LIFE AND LABOUR OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATIVE ARTISTS, AND A DESIGN ON THE COVER AFTER AN ORNAMENT IN THE ROYAL PALACE AT DELHI

"For wel I wot that ye han her-biforn
Of making ropen, and lad awey the corn;
And I come after, glening here and there,
And am full glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word that ye han left."

—CHAUCER,

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1907

TO

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD,

M.D.EDIN., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., LL.D.,

WHO TO HIS SPECIAL INSIGHT OF
THE INNER CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE EAST,
ADDS AN EVER-HELPFUL SYMPATHY
WITH THE ARTISTIC AND LITERARY LIFE
OF THE IMMEMORIAL PEOPLE OF INDIA,

THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS DEDICATED,

AS AN AFFECTIONATE APPRECIATION
OF THE MANY KINDNESSES AND COURTESIES
RECEIVED FROM HIM

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

An account of the genesis of this book may help to explain some of its peculiarities.

The nucleus of the volume was formed by certain lectures which the writer delivered at the Passmore Edwards Institute and elsewhere. During the autumn and winter of 1905-6 India occupied a good deal of the attention of the British public, on account of the memorable tour of their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, in that country. The writer happened to be on furlough in England, and was frequently requested to speak on Indian questions. At the Passmore Edwards Institute he undertook a series of six lectures. They began in the small lecture-room, but week after week the audience increased, until the warder had to give us the largest hall for the purpose. This showed that the subject attracted considerable attention, and that the Metropolis of the Empire was by no means as indifferent to Indian questions as is sometimes assumed.

The writer had the good fortune to have in his audience or in the Chair some of the most

distinguished men and women of letters, as well as some well-known authorities on Indian matters. They were pleased not only to approve of the method of presentment, but even to suggest that the matter was of sufficient importance to be presented to a wider public than that to which it had hitherto been submitted. The papers were, therefore, subjected to a thorough revision, and with some additions are now laid before the reading public.

Some new ground is covered in these pages, but the main interest to English readers will lie in the fresh point of view from which all questions are approached. To an Indian, looking at things from within, they must necessarily wear a somewhat different aspect from that in which they appear to the numerous administrators, judges, business men, and travellers, English and foreign, who visit India or make it their home. At the same time an endeavour has been made to avoid all controversial topics. A comprehensive picture of the life of the people of India and an estimate of their social tendencies need not include any matter which cannot be accepted by men of all shades of opinion.

Mrs Humphry Ward presiding at one of the lectures, was kind enough to mention three qualifications in the present writer for dealing with Indian life. In the first place, being born

and bred in India, he is of the people. In the second place, his association with the Government of the country enables him to view life also from the administrative point of view—viz.: as a whole, and with special reference to social organisation and cohesion. In the third place, a Cambridge education and a lengthened study of European life and methods should enable him to present facts in a form which may appeal to European readers and be not unacceptable to that large body of University men in India whose minds are still seeking an adjustment between Western ideals and Eastern traditions. If a fourth qualification may be added, it is the possession of an open mind and the consciousness that in private and public life the influences that go furthest are not those that are most talked about, but that, in any case, there can be no finality in the discussion of social problems.

Some of these papers in their original form have already appeared in the *Indian Magazine*, the *Hindustan Review*, and the *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review*. The paper on Economic Problems was printed in the journal *Anglo-Oriental Commerce*, while that on Public Health has seen the light in the journal of the Royal Institute of Public Health. Those on the Leisured Classes, Woman's Life, and Social Tendencies have not been published before.

The list of private friends to whom my thanks are due for much assistance and encouragement is long, and only a few names can be mentioned. Sir George Birdwood may be styled "the onlie begetter" of this volume. Mr T. W. Arnold has given much valuable time in reading over the proofs, and his suggestions have been most helpful. Mr C. A. Latif, Mr S. Athim, Mr Narottam Morarji Goculdas, and Mr Abbas Tyebji have helped me to obtain the excellent illustrations from India. The design on the cover is taken from the Hall of Justice in the Royal Palace at Delhi, but instead of the date inscription I have ventured to put in a couplet from Hafiz, transcribed specially for this book by Miss Fyzee, the distinguished young Indian lady whose versatile accomplishments are so highly prized by her friends. The couplet from Hafiz is specially appropriate on the eve of my departure from England, and may be paraphrased:—

"Though we are far from the carpet
Whereon ye sit with your nearest,
Yet our spirit is not far;
For do we not serve your king,
And do we not remember you
Ever in our praises?"

A. YUSUF-ALI.

ST ALBANS,
30th January 1907.

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"I lived with visions for my company,
Instead of men and women, years ago,
And found them gentle mates, nor thought to know
A sweeter music than they played to me.
But soon their trailing purple was not free
Of this world's dust,—their lutes did silent grow,
And I myself grew faint and blind below
Their vanishing eyes."

—Mrs BROWNING,
Sonnets from the Portuguese, xxvi.

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I

TOWN LIFE

"Here's
A crowd to make a nation!—best begin
By making each a Man, till all be peers
Of Earth's true patriots, and pure martyrs in
Knowing and daring."

—E. B. BROWNING, *Casa Guidi Windows*, I. xix.

"Don't mix yourselves in others' strife,
But gather in the proffered fruit—
That is a practical pursuit
That does not call for blood and knife;
That asks no sacrifice of life,
And gives you its good things to boot."

—IBSEN, *Brand*.

TOWN LIFE

In describing town life in India there are two main difficulties. First, every town or city has its own characteristics and peculiarities, which mark it out from the other towns in quite a distinctive way. Secondly, there is no unity of life in the towns. A town in India is merely a geographical expression, without corporate life. There is no centre in which the activities of the different parts of the population can be focussed. There is no common measure of social conduct. There is no combining force or personality to which the different strata of society look up as in some way setting a standard. The village in India, on the other hand, is a distinct unit, a centre of life, and in some measure a common bond of action.

The reason of these differences is that the conception of a village as an entity is of very great antiquity, whereas the conception of a town is comparatively modern. I do not assert that town life or city life was unknown in the earlier history of India, but towns in those days were centres of a Court, with a king at its head. The

Court was often peripatetic. It moved about from place to place as the exigencies of political life required. The Emperor Aurangzeb, who reigned fifty years, was more than thirty years absent from his capital. During the last twenty-five years of his reign he never saw Delhi, and was scarcely more than once or twice within a thousand miles of it. He was constantly moving about on military expeditions in the Deccan. The Italian traveller, Gemelli Carreri, visited Aurangzeb's Court at Galgala in March 1695, and describes it as a huge camp more than thirty miles in circuit, and containing over 1,500,000 souls.[1] There were 250 bazars or markets, every nobleman having a special one of his own. The shops, the offices, the dwellings of the noblemen, and the royal apartments themselves—hung with silks and cloth of gold—were all tents, more or less splendidly equipped. Thus the life and soul of Delhi was wandering about, like a disembodied spirit, in the Deccan. Anything like a stable town with a corporate life, the centre of commerce or industry, with a mayor, or chief functionary, who did not depend for his appointment on the favours of the central Court, was absolutely unknown. Anything like the association of the inhabitants of one town with another in common commercial, industrial, social or political objects, such as we find in mediæval Europe, was entirely undreamt of. The village was the creation of

[1] Churchill's *Voyages*, 1704, vol. iv. p. 233.

Aryan gods; the town was the child of Greek civilisation; while the modern State is the town grown adult, with increased powers and activities. In India, though we have some huge cities, the life in them had not, until quite recently, developed beyond the village stage. Indeed, if social aims be taken as the test of advancement, the town was in many respects behind the village. The village I mean was an adult village, the like of which perhaps has existed nowhere else in recent times.

As the different towns have their own peculiarities, I will select a particular town in order to describe it. That town will be Lucknow, the capital of Oudh. When it is spoken of as the capital of Oudh, the word must be understood in a limited sense. Oudh is not now a country or a province separately administered. It forms a part of what are known as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, with a common capital at Allahabad. The Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces makes a point of spending a few weeks of the cold weather in Lucknow in order to keep alive Oudh traditions, but although he keeps up a separate Government House in Lucknow, his visit there must be considered in the nature of a prolonged stay in camp. There is undoubtedly a certain amount of social life centred in Lucknow on account of the Barons of Oudh having a common meeting-ground in the Kaisar Bagh. In this respect

Lucknow differs from most other towns in India. Neither Bombay, nor Madras, nor Lahore, nor Allahabad, is a centre of social life in the widest sense of the term. Calcutta is to a considerable extent becoming the centre of Bengali life. Hence the loud outcry raised against the partition of Bengal. But Lucknow is *par excellence* the centre of the higher life of Oudh, although this must be understood only in a social and not in a political, industrial, or intellectual sense. In literature, though Sarshar and Sharar are still living, the exclusive côterie which claimed to lay down the laws of taste and elegance in modern Urdu has passed away, never to be revived again.

Lucknow is the largest city in the United Provinces, having a population of 264,000 by the census of 1901. It is not an expansive city like Agra, Delhi, or Calcutta, the population having decreased by 3·2 per cent. since 1891 and 7·2 per cent. since 1872. Historically it is not an old city like Delhi, nor has it the commercial importance of Cawnpore, but it has nevertheless a romantic interest, which entitles it to rank as the premier city in the hearts and affections of the people of Upper India.

The name of the city is derived from the name of a mythical personage, Lakshman, the brother of Rama, the hero of the celebrated epic *Ramayana*. The name got corrupted into Lakhan in popular speech, and hence the city of Lakhan became Lakhnau, or as it is spelt in

English, Lucknow. It was quite a small place until the latter half of the eighteenth century. Its importance dates from the time when the Oudh dynasty transferred their capital hither from Fyzabad. The dynasty was founded by a Persian adventurer, who found favour at the Moghal Court at Delhi, and made himself master of a large number of provinces, including Rohilkhand, Oudh, and nearly the whole of the eastern part of the present United Provinces. He and his successors were great warriors and men of strong character. The third in succession from the founder was defeated at the battle of Buxar in 1764, and held his territories subsequent to that defeat by favour of the new and growing power of the East India Company. This was part of the settlement which Clive made in his famous journey to the Upper Provinces in 1765. Asaf-ud-daula first made Lucknow the capital of his kingdom in 1775. He was a great builder. He built bridges, mosques, bazaars, squares, streets, palaces, and other public edifices. His predecessors had built nothing but forts and walls. He was able to consolidate his power in peace and embellish his capital with various works of architecture. His buildings are free from tawdry ornaments such as are found in buildings erected by some of his successors. The most flimsy and unsightly buildings in Lucknow are those erected in the reign of Wajid Ali Shah, between 1840 and 1850. It is said that Wajid

Ali Shah called for designs based on European architecture. What he got was the bastard style of architecture seen in such places as the pavilions in Rosherville and Vauxhall Gardens, at a date when those styles had become the laughing-stock of the satirists of Western Europe. The result is that most of the buildings erected in the middle of the nineteenth century are nearly crumbling to pieces, while the more solid and chaste architecture of the earlier Oudh rulers still exists and goes some way to redeem Lucknow from the charge of vulgarity, which has justly been brought against its architectural pretensions.

If we take our stand on one of the four bridges that cross the Gumti river we shall see practically all the most important buildings of the city. The minarets of the Cathedral Mosque, standing out gracefully against the beautiful blue sky, lend that tone of delicacy to the outline wanting in the huge mass of the Imambara and the Rumi Darwaza. These three buildings form a picturesque group. A little further to the left may be seen the massive structure of the Residency, immortalised in the history of the Mutiny. It contains the tomb of Sir Henry Lawrence, bearing the simple epitaph composed by the hero himself:

"Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

A little further to the left again will be seen the domes of two mausolea, and behind them is the Kaisar Bagh, which so well illustrates the debased

style of European Architecture (so-called). Here will be seen the Saracenic arch blended with Gothic pilasters, the oriental dome surmounting pillars with Corinthian capitals. The whole place is covered with a pale orange colour, which seems to have been the imperial purple of the kings of Oudh. On the gates are the designs of two fishes, characteristic of the arms of the royal family of Oudh.

In another part of the city is the Martinière College, which was built by General Claude Martin, who was a favourite architect of Asaf-ud-daula. The General is buried in a vault in the College, and an interesting story is attached to his tomb. The General in his lifetime drew up a design for the building himself. Having shown it to the king of Oudh, the king immediately expressed a desire to purchase it for a million pounds sterling. Before the bargain could be completed, the General died. But he left ample funds to build and endow the College, with instructions that his body should be buried in the building, as that was the only plan by which he could ensure the land from confiscation by future kings. Whatever the failings of the kings of Oudh, they scrupulously respected burial-places, and to-day the Martinière College stands as a noble monument of its charitable founder. The College supports a hundred and twenty European boys of military parents, and there are similar institutions for boys and girls, established

by the same founder, in Calcutta. An interesting parallel has been drawn by a competent authority between this school and its founder and the oldest of English public schools, Winchester College, and its founder, the generous and practical bishop-architect, William of Wykeham. Claude Martin was a most versatile man. Originally the son of a silk manufacturer at Lyons, he fought in India for the French East India Company, and was subsequently in the service of the English Company. In later life he was one of the grandees of the Lucknow Court. His accomplishments included those of a soldier, architect, watchmaker, and gunsmith.[1] He built up a vast fortune, which he left by will to charities in Lucknow, Calcutta, Chandernagore, and Lyons.[2]

Before we pass on to the native city, let us notice the Chhatar Manzil, or the palace of umbrellas, so called because golden umbrellas surmount the tops of several parts of the building. It was once a royal palace, but it is now used as

[1] A contemporary letter printed with the "Siyar-ul-Mutaakhkhirin," the Indian "Mémoires de Sully," published in Calcutta, 1789 (vol. i. p. 14, note 3), describes him thus: "As an architect (and he is everything) he has built himself at Lucknow a strong, elegant house, that has neither beams nor cupola, and is so contrived that a single man might defend it against multitudes."

[2] Mr Buckland's "Dictionary of Indian Biography" contains a notice, all too brief, of this remarkable man. Mr Buckland, following Mr Keene (except as to dates), calls him a deserter from the French; but Mr S. C. Hill, in his "Life of Claud Martin" (Calcutta, 1901), disposes of this charge (pp. 8-14, 155-6). Mr Hill also discredits the story of Martin's motive in directing his body to be buried in the vault (pp. 85-6). The building was called "Constantia" from Martin's motto: "Labore et Constantia." Its art treasures are worth a visit.

a club-house, the Chhatar Manzil Club being one of the finest European clubs in India. Government House, with its fine grounds, and the spacious parks, with their flower-beds and statuary, will no doubt attract the visitor's attention. The statuary is not by Phidias or Thorwaldsen, and lurks in corners as if it were ashamed of being seen where it is.

If you go to the native city you will not find any important or striking buildings. The only place worth seeing is the Chauk or market square, comparable to the famous Chandni Chauk or "moonlight street" of Delhi. Here a large number of people assemble every day for the purpose of buying and selling, as well as for seeing and being seen. It is an open space, the four sides of which are occupied by well-built shops. These belong to the superior merchants, who, dressed in loose oriental robes, sit on carpets of harmonious colours, more like princes in a show than business men who felt that time was money. The *hukka* is before them, and a slow sort of conversation is being carried on in undertones by two or three confidential companions, who are innocent of any intentions to patronise the shop. Woe betide the brisk customer who seeks rudely to disturb their somnolent repose, even with the pardonable intention of leaving a few of his rupees at the shop. For it is the unwritten law of the Chauk that you should approach the lords and masters of its merchandise

with benign salutations and veiled apologies for your intrusion. These delivered, you will hear in reply many amiable compliments, with perhaps an apt quotation from a Persian poet about wealth being a humble handmaid ever dogging your auspicious footsteps. When you arrive at this stage, there is an opening for gently broaching your matter of business, a sort of suggestion that though both parties are personally above the claims of filthy lucre, the "handmaid dogging your auspicious footsteps" requires a little concession. But even so you must approach the matter delicately, and not show yourself too eager to obey the behest of your business instinct. Time may be convertible into money in a new sense: the less time you spend at the shop, the more you pay for it. To drive an equal bargain, take up casually a piece of *chikan* embroidery, lying in a corner of the shop as if by accident. It may be the finest sample of its kind you have seen, but you don't say so. You lament the decline in the art of *chikan* embroidery: of course you add politely, your remarks do not apply to your interlocutor's stock. This opens the campaign. He agrees with your opinion in general, but points out how his wares are the finest in the market, having been made by the only artisan of the old school living. You assent with ostentatious civility; but do not omit to give the knowing smile which says that you have heard the story before. The *onus* of naming the

price is thrown on you. In your blandest manner you plead inexperience. He understands you perfectly. As you are not a greenhorn, he names a price only twice as high as that which he would be glad to take. You talk generalities, and pretend you do not wish to purchase it at all. He takes your cue, and expatiates upon the history of the article and the varying fortunes of its makers. After a variety of tactics, carried on with perfect good-humour—nay, with a show of superabundant politeness—the bargain is clinched at considerably less than the cost price as declared by the merchant. You part with mutual respect and many touching salutations. You have secured a bargain, but he too has made a deal. In the Chauk you will require no commentary to enable you to understand: "*Malum est! malum est!*" *inquit emptor; sed quum abierit tum gloriabitur!*

So much for the permanent shops in the Chauk —mostly art-ware and jewellery of a superior description. But turn to the open space in the centre, and you will find brisk business of a noisier and more vulgar description. There are pedlars and bead-makers, with tinsel jewellery made in Delhi or more probably in Birmingham. There are the bangle-sellers, "round whom the women folk do ever congregate." There are the sellers of sweets, each with a tray poised on a cane stool, whose contents are tersely announced as "*pera, barfi, mithai!*" There are fruit-sellers and vegetable-sellers; the humble cobbler with

his unfashionable shoes and the still humbler grass-cutter with his load of grass which he has cut—or rather dug up from the roadside, or from ditch or bank, with a primitive hoe. All these humble votaries of commerce ply their busy trade with a great deal of brisk animation, and not without an amount of haggling over their farthing bargains, which keeps up the reputation of trade as sharpening the wits of man. They have no shops or stalls to sit on, but all squat on the ground, paying a market toll withal to the Municipality every time they come. Notice the lighting arrangements at night. Most of the dealers have none. But the fortunate few, such as the itinerant sweet-sellers, have flaring smoky lamps of kerosine oil, with leaky reservoirs of tin that never dreamt of the proximity of a glass chimney. Let us hope that the odours of the kerosine oil do not thrust themselves too shamelessly into the (presumably) appetising sweets offered by the confectioner—for this same "*pera, barfi, mithai*" is a whole day's dinner to some poor stranger who has not either the pots or the place where he can cook his meals according to caste rules.

If Joseph Addison were to return to life as a Lucknow citizen, what a wealth of copy he would find in a study of the cries and noises, the shouting and gesticulations, the unctuous tones of persuasion, and the biting gibes of sarcasm and anger, which he would hear in the Chauk!

After a Photo.] A GREENGROCER'S STALL. *By* K. Beg.

"The unctuous tones of persuasion, and the biting gibes of sarcasm and anger"—p. 14.

To face p. 14.]

Here is a man who has cut and brought a head-load of the milky pipal leaves, which he meant to sell as fodder for goats—abusing in a towering rage the unknown owner of a goat which has watched its opportunity and eaten half the old man's luscious stock-in-trade. Here is a vegetable-seller who is giving a piece of her mind to another who has undersold her, "with her wretched rotten stuff, which even baby donkeys would have too much discrimination to accept!" Move a little further, and you will find a *churan*-seller: he sells condiments and mixtures of digestive spices—sad commentary either on the quality of Lucknow cooks or the quantity which their patrons have time to eat but not stomach to digest. These little mixtures are carried in paper packets lying in two shallow baskets hanging from a pole slung over the man's shoulder. This man is an artist in patter-song; he would stand up to your fastest singing artist from the most up-to-date music-hall. Fast come his words like pattering rain. In rollicking snatches of doggerel verse does he run over the virtues of half his *churans* before he once takes breath. But the excitement is greatest when two *churan*-sellers meet and try to talk each other down. The retailers of the most dainty little verses, however, are the toy-sellers. The toys may be made of mud or clay, or paper and bamboo twigs; the more expensive (yet not above a pedlar's purse) are made of brass which

is facetiously described as "glittering gold." How can I give an idea of the doggerel verse, the pathos, the wit, the thrust, and the homely simplicity, which the hidden poets who talk through these men bring to their task? Let me attempt a feeble imitation, doggerel and all, in a paraphrase:—

"If some dear little children you possess,
Whose lisp is to your ears a sweet caress,
Then take this cow with the golden sheen;
(to be pronounced with a lisp)
If you refuse, you are—a parent mean."[1]

There are thus two kinds of bazars, two streams of commercial life, mingling side by side in this piece of ground called the Chauk. The Chauk is the true forum — the place of public resort — of Indian cities. In the olden days,

[1] Was Shakespeare a native of Lucknow? Were it not that the glories of Lucknow as a capital date from a time more than a century and a half after Shakespeare, I would offer this suggestion to the Baconians, and to those who find the facts of Shakespeare's ordinary life unsatisfactory. Is not Autolycus a typical Lakhnavi? And does not his song as a pedlar breathe the spirit of the Chauk?—

"Lawn, as white as driven snow;
Cyprus, black as e'er was crow;
Gloves, as sweet as damask roses;
Masks for faces, and for noses;
Bugle bracelet, necklace amber,
Perfume for a lady's chamber:
Golden coifs, and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears;
Pins, and poking-sticks of steel,
What maids lack from head to heel:
Come, buy of me, come; come buy, come buy;
Buy, lads, or else your lassies cry; Come, buy."
—*Winter's Tale*, IV. iii.

When there was no police, if a man wanted to ventilate a grievance, he went to the Chauk. If we can imagine the elders of the city dispensing patriarchal justice, they would no doubt do it at the Chauk. The word "chauk" is frequently translated "market place," but there are six other words for "market" or "street" which connote different ideas. As the ideas underlying them illustrate some phases of town life, I will proceed to explain them. "Bazar" is the most general term for market. It is a Persian word introduced by the Muhammadans, and is also used figuratively, as in "bazar garm hai"—"The market is brisk." Having been introduced by non-Hindus, the word is also associated with foreign trade, *e.g.* the Kandahari Bazar and the Chini Bazar, in Lucknow, which were at one time the centres of the Afghan and the China trade respectively. The word "ganj" is generally confined to a grain market. It is derived from a Sanskrit word which means a mine, storehouse, or granary. As the lion's share of the trade of India is taken by grain and raw produce, it is not surprising that it occurs in so many place-names, either the names of streets or quarters in big cities, or the names of new centres of the grain trade which have grown into towns. Generally the name or title of the founder is prefixed to the word. Thus you will find in different parts of Lucknow, Hazratganj, Nawabganj, Wazirganj, Husainganj, the more

recent Victoriaganj (called after the late Empress of India), and the cumbrously-named Drig-Bijaiganj (called after a popular ancestor of the Maharaja of Balrampur). "Mandi" is the word usually associated with the market for bulky articles of low value, such as vegetables, timber, grass, etc. Thus there is the famous Sabzi Mandi (vegetable market) of Delhi, and several other mandis, such as the Lakarmandi (timber and fuel market) and the Ghasimandi (grass market), in Lucknow. "Katra," as the name of a bazar, originally denoted the quarter or suburb where the humble artisans lived, manufactured their wares, and sold them. There would usually be only one katra in a town, but if a modern city has been formed by the amalgamation of several little towns, there may be more than one katra. Then the artisans who plied different trades and tended to form caste-guilds, gravitated into distinct and local groups, giving rise to streets or quarters named after the guilds. Such a quarter would be called a "tola," if it arose before Muhammadan words became fashionable, and "mohalla," if it arose during the supremacy of Muhammadan ideas. Thus we have in Lucknow, north of the river, Chamar-tola (or the cobblers' quarter), Thatheri-tola (or the quarter of workers in copper), and Murai-tola[1] (or the

[1] The nearest equivalent to "Tola" that I can think of in the English language is the word "Row." The "Rows" of Yarmouth are famous; those of Chester are *sui generis*. Doubtless "Bedford Row"

quarter of the vegetable growers). This scheme of names will furnish the key to the ancient distribution of the working population of a city or the gradual building up of a town, and will incidentally explain many place-names. It must not be supposed that the scheme of distribution remains unaltered through the centuries. The population of Indian towns is a particularly shifting population in contrast to the rural population, which is so attached to its ancestral acres. But the historical meaning that lies buried in names is significant of many of the features of the social system.

One of the most characteristic fancy industries of Lucknow is that of clay modelling. The workers are so clever that they can make a clay figure (face, draperies, and all) while you wait. They have been known to ask a person to sit in a chair while their partner engages him in pleasant talk, and before their customer has quite made up his or her mind what to buy, the clever artist has modelled an exact image, or series of

in London retains a relic of early phraseology; so does "Rampart Row" in Bombay. But the most interesting glimpse in this connection is afforded by Daniel Defoe in his "Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain." Describing Stourbridge Fair at Cambridge, he tells us how the "Duddery" was a great square—a sort of chauk—in the centre, formed of the largest booths, where wholesale business was transacted. Then there were streets or "Rows" running in all directions, which were the scenes of different trades such as "Goldsmiths, Toymen, Turners, Milliners . . . in a word, all Trades that can be found in London." A passage like this vividly brings home eighteenth-century England to an Oriental. Perhaps, after all, West was East, and East is West.

images, to represent the customer in various attitudes and with different expressions of face. This will be shown in the rough, and if it does not please (which rarely happens), the artist is most voluble in telling you how the finished product will represent you exactly as you are (that is, exactly as you think you are), this being only a rough attempt to aid his memory in finishing his task. The subtle word of flattery in season, when the will is wavering, is so well understood and practised that these artists in clay command a large business, and used to earn good profits. Recently, however, they have fallen upon evil times, and with the decline in their business has followed a decline in their art. But some say that the decline in their art has led to a fall in prices. True it is that the modellers in clay do not receive as much patronage as they used to do, and the finest exponents of the art are now rare.

If you go to the interior of one of these workmen's houses you will find no more than one room occupied by the whole family. A large number of them, about two-thirds of the whole population, live in mud-built houses, but the better class of them can afford to rent a house built of bricks and plaster. The lighting and ventilation are left to chance. In the one room they can command, they put about three beds. They are not exactly French or Arabian bedsteads, but four posts joined by four pieces of

wood, and covered with string usually made of cocoanut fibre. A bed like that, called a *char-pai*, would cost about sixpence or eightpence, which, however, represents a day's work to the men. On the bed nothing more than a cheap blanket is placed, which in the cold weather serves the double purpose of sheet and coverlet. One of these beds is used for sleeping on. The others would be used as chairs or tables, in case there are no children in the family. There are no pictures in the room, no chairs nor tables. The walls are not covered with paper, and, of course, there are no hangings. There is usually no carpet or floor-cloth, but occasionally a cheap cotton print or a mat is spread on the floor, and when people are not sitting on the four-post beds, they sit on the ground on these floor coverings. One corner of the room serves as a kitchen, where four or five cooking utensils are stacked, and two or three brass vessels serve as vessels for drinking-water. In the hot weather porous earthenware vessels are filled with water, and the evaporation that takes place helps to cool the water almost to an icy temperature.

Let us go to a somewhat better-class house than this, say the house of a clerk employed in a Government office. His income would be about two or three pounds a month. Out of that he pays a rent of about five or six shillings, unless he has pretensions to a better style of living, in which case he would, perhaps, pay ten

shillings for rent. He has, in most cases, at least two rooms to live in, one used by the women, and the other by the men. The children would usually be in the women's apartment. The cooking and all the domestic service would also be performed there, the men's apartment being usually reserved for the men's interests or for business purposes. In such a house they generally have some sort of a floor-cloth, but the walls of the rooms are not papered. In the men's apartments there may be a picture or two. Usually the pictures deal with subjects of Hindu mythology, if the owner happens to be a Hindu, or representations of sacred buildings, if the owner happens to be a Muhammadan. Sometimes cheap theatrical prints or Roman Catholic devotional pictures, or the two in juxtaposition, are hung up, without the owner realising the incongruous ideas they would suggest to any one who knew their meaning.

If you go to a still higher stratum in society you would come to the still larger and more open house called a bungalow. Lucknow is, in a sense, pre-eminently the city of bungalows. All the better-class Indians affect a bungalow in Lucknow, while in other cities or Indian stations, the bungalow is usually the habitation of Europeans only. The ground is called a "compound." Round the compounds are scattered out-houses for the servants, stables, and coach-houses. There is often a large garden with some flowers, but

the garden is chiefly remarkable for its fruit trees. The bungalow itself has a verandah, and any number of rooms from six to ten, all on the ground floor, but the plinth is raised a few feet from the ground. The style of living is of a mixed character, like all institutions in modern India. One room is perhaps fitted up in the European style, and would serve as a drawing-room in which to receive visitors accustomed to the Western mode of life. Another is fitted up in the Oriental style, with rich carpets on the floors, expensive hangings on the walls, and several ornamental *hukkas* and spittoons in different parts of the room. These are the only kind of houses which have separate kitchens. The sanitary arrangements, too, are of a better order, although it must not be supposed that the clean spick and span arrangements of an English home and the clock-work routine of an English household are to be obtained in the free, lackadaisical life of India.

The amusements of the city are not many, but an Eastern crowd generally manages to find amusement in most things in life. The bazar is a free lounging place or club, where you may meet your fellows and exchange any ideas you may have and any compliments you may think fit to bestow. The place of newspapers is supplied to the man in the street by bazar gossip. There are no billiard saloons, but at any shop you are allowed to play skittles with

your neighbour's character. In Lucknow there are two or three theatres on Western lines, or rather theatres which attempt to mount pieces on Western lines. The dresses, however, are generally the same for similar characters, in whatever play they appear; thus the King wears the same crown and dress whether he appears as King Lear or as King Harishchandra, or as the god Indar in *Indar Sabha*. The female parts are acted by boys and the scenery is of the simplest description. The old style of plays, which may in some respects be called the national style, is that in which there are no set pieces, but only sketches of life, grave and gay, patriotic, satirical, or frivolous. There are a set of professional men, called Bhánds or Naqqáls, who hold grants of land given by the old Indian dynasties for their subsistence. They used to perform at Court and sometimes for the benefit of the public on occasions of public festivals without any fees. Many of those old families still exist and give performances, but not in a regular theatre where the spectators pay for entry. When a rich man wants to celebrate a wedding or a birthday, or the name-day of a child, or other auspicious event in his family, he generally has one of these men, or a troupe of them, to come to perform at night. The spectators would be his guests. The hosts pay for the entertainment from about £1 to £10 for the whole troupe for the evening. It would

not be the only entertainment. Other items on the programme include dances performed by professional dancing girls. The Indians consider it beneath their dignity to dance themselves. The performances of the professionals are often of a tedious character, and generally go on all night. The guests are not only those invited by special request, but anybody who chooses to drop in. The dancing girls also sing. The songs are like music-hall songs in character, and the dances are so adjusted that they are appropriate to the songs. The motions are slow and dignified, but dreamy and sensuous. The arms and fingers, the twisting of the wrists and ankles, the languorous manipulation of the head and the supple turnings of the waist and body, all contribute to the general effect. The music is in a minor key, a low, sad, dreamy monotone, played by a man with a *sárangi*, whose eyes and head show him to be a true artist living in a dream-land of his own, of which this world with all its fleeting show is a mere faint expression. The time is accentuated by a man with a hand-drum, whose nimble fingers strike against the vellum with energy and ease, while he closes his eyes and feels that he is the true master of the dancing measure. If the song happens to be a Hindi plaint, in which the lonely Radha pines because Krishna, the lord of her heart and the soul of her body, cometh not, there is nothing surprising in the spell it

casts over an audience who understand both the words, the scenes, and the setting in which they are presented, and feel transported into a world where the artist and the audience, the motion and the music, fade into the depths of the Unattainable.

Other amusements indulged in are wrestling, cock-fighting, quail-fighting, kite-flying, and card-playing. The cards played with are different from the ordinary pack of 52 oblong cards used in Europe. They are round in shape and are called Ganjifa. The pack consists of 96 cards, consisting of eight different colours or suits. They are usually played by three persons. The ordinary four-suit pack of 52 cards is, however, coming into vogue, though there are no brilliant exponents of the game of bridge or whist among the people of India. Chess, on the other hand, is a great favourite among the better classes.

The art of kite-flying, as practised in Lucknow, is of a very superior order. The strings are covered with a composition containing ground mica, which makes it as hard as steel wire. The object of the kite-flier is to get his opponent's kite-string so entangled in his own in the higher regions of the air that with a judicious sawing motion of the hand he can cut that string. When he succeeds in cutting it, the opponent's kite gets detached and flies off whither the wind leads it. When it is nearly on the point of falling on the ground, a crowd of boys and men who are con-

noisseurs in the art of kite-flying run after it in order to try to capture the kite, which is supposed to be fair booty for whoever lays his hand on it first. Some of these kites are expensive affairs, and in the colours and decorations with which they are adorned are perfect little works of art. There are those with long tails that trail in the air. Such a kite is called a comet. There are other kites which are flown at night, to which is attached a small candle. Such a kite would be a star kite, but the star kite hobby is only confined to a superior class of connoisseurs, who can afford the time and money to indulge in their taste, and who have also the brains to devise novelties in the kite line.

The art of wrestling is the only one among the manly games practised in Lucknow. I will not here consider cricket, football, or tennis, which are exotic games confined to the school or college boys. Formerly sword-play, fencing, single sticks and other games of that description, were in great vogue, and a school of fencing existed in Lucknow, which claimed to expound the art in a way peculiarly original. In the opinion of its votaries it was superior to the art as practised in Delhi; but latterly the Arms Act, which has disarmed the civil population, has also resulted in the practical extinction of the art of sword-play. The only occasions when single sticks are used are unfortunately when human heads are broken. Some of these schools of arms train pupils for

showing their skill in the *Moharram* celebrations, but even here there has been a sad decline both in number and in the quality of the art.

The mention of the *Moharram* celebrations recalls the fact that Lucknow is a stronghold of the Shiah sect in India, and therefore these celebrations are attended with peculiar splendour and solemnity. When the Lucknow Court existed, these celebrations were specially patronised by royalty. The Imambara and the Shah Najaf are buildings specially built to commemorate the event with which the *Moharram* celebrations are connected. Originally a sad and solemn festival, it gives the crowds, both Shiah and Sunni, both Hindu and Muhammadan, the opportunity of working up that spirit which, if not kept within bounds, would result in fanatical outbreaks. It is a peculiar religious frenzy, which is concerned more with the emotional expression of a crowd than with religion in its higher aspects. It sometimes takes the form of a show or sheer buffoonery, which is peculiarly revolting to those who understand the true significance of the solemn festival. The religious teachers always preach against it, but, nevertheless, it has established itself as a national institution in India, and the lower classes, irrespective of caste or religion, are entirely devoted to it. In Persia it takes the form of mystery plays or miracle plays. In India it confines its expression, as far as the crowds are concerned, to the making of paper

images of the tombs of the martyrs. The framework of these tombs is of sticks or bamboos, but they are completely covered over with paper in a variety of colours and designs. Sometimes they are adorned with such artistic taste that a single one of these tombs costs as much as a thousand rupees. They are led in procession through the town and finally carried to a river or stream, where they are floated in the water. The paper is destroyed, but the framework is preserved for the next year's celebrations. The nobles vie with one another in having *Tazias* of their own. The different Akháras (schools of arms) have each a *Tazia* of its own. Sometimes a whole street subscribes to have a special *Tazia*. Sometimes a trade guild or a society combine to have a *Tazia* of their own. In all these cases the competition consists in making a *Tazia* of superior artistic finish to any of the others or to any of those of the previous year. In some respects the festival has the same aspect in the social life of the people as the Battle of the Flowers in a continental town, or the Lord Mayor's Show in London, but the occasion in the one case is that of civic mirth, and in the other it is buffoonery super-imposed upon a fanatic zeal in the commemoration of an event which is sad beyond expression in the history of Islam.

Having described the external appearance of the city, the interior of the houses, and the amusements of the people, let us review briefly

the social and moral ideas which ferment this huge mass of humanity. One of the great factors in the social life of the people, which is specially prominent in the cities, but somewhat thrown into the background in the villages, is the division of the people into water-tight compartments. One section of the people scarcely knows the history, traditions, ideas, and aims of another section, and there are so many sections in the whole mass that the Indian city from a social point of view may be fitly described as a conglomerate of fortuitous forces, working blindly and often in opposite directions, for want of a guiding hand and a master mind, which would enable them to work in harmony and efficiency. Take the religious idea alone. Some people doubt whether there is any religion in the Indian cities. A form of religion there is undoubtedly, or rather a bewildering multiplicity of forms of religion, but they do not constitute a social or a moral force. A rich banker who feeds a hundred Brahmans and gives away large sums of money in charity, but does not hesitate to keep a double set of accounts, one fraudulent (for other people's use) and another real (for his own use), cannot be said to have any religious idea fructifying in his life. A devout Muhammadan who builds a new mosque, and if there is a dispute as to its site will not hesitate to forge a deed which would establish his title to the possession of the land, cannot claim to be working on a religious basis.

"Pious" people who allow their numerous and beautiful places of worship of ancient times to crumble to dust, and build new ones in order to perpetuate their own name, cannot be said to worship any god except that of self-glory. A family in which the sons are against their fathers, and the mothers of the sons are, without any social stigma, the heavy oppressors of their daughters-in-law, cannot be described as showing a real picture of home life or domestic affection. There may exist a vast diversity of religious forms and yet a real unity of ethical, social, or national ideas, as in the United States of America. But where the forms are dead and make no pretence to mould the growing ideas, where the sap of human experience which gave life to a system has run dry, the forms, rituals, and social observances will have no connection with the true inner life of the people. The priests are generally an ignorant body of men, whose knowledge is confined to a set of dead formularies. They have no possible position or vantage-ground from which they can impress their ideals, even if they had any, on their congregations. They have no access to any machinery for the spiritual elevation of humanity. I do not assert that there are no individual lives of purity, devotion, and self-sacrifice in the cities. But where these virtues exist, their lustre is dimmed by gloom and despair as regards the world in general. Where is the self-confident power which will ride on

the gathering wave of hope, and batter the rocks of inertia, superstition, and a coarse and selfish greed?

As to the density of population, the problem raised by it is so vast and so appalling that it will have to be handled sooner or later by all social reformers. Hitherto, social reform in India has taken account only of individual or family life. As applied to mankind in the mass, and especially to those soulless agglomerations of seething humanity which we call cities, it is a gospel yet to be preached. Even the statistics dealing with the herding of the masses in cities have scarcely been brought into sufficient prominence. There are not many publicists who have devoted any special attention to the overcrowding which takes place in large towns. This evil is especially prominent in the new and growing towns as opposed to the old and decaying cities. Such towns as have increased with the growth of commerce and industry—for example, Cawnpore and Calcutta—are striking illustrations of this. The population of Cawnpore as a city has grown 61 per cent. since 1872. The growth of Calcutta has also been rapid. But concurrently with this growth no sufficient attention has been paid to the problems suggested by the density of population or the difficulty of housing the people in decent and comfortable homes.

Let us take a few figures. The density of population in Lucknow is 12,278 per square mile.

In Cawnpore it is 37,538; in Bombay it is 35,273; in Calcutta it is 42,390; and in London it is 37,000 per square mile. This comparison would only be useful when we recollect that in a city like London there are a vast number of houses with more than three storeys, while houses with a single floor are almost unknown. In a city like Calcutta, the majority of the houses, fully three-fifths, are mud-built hovels, and therefore the vast majority of the population live, if we may so call it, in a single layer, whereas the majority of the population in London live in triple or quadruple layers, one above the other. Assuming it to be a triple layer, which I think is very far below the mark, a true comparison between the Calcutta and the London populations would be shown thus: If the Calcutta population were housed in triple layers, the people occupying the same living space as they do now, there would be a density of nearly 127,000 per square mile against a density of 37,000 to the square mile in London. According to the Census Report, fully one-eighth of the population live in rooms shared with at least three persons, and one-half share a room with at least one other person. Only three per cent. have one or more rooms to themselves. Let me quote from the latest Census Report:—

"The minimum supply of air space allowed in barracks and common lodging-houses in England is 300 cubic feet per head, but special enquiries,

made by Mr Blackwood, in some typical congested areas in Calcutta, show that the space generally ranges from between 200 and 300 cubic feet. In some instances it is greater, but it is also often less, and in two exceptional cases it was only 109 and 129 cubic feet respectively. The local conditions in England differ greatly from those in India; and in this country, owing to the style of buildings and to the fact that the doors and windows are more often kept open, the same amount of air space is not necessary. But even so it is clear that in areas such as those referred to the people are terribly overcrowded."

The conditions in Bombay have been carefully studied by Dr Bhalchandra Krishna and the Honourable Vithaldas Damodar Thakersey. Dr Bhalchandra Krishna has described them in a paper which he read before the Bombay Sanitary Association in 1904. The figures he gives are sufficiently startling. Out of every 10,000 residents in Bombay, as many as 2,492 live in rooms, each occupied by six to nine persons; 1,174 in rooms occupied by ten to nineteen persons, and 288 in rooms occupied by twenty persons and more. According to the same authority, the decade ending in 1899 saw a decreasing birth-rate, reduced to 18·86 per mille. and an increasing death-rate raised as high as 43·85 per mille. His words are not too strong when he says: "In such houses—the breeders of germs and bacilli, the centres of disease and poverty, vice and crime —have people of all kinds — the diseased, the dissolute, the drunken, the improvident — been

indiscriminately herded and tightly packed in vast hordes to dwell in close association with each other."

This overcrowding leads to many evils, moral and physical. It is an appreciable factor in the terrible infant mortality in towns, though by no means its only cause. It has provided a most favourable set of conditions for the plague, which, since its outbreak (or discovery) in Bombay in 1896, has gone on increasing and spreading, until it has now almost penetrated all the provinces of India. In the year ending on the 30th September 1905, it claimed a million and a quarter of victims. As far as we can judge at present, plague appears to have come to stay. While its etiology baffles the scientific investigator, its presence has afforded a strong argument to the sanitary reformer in favour of a forward policy, and after many misunderstandings has in some measure opened the eyes of the people. Bombay the Beautiful has its City Improvement Trust, a body created and controlled by the Government, and independent of the Municipal Corporation. The Trust has cleared out large insanitary areas, and made an attempt to encourage the spread of the population in the suburbs. It has also in hand a scheme for model dwellings for the mill operatives, but the difficulty in giving it a large scope is that to cover the bare interest on the capital sunk, it would be necessary to demand a rent almost prohibitive to the mill

hand. Nor have its building operations been invariably attended with success. One of the newest buildings erected by the Trust collapsed almost as soon as it was completed, involving the loss of some human lives. In Calcutta, a big scheme of Improvement is also under contemplation, though on somewhat different lines. As the project stands now, a sum of five millions and a half is to be spent on improvements. Congested districts are to be relieved, and open spaces provided. The expenses are to be met by loans, which are to be paid off in sixty years. Meanwhile special taxation to the amount of £70,000 a year will probably be necessary. But the question of cheap means of communication for workmen, which is bound up with the question of improved housing for the people at a distance from their work, has not, as far as I am aware, been much advanced either in Bombay or Calcutta. In the United Provinces large grants have been made by the Government to Municipalities, towns, and rural areas to carry out simple measures of sanitation; and I have no doubt similar steps have been taken in other provinces. Thus plague has undoubtedly stimulated sanitary activity in the authorities. But no success can be achieved or maintained until Indian publicists take up these questions in a practical spirit and infuse into the people themselves a strong impulse towards co-operative effort.

The intellectual status of the people can be

gauged from the sort of reading in which they indulge. But here again we find a discouraging picture. Scarcely one man in ten can read or write, and there is scarcely one woman in 144 who can do so. As to those who can read or write with facility, the numbers are far smaller, and in fact may be said to be confined to the following classes: (1) The men of the old learning; (2) The clerks and officials of Government or railway offices, or mercantile houses; (3) The lawyers. As to the men of the old learning, they live in the past. Their dreams are centred in those nooks and corners of history to which the light of modernity has never penetrated. Their ideals have never adjusted themselves to the demands of modern life. They have not been steeled to resist temptations and vices that have risen from the new conditions of modern India. From them, therefore, no progress can be expected. From them no writings can ever emanate which will carry the seeds of advancement to a higher life in this modern world. Though worthy of all respect, they cannot be trusted as leaders or teachers in the bustle of a life which is entirely alien to the life in which they live and move and have their being. As to the second class—the clerks—the conditions of modern India are such that they tend to set a premium on a soapy, supple sycophancy (as Mrs Brookfield would say), that thinks more of the advantage of the moment than of an artistic

ideal or of an elevated purpose in life. The ordinary clerk after a day of sedentary work has neither the time nor the inclination nor the opportunities to read any works of the imagination, or any biographies or stories, which would lay before him the ideals of strong character or fruitful endeavour. The third class—the lawyers —have never been famed in any age or country for those tender flowers of human sympathy which bring sunshine into the secluded vale of human life. They stand for strength, accuracy, smartness, business prompitude, and stern unbending justice, but not for poetry, or the softer humanities. There remains a fourth class—the student class—from which much might be hoped for, only in proportion to the extent to which they do not, when they grow up, merge, pure and simple, into the three classes abovementioned.

We have seen that city life in India is the adjustment of old habits to new forces, the putting of new wine into old bottles. There are decaying cities like Lucknow and growing cities like Cawnpore; old cities like Delhi and new cities like Calcutta; beautiful cities like Bombay and sombre cities like Allahabad. In none of them yet has the city life, or city government, come into line with the ideals and aspirations of the people. Their social life is wanting in unity. The civic virtues are yet dormant; civic enterprise yet lacks that strong moral incentive, which

makes the needs of the many the opportunity for the devotion of the few. Civic renown is not yet the coveted laurel for which men live and die. But surely the time must come when the energies of the citizens will be crystallised into all the civic and social virtues which go towards the building up of a modern State, and make it a worthy product of evolution from the ancient city state of the Greeks, or the still more ancient village of the Aryans.

II

VILLAGE LIFE

"So, with good life
And observation strange, my meaner ministers
Their several kinds have done."

—SHAKESPEARE, *Tempest*, iii. 3.

"Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

—WORDSWORTH.

VILLAGE LIFE

In order to obtain an idea of village life, let us take a look round at a typical village. The one we shall choose is situated in the district of Saháranpur. This is the westernmost district of the United Provinces, and lies on the border of the Punjab province.

The Village is generally taken to include the village habitations and the area of agricultural land attached to the village site. In our village there are about 600 acres of land. The soil is not uniform throughout, some being light loam, and some sandy; some is covered with light brushwood, and is so poor in quality that it would not pay to cultivate it. This is usually reserved for grazing. The meadows and pastures of England, covered with daisies and buttercups, and concealing within the folds of lazy streams the yellow gleam of the marsh marigold or the snowy fragrance of the meadow-sweet, are unknown in India. The stretches of black cotton soil, beloved of the ryot who grows cotton or grain, but a terror to the horse and its rider, are a feature of the

landscape south of the Jamna, but are scarcely found in the tract we are examining.

There are two small streams, which empty into a small river hard by. There are four ponds in the whole area: three are situated in the outlying land, and are used principally for irrigation purposes during those short intervals in the rainy season when the rain holds off, and the crops would suffer without water. During a famine, when there is no rain at all, these ponds would be empty and useless; they are not fed by any springs, but depend on the rainfall for their water-supply. During short intervals of drought, however, the agriculturists make little channels out of them, and lift the water on to the fields on a higher level. The apparatus used is of the simplest description. Some matting is so manipulated that two or three thicknesses combined are able to hold quantities of water for the few seconds it takes to lift them up one or two feet. These are held by means of ropes, one on each side, by two men, who, with a swinging motion downwards, take the water as into a scoop, and then with a swinging motion upwards discharge it into a channel a little higher than the level of the pond. If the fields to be irrigated are five or six feet above the water level, this simple arrangement is repeated at short intervals three or four times, and is then quite sufficient for irrigating them on a small scale. In order to prevent any disputes about

the times at which different agriculturists may want to irrigate their fields, a fixed rotation is agreed upon, and is well understood by the parties concerned. I am speaking now of a village that is not irrigated from a canal, or of portions of a village area to which canal water cannot be brought up.

Besides these ponds in the outlying area, there is a pond quite close to the village, which we may call the village pond, and to which the cattle are usually taken to be watered. The watering operation is usually performed at the close of the day, when "the lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea." The cattle then come home from their pasture grounds, raising clouds of dust on the way to such an extent that evening time is known in village phraseology as "dust time." Before the animals are brought into the byres, they drink their fill at the village pond, and wait for the stragglers of the herd, which may, through accident or inexperience, have been left behind. After they have been watered they are taken to little sheds in the village, or sometimes left in fallow fields. They are frequently accommodated in the houses themselves, where men and cattle congregate and sleep in the most amicable and primitive manner. In the hot weather the cattle are often left in the open air, as it is both healthy and pleasant for them. The shade of a tree is all that is necessary to

protect them from the heavy dews of a May night, when sometimes whole herds are left in the village streets. Any one walking through the village at night would have to make his way through labyrinths of oxen, cows, buffaloes, calves, ponies, and sometimes the heavy village carts with tireless wooden wheels.

Before entering the village site let us examine the fields. It is the month of March, and the fields are ripe with waving corn. The crops consist mostly of wheat, barley, oil-seeds, and potatoes, the fields being all unenclosed. The place of hedges is taken by small earthen ridges that serve to mark off one field from another. Each field consists on a average of an area scarcely larger than the fifth of an acre, and in some places often smaller. The rice beds are sometimes fifteen to an acre, but rice is an autumn crop. The roads are few and far between. Indeed, so great is the pressure on the soil that the agriculturists prefer to drive their corn-laden carts through their neighbours' fields which happen to lie fallow for the time being. There are a few foot-paths: even they follow the lines of the mud ridges which serve as the boundaries of the fields. If you could take a bird's-eye view of the whole of the cultivated area, you would find little patches of square or rectangular fields, some with crops, some lying fallow, and others ploughed and levelled for the sugar-cane crop of the next season.

It will be noticed that there are very few trees in the village. Those which do exist cluster together in well-defined groves. The largest tree area is that within or surrounding the village site. Among the fields here and there are two or three groves of mango trees. There are isolated trees of the kind that yield timber, such as the tún, the shísham, or the ním. The mango tree itself yields timber, but it is principally grown for the sake of its fruit, and on that account is very valuable. Usually, if there is an isolated tree, its shade is detrimental to the crops in the immediate vicinity, and therefore agriculturists always try to plant clumps or clusters in those parts of the village which are not very fertile for ordinary crops. The shade trees, such as the far-famed banyan or the pípal, are generally in or around the village site. They often mark the shrine of a tribal or a local god, and sometimes harbour snakes in their hollow trunks. As the snake, however, is considered sacred, and is sometimes looked upon as the guardian genius of the village, the villagers entertain no fear on that account. They sometimes feed them with milk, and therefore the snakes themselves rarely molest the human beings around them. In the branches of these spreading trees there is a large quantity of bird life. Pigeons, doves, mainas, green pigeons, sparrows, crows, and owls find a habitation there; while the pretty striped squirrel that skips with such wonderful agility from branch to branch,

and playfully descends to the ground to snatch, it may be, a piece of bread from a village urchin, serves to diversify and render lively the ordinarily sober and lazy animal life around.

Herds of antelope—the famous black buck of India—roam wild from village to village. They are so tame to the villager that they will allow him to approach within ten yards of them; but with sportsmen they enter into the spirit of sport, and "play the game." Lucky would be the sportsman who can get within rifle-shot of three fine heads of a morning. In spite of their long, straight, spiral horns, which attain a length of 18 to 28 inches, they can make their way through dense sugar-cane fields with ease. The villager looks upon them as harmless friends, except when they approach too near the village site, and begin to nibble at the young green shoots of valuable crops in the immediate vicinity of habitations. Here the land is freely and specially manured, and the crops are more valuable; but as soon as the villagers have driven off the black buck, there comes a troop of monkeys who begin to help themselves to the more advanced corn. These cannot be quite driven away. On the approach of men they climb up into the branches of the trees, but descend again immediately the danger is past.

We are now approaching the village habitations. They are situated on a slightly-raised piece of ground, because the village site has been there

for centuries, and the *débris* which has been accumulating has made quite a little mound. If we were only to dig into the ground we should find relics left by the ancestors of the present villagers in the form of pots, copper and silver coins, women's bangles, and pieces of earthenware vessels. But as our business at present is not that of archæologists, but of people interested in the life of the villagers, we will enter and pay a visit to some of their representative men.

Who is this man in a blue coat and red turban, carrying a long bamboo stick with brass knobs at both ends? The bamboo is about seven feet long, and its brass ends are sufficiently massive to account for a couple of enemies in a close hand-to-hand fight. Its owner carries his head high, and seems to look upon his stick as an emblem of divinity. He is merely the village watchman—called in the vernacular the *Chaukidár*—whose pay does not exceed six or seven shillings per month, besides such customary doles of grain as he may get at harvest. But he stands to the villagers as the representative of a strong central government. He is armed with the authority of the law to arrest offenders in certain classes of offences. As he is not a lawyer, he sometimes even arrests for offences in respect of which he has no legal power; but, as there are no lawyers in the village, his action is scarcely likely to be disputed locally, and if he treats his fellow-villagers with no more than the amount of severity which is necessary

to keep up his "dignity," no one would ever venture to criticise his actions. If he adds to his accomplishments the gift of a rough and ready wit which is not too far above the villagers, and yet impresses them—say the wit of a Dogberry or a Verges—he is looked up to with the respect which an official hierarchy would pay to a governor. The terror he inspires has been well described by an Anglo-Indian poet in the following lines:—

> "The wisdom crammed in a long Report,
> Or a neatly writ G.R.,[1]
> Is less than a lie in a Sudder Court,
> Or the fear of the Chaukidár."

He not only performs the duties of a village police officer, but is also the registrar of births and deaths. He is quite illiterate, but he keeps a book which is given him by Government, in which are entered any births or deaths that occur in the village. He gets the entries made by others, such as the village accountant or the schoolmaster. This is not a disadvantage from his point of view. When the books are checked, if they are found correct and up to date, the credit is of course his, for being a smart chaukidár. But if any errors or omissions are found, he can say, nothing daunted: "Oh! it's that fellow X. Y. I thought he was accurate in his writing, but I shall have to speak to him. How could I judge of his merits, I, a poor illiterate chaukidár?"

[1] Government Resolution.

When he goes to the police station the head constable at the station copies out the entries into a proper register; but the whole basis of executive administration in India is the humble chaukidár. He generally belongs to the lower classes, sometimes to the classes which have been professional thieves or criminals. The high caste men object to duties which might bring them into contact with the criminal classes. A Brahman would be seriously put out if he were a chaukidár and had to arrest a criminal sweeper. Besides, the principle "Set a thief to catch a thief" applies to the village chaukidár just as much as to the instruments of which Scotland Yard occasionally makes use here in tracing important crimes.

With all his status and dignity he is sometimes a smart man, too, or can be if he likes. A magistrate once had a case of some difficulty. The evidence for the prosecution and the defence was fairly evenly balanced. It was asserted on behalf of the prisoner that it was impossible for him to have been concerned in the crime and arrested by the chaukidár in the manner in which the chaukidár stated he had arrested him, because the prisoner was a strong man, fleet of foot, whereas the chaukidár seemed to be a heavy, slow sort of man. On this the chaukidár put up his stick in court, like a schoolboy putting up his hand, who wishes to say something to the teacher. When the magistrate turned to him he said: "Your worship, try the relative powers of

speed of myself and the prisoner, and you will see for yourself whether I cannot catch him." The idea struck the magistrate as irresistibly funny, and he adjourned the court to the village green, where he set the prisoner free and directed the chaukidár to run and arrest him. The chaukidár was as good as his word, for he caught the man in two furlongs. He therefore not only received the magistrate's thanks for solving a difficult question, but obtained a reward of two months' pay. The chaukidár wore his dignity to impress the people—he now showed his smartness to impress the magistrate!

The next man we shall interview will be the village accountant. He is in some respects a representative of the Government; but he is armed with no power of the law, and therefore is looked upon as less of a dignitary than the chaukidár. He is an educated man, and in dealing with large and intricate sums is quite as expert as a banker's clerk. The Government's chief source of revenue is the land-tax, which is assessed, in the ledgers at headquarters, on units, called mahál, which roughly corresponded, when the arrangements were made, to single villages; but as the landlords in a village are numerous, the shares being subdivided to a thousandth or two-thousandth part of a rupee unit, the collection of the Government revenue from individual landlords would be a matter of extreme difficulty were it not for the village accountant.

But this is only one side of his work. His records not only comprise the data upon which the Government revenue is apportioned, but also the intricate rights of the villagers among one another. For example, the landlords who do not cultivate the land themselves, but let it out to tenants, would be hard put to it to calculate the rent due to them were it not for the village accountant. The tenantry among themselves would never know how much land precisely they held, and what rent would be due to the landlords, were it not for the village accountant. Again, the landlords themselves are a petty class, and cultivate some fields as owners and others as tenants to other landlords, equally petty with themselves. The result is that the same men would be from one point of view the landlords, and from another the tenants. Sometimes they get quite mixed up as to which land they hold and in what capacity, and what rent they should pay and to whom. And it is here that the village accountant comes in to solve the difficulties.

Again, the village, as a whole, has certain common expenses. In the days when the village was a living organism, with the directing force within itself, the common expenses were numerous. If its balance-sheet was ever committed to paper in those days, and could now be unearthed, it would doubtless be found to be rankly socialistic. In the modern village, with its disintegrated life, its absentee "co-sharers" and its banker land-

lords, to whom landed property is an investment and nothing else, the common expenses tend to be more and more restricted. Whenever disputes are taken into Court about the calculation or division of profits, all items of "Village Expenses" are usually resisted, except the amounts actually assessed by Government as its own revenue. But tradition dies hard in an Indian village, as indeed in all villages. The local villagers, therefore, try their utmost, when the record of customs is being framed, to get clauses inserted about the expenses of entertaining and the like, in which absentees take no interest. The entertainments, whose expenses are shared by the village as a whole, may be charitable, or politic, or they may be amusements, pure and simple. In the absence of a Poor Law, the old village communities used to make it a point of honour to entertain strangers — the needy and afflicted who came within their gates. On this principle, Brahmans and beggars are still fed, and are charged to the common funds. Then the petty Government officials who come to the village have to be made much of and put at their ease, as their reports, favourable or unfavourable, would influence the material destinies of the village. It is politic to humour them, but the humouring is not always of a nature to be beyond the law of corruption. And here the accountant's tact and knowledge of the world come in. Sums spent on many a well-fed

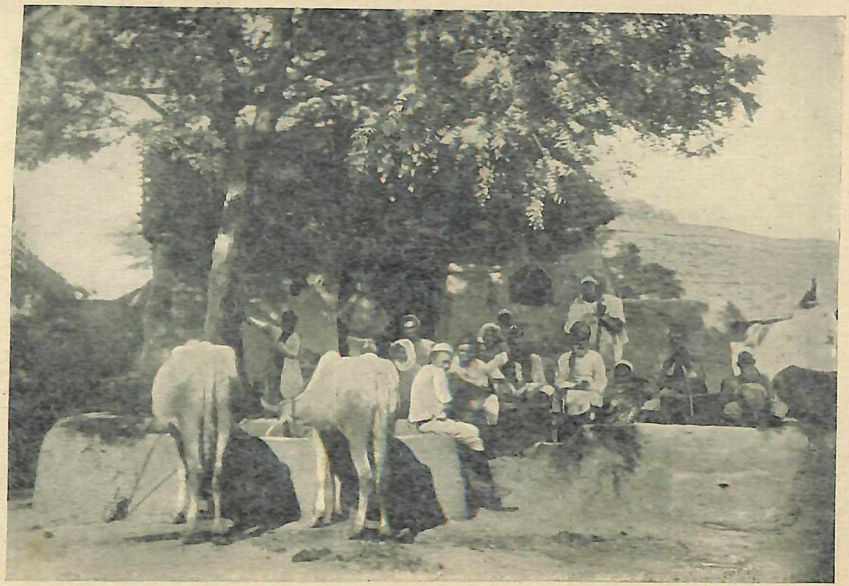
Kanungo have gone down in the accounts as the "feeding of Brahmans." But the most curious form of village expenses occurs where gipsies and acrobats are entertained for amusement, or wandering bards in Rajput villages for the maintenance and occasional "touching-up" of pedigrees. Such charges can only be recognised in courts of law, if they depend upon customs expressly recorded in the village papers, whose custodian, the village accountant, has therefore a fruitful field for the exercise of his ingenuity in favour of one party or another. All such expenses are pooled together on one side, and the income from the rent-roll, market-dues, fisheries, or other rights (if any) is also pooled together on the other side of the account. A balance of profit and loss is then struck by the accountant, who has to divide it into minute fractional shares corresponding to the conflicting rights and interests of the different co-sharers.

The village accountant, therefore, is not a purely Government official, nor is his work entirely for the benefit of Government. He is as much the representative of the landed classes as of the Government. Indeed, as he is usually the only literate man in the village (every village having a village accountant either resident or visiting it at short intervals, while of the schoolmasters there is scarcely one to every fifteen[1]

[1] See the last *Quinquennial Review of Education*: the statement refers to the United Provinces.

villages), his assistance is of the greatest value to the people, who have to write or receive letters from their friends or relatives abroad (which in village parlance means outside the village), or to those who have documents to execute, or cases to be filed in court. To all such the village accountant is indispensable. He knows his own value, for, besides the pay of about 15s. a month (or less) which he receives, he generally gets a large number of gifts from the people whom he has served. He sometimes manages to extract still larger sums in ways that will not bear the strictest investigation, so that his true income would be about five or six times that which is shown nominally as his pay. He may belong to any of the castes, but he is usually a Brahman or a Kayasth, which is the writer caste throughout Upper India.

Let us now make the acquaintance of the Lambardár. His name would evoke a smile from those who knew its meaning. It is made up of two words—*Lambar*, the English "number," and *dár*, which is the Persian equivalent of "holder" or "possessor." Our Lambardár is therefore a man who possesses a number. Formerly, when the revenue system was remodelled by the British Government, they appointed for each village a man who was to be responsible for the whole of the land-tax, and who was allowed to collect the different shares from the hundreds of co-sharers in his



From a Photo.] [*By* Mr S. Athim.

LAMBARDÁR'S HOUSE.

"The Lambardár's house has some outside apartments which serve as a meeting-place for the village public"—p. 57.

To face p. 57.]

own way. Each of such men, who might from another point of view be called village headmen, was given a number in the Government registers; hence the funny-sounding name of Lambardár. He represents the more comfortable classes in the village, and, of course, belongs to the land-owning class. He is generally the most considerable land-owner, which, however, may mean nothing more than that he owns five or ten acres. He sometimes has a house built of masonry and covered with lime-wash, perhaps the only house of that character in the village. The rest of the houses are mere mud-huts, more or less compactly built together. The Lambardár's house, however, has some outside apartments, which serve as a meeting-place for the village public. If the village is large enough to have a school, but not large enough for a Government building for a school, the boys collect in the Lambardár's public apartments. They are also the place for the receipt of customs. When the time for collecting the land-tax comes round, the village accountant sits on one side with his volume of accounts and pen and ink; the Lambardár sits on the other side; and his messengers, who are usually his agricultural tenants, run from place to place to bring up the defaulters to plank down their money so that the Lambardár may pay the Government demand in due season. If the Lambardár is a friend of the poor and a protector of the needy and the

fatherless, as he sometimes is, his public apartments are also besieged with suppliants in various forms, who come to pour their tales of woe into his sympathetic ears. Parish gossips are also free to come and go whenever they like and exchange the news of an evening. The Lambardár generally keeps half a dozen smoking pipes and hukkas in order that his guests might smoke while the conversation is flagging, and pretend the indifference associated with smoking when the conversation is at its most interesting stage. Any fakírs, or religious ascetics, passing through the village, are also sure of finding a ready hospitality in the Lambardár's public apartments.

Besides these he has his private house. Let us, with his permission, enter it, as it in a measure represents the houses of the whole village, although on a grander scale than the average. The general plan is that of a courtyard, surrounded by buildings on all the four sides. The front side is that in which the public apartments are; the three other sides contain the private apartments. The courtyard is quite open to the rays of the sun by day, and of the moon or stars by night; and these luminaries truly represent to the simple villagers as much actuality as any of the things they see in their daily life. Round the courtyard on three sides are grouped together a number of what might be called inner-rooms. Some of them are used as store-rooms, some of them as stables for the cattle, and occasionally for the

bullock cart in which the Lambardár drives when he goes long distances. He rarely indulges in the luxury of a pony for himself, perhaps because he is fat and comfortable, but he keeps an undersized pony for mounting the village accountant if he happens to go to the headquarters of the district, or for the entertainment of guests of distinction, whom it might be his good fortune to receive in the village. These apartments are not closed rooms like those in an English house. Sometimes they are merely a long shed with a roof and no doors, the apartments communicating with one another. The side nearest the door, but facing the courtyard (though contiguous to the public apartments, which look on to the street), is occupied by apartments for the male members of the Lambardár's family. Here they sit and sometimes smoke; here they often sleep at night.

The side opposite to what we may call the public side is closed with doors, and shut in in every direction by walls. That is the side where the female apartments are. Perhaps they form a separate quadrangle. It must not be supposed that the women are all entirely shut in, as is the custom in towns. The village women go out into the streets of the village with as much liberty as they choose to exercise; but their lives naturally require a little more privacy than the lives of the men, who almost entirely live in public. The inner apartments are also those in which the Lambardár's valuables are stored. Here his

clothes are kept, and, in fact, everything is preserved which requires doors to protect it, and cannot be put into the open apartments where any one can come and go freely. The furniture is of the simplest description. There are any number of beds of the kind described in speaking of town life, which are used for sitting and sleeping on, for putting clothes or babies on; in fact, for all purposes for which a cot, a table, a chair, a desk, a sofa, or a shelf would ordinarily be used in this country. Besides these there are some floor-cloths, and the usual cooking pots, the brass drinking pots, and a large number of earthen vessels; only everything is on a more liberal scale in the village than in the town. In villages there is not the same competition as in towns. There is not the feeling of hungry generations treading you down. There is peace and quiet. There is comfort and confidence, and not a commercial spirit of calculation. Many of the things are made locally. The Lambardár pays nothing in cash for his earthenware pots, but he keeps the potter in his pay, and the potter makes what is necessary for him. In fact, this relation may be said to hold as regards the whole village collectively in its dealings with the artisans.

The grain is stored in pits dug in the courtyard, which are covered up after they are full. The grain is taken out of each pit as required, and if the Lambardár happens to be the trustee for the co-sharers of the village, he would naturally have

a large number of these pits. Some of them contain as many as ten or fifteen tons of grain, and the whole supply would often be sufficient for several years—that is to say, if the Lambardár and the whole village are not entirely in debt, as often happens. The only cash which the Lambardár has is generally kept for the purposes of paying the tax or of paying his debts. Otherwise his wealth consists in the cattle, the grain, or the ornaments which his wife and children wear. He has no bankers to keep his accounts or take charge of his savings. Any savings he may make he invests in ornaments of silver or gold. It is in the last resort that these ornaments would be sold, and that distressing calamity happens in famine years.

Let us now turn to the village Banya—a man who is often the subject of fierce diatribes, and described as a blood-sucker and a tyrant. He is the village financier and shopkeeper. His shop is generally a small mud-built shed, containing forty or fifty baskets, all put in tiers and rows, containing grains of the various kinds which are grown in the village; salt, pepper, and other spices; and the usual village groceries. He acts as the intermediary through whom the Lambardár sells his grain for town markets whenever the Lambardár wishes to raise money on gathered crops. He also advances seed to the poorer agriculturists. These live from hand to mouth, and they have not the wherewithal to wait for

the harvest, but must be fed, while the crops are growing, by the village Banya. It is true the Banya makes a good thing out of it, charging interest as high as cent. per cent.; but the people to whom he lends money are so abjectly poor that he often has not only to forego the repayment of his loan for the time being, but even to feed his debtors into the bargain, in order to keep alive the hope of being paid at some future time. The Banya is scarcely literate in the sense in which the village accountant is literate; but, of course, in the matter of accounts, he is a perfect prodigy. If you want to get an object lesson in mental arithmetic, go to the Banya. He keeps elaborate books, showing what he owes to the different people, and what they owe to him. He sometimes grows rich, and passes into the land-owning classes. Then he may give up his shop, and, if he is appointed Lambardár, sets up as a village magnate himself; but there is this difference between the Banya land-owner and the land-holder of the agricultural classes—that the Banya, being a sharp man of business, knows how and where to invest his capital, and if he is at all an intelligent man, he never starves the land of capital. As capitalist and financier his assistance in the smooth running of the wheels of agricultural economy is most valuable, and if he is occasionally prone to cheat, it is not that he is worse than his fellow-villagers, but that he has more opportunities, and makes full use of them.

It is the fashion nowadays to denounce the Banya, but the denunciation is a little overdone. In the absence of co-operative or village banks, the Banya, as a money-lender, is an absolute economic necessity, apart from his position as shopkeeper and trader. He finances the crops, and there is no other agency to do so on a large scale. Grain for foreign export is often financed by the large export houses in the presidency towns, but the internal trade cannot yet spare the Banya. The experiment of people's banks is being tried on a small scale, but it can only be successful when the ideas underlying the movement have taken firm hold of the people's minds. The Government Takávi system has not been hitherto as popular with the villagers as could have been wished, because of certain drawbacks, which have been recently considered by the Government of India. Government has issued orders for revising the system and working it efficiently, but some defects are inherent in the system, and in any case Government cannot possibly provide the vast amount of capital that would be required to finance the agriculture of the whole country.

The village artisans comprise the blacksmith, the carpenter, the goldsmith, the potter, the weaver, the washerman, and the sweeper. The oilman has almost been squeezed out of existence by the cheap and nasty mineral oil known as Kerosine, which comes from Baku,

Burma, or America. The artisans are all of separate castes, and the members of each caste are as proud of their rank and calling as if they practised some exclusive art. In many cases they are not paid for their work in hard cash: they get some land rent free for their support, which the women and children cultivate, and they always get their customary dues at harvest time. The blacksmith makes the hoes, the ploughshares, the iron utensils which may be necessary in cooking, and other things of that kind, and supplies them to the people who want them, without any money or only nominal payments passing immediately between them. The potter supplies the pots and the sweeper performs his duties in the same way, being recompensed by gifts from the better class of persons, and mutual services from their fellow-artisans, such as the carpenter, the blacksmith, and the weaver.

No account of village life would be complete without a description of the Fakír. He lives in a little hut or cave (if there is a cave) away from the village, so as to be free, and far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife. What he does there nobody knows. He is a mysterious being, who appears with only a loin cloth round his waist, apparently quite indifferent to the praise or blame of the world. He rarely enters into conversation about the ordinary affairs of mankind, and the gifts he receives in charity are those which his disciples and admirers beg

for the honour of presenting to him, rather than doles extracted by a beggar from an unwillingly charitable public. The people look upon him with superstitious veneration, not because they know there is anything in his life, but because in person and habit he represents that ascetic ideal which renounces the world and lives an inner life of self-mortification. He carries a rosary of beads, and he often goes along the streets shouting "Rám, Rám," if he is a follower of that particular incarnation of God as worshipped by the Hindus. He has no religious ideals in the sense of a striving for the elevation of other men's lives; but he is possessed with the idea which finds a mere illusion in the whole world and in all humanity, and the only reality in the name of Rám. This simple monomania is revered by the people in proportion as they cannot translate it into their own lives. Though apparently indifferent to all that passes around him, the Fakír is a great observer of men and manners, and is often able to reconcile disputes and extricate people from difficult situations on account of his apparently isolated position. Sometimes he takes a vow of religious silence for seven years, and keeps it. Sometimes he undertakes to walk to all the sacred shrines of India, which may include a journey from Badrináth, near the glacier valleys of the Himalayas, to the sea-washed shores of Western Dwarka, or the torrid heat of Rameshwaram in

the extreme south. He would thus cover a distance of thousands of miles on foot, with nothing but his rosary with him, not even the traditional staff of the weary wanderer. His life is a mystery to outsiders. His survival in the twentieth century is to superficial observers of Indian life a greater mystery still. The fact is that he represents a strain of that morbid love of self-mortification and self-abasement which, when healthy and turned into a useful sphere, gives us the greatest saints and heroes of history. If there is any one class in India more than another to which the famous lines of Matthew Arnold are peculiarly appropriate, it is to that rare individual, the true Fakír (as distinguished from the false Fakírs who figure in jugglery tales and the annals of crime):—

> "The East bowed low before the blast,
> In silent deep disdain;
> She let the Legions thunder past,
> Then plunged in thought again."

As the social life of the men centres round the Lambardár's reception-room, so the social life of the women centres round the village well, to which they go to draw water. The graceful figure of the village maiden, with two or three pots of different sizes—the smallest on the top—poised on her head, going to the river to fetch water, has been so familiarised in Daniell's pictures that it is scarcely necessary to describe it in words, but the social chatter which takes

place at the well claims a little of our attention. In the first place, it must be realised that the water-supply of a village which is some distance from a stream or river (a description that would apply to a vast number of villages) is not derived from any water-works, but from deep holes dug in the ground to a depth of 15 to 30 feet, according to the spring level. The vertical hole thus made in the soil is lined with masonry. When the masonry tube is well sunk in, a ceremony is performed which is analogous to that of the going of a bride to the husband's house. The well is supposed to be a living being, and she is married to the god of the locality. No one is allowed to drink water out of it until the installation has taken place in due form. It is attended with some picturesque ceremonies, and forms quite an event in village history.

The exterior of the well is built up in the form of a round platform with an opening into the well in the centre. On this platform are fixed two or three poles, or a framework with a pulley and ropes, to help people to draw water. The mouth of the well is sometimes covered with a wooden grating to prevent accidents, as men and women have been known to lose their balance and fall into the water. The favourite mode of suicide, by the way — when an Indian woman finds herself unhappy in her married life on account of differences, not with her husband, but with her mother-in-law — is by jumping down a well.

The usual gossip of the women, morning and evening, is around the village well. It is the ladies' club, as exclusive as the aristocratic clubs of London. The higher castes have wells of their own, to which no lower class people are allowed to go to draw water. The conversation which usually takes place among the elder women when they are present is about the enormities or failings of the younger women who are their daughters-in-law. If they are absent or when they are gone, then comes the turn of the young wives to compare notes about their respective mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, not often to the advantage of these relatives of the husband. Thus you will see the village well looms very large in the social history of the Indian women; but it would require a whole volume to enlarge upon the romance of the well. It will be remembered that even so in England, in the age of chivalry and romance, a great many legends gathered round wells. These still linger round the holy wells in Cornwall and Ireland. Southey wrote a famous ballad on the well of St Keyne, and the scene of one of Sir Walter Scott's novels is laid in the midst of the motley society that come to "take the cure" at St Ronan's well.

The men also come to the well, but the morning and evening hours are sacred to the women. These hours are usually avoided by the men out of respect to the fair sex. The most

After a Photo.] [*By* Mr S. Athim.

THE VILLAGE WELL.

"The village well looms very large in the social history of Indian women"—p. 68.

To face p. 68.]

perfect decorum and even privacy is observed in these matters in the village. Though the village women go about freely, there is never any molestation of them, and the men, in their own rough and ready way, show a chivalrous spirit that is not noticed by those who only look at life from a superficial point of view. All crimes, social or legal, against women in a village, are committed by strangers, but they are not many. Of course, the lot of the Indian woman requires improvement in many ways; but so does that of the Indian man, and, taking them altogether, we ought to be very cautious in judging either sex. Their lives are as happy as possible under the circumstances. The social evils of the joint family system are responsible for much friction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, and for many attempted suicides on the part of the latter; but that is a large question, and need not detain us here.

It may be asked: If the men do not come to the well to draw water, and if they have their own meeting-places in the village, why should they come to the well at all? The answer is that the water which the women draw is mostly for drinking and cooking purposes. The bathing is all done at the well. Ablutions form a great feature in Oriental life. Every Hindu of the better classes is supposed to bathe before every meal, and he does not bathe at home, but comes to the well, divests himself of all his clothes

except his loin cloth, and pours water over his head and shoulders. This is all done quite publicly in the open air. It is generally done on the platform round the mouth of the well, and sometimes the dirty water finds its way in. One of the problems of public sanitation in the administration of the villages is to make the platforms in such a way that the dirty water cannot possibly find its way in, but must all flow out. The best way is to have separate bathing platforms round about the well. But, even so, the water that flows out is apt to stagnate round the well, percolating through the soil, and eventually affecting the purity of the water in the well. There is no systematic drainage of the village streets, and all sanitary reforms in the villages have first to deal with this particular evil.

Speaking of sanitation, I must utter a word of protest against the idea which prevails that the Indian crowd is dirty in its habits. The other day, when it was announced that as a protest against the partition of Bengal, large crowds of Bengalis bathed in the River Hughli, it was said to me by a facetious English friend: "A very good thing, too, if it made them wash for once in their lives." This is based on a misapprehension. You cannot apply the opprobrious term of the "great unwashed" to the Indian proletariat. On the contrary, bathing is almost overdone. In person, the Indian is as

clean as any one in the world. His immediate surroundings, also, he tries to keep as clean as possible. But ideas of co-operative sanitation—that is to say, sanitation as applied in concert to a large mass of people or to a large area, such as a village or a town—are not sufficiently understood. Cleanliness becomes so much a matter of religion and ceremonial, that it is apt to be forgotten that there are other sanitary demands in life than merely keeping the person and the house clean. There is much in the proverbial philosophy of the people, which urges the protection of wells from pollution, but the methods recommended are those of excluding certain kinds of people, and not those of an earnest co-operation of all for the common good. Sanitation is one of the most useful departments of activity to which Government energy can be directed.

Village life in India is far more familiar to the thousands of Englishmen who go out to administer the country than town life. There is no mystery about it. Every one lives in the open; every one talks in the open; every one sleeps in the open. The only thing about which there is any mystery or any privacy is the eating of food, but even that is due more to ideas of cleanliness and of caste than anything else. The idea about the "mystery of the East," about there being huge cavernous depths of feelings and thoughts over which the English ideas merely

float like foam, is fostered by many admirable novels, but certainly does not grow on an intimate acquaintance with village life. Every civil official in the cold weather goes round camping through his district, and the opportunities he gets of intercourse with the villagers tends to produce a feeling of mutual sympathy and understanding, which is one of the most valuable features of Indian administration.

There are people who hate the mere sight of an Indian town, but take them to the simple life of the villagers, and the first glimpse will convert them. If they camp out in the orthodox Indian fashion, with a canvas tent merely to give them shelter when necessary, while passing their whole time as far as possible in the open air, they will get into touch with the whisperings of Nature, which are the first teachings of art and poetry. They will then get into sympathy with the homely villager, who uses his hut or house merely as a shelter, but not as a home, whose roof is, in fact, the vaulted blue above, and whose carpet is the spacious plains below. If they wander a little among the cattle or the wild animals, the children or the birds, they will see the intimate ties that exist between man and Nature in these mud-built villages, and perhaps understand, better than pages of the most beautiful poetry can explain, the reason why villagers object to a peacock being shot in the interests of sport, or to a diseased animal in his last stages being

given his quietus in the interests of that more subtle humanity which is beyond their grasp. If they think life under the circumstances is humdrum and wanting in the exhilaration which every aspiring life has a right to expect, let them lose their way by night and find it again by the kindly help of the shining stars above or the flickering lights of the camp fires, which, penetrating through a crisp and clear atmosphere, bring a homelier but no less beautiful message to the heart that understands. The simple habits of quiet, unostentatious hospitality in times of plenty, and of infinite patience in times of suffering or in a time of famine, the tender domestic affections among these people, the feeling that each person has his own place and mission in life, from the sweeper to the Lambardár, evoke a feeling of restful sympathy which is especially welcome to the emigrants from a life of hurry, of luxury, of clubs, of amusements, of bridge, and of general heartlessness, which seems to make up the sum of existence in more advanced countries. The description of the Chaldean shepherds in Wordsworth's *Excursion* applies with peculiar force to the Indian agriculturist:—

> "Chaldean shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
> Beneath the concave of unclouded skies,
> Spread like a sea in boundless solitude."

As about sixty-five per cent. of the whole Indian population live on agriculture, and a much

larger proportion live in the villages, it will be readily understood that village life forms a most important factor in the social economy of the country. The old-world spirit of aloofness which some people ascribe to the Indian village exists only in the imagination of those who generalise from imperfect knowledge. It is true that the home-loving ryot would agree with the lines :—

> "Blest is the man whose wish and care
> A few paternal acres bound;
> Content to breathe his native air
> In his own ground."

But that spirit does not prevent the easy and dignified reception of strangers. It, indeed, promotes the social code in accordance with which distinguished men from other villages are invited and welcomed, and a pleasant intercourse goes on between the different villages. In fact, if there is any social life in India, it is in the villages and not in the towns. Again, in villages which have retained their solidarity, public opinion is not only stronger than in towns, but is healthier and saner, as being built on the hard actualities of life. Unfortunately, it is too restricted in its scope; and having no organised and recognised means of public expression, it lacks the opportunity of being heard. The weakening of the authority of the Lambardár or headman is unfortunate. All measures for rehabilitating his position will be welcomed by those who have understood the many disintegrating factors that operate in village

life. The trend of recent land revenue legislation has been to improve his worldly position by a statutory recognition of his remuneration for the collection of land revenue. The permission to wear a sword, in exemption from the Arms Act, adds to the dignity of his status. All these appear to be little matters to outsiders, but they are most important for the well-ordered government of a village.

The structure of rural society has generally rested on authority, while towns of healthy growth have generally identified themselves with new ideas and a spirit of restless independence. A happy balance between these two tendencies is necessary for the well-being of society, and this balance is in danger of being upset by an invasion of disruptive ideas. It must not be supposed that Indian villages are impervious to modern tendencies, or that the siren voice of the towns will always call to them in vain. The question to which all who are interested in the welfare of the country have to address themselves is of a different nature. Will the twentieth century spirit completely destroy village institutions, or will they, under the stress of modern conditions, evolve themselves to some form different from its historic type, but not alien to the habits and ideals of the people?

Destruction is impossible. The village has stood many a shock in history from the most ancient times, and to-day, in spite of its con-

servatism, it shows itself as freely open to conviction on questions of material and moral advantages as can be expected from people who think slowly and act deliberately. Some years ago it was the fashion to look upon the simple methods of village agriculture as stupid. It was said that the plough simply made a scratch in the soil, and for scientific agriculture deeper ploughing would be necessary. But scientific experiments have proved what such men as Dr Voelcker have contended all along: that the methods pursued in the Indian village are the best, most economical, and most efficient under the conditions under which the Indian ryot has to work. The object in India is not so much to drain the soil of unnecessary moisture, as to retain such moisture as there is in the ground; and for this reason shallow ploughing is far more reasonable than deep ploughing, although, of course, local circumstances may qualify this proposition. On the other hand, the old sugar-cane press, which was universally used in the Indian villages, has practically been supplanted by the new iron press. This complete revolution has taken place within ten or fifteen years. The reason was that economically the new press was sound. It gave more juice; it worked more expeditiously; and, in the long run, the cost of the production of sugar was reduced by its use. There was absolutely no difficulty in the way of the "stupid Ryots" adopting it wholesale.

This shows that their supposed conservatism and opposition to change are myths as much as their supposed exclusiveness.

It was supposed at one time that the Indian village system was an archaic system, and that it showed in its primitive structure a stage of human development which the Indo-European nations had left far behind. This was pointed out as an argument that the Indian village had remained absolutely unchanged from the most distant antiquity. This was the idea under which Sir Henry Maine worked. But later researches by Baden-Powell have proved that this was a mistake. The Indian village is no more the survival of some absolutely archaic form than is the present day manor of English law the evidence of an unchanged archaism in English rural life. Its historical affinity with the German "Mark" is probably a myth, fostered by an imperfect knowledge of both systems. The fact is that there is a type of village that existed in India, even before the Aryan invasion. When the Aryans came, they adopted the agricultural economy of the country, making such changes as were necessary for their altered circumstances. Their tribal organisation in a conquered country was devoted to the cultivation of the martial spirit which had established them. Their intellectual energies were absorbed by poetry, philosophy, and speculation. Agriculture they left to the subject races. But it underwent a change with the change in the times. We can prove that village life in

the time of the brilliant Sanskrit writers who are called the nine gems of the Court of Ujjain, was very different from village life in later Hindu times. When the Muhammadans came on the scene there was further change or development in sympathy with the new political conditions established. With the establishment of the British Government further changes have taken place, and new forms and problems have arisen in village life which have led to further advances. We can trace the continuous growth of modern from ancient forms, and within the last few years there has been a complete remodelling of many of the old village customs and institutions, which have got stereotyped in the imagination of persons who have made the "unchanging East" their fetish. Only, these changes have taken place gradually, and have been in the direction of a continuous adaptation to new conditions.

Throughout the political history of India the central power never interfered—and even now it interferes little—with village life. And therefore there are not found in village history those striking revolutions in thoughts, methods, ideas, and institutions, which we meet with in the history of town life. But progress there undoubtedly has been. There can be no doubt that the village of 1800 is as obsolete now in India as the feudal system is in England. The fact that many of the older forms still influence village ideas, legal administration, and even legislation, shows nothing

more than the fact that traces of feudalism survive in the land law of England, and have constantly to be eliminated to bring the modern English village into touch with the larger life which pulsates through the nation. This process of elimination is going on in the Indian village too, consciously or unconsciously, and in different forms. Let us hope that the *pax Britannica*, while it has broken village solidarity, will open up ideas of unity and co-operation on an enlarged scale. Let us hope that the frank understanding between the people and the governing classes which undoubtedly exists in the villages, will, in the fulness of time, lead to a better understanding of the people as a whole, welded into a form of polity in which they will understand, influence, and elevate public life.

III

THE LEISURED CLASSES

"Studious he sate, with all his books around,
Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound—
Plunged for his sense, but found no bottom there,
Then writ, and floundered on in mere despair."

—POPE: *Duncid.*

"'Tis not enough to mount and ride,
No saddle, bridle, whip, nor spur;
To take the chance of time and tide,
And follow fame without demur.

I want some reason with my rhyme,
A fateful purpose when I ride;
I want to tame the steeds of Time,
To harness and command the tide.

I want a whip whose braided lash
Can echo like the crack of doom;
I want an iron mace to smash
The world and give the peoples room."

—JOHN DAVIDSON.

THE LEISURED CLASSES

WHO is the man of leisure? It is the man who is free to lay out his time as he likes. He may, like the King of Yvetôt, rise late and go to bed with the sun, and sleep too soundly to dream of glory. Or he may be subject to "that last infirmity of noble minds, to scorn delight and live laborious days." He may be a man always in a hurry, with his "social" distractions—fashionable calls, parties, receptions, cards, and dinners. Or he may be the steady, sober man of action—with concentrated purpose and unjaded energies—who never inveighs against Time because Time is his best friend. If only he has the freedom to act, can choose his own method, and bide his own opportunity, he may be counted as a man of leisure. Coming to a lower plane, he may be a man fulfilling the destinies of his class and following the dictates of the customary code around him. So long as his whole time is not given over to the pursuit of the elementary means of livelihood, he is a man of leisure.

All these are individual temperaments. But every organised community consists of certain

classes who have more leisure than others for the cultivation of these temperaments. The toiling masses have usually no leisure at all. If they have any, it is only in the more advanced communities. The highest aim of philosophic socialism is to secure a more equitable distribution of leisure rather than of wealth. But taking things as they are, it is upon the use made of their leisure by the leisured classes that the noblest impulses of a nation depend. It will therefore be useful to examine some of the features of the life of the leisured classes in India. The individuals comprising them are very few in number, but their influence on the social structure, whether for good or for evil, is incalculable.

The first class I am going to speak about is that of the territorial magnates, the ruling princes, the Rajas, Maharajas, and Nawabs. They form an aristocracy quite different from the aristocracy of any other country. Their patents of nobility have different sources, one from the other. Their castes, tribes, and social spheres are different. They are not all governed by the same customs, nor are they the products of the same conditions; and the history behind them is different in each case. But they are all united, in modern India, by the common bond of political sympathy. They are all staunch and loyal feudatories of the British Crown. The flag unites them; the empire that guarantees to them their territory and their titles, brings them into relations one with another. The

personality of the Sovereign furnishes them with that human element of loyalty which is the best of all political sentiments, better than a sense of security, or an expectation of favours to come.

The type varies from that of a petty chieftain whose rule is as of yesterday to that of the Rajput Rana of Udaipur, who claims descent from the Sun and has never bowed the knee to the conqueror in all the chequered history of mediæval India. The Rana belongs to the noblest of the Rajput clans, and in one sense may be considered the head of the whole of the Rajput confederacy. His territory is in the sandy deserts of Rajputana, but firmer than the rock which lies beneath that sand is the devotion of his kinsmen and his people. No softness will you find under the shadow of his royal umbrella. His people are hardy and rugged, but true as steel. If we may judge from their past history, and from the songs of the bards that delight them most, they will be ready, matchlock in hand, to face gunpowder and quick-firers for the honour of their clan. Warriors and chieftains are all animated with the most lively spirit of chivalry and daring, which does credit to their ruling House. Civil government in such conditions is mostly a matter of personal rule. The place of law is taken by loyalty and a corporate conscience. There is very little red tape. There are no social strata. The ruling prince himself is only the first among equals in his relations to the noblemen of his court. Each of these noblemen

again forms a social or feudal centre, in which he himself occupies a similar position to those immediately below him that his ruling prince occupies to those like himself and his class. The dignity of a prince is fully secured on all ceremonial occasions, but in private life every one has free access to the palace.

Noble birth, or, indeed, membership of the clan (for they hold to the American maxim "We are all noble") gives the title to a man to be heard, and he is freely heard in all the counsels of the State. As representing the British Government, the Resident or Political Agent finds his work the easiest among such people. His suggestions are given and accepted in the right spirit, and if there are occasional differences, as there must be, there is no difficulty in settling them in a sportsmanlike spirit of give-and-take in a personal interview, perhaps after a polo match or a review of Imperial Service troops.

As another type of the old-fashioned State, may be mentioned the small Muhammadan principality of Palanpur. The ruler bears the hereditary titles of "Diwan" and "Zubdat-ul-Mulk," both of which recall passages in the stirring history of the family. Their ancestor was an Afghan of the Lohani tribe, and distinguished himself in Behar in the reign of Humayun. Akbar bestowed the government of Lahore and the title of "Diwan"; Aurangzeb gave a large slice of territory in Gujerat, which

Portrait by] [SAIYID SHARFUDDIN.

ZUBDAT-UL-MULK, H.H. DIWAN SIR SHER MUHAMMAD KHAN, G.C.I.E.

"He knows his villages personally, as a shepherd knows his flock, and he knows his hills and forests as a sportsman knows his game"—p. 87.

To face p. 87.]

has since been somewhat restricted in the north in the vicissitudes of warfare with the Rajput clans. The majority of the population consists of Hindus, but the relations of the chief to his subjects are entirely patriarchal.

The present chief, Sir Sher Muhammad Khan, is a good type of the Muhammadan nobleman, and has ruled his little state for eight-and-twenty years. He knows his villages personally, as a shepherd knows his flock, and he knows his hills and forests as a sportsman knows his game. He is a man of wide reading in Persian and Urdu, and a poet himself. Though the family is strictly Moslem and the Saiyids are held in the highest esteem, the law of succession in the State is that of primogeniture. The heir has been trained in the Imperial Cadet Corps. The chief's time is spent in placid domesticity, or in the pursuits and pleasures of a country gentleman and a genial host, when famine or plague does not claim his attention for more sombre duties.

These are not the only types of the Native State, nor are these types even largely represented numerically. But they are the types that get hold of the imagination, and fasten on the memory for their old-world associations and romantic history. Such types merge by slow gradations into what we might call the intermediate stage, between the old world and the new. This stage is represented by a somewhat more complex state, with territory in which a certain amount of industrial

development has taken place. The interests of the people are not purely martial, but partly agricultural and partly also industrial. Where this is the case there are more forms and formalities at Court, but there is still an easy bearing, and the simple manners of a people free from the cautiousness of commercialism. They show the usual hospitality to strangers. Their rule of social life is theoretical equality among all members of the sept or clan. In a state like Bikanir, where the camel-hair industry has been developed to a fine art and agriculture flourishes, the code of government includes a rough-and-ready set of rules, determining the rights of the sovereign in relation to his subjects, and of the subjects among themselves. There are agricultural or revenue settlements, but they have neither the complexity nor the exactitude of the British system, and the Government revenue taken from the agriculturists is more elastic. The State demand is more in times of prosperity than in times of adversity. Such agricultural calamities as hail, frost, or drought are generally followed, as a matter of course and without any long formalities, by a well-understood and automatic lowering of the scale of demand, or by an entire omission to collect the Government revenue. On the other hand, there is less fixity of tenure in theory, and the Government due is liable to revision from year to year. The immediate cultivators of the soil are more directly in touch

with the State, and that growing middle class, with some affluence and influence, which is a marked feature of British administration, is entirely wanting. The ruler has his clansmen and his relatives. The people with any claim to position are connected with the land. The merchant class are not of much consequence. The artisans have their own separate life. The beautiful arts are practised without much competition, and freely patronised by the Court. Instinct and heredity take the place of technical schools.

The most complex type of state is such a one as that of Baroda, or Mysore, or Hyderabad. Here you have a large territory in contact with some of the most fertile and most populated portions of British territory. The problems here presented are of the most complicated character. In Mysore there is an enormous mining industry, and also a large number of European planters, who produce coffee. The mining industry carries in its train the installation of electric works, and the utilisation of natural forces such as the Cauvery waterfalls. The social problems of the mass of the people have also received a great deal of attention in the progressive administration of these states. In Baroda there is an act to deal with the early marriage question. In Mysore there is a representative assembly which is consulted periodically, and before whom a record of work is laid for information. The

members are permitted to ask questions and make suggestions on the points in which they are interested.

Hyderabad is a unique centre of literature and social activity among the Muhammadans. Many of the most brilliant lights of Hindustani literature find a home and a centre of encouragement in the Nizam's Court. The industries, too, are being slowly developed, and the efficiency of the Imperial Service Corps is one of the objects claiming the Nizam's personal attention. This corps was organised in Lord Dufferin's viceroyalty. The Panj-Deh incident evoked an outburst of patriotism in the Native States, and they voluntarily asked the Paramount Power to allow them to be associated with the defence of the country. Hitherto their armies had consisted of unwieldy groups of retainers, armed with picturesque but obsolete weapons. The new idea was to have in every state which desired it the nucleus of a highly organised and efficient modern force, small indeed—much smaller than many of the chiefs would have wished—but able to give an excellent account of itself, both as regards its *personnel* and *matériel*, its organisation, equipment, uniforms, and weapons. This idea took root and grew, and has borne abundant fruit in twenty years, under the fostering influence of successive viceroys.

All the feudatory princes of India hold their thrones under treaties into which their prede-

cessors entered. In the eyes of the law the more important of them are independent sovereigns in subsidiary alliance with His Britannic Majesty, and bound by the engagements entered into at different times in their history. They are free to try any experiments in social or domestic legislation, but they owe it both to themselves and the British Government, which guarantees their power and relieves them of the burden of maintaining a large army to repel external aggression, that there should be a feeling of tact, harmony, and mutual trust, in the broad lines of their policy as settled in consultation with the Paramount Power, which affords them friendly counsel and a practical example. The cordiality with which they are received and visited by the Sovereign's representative depends, not upon their personal habits or prejudices, but upon the degree to which they show themselves ready to become co-operating units in the great Empire of which they form such worthy ornaments and pillars. Their feelings of loyalty and devotion have been exemplified on many occasions. Ceremonial occasions, such as those of the Delhi Durbar and the Coronation of His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII., have found them vying with each other—almost beyond their financial resources—in adding lustre to the pomp and splendour which symbolise power and dominion. Their splendid equipages and noble bearing have been applauded by crowds which knew nothing of the generous

enthusiasms which lurk beneath their calm exteriors. In times of great stress, such as the South African War, and the operations of the Allies in China, they freely came forward with help in the matter of transports, hospital ships, and ambulance appliances, while many of them were ready to go personally and serve with their swords in defence of the Empire with which their destinies are so closely connected.

It has been suggested that they should be invited to join the Privy Council in England, or to sit in the House of Lords, under some scheme by which the Indian Empire will be represented by her own sons. The main difficulty lies in the fact that their administrations are distinct from the administrations of the Indian Provinces, and their advice would naturally be more valuable in the matter of those wider Imperial problems with which the Privy Council usually does not deal, and which in the House of Lords are generally merged in the party politics of the Empire. In questions connected with the policy of the government of India in India, it would be invidious to ask their advice, as the internal administration of the British provinces does not directly concern them, but their aid has often been asked, and their advice freely given, on matters closely connected with their own order and class, such as the organisation and government of the chiefs' colleges, and the determination of the ceremonial and precedence which have to be

observed on important State occasions. Their association, however, in more serious affairs than questions of ceremonial would doubtless do much to cement the bonds of our world-wide Empire.

The status and dignity of these feudatories were expressed so happily by Lord Curzon in his farewell address to the chiefs assembled at Indore, that I will take the liberty of quoting his words:[1]

"Long may they continue to hold their great positions, secure in the affections of their own subjects, and assured of the support of the Paramount Power. May they present to the world the unique spectacle of a congeries of principalities, raised on ancient foundations, and cherishing the traditions of a famous past, but imbued with the spirit of all that is best and most progressive in the modern world, recognising that duty is not an invention of the schoolmaster but the law of life, and united in defence of a throne which has guaranteed their stability and is strong in their allegiance."

The next class for consideration is that of the great land-holders, men who have titles scarcely distinguishable from those of the ruling chiefs, but who, nevertheless, exercise no ruling powers. They merely hold land in the same way as English noblemen hold their estates. They have the titles of Rajas, Maharajas, and Nawabs; and some of them—for example, the Maharaja of Benares—are entitled to be addressed as "His

[1] "Lord Curzon in India," by Sir Thomas Raleigh, p. 241.

Highness." They take principal parts in ceremonials on State occasions, but have no power of life or death on their own estates, and they do not have any work of government administration properly so called. The important work of estate management, however, is dignified enough to give full scope to their organising talents. They control very large establishments of bailiffs and managers. The selection of tenants, the provision of suitable holdings for them, the grant of a fairly fixed title of occupancy in the land, and the determination of questions of rent, are subjects which, if properly attended to, are quite enough to occupy the whole of the time of the most leisured land-holder in existence. I know of a young and promising Maharaja land-holder, who is occupied for weeks together with the work of seeing that the leases are properly renewed to his tenants. These gentlemen form the aristocracy of British India. Nominally without any legal power, in reality they wield a vast amount of social influence. They can make or mar the lives of thousands of people who live and work on their estates, and the agricultural prosperity of the whole country depends on whether they are enlightened or are pursuing a selfish policy.

There are many of these great landed proprietors in Bengal, but they seem to be concentrated in the part of the country known as Oudh. This has been called the "Land of Barons," because the Taluqdars form a compact

body, and both by history and tradition, are capable of acting together and assisting the general administration of the country. By their good sense and direct contact with the agricultural population, as well as their conservative instincts, they are marked out to be the pillars of the State, and useful auxiliaries to all movements that make for peace and order. Selected individuals among them are vested with magisterial powers, which they exercise to the relief of the overburdened stipendiary magistrates, and for the benefit of their own people. In many cases the quarrels of the rural population are simple in the extreme, and instead of fighting them out in the heated atmosphere of a court, with two sets of lawyers exercising their wits in a legal combat, the tenantry do far better to settle them in the unruffled atmosphere which surrounds their own landlord. He holds his head secure from the whirlwinds which vex the lower strata of the social air. He may be able to quietly suggest some means of compromise which may be accepted, thus doing an amount of good which cannot be measured by words.

The life of these landlords is made up of the usual routine of estate management, combined with such magisterial work as they have, and such ornamental work as falls to them in the *levées* and durbars organised by the ruling power. Some of them are fond of travelling, and under-

take journeys through different parts of India, and occasionally to England, thus enlarging their own ideas and fitting them for a larger part in the work of raising the tone of their own people. Many of them are honoured members of the Legislative Councils, and they exercise their privileges and perform their duties in a manner which has won the highest commendation from their colleagues. The sons of many of them are being brought up in the "new light," that is, the more strenuous ideals of the West, which are associated with English civilisation. Many of them send their sons to be educated in the chiefs' or noblemen's colleges, which are unique institutions provided for their special class. These will be described when we come to speak of student life.

We now come to the men of the old learning, a class which is more truly the leisured class of India than any other. They are, among the Muhammadans, the Kazis and Maulvis, and among the Hindus, the Pandits and Upadhyas. These men live as book-worms, but their learning has very little market value, although the reverence attached to old traditions is so great that many people become their pupils, and at least nominally try to conform to the precepts they give. The precepts are generally impossible for any everyday mortal. They are either too formal, or "too good for human nature's daily food." If a very orthodox Pandit tell his pupils

not to drink water from the waterworks made by the municipality, because the pipes are contaminated by the touch of people not of his caste, the advice is absurd, and cannot be carried out by any dwellers in the cities. The answer given to that by the book-worm, who holds to a creed outworn, would be, "So much the worse for the dwellers in the city." These fossils of an antique civilisation generally take refuge in some out-of-the-way place. They dream away their lives in extracting omens from an impossible system of astrology, to find out the precise moment when their learning and their prayers will bear fruit, little suspecting that the sad, sad answer has already been pronounced by the weird and wise Raven of Edgar Allan Poe—"*Never more!*" They waste days and nights of deep study and silent meditation in trying to discover the hidden meaning of old-world texts, plain and sound enough in their day, but now overlaid by the rust of ages, which it takes longer to remove than to construct a new system.

The kind of pupils they get tend to become fanatics—not the sort of fanatics that would use force in disseminating their doctrines or in fighting with their opponents, but the mental fanatics, who refuse to see any other side of the question than their own. As the more progressive sections of the population get more and more aloof from these people, they become the teachers of the very poorest and hungriest classes. Their pupils,

after acquiring distinctions and diplomas not recognised in the practical world, find very little encouragement with the large outside public. This leads to great discontent and galling bitterness, not only against the men who fail to appreciate them, but with the social and political institutions actually existing in the country. It also leads to a mental and moral pessimism darker than that of Schopenhauer, and more despairing than that of Max Nordau. In the teachers there is a high-bred courtesy and an undercurrent of tolerance for a flood which they cannot stem. But in their disciples the stream of ideas tends to acquire a corrosive poison from the fact that they have no experience of life, and exaggerate tenfold the mysticism and introspection of a detached existence.

Their mental faculties get blunted by not having the advantage of being sharpened by actual facts or by contact with human life. Their astronomy is old-world, and based on the Ptolemaic system. They believe that when the sun or the moon is in eclipse it is due to two terrible demons who want to swallow up these luminaries, and it is necessary to make large gifts to Brahmans or beggars, to offer up lengthy prayers, and perform repeated ablutions, before the threatened calamity can be warded off. The science of medicine is with them divorced from the art of surgery, which is treated as simply the art of the barber. The science of chemistry is

left to the dyer to study, or rather to learn by rule of thumb practice. Theoretically, they write pages of books dealing with the sciences, but they never have any apparatus to enable them to perform experiments to test their theories or even to understand them in all their bearings.

Poverty has spread its pall over them. They live in close, musty, badly-lighted rooms. Their books are very old manuscripts, which would be of priceless value in a Western library; but here they are handled and thumbed with the carelessness born of common use, and they are frequently eaten by worms, or destroyed by fire. When such a man dies, the fate of his books and papers is truly pathetic. His disciples are no longer with him, because they have been scattered all over the country, in search of their own means of livelihood. They are rarely men with families; but if they are, the go-ahead members have already gone into the large material whirlpool for which they have such utter contempt, and the backward ones among them have failed to reach *their* standard of learning, or *their* devotion to an ideal inherited as an heirloom of antiquity, before it was thrown out of fashion by an age of shallow sentimentalism and self-advertising show. The ladies of the family are generally uneducated, although they may be literate. Cases have been known in which a box laden with precious manuscripts and papers has been allowed

to lie in a damp, mouldy room, until all its contents were practically destroyed. In some cases the books are sold at the price of waste paper, and thus that link of continuity which connects their learning with olden times is broken. It is sad to reflect that worms should be the only eager heirs to the old learning!

Can nothing be done for this class? Their character is generally weak but venerable, wanting in stamina, but full of idealism; and their actions, although they savour of pedantry, often appeal to the imagination. Their services used to be utilised not long ago in the educational institutions of the country, but they are being ousted and replaced by men who are more adaptable to new conditions, and who, if an hour is fixed for a lecture, would not hesitate to come punctually, merely because the astrological signs were unfavourable. The good that is in them can only be drawn out by giving them such responsibility as they can sustain, and helping them out of their abject poverty. They can earn their bread by no other means than their out-of-date learning, and the respect in which they are held is not sufficient to keep the wolf from the door. It is difficult to see how they can be made to fit into the scheme of modern life. They have been tried as sub-registrars of documents, but even there they have failed on account of unbusiness-like habits and the temptations engendered by a comfortable position, without the stamina that

would keep them from taking advantage of the illiterate people they have to deal with.

Perhaps their appointment as celebrants and registrars of marriages might do something towards giving them a self-respecting and a fairly comfortable position during the last flicker of their existence as a separate class. It must be understood that whereas the registration of births and deaths is carried out by the civil agency, the registration of marriages is only carried out in the case of Christian marriages, or marriages celebrated in what would be called registrar's offices in England. These represent a microscopic minority for the huge population of 294,000,000 who inhabit India. Practically, we may say that all Hindu and Muhammadan marriages are ecclesiastical marriages, and, as far as the State is concerned, are not registered at all. Unofficially the priests (the Muhammadan Maulvi or Kazi who celebrates the marriage may be called by that name for convenience), no doubt, keep a note of these; but such notes are not systematically kept, and precisely in those cases where litigation arises and disputes take place, a great opportunity is offered for forgeries. In a large number of cases, however, even these unsatisfactory notes are not available, and oral evidence is all that can be adduced by either party. The priests have no official status, and in many cases are poor, struggling men, and scarcely distinguishable from loafers.

What I think can be done is that every district should be partitioned into circles, for each of which there should be an officially recognised Brahman registrar of marriages for Hindus, and an officially recognised Muhammadan registrar of marriages for the Muhammadans. In many cases two for each circle would be sufficient, but, as there are legal divergences of custom, and it is possible that some sections of the population may not acknowledge the validity of either of these two authorities, it should be provided that on due cause being shown, a separate registrar might be appointed at the discretion of the District Magistrate for any section of the people whose case is not met by either of the two registrars. But the number must be limited as far as possible. The men selected would be men of some education and character, and for misconduct they could be dismissed. The Muhammadans would, as far as possible, be selected from old Kazi families, and the Hindus from Pandit families. Their income would consist of a small compulsory registration fee, with such optional fees as are customary for celebrating ecclesiastical marriages. For the celebration of ecclesiastical marriages, option would have to be allowed to the parties to have recourse to whomsoever they like, but in the majority of cases, if there is an officially recognised registrar, the two functions would, if proper care were exercised in the selection of men, be performed by the same man. The registers could be moved, according to

prescribed rules, at periodical intervals, into the Chief Registrar's (Judge's) offices of the different districts. Some sort of order would then be evolved out of that complete chaos which surrounds a case now when a birthday, a marriage, or a divorce comes into dispute in a civil court.

We may now consider the leisured merchant class, who have made their pile by a life of hard commercial activity, and have retired to a life of ease and dignity. They have not the interest of the ruling chiefs or the aristocracy in estate administration or in field sports. They have not been disciplined in habits of learning, and brought up in the reverence for books, which fill up so large a part of the thoughts and lives of what we have called the men of the old learning. Their life from a social aspect generally shows a great void. They are not often men of culture, excepting those in the Presidency towns, and their hobbies or interests it would be difficult indeed to describe. A general inertia takes hold of them, and they pass their hours in inglorious ease. It would be a veritable God-send if some means could be devised for interesting them, and at the same time advancing the welfare of the community. If they have children, they no doubt feel a justifiable pride in seeing them lifted up to the best positions to which they can attain, but in many cases that interest fails them. In any case, their minds are so uncultured that they can find little

rational enjoyment from such occupations as presiding at functions, or holding social gatherings, or attending or getting up popular lectures. Their purse is open, but they do not know when and how to open it to works of popular philanthropy. Sometimes on account of ignorance of social conditions their charity is wasted on barren soil. Sometimes advantage is taken of them, if, indeed, the process to which they are subjected should not be called blackmail. In any case, they are not able to put their own personality into the scheme they wish to aid, and the gift without the giver may be charity, but it is not philanthropy. There are no theatres to which they could go for amusement which would show them the mirror of life, as it is lived with its chequered lights and shades. They cannot travel much, because their physical energies are spent by the time they arrive at mature age. The climate, too, has undermined their constitutions. It has often struck me that if Cicero's ideas in his essay on old age were adapted for their special behoof, they might find a great deal to amuse themselves with, in spite of their general languor. If little schemes of public amelioration which they could grasp, and over which they could grow enthusiastic, were started, not requiring too much in the way of brains, but capable of utilising their matured experience of business, they could fitly take part with those who help to move the wheel of the

social machinery. It would be a very good thing if there were unions of school children looked after by such men, and they were expected and encouraged to provide them with the expenses of little treats in neighbouring villages or towns, and altogether to take a fatherly interest in the rising generation.

The retired lawyers fill a very large place among the useful and active members of the leisured classes. The law is the one profession in which the highest distinctions are accessible to the humblest man and to the large class of mediocre celebrities from town and country. To such men, who have fought their legal battles, but not attained to the rare and coveted dignity of a High Court Judgeship, there are still many avenues of public and private usefulness within reach. Many of them become Honorary Magistrates, and serve as members of Municipal and District Boards. Some of them take part in all the gatherings which are organised in their towns of a public or semi-public nature. They wield a ready pen and a facile tongue, and command a graceful oratory, which can not only move the hearts of men, but also untie their purse strings. To any organisation of a public nature their help is invaluable. They show tenacity of purpose and independence of judgment, and yet none can be readier in appreciating "the case for the other side," as their whole experience is built on the art of

seeing (and covering) the weakness of their own side. Their resource and shrewdness give life and spirit to new social movements. Is it a subscription being raised for a local famine, or a campaign being organised for the distribution of free quinine among the poor, in a malarious and fever-stricken district? Are fireworks and illuminations to be displayed on an occasion like the King's birthday? Is a new library to be opened, or systematic plague preventive measures to be adopted? At such times the retired lawyer is to the fore with his bustle and energy, which are at least as useful as the money which is largely contributed by the silent members of the community.

In plague and sanitary administration, and indeed in any administrative campaign, even if directed against the criminal classes, our chief difficulty in dealing with the mass of the people and ensuring their co-operation, is their ignorance and suspicion of the motives of Government. Now a lawyer understands these, or can be made to understand them; and if his sympathies are enlisted by the right kind of personal treatment, he is a most valuable auxiliary. The man in actual practice will not run counter to popular prejudices, because he is afraid of a falling away in the number of his clients. But the retired lawyer comes forward readily — if he is approached in the proper spirit.

The question has often been raised as to the

measure of culture to be found among the higher classes in India. Different opinions have been held on the subject. It is contended, on the one side, that true culture has almost vanished from a land which boasted at one time of a splendid chivalry and a nobility of the highest refinement. It is pointed out that there has been no Montaigne and no Abul Fazl in the India of the last two centuries. The conditions of transition from one state of society to another, from one system of thought to another, from one type of civilisation to another, are pre-eminently suitable to the rise of great intellects such as those of Montaigne, or Bacon, or Montesquieu, but no universal intellect of that kind has appeared in recent years. On the other hand, it is asserted that the culture of the East has permeated through all the grades of society, and that, man for man, the individual of the humblest classes in India is far more refined in his habits, manners, and ideas than an individual of a similar class in the West. The last statement is true. But the phenomenon equally prevails in such countries as Italy, where the traditions of civilisation reach back to earlier centuries than in Western Europe. Moreover, many of the classes in the humbler grades of society in India are only submerged representatives of the culture and distinction of a century or two ago. I have met a Chaukidár who traced his ancestry from the once ruling

family of Oudh, and who had a seal and documents in his possession which proved his claim beyond doubt. There are many clerks in Government offices, whose pedigree connects them with ministers and statesmen who played a leading part in the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is not uncommon to find among the literary classes those whose families were overwhelmed by the political revolutions of the eighteenth century, and who now earn a scanty pittance, where under more congenial conditions they would have shone by their pen and their intellect. They refuse to put themselves in line with the more progressive ideas, and they only find themselves superfluous in the times in which they live. Poverty or humble living does not necessarily show that an individual belongs to the lower classes in the sense in which the term might be used in this country.

On the other hand, the opportunities of true culture understood in its highest sense are rare in India. Culture, I take it, is the carrying out of religion, art, and poetry into social life. Neither leisure nor money can, by themselves, supply the means for that humanising culture, which is born of the clash of mind with mind, and the play of intellect upon the practical affairs of courts and princes or nations. Of reading there is a great deal, but the dry bones of book-learning require to be vivified by a living human intercourse free from ceremonial, yet carried forward on the

wings of that Time Spirit, which breathes over society taken in large masses, and gives shape to the institutions and ideals that move the world.

There is a passage in Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister," which describes the difficulty of an aspiring soul in India, if we only substitute "India" for "Germany," "Indian" for "burgher," and "European" for "Nobleman."

"I know not how it is in foreign countries, but in Germany a universal, and if I may say so, personal cultivation is beyond the reach of any one except a nobleman. A burgher may acquire merit; by excessive efforts, he may even educate his mind; but his personal qualities are lost, or worse than lost, let him struggle as he will. . . . Since in common life the nobleman is hampered by no limits—since kings or kinglike figures do not differ from him—he can everywhere advance with a silent consciousness, as if before his equals. Everywhere he is entitled to press forward, whereas nothing more beseems the burgher, than the quiet feeling of the limits that are drawn around him."

This represents Goethe's difficulties in raising himself to the state of intellectual culture to which he aspired. He surmounted them. The difficulties are the same or greater in India at the present day; but there is no doubt that master minds are, and will be, able to surmount any difficulties whatever. It is well, however, to

recognise the obstacles that exist in judging a people or their culture.

The palace of knowledge (to use an Oriental trope) is mounted on the ladder of curiosity; the palace of culture is attained by steps in which all the climbers feel, on the one hand, a sense of equality with those climbing like them, though not quite up to their level, and, on the other hand, a sense of welcome from those who have climbed a little higher, but whom they might claim as kindred spirits. The aim of human culture is to refine the pleasures of life and strip them of all their grossness. The intellect is not the only instrument for that purpose. Character and social gifts all have their part to play; but the noblest instrument for the attainment of this aim is the society of cultured women. Until woman's sphere is drawn concentrically with man's; until the idea of love is ennobled through the magic light of poetry and chivalry, and marriage ceases to be an affair of convention, and becomes an affair of the heart; until then the salvation of the higher classes, or, indeed, of any of the classes in India, will be a mere chimera — a dream which will vanish with the shades of the night. It is only when these conditions have been fulfilled that we shall have learnt the art of living. The dream of beauty will then merge in the realisation of duty, and the use of leisure will be felt to be the opportunity it gives for a higher personal and social culture. Without such culture — not

only personal, but social — we can but live vacillating and wasted lives, and should well deserve the following epitaph[1]:

"He revelled under the moon,
He slept beneath the sun,
He lived a life of going-to-do,
And died with nothing done."

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[1] For the source of this prize epitaph, see *Calcutta Review*, No. 229, p. 196.

IV

STUDENT LIFE

"An ignorance of means may minister
To greatness, but an ignorance of aims
Makes it impossible to be great at all."
—E. B. BROWNING, *Casa Guidi Windows*, ii. 212-214.

"Tell him that when he is a man,
He must reverence the dreams of his youth."
—Posa's last message in SCHILLER'S *Don Carlos*.

"The educational harvest will increase as years go on, and the healthiness of the nourishment it gives will depend on the careful administration and distribution of its products."
—Lord Minto to the Muhammadan Deputation at Simla, 1st October 1906.

STUDENT LIFE

THE greatness of a people depends on the education, culture, training, and opportunities afforded to its children. Educational ideals, therefore, and the life in the school can be a matter of indifference to no one who seeks to examine the hidden forces of social life, or to influence the stream of a nation's history. In India the problem acquires extreme complexity from the fact that there is no educational uniformity in different parts of the country, or among different sections of the people. There are no ideals to work up to. There is not even a definite understanding as to what is to be aimed at. There is great confusion as to the relative places to be occupied by Western and Eastern culture. Schools scarcely ever tackle this problem, colleges usually degenerate into a machinery for the training of clerks and Government officials, and post-graduate study entirely falls into the background. What is worse is that culture in its highest sense does not even figure as an object to be aimed at. It is talked about by educationalists in high places; but if you examined a private in the vast army

of teachers to whom the early training of youth is committed, you will find that it forms no part of either his practice, his experience, or his ideals.

Let us take a survey of the actual conditions existing, that we may understand the difficulties of the situation and the gaps which have yet to be filled before the educational machinery can be said to have become comprehensive and efficient. Let us begin at the bottom and take a peep at the village school. The building is of the simplest description. In some villages there is not even a separate building used exclusively for the school. The village headman's public apartments are used for the school by day. Many of the parents come and gossip with the teacher while the school is supposed to be going on. The school hours are supposed to begin at seven o'clock in the morning in the summer months, but it is rarely that the school is at its full strength till nine or ten. There are no clocks or time-pieces in the schools, or, indeed, in the village. Most of the boys, as well as their elders, get up at home like the lark with the sunrise. So does the teacher.

But there are a number of personal, religious, and social duties to be performed before either the one or the other is free for the mundane affairs of life. Some boys come quite early in the day (even before seven o'clock), and help the teacher in cooking his breakfast. There is no separate kitchen for this purpose in many