



caste, the Rājhhars seem, in some localities, to be more backward and primitive than the Rājhhars. This is also the case in Berār, where they are commonly known as Lajjhar and are said to be akin to the Gonds. A Gond will there take food from a Lajjhar, but not a Lajjhar from a Gond. They are more Hinduised than the Gonds and have prohibited the killing or injuring of cows by some caste penalties.¹

2. Origin
and sub-
divisions.

The caste appears to be in part of mixed origin arising from the unions of Hindu fathers with women of the Bhar tribe. Several of their family names are derived from those of other castes, as Bamhania (from Brāhman), Sunārya (from Sunār), Baksaria (a Rājput sept), Ahīriya (an Ahīr or cow-herd), and Bisātia from Bisāti (a hawker). Other names are after plants or animals, as Baslya from the *bāns* or bamboo, Mohanya from the *mohin* tree, Chhitkaria from the *sitaphal* or custard-apple tree, Hardaya from the banyan tree, Rīchhya from the bear, and Dukhania from the buffalo. Members of this last sept will not drink buffalo's milk or wear black cloth, because this is the colour of their totem animal. Members of septs named after other castes have also adopted some natural object as a sept totem; thus those of the Sunārya sept worship gold as being the metal with which the Sunār is associated. Those of the Bamhania sept revere the banyan and pipal trees, as these are held sacred by Brāhmins. The Bakraria or Bagsaria sept believe their name to be derived from that of the *bāgh* or tiger, and they worship this animal's footprints by tying a thread round them.

3. Mar-
riage.

The marriage of members of the same sept, and also that of first cousins, is forbidden. The caste do not employ Brāhmins at their marriage and other ceremonies, and they account for this somewhat quaintly by saying that their ancestors were at one time accustomed to rely on the calculations of Brāhman priests; but many marriages which the Brāhman foretold as auspicious turned out very much the reverse; and on this account they have discarded the Brāhman, and now determine the suitability or otherwise of a projected union by the common primitive custom of

¹ Kitts' *Berār Census Report* (1881), p. 157.

throwing two grains of rice into a vessel of water and seeing whether they will meet. The truth is probably that they are too backward ever to have had recourse to the Brāhman priest, but now, though they still apparently have no desire for his services, they recognise the fact to be somewhat discreditable to themselves, and desire to explain it away by the story already given. In Hoshangābād the bride still goes to the bridegroom's house to be married as among the Gonds. A bride-price is paid, which consists of four rupees, a *khandi*¹ of juāri or wheat, and two pieces of cloth. This is received by the bride's father, who, however, has in turn to pay seven rupees eight annas and a goat to the caste *panchāyat* or committee for the arrangement and sanction of the match. This last payment is known as *Sharāb-ka-rupaya* or liquor-money, and with the goat furnishes the wherewithal for a sumptuous feast to the caste. The marriage-shed must be made of freshly-cut timber, which should not be allowed to fall to the ground, but must be supported and carried off on men's shoulders as it is cut. When the bridegroom arrives at the marriage-shed he is met by the bride's mother and conducted by her to an inner room of the house, where he finds the bride standing. He seizes her fist, which she holds clenched, and opens her fingers by force. The couple then walk five times round the *chauk* or sacred space made with lines of flour on the floor, the bridegroom holding the bride by her little finger. They are preceded by some relative of the bride, who walks round the post carrying a pot of water, with seven holes in it; the water spouts from these holes on to the ground, and the couple must tread in it as they go round the post. This forms the essential and binding portion of the marriage. That night the couple sleep in the same room with a woman lying between them. Next day they return to the bridegroom's house, and on arriving at his door the boy's mother meets him and touches his head, breast and knees with a churning-stick, a winnowing-fan and a pestle, with the object of exorcising any evil spirits who may be accompanying the bridal couple. As the pair enter the marriage-shed erected before the bridegroom's house they are drenched with water

¹ About 400 lbs.

by a man sitting on the roof, and when they come to the door of the house the bridegroom's younger brother, or some other boy, sits across it with his legs stretched out to prevent the bride from entering. The girl pushes his legs aside and goes into the house, where she stays for three months with her husband, and then returns to her parents for a year. After this she is sent to her husband with a basket of fried cakes and a piece of cloth, and takes up her residence with him. When a widow is to be married, the couple pour turmeric and water over each other, and then walk seven times round, in a circle in an empty space, holding each other by the hand. A widow commonly marries her deceased husband's younger brother, but is not compelled to do so. Divorce is permitted for adultery on the part of the wife.

4. Social
customs.

The caste bury their dead with the head pointing to the west. This practice is peculiar, and is also followed, Colonel Dalton states, by the hill Bhuiyas of Bengal, who in so doing honour the quarter of the setting sun. When a burial takes place, all the mourners who accompany the corpse throw a little earth into the grave. On the same day some food and liquor are taken to the grave and offered to the dead man's spirit, and a feast is given to the caste-fellows. This concludes the ceremonies of mourning, and the next day the relatives go about their business. The caste are usually petty cultivators and labourers, while they also collect grass and fuel for sale, and propagate the lac insect. In Seoni they have a special relation with the Ahīrs, from whom they will take cooked food, while they say that the Ahīrs will also eat from their hands. In Narsinghpur a similar connection has been observed between the Rājghars and the Lodhi caste. This probably arises from the fact that the former have worked for several generations as the farm-servants of Lodhi or Ahīr employers, and have been accustomed to live in their houses and partake of their meals, so that caste rules have been abandoned for the sake of convenience. A similar intimacy has been observed between the Panwārs and Gonds, and other castes who stand in this relation to each other. The Rājghars will also eat *katcha* food (cooked with water) from Kunbis and Kahārs. But in



Hoshangābād some of them will not take food from any caste, even from Brāhmans. Their women wear glass bangles only on the right hand, and a brass ornament known as *māthi* on the left wrist. They wear no ornaments in the nose or ears, and have no breast-cloth. They are tattooed with dots on the face and patterns of animals on the right arm, but not on the left arm or legs. A *liaison* between a youth and maiden of the caste is considered a trifling matter, being punished only with a fine of two to four annas or pence. A married woman detected in an intrigue is mulcted in a sum of four or five rupees, and if her partner be a man of another caste a lock of her hair is cut off. The caste are generally ignorant and dirty, and are not much better than the Gonds and other forest tribes.



RĀJPUT

[The following article is based mainly on Colonel Tod's classical *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān*, 2nd ed., Madras, Higginbotham, 1873, and Mr. Crooke's articles on the Rājput clans in his *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*. Much information as to the origin of the Rājput clans has been obtained from inscriptions and worked up mainly by the late Mr. A. M. T. Jackson and Messrs. B. G. and D. R. Bhandarkar; this has been set out with additions and suggestions in Mr. V. A. Smith's *Early History of India*, 3rd ed., and has been reproduced in the subordinate articles on the different clans. Though many of the leading clans are very weakly represented in the Central Provinces, some notice of them is really essential in an article treating generally of the Rājput caste, on however limited a scale, and has therefore been included. In four cases, Panwār, Jādum, Rāghuvansi and Daharia, the original Rājput clans have now developed into separate cultivating castes, ranking well below the Rājputs; separate articles have been written on these as for independent castes.]

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|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Baghel. | 12. Gaharwār, Gherwāl. |
| 2. Bāgri. | 13. Gaur, Chamār-Gaur. |
| 3. Bais. | 14. Haihaya, Haihaivansi, Kāla-churi. |
| 4. Baksaria. | 15. Hūna, Hoon. |
| 5. Banāphar. | 16. Kachhwāha, Cutchwāha. |
| 6. Bhadauria. | 17. Nāgvansi. |
| 7. Bisen. | 18. Nikumbh. |
| 8. Bundela. | 19. Pāik. |
| 9. Chandel. | 20. Parihār. |
| 10. Chauhān. | 21. Rāthor, Rāthaur. |
| 11. Dhākar. | |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 22. Sesodia, Gahlot, Ahāria. | 26. Tomara, Tuar, Tunwar. |
| 23. Solankhi, Solanki, Chalukya. | 27. Yādu, Yādava, Yādu-Bhatti, |
| 24. Somvansi, Chandravansi. | Jādon. |
| 25. Sūrajvansi. | |

Rājput, Kshatriya, Chhatri, Thākur.—The Rājputs are the representatives of the old Kshatriya or warrior class, the second of the four main castes or orders of classical Hinduism, and were supposed to have been made originally from the arms of Brahma. The old name of Kshatriya is still commonly used in the Hindi form Chhatri, but the designation Rājput, or son of a king, has now superseded it as the standard name of the caste. Thākur, or lord, is the common Rājput title, and that by which they are generally addressed. The total number of persons returned as Rājputs in the Province in 1911 was about 440,000. India has about nine million Rājputs in all, and they are most numerous in the Punjab, the United Provinces, and Bihār and Orissa, Rājputāna returning under 700,000 and Central India about 800,000.

1. Introductory notice.

The bulk of the Rājputs in the Central Provinces are of very impure blood. Several groups, such as the Panwārs of the Wainganga Valley, the Rāghuvansīs of Chhindwāra and Nāgpur, the Jādams of Hoshangābād and the Daharias of Chhattīsgarh, have developed into separate castes and marry among themselves, though a true Rājput must not marry in his own clan. Some of them have abandoned the sacred thread and now rank with the good cultivating castes below Banias. Reference may be made to the separate articles on these castes. Similarly the Sūrajvansi, Gaur or Gorai, Chauhān, and Bāgri clans marry among themselves in the Central Provinces, and it is probable that detailed research would establish the same of many clans or parts of clans bearing the name of Rājput in all parts of India. If the definition of a proper Rājput were taken, as it should be correctly, as one whose family intermarried with clans of good standing, the caste would be reduced to comparatively small dimensions. The name Dhākar, also shown as a Rājput clan, is applied to a person of illegitimate birth, like Vidūr. Over 100,000 persons, or nearly a quarter of the total, did not return the name of any clan in 1911, and

these are all of mixed or illegitimate descent. They are numerous in Nimār, and are there known as *chhoti-tur* or low-class Rājput̄s. The Bāgri Rājput̄s of Seoni and the Sūrajvansis of Betal marry among themselves, while the Bundelas of Saugor intermarry with two other local groups, the Panwār and Dhundhele, all the three being of impure blood. In Jubbulpore a small clan of persons known as Pāik or foot-soldier return themselves as Rājput̄s, but are no doubt a mixed low-caste group. Again, some landholding sections of the primitive tribes have assumed the names of Rājput̄ clans. Thus the zamīndārs of Bilāspur, who originally belonged to the Kavar tribe, call themselves Tuar or Tomara Rājput̄s, and the landholding section of the Mundas in Chota Nāgpur say that they are of the Nāgvansi clan. Other names are returned which are not those of Rājput̄ clans or their offshoots at all. If these subdivisions, which cannot be considered as proper Rājput̄s, and all those who have returned no clan be deducted, there remain not more than 100,000 who might be admitted to be pure Rājput̄s in Rājputāna. But a close local scrutiny even of these would no doubt result in the detection of many persons who have assumed and returned the names of good clans without being entitled to them. And many more would come away as being the descendants of remarried widows. A Rājput̄ of really pure family and descent is in fact a person of some consideration in most parts of the Central Provinces.

2. The
thirty-six
royal races.

Traditionally the Rājput̄s are divided into thirty-six great clans or races, of which Colonel Tod gives a list compiled from different authorities as follows (alternative names by which the clan or important branches of it are known are shown in brackets):

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|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ikshwaka or Sūrajvansi. | 7. Kachhwāha (Cutchwāha). |
| 2. Indu, Somvansi or Chandra-
vansi. | 8. Prāmara or Panwār (Mori). |
| 3. Gahlot or Sesodia (Rāghu-
vansi). | 9. Chauhān (Hāra, Khichi,
Nikumbh, Bhadauria). |
| 4. Yādu (Bhatti, Jareja, Jādon,
Banāphar). | 10. Chalukya or Solankhi (Baghel). |
| 5. Tuar or Tomara. | 11. Parihār. |
| 6. Rāthor. | 12. Chawara or Chaura. |
| | 13. Tāk or Takshac (Nāgvansi,
Mori). |



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 14. Jit or Gete. | 26. Gherwāl or Gaharwār (Bundela). |
| 15. Hūna. | 27. Badgūjar. |
| 16. Kāthi. | 28. Sengar. |
| 17. Balla. | 29. Sikarwāl. |
| 18. Jhalla. | 30. Bais. |
| 19. Jaitwa or Kamari. | 31. Dahia. |
| 20. Gohil. | 32. Johia. |
| 21. Sarweya. | 33. Mohil. |
| 22. Silar. | 34. Nikumbh. |
| 23. Dhābi. | 35. Rājpalī. |
| 24. Gaur. | 36. Dahima. |
| 25. Doda or Dor. | |

And two extra, Hul and Daharia.

Several of the above races are extinct or nearly so, and on the other hand some very important modern clans, as the Gautam, Dikhit and Bisen, and such historically important ones as the Chandel and Haihaya, are not included in the thirty-six royal races at all. Practically all the clans should belong either to the solar and lunar branch, that is, should be descended from the sun or moon, but the division, if it ever existed, is not fully given by Colonel Tod. Two special clans, the Sūrajvansi and Chandra or Somvansi, are named after the sun and moon respectively; and a few others, as the Sesodia, Kachhwāha, Gohil, Bais and Badgūjar, are recorded as being of the solar race, descended from Vishnu through his incarnation as Rāma. The Rāthors also claimed solar lineage, but this was not wholly conceded by the Bhāts, and the Dikhits are assigned to the solar branch by their legends. The great clan of the Yādavas, of whom the present Jādon or Jādum and Bhatti Rājput̃s are representatives, was of the lunar race, tracing their descent from Krishna, though, as a matter of fact, Krishna was also an incarnation of Vishnu or the sun; and the Tuar or Tomara, as well as the Jit or Gete, the Rājput̃ section of the modern Jāts, who were considered to be branches of the Yādavas, would also be of the moon division. The Gautam and Bisen clans, who are not included in the thirty-six royal races, now claim lunar descent. Four clans, the Panwār, Chauhān, Chalukya or Solankhī, and Parihār, had a different origin, being held to have been born through the agency of the gods from a fire-pit on the summit of Mount Abu. They are hence known as Agnikula or the fire races. Several clans, such as the

Tāk or Takshac, the Hūna and the Chaura, were considered by Colonel Tod to be the representatives of the Huns or Scythians, that is, the nomad invading tribes from Central Asia, whose principal incursions took place during the first five centuries of the Christian era.

At least six of the thirty-six royal races, the Sarweya, Silar, Doda or Dor, Dahia, Johia and Mohil, were extinct in Colonel Tod's time, and others were represented only by small settlements in Rājputāna and Surat. On the other hand, there are now a large number of new clans, whose connection with the thirty-six is doubtful, though in many cases they are probably branches of the old clans who have obtained a new name on settling in a different locality.

3. The
origin
of the
Rājput.

It was for long the custom to regard the Rājput as the direct descendants and representatives of the old Kshatriya or warrior class of the Indian Aryans, as described in the Vedas and the great epics. Even Colonel Tod by no means held this view in its entirety, and modern epigraphic research has caused its partial or complete abandonment. Mr. V. A. Smith indeed says:¹ "The main points to remember are that the Kshatriya or Rājput caste is essentially an occupational caste, composed of all clans following the Hindu ritual who actually undertook the act of government; that consequently people of most diverse races were and are lumped together as Rājputs, and that most of the great clans now in existence are descended either from foreign immigrants of the fifth or sixth century A.D. or from indigenous races such as the Gonds and Bhars." Colonel Tod held three clans, the Tāk or Takshac, the Hūna and the Chaura, to be descended from Scythian or nomad Central Asian immigrants, and the same origin has been given for the Haihaya. The Hūna clan actually retains the name of the White Huns, from whose conquests in the fifth century it probably dates its existence. The principal clan of the lunar race, the Yādavas, are said to have first settled in Delhi and at Dwārka in Gujarāt. But on the death of Krishna, who was their prince, they were expelled from

¹ *Early History of India* (Oxford, Clarendon Press), 3rd edition, p. 414.



these places, and retired across the Indus, settling in Afghānistan. Again, for some reason which the account does not clearly explain, they came at a later period to India and settled first in the Punjab and afterwards in Rājputāna. The Jit or Jāt and the Tomara clans were branches of the Yādavas, and it is supposed that the Jits or Jāts were also descended from the nomad invading tribes, possibly from the Yueh-chi tribe who conquered and occupied the Punjab during the first and second centuries.¹ The legend of the Yādavas, who lived in Gujarāt with their chief Krishna, but after his defeat and death retired to Central Asia, and at a later date returned to India, would appear to correspond fairly well with the Sāka invasion of the second century B.C. which penetrated to Kāthiāwār and founded a dynasty there. In A.D. 124 the second Sāka king was defeated by the Andhra king Vilivāyakura II. and his kingdom destroyed.² But at about the same period, the close of the first century, a fresh horde of the Sākas came to Gujarāt from Central Asia and founded another kingdom, which lasted until it was subverted by Chandragupta Vikramaditya about A.D. 390.³ The historical facts about the Sākas, as given on the authority of Mr. V. A. Smith, thus correspond fairly closely with the Yādava legend. And the later Yueh-chi immigrants might well be connected by the Bhāts with the Sāka hordes who had come at an earlier date from the same direction, and so the Jāts⁴ might be held to be an offshoot of the Yādavas. This connection of the Yādava and Jāt legends with the facts of the immigration of the Sākas and Yueh-chi appears a plausible one, but may be contradicted by historical arguments of which the writer is ignorant. If it were correct we should be justified in identifying the lunar clans of Rājpuṭs with the early Scythian immigrants of the first and second centuries. Another point is that Buddha is said to be the progenitor

¹ *Early History of India*, pp. 252, 254.

² *Ibidem*, p. 210.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 227.

⁴ Colonel Tod states that the proper name of the caste was Jit or Jat, and

was changed to Jāt by a section of them who also adopted Muhammadanism. Colonel Tod also identifies the Jats or Jits with the Yueh-chi as suggested in the text (*Rājasthān*, i. p. 97).

of the whole Indu or lunar race.¹ It is obvious that Buddha had no real connection with these Central Asian tribes, as he died some centuries before their appearance in India. But the Yueh-chi or Kushān kings of the Punjab in the first and second centuries A.D. were fervent Buddhists and established that religion in the Punjab. Hence we can easily understand how, if the Yādus or Jāts and other lunar clans were descended from the Sāka and Yueh-chi immigrants, the legend of their descent from Buddha, who was himself a Kshatriya, might be devised for them by their bards when they were subsequently converted from Buddhism to Hinduism. The Sākas of western India, on the other hand, who it is suggested may be represented by the Yādavas, were not Buddhists in the beginning, whether or not they became so afterwards. But as has been seen, though Buddha was their first progenitor, Krishna was also their king while they were in Gujarāt, so that at this time they must have been supposed to be Hindus. The legend of descent from Buddha arising with the Yueh-chi or Kushāns might have been extended to them. Again, the four Agnikula or fire-born clans, the Parihār, Chalukya or Solankhi, Panwār and Chauhān, are considered to be the descendants of the White Hun and Gūjar invaders of the fifth and sixth centuries. These clans were said to have been created by the gods from a firepit on the summit of Mount Abu for the re-birth of the Kshatriya caste after it had been exterminated by the slaughter of Parasurāma the Brāhman. And it has been suggested that this legend refers to the cruel massacres of the Huns, by which the bulk of the old aristocracy, then mainly Buddhist, was wiped out; while the Huns and Gūjars, one at least of whose leaders was a fervent adherent of Brāhmanism and slaughtered the Buddhists of the Punjab, became the new fire-born clans on being absorbed into Hinduism.² The name of the Huns is still retained in the Hūna clan, now almost extinct. There remain the clans descended from the sun through Rāma, and it would be

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 42. Mr. Crooke points out that the Buddha here referred to is probably the planet Mercury. But it is possible that he may have been identified with the religious reformer as

the names seem to have a common origin.

² See also separate articles on Panwār, Rājput and Gūjar.



tempting to suppose that these are the representatives of the old Aryan Kshatriyas. But Mr. Bhandarkar has shown¹ that the Sesodias, the premier clan of the solar race and of all Rājputās, are probably sprung from Nāgar Brāhmins of Gujarāt, and hence from the Gūjar tribes; and it must therefore be supposed that the story of solar origin and divine ancestry was devised because they were once Brāhmins, and hence, in the view of the bards, of more honourable origin than the other clans. Similarly the Badgūjar clan, also of solar descent, is shown by its name of *bara* or great Gūjar to have been simply an aristocratic section of the Gūjars; while the pedigree of the Rāthors, another solar clan, and one of those who have shed most lustre on the Rājput name, was held to be somewhat doubtful by the Bhāts, and their solar origin was not fully admitted. Mr. Smith gives two great clans as very probably of aboriginal or Dravidian origin, the Gaharwār or Gherwāl, from whom the Bundelas are derived, and the Chandel, who ruled Bundelkhand from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, and built the fine temples at Mahoba, Kālanjar and Khajarahō as well as making many great tanks. This corresponds with Colonel Tod's account, which gives no place to the Chandels among the thirty-six royal races, and states that the Gherwāl Rājput is scarcely known to his brethren in Rājasthān, who will not admit his contaminated blood to mix with theirs, though as a brave warrior he is entitled to their fellowship.² Similarly the Kāthi clan may be derived from the indigenous Kāthi tribe who gave their name to Kāthiāwār. And the Sūrajvansi, Somvansi and Nāgvansi clans, or descendants of the sun, moon and snake, which are scarcely known in Rājputāna, may represent landholding sections of lower castes or non-Aryan tribes who have been admitted to Rājput rank. But even though it be found that the majority of the Rājput clans cannot boast a pedigree dating farther back than the first five centuries of our era, this is at any rate an antiquity to which few if any of the greatest European houses can lay claim.

Many of the great clans are now split up into a number

¹ *J.A.S.B.*, 1909, p. 167, *Guhilots*. See also annexed article on Rājput Sesodia.

² *Ibidem*, i. p. 105.

4. Sub-
divisions of
the clans.

of branches. The most important of these were according to locality, the different *sachae* or branches being groups settled in separate areas. Thus the Chalukya or Solankhi had sixteen branches, of which the Baghels of Rewah or Baghelkhand were the most important. The Panwārs had thirty-five branches, of which the Mori and the Dhunda, now perhaps the Dhundele of Saugor, are the best known. The Gahlot had twenty-four branches, of which one, the Sesodia, became so important that it has given its name to the whole clan. The Chamār-Gaur section of the Gaur clan now claim a higher rank than the other Gaurs, though the name would apparently indicate the appearance of a Chamār in their family tree; while the Tilokchandi Bais form an aristocratic section of the Bais clan, named after a well-known king, Tilokchand, who reigned in upper India about the twelfth century and is presumably claimed by them as an ancestor. Besides this the Rājput̃s have *gotras*, named after eponymous saints exactly like the Brāhman *gotras*, and probably adopted in imitation of the Brāhmins. Since, theoretically, marriage is prohibited in the whole clan, the *gotra* divisions would appear to be useless, but Sir H. Risley states that persons of the same clan but with different *gotras* have begun to intermarry. Similarly it would appear that the different branches of the great clans mentioned above must intermarry in some cases; while in the Central Provinces, as already stated, several clans have become regular castes and form endogamous and not exogamous groups. In northern India, however, Mr. Crooke's accounts of the different clans indicate that marriage within the clan is as a rule not permitted. The clans themselves and their branches have different degrees of rank for purposes of marriage, according to the purity of their descent, while in each clan or subclan there is an inferior section formed of the descendants of remarried widows, or even the offspring of women of another caste, who have probably in the course of generations not infrequently got back into their father's clan. Thus many groups of varying status arise, and one of the principal rules of a Rājput̃'s life was that he must marry his daughter, sometimes into a clan of equal, or sometimes into one of higher rank than his own. Hence arose great



difficulty in arranging the marriages of girls and sometimes the payment of a price to the bridegroom; while in order to retain the favour of the Bhāts and avoid their sarcasm, lavish expenditure had to be incurred by the bride's father on presents to these rapacious mendicants.¹ Thus a daughter became in a Rājput's eyes a long step on the road to ruin, and female infanticide was extensively practised. This crime has never been at all common in the Central Provinces, where the rule of marrying a daughter into an equal or higher clan has not been enforced with the same strictness as in northern India. But occasional instances formerly occurred in which the child's neck was placed under one leg of its mother's cot, or it was poisoned with opium or by placing the juice of the *ākra* or swallow-wort plant on the mother's nipple.

Properly the proposal for a Rājput marriage should emanate from the bride's side, and the customary method of making it was to send a cocoanut to the bridegroom. 'The cocoanut came,' was the phrase used to intimate that a proposal of marriage had been made.² It is possible that the bride's initiative was a relic of the Swayamwāra or maiden's choice, when a king's daughter placed a garland on the neck of the youth she preferred among the competitors in a tournament, and among some Rājputs the Jāyamāla or garland of victory is still hung round the bridegroom's neck in memory of this custom; but it may also have been due to the fact that the bride had to pay the dowry. One tenth of this was paid as earnest when the match had been arranged, and the boy's party could not then recede from it. At the entrance of the marriage-shed was hung the *toran*, a triangle of three wooden bars, having the apex crowned with the effigy of a peacock. The bridegroom on horseback, lance in hand, proceeded to break the *toran*, which was defended by the damsels of the bride. They assailed him with missiles of various kinds, and especially with red powder made from the flowers of the *palās*³ tree, at the same time singing songs full of immoral allusions. At length the

5. Marriage customs.

¹ See also article Bhāt.

² *Rājasthān*, i. pp. 231, 232.

³ *Butea frondosa*. This powder is also used at the Holi festival and has some sexual significance.

toran was broken amid the shouts of the retainers, and the fair defenders retired. If the bridegroom could not attend in person his sword was sent to represent him, and was carried round the marriage-post with the bride, this being considered a proper and valid marriage. At the rite of *hātleva* or joining the hands of the couple it was customary that any request made by the bridegroom to the bride's father should meet with compliance, and this usage has led to many fatal results in history. Another now obsolete custom was that the bride's father should present an elephant to his son-in-law as part of the dowry, but when a man could not afford a real elephant a small golden image of the animal might be substituted. In noble families the bride was often accompanied to her husband's house by a number of maidens belonging to the servant and menial castes. These were called Devadhari or lamp-bearers, and became inmates of the harem, their offspring being *golas* or slaves. In time of famine many of the poor had also perforce to sell themselves as slaves in order to obtain subsistence, and a chief's household would thus contain a large number of them. They were still adorned in Mewār, Colonel Tod states, like the Saxon slaves of old, with a silver ring round the left ankle instead of the neck. They were well treated, and were often among the best of the military retainers; they took rank among themselves according to the quality of the mothers, and often held confidential places about the ruler's person. A former chief of Deogarh would appear at court with three hundred *golas* or slaves on horseback in his train, men whose lives were his own.¹ These special customs have now generally been abandoned by the Rājputs of the Central Provinces, and their weddings conform to the usual Hindu type as described in the article on Kurmi. The remarriage of widows is now recognised in the southern Districts, though not in the north; but even here widows frequently do marry and their offspring are received into the caste, though with a lower status than those who do not permit this custom. Among the Baghels a full Rājput will allow a relative born of a remarried widow to cook his food for him, but not to add the salt nor to eat it with him.

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 159.



Those who permit the second marriage of widows also allow a divorced woman to remain in the caste and to marry again. But among proper Rājput̃s, as with Brāhm̃ans, a wife who goes wrong is simply put away and expelled from the society. Polygamy is permitted and was formerly common among the chiefs. Each wife was maintained in a separate suite of rooms, and the chief dined and spent the evening alternately with each of them in her own quarters. The lady with her attendants would prepare dinner for him and wait upon him while he ate it, waving the punkah or fan behind him and entertaining him with her remarks, which, according to report, frequently constituted a pretty severe curtain lecture.

The dead are burnt, except infants, whose bodies are buried. Mourning is observed for thirteen days for a man, nine days for a woman, and three days for a child. The *shrāddh* ceremony or offering of sacrificial cakes to the spirit is performed either during the usual period in the month of Kunwār (September), or on the anniversary day of the death. It was formerly held that if a Kshatriya died on the battlefield it was unnecessary to perform his funeral rites because his spirit went straight to heaven, and thus the end to which the ceremonies were directed was already attained without them. It was also said that the wife of a man dying such a death should not regard herself as a widow nor undergo the privations imposed on widowhood. But this did not apply so far as self-immolation was concerned, since the wives of warriors dying in battle very frequently became *sati*. In the case of chiefs also it was sometimes the custom, probably for political reasons, that the heir should not observe mourning; because if he did so he would be incapable of appearing in an assembly for thirteen days, or of taking the public action which might be requisite to safeguard his succession. The body of the late chief would be carried out by the back door of the house, and as soon as it left his successor would take his seat on the *gaddi* or cushion and begin to discharge the public business of government.

The principal deity of the Rājput̃s is the goddess Devi or Durga in her more terrible form as the goddess of war. Their swords were sacred to her, and at the Dasahra festival

6. Funeral rites.

7. Religion.

they worshipped their swords and other weapons of war and their horses. The dreadful goddess also protected the virtue of the Rājput women and caused to be enacted the terrible holocausts, not infrequent in Rājput history, when some stronghold was besieged and could hold out no longer. A great furnace was then kindled in the citadel and into this the women, young and old, threw themselves, or else died by their husbands' swords, while the men, drunk with *bhāṅg* and wearing saffron-coloured robes, sallied out to sell their lives to the enemy as dearly as possible. It is related that on one occasion Akbar desired to attempt the virtue of a queen of the Sesodia clan, and for that purpose caused her to lose herself in one of the mazes of his palace. The emperor appeared before her suddenly as she was alone, but the lady, drawing a dagger, threatened to plunge it into her breast if he did not respect her, and at the same time the goddess of her house appeared riding on a tiger. The baffled emperor gave way and retired, and her life and virtue were saved.

The Rājputs also worship the sun, whom many of them look upon as their first ancestor. They revere the animals and trees sacred to the Hindus, and some clans show special veneration to a particular tree, never cutting or breaking the branches or leaves. In this manner the Bundelas revere the *kadamb* tree, the Panwārs the *nīm*¹ tree, the Rāthors the *pīpal*² tree, and so on. This seems to be a relic of totemistic usage. In former times each clan had also a tribal god, who was its protector and leader and watched over the destinies of the clan. Sometimes it accompanied the clan into battle. "Every royal house has its palladium, which is frequently borne to battle at the saddle-bow of the prince. Rao Bhima Hāra of Kotah lost his life and protecting deity together. The celebrated Khichi (Chauhān) leader Jai Singh never took the field without the god before him. 'Victory to Bujrung' was his signal for the charge so dreaded by the Marātha, and often has the deity been sprinkled with his blood and that of the foe."³ It is said that a Rājput should always kill a snake if he sees one, because the snake, though a prince among Rājputs, is an enemy,

¹ *Melia indica*.

² *Ficus R.*

³ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 123.



and he should not let it live. If he does not kill it, the snake will curse him and bring ill-luck upon him. The same rule applies, though with less binding force, to a tiger.

The Rājput̃s eat the flesh of clean animals, but not pigs 8. Food. or fowls. They are, however, fond of the sport of pig-sticking, and many clans, as the Bundelas and others, will eat the flesh of the wild pig. This custom was perhaps formerly universal. Some of them eat of male animals only and not of females, either because they fear that the latter would render them effeminate or that they consider the sin to be less. Some only eat animals killed by the method of *jatka* or severing the head with one stroke of the sword or knife. They will not eat animals killed in the Muhammadan fashion by cutting the throat. They abstain from the flesh of the *nīlgai* or blue bull as being an animal of the cow tribe. Among the Brāhmans and Rājput̃s food cooked with water must not be placed in bamboo baskets, nor must anything made of bamboo be brought into the *rasoya* or cooking-place, or the *chauka*, the space cleaned and marked out for meals. A special brush of date-palm fibre is kept solely for sweeping these parts of the house. At a Rājput̃ banquet it was the custom for the prince to send a little food from his own plate or from the dish before him to any guest whom he especially wished to honour, and to receive this was considered a very high distinction. In Mewār the test of legitimacy in a prince of the royal house was the permission to eat from the chief's plate. The grant of this privilege conferred a recognised position, while its denial excluded the member in question from the right to the succession.¹ This custom indicates the importance attached to the taking of food together as a covenant or sacrament.

The Rājput̃s abstain from alcoholic liquor, though some 9. Opium. of the lower class, as the Bundelas, drink it. In classical times there is no doubt that they drank freely, but have had to conform to the prohibition of liquor imposed by the Brāhmans on high-caste Hindus. In lieu of liquor they became much addicted to the noxious drugs, opium and gānja or Indian hemp, drinking the latter in the form of the intoxicating liquid known as *bhāṅg*, which is prepared

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. pp. 267, 268.

from its leaves. *Bhāṅg* was as a rule drunk by the Rājput̃s before battle, and especially as a preparation for those last sallies from a besieged fortress in which the defenders threw away their lives. There is little reason to doubt that they considered the frenzy and carelessness of death produced by the liquor as a form of divine possession. Opium has contributed much to the degeneration of the Rājput̃s, and their relapse to an idle, sensuous life when their energies were no longer maintained by the need of continuous fighting for the protection of their country. The following account by Forbes of a Rājput̃'s daily life well illustrates the slothful effeminacy caused by the drug:¹ "In times of peace and ease the Rājput̃ leads an indolent and monotonous life. It is usually some time after sunrise before he bestirs himself and begins to call for his hookah; after smoking he enjoys the luxury of tea or coffee, and commences his toilet and ablutions, which dispose of a considerable part of the morning. It is soon breakfast-time, and after breakfast the hookah is again in requisition, with but few intervals of conversation until noon. The time has now arrived for a siesta, which lasts till about three in the afternoon. At this hour the chief gets up again, washes his hands and face, and prepares for the great business of the day, the distribution of the red cup, *kusumba* or opium. He calls together his friends into the public hall, or perhaps retires with them to a garden-house. Opium is produced, which is pounded in a brass vessel and mixed with water; it is then strained into a dish with a spout, from which it is poured into the chief's hand. One after the other the guests now come up, each protesting that *kusumba* is wholly repugnant to his taste and very injurious to his health, but after a little pressing first one and then another touches the chief's hand in two or three places, muttering the names of Deos (gods), friends or others, and drains the draught. Each after drinking washes the chief's hand in a dish of water which a servant offers, and after wiping it dry with his own scarf makes way for his neighbour. After this refreshment the chief and his guests sit down in the public hall, and amuse themselves with chess, draughts or games of chance, or perhaps dancing-girls are called in to

¹ *Rāsmāla*, ii. p. 261.



exhibit their monotonous measures, or musicians and singers, or the never-failing favourites, the Bhāts and Chārāns. At sunset the torch-bearers appear and supply the chamber with light, upon which all those who are seated therein rise and make obeisance towards the chief's cushion. They resume their seats, and playing, singing, dancing, story-telling go on as before. At about eight the chief rises to retire to his dinner and his hookah, and the party is broken up." There is little reason to doubt that the Rājput̃s ascribed a divine character to opium and the mental exaltation produced by it, as suggested in the article on Kalār in reference to the Hindus generally. Opium was commonly offered at the shrines of deified Rājput̃ heroes. Colonel Tod states: "*Umul lār khāna*, to eat opium together, is the most inviolable pledge, and an agreement ratified by this ceremony is stronger than any adjuration."¹ The account given by Forbes of the manner in which the drug was distributed by the chief from his own hand to all his clansmen indicates that the drinking of it was the renewal of a kind of pledge or covenant between them, analogous to the custom of pledging one another with wine, and a substitute for the covenant made by taking food together, which originated from the sacrificial meal. It has already been seen that the Rājput̃s attached the most solemn meaning and virtue to the act of partaking of the chief's food, and it is legitimate to infer that they regarded the drinking of a sacred drug like opium from his hand in the same light. The following account² of the drinking of healths in a Highland clan had, it may be suggested, originally the same significance as the distribution of opium by the Rājput̃ chief: "Lord Lovat was wont in the hall before dinner to have a kind of herald proclaiming his pedigree, which reached almost up to Noah, and showed each man present to be a cadet of his family, whilst after dinner he drank to every one of his cousins by name, each of them in return pledging him—the better sort in French claret, the lower class in husky (whisky)." Here also the drinking of wine together perhaps implied the renewal of a pledge of fealty and protection between the chief and his clansmen,

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 553.

² *Reminiscences of Lady Dorothy Nevill*, Nelson's edition, p. 367.



all of whom were held to be of his kin. The belief in the kinship of the whole clan existed among the Rājput̥s exactly as in the Scotch clans. In speaking of the Rāthors Colonel Tod states that they brought into the field fifty thousand men, *Ek bāp ka beta*, the sons of one father, to combat with the emperor of Delhi; and remarks: "What a sensation does it not excite when we know that a sentiment of kindred pervades every individual of this immense affiliated body, who can point out in the great tree the branch of his origin, of which not one is too remote from the main stem to forget his pristine connection with it."¹

The taking of opium and wine together, as already described, thus appear to be ceremonies of the same character, both symbolising the renewal of a covenant between kinsmen.

10. Improved training of Rājput chiefs.

The temptations to a life of idleness and debauchery to which Rājput̥ gentlemen were exposed by the cessation of war have happily been largely met and overcome by the careful education and training which their sons now receive in the different chiefs' colleges and schools, and by the fostering of their taste for polo and other games. There is every reason to hope that a Rājput̥ prince's life will now be much like that of an English country gentleman, spent largely in public business and the service of his country, with sport and games as relaxation. Nor are the Rājput̥s slow to avail themselves of the opportunities for the harder calling of arms afforded by the wars of the British Empire, in which they are usually the first to proffer their single-hearted and unselfish assistance.

11. Dress.

The most distinctive feature of a Rājput̥'s dress was formerly his turban; the more voluminous and heavy this was, the greater distinction attached to the bearer. The cloth was wound in many folds above the head, or cocked over one ear as a special mark of pride. An English gentleman once remarked to the minister of the Rao of Cutch on the size and weight of his turban, when the latter replied, 'Oh, this is nothing, it only weighs fifteen pounds.'² A considerable reverence attached to the turban, probably because it was the covering of the head, the seat of life, and

¹ *Rājasthān*, ii. p. 3.

² Mrs. Postans, *Cutch*, p. 35.



the exchanging of turbans was the mark of the closest friendship. On one occasion Shāh Jahān, before he came to the throne of Delhi, changed turbans with the Rāna of Mewār as a mark of amity. Shāh Jahān's turban was still preserved at Udaipur, and seen there by Colonel Tod in 1820. They also wore the beard and moustaches very long and full, the moustache either drooping far below the chin, or being twisted out stiffly on each side to impart an aspect of fierceness. Many Rājput̃s considered it a disgrace to have grey beards or moustaches, and these were accustomed to dye them with a preparation of indigo. Thus dyed, however, after a few days the beard and moustache assumed a purple tint, and finally faded to a pale plum colour, far from being either deceptive or ornamental. The process of dyeing was said to be tedious, and the artist compelled his patient to sit many hours under the indigo treatment with his head wrapped up in plantain leaves.¹ During the Muhammadan wars, however, the Rājput̃s gave up their custom of wearing beards in order to be distinguished from Moslems, and now, as a rule, do not retain them, while most of them have also discarded the long moustaches and large turbans. In battle, especially when they expected to die, the Rājput̃s wore saffron-coloured robes as at a wedding. At the same time their wives frequently performed *sati*, and the idea was perhaps that they looked on their deaths as the occasion of a fresh bridal in the warrior's Valhalla. Women wear skirts and shoulder-cloths, and in Rājputāna they have bangles of ivory or bone instead of the ordinary glass, sometimes covering the arm from the shoulders to the wrist. Their other ornaments should be of gold if possible, but the rule is not strictly observed, and silver and baser metals are worn.

The Rājput̃s wear the sacred thread, but many of them have abandoned the proper *upanayana* or thread ceremony, and simply invest boys with it at their marriage. In former times, when a boy became fit to bear arms, the ceremony of *kharg bandai*, or binding on of the sword, was performed, and considered to mark his attainment of manhood. The king himself had his sword thus bound on by the first of his vassals. The Rājput̃s take food cooked with water (*katchi*)

12. Social
customs.

¹ Mrs. Postans, *Cutch*, p. 138.



only from Brāhmans, and that cooked without water (*pakki*) from Banias, and sometimes from Lodhis and Dhīmars. Brāhmans will take *pakki* food from Rājput̃s, and Nais and Dhīmars *katchi* food. When a man is ill, however, he may take food from members of such castes as Kurmi and Lodhi as a matter of convenience without incurring caste penalties. The large turbans and long moustaches and beards no longer characterise their appearance, and the only point which distinguishes a Rājput̃ is that his name ends with Singh (lion). But this suffix has also been adopted by others, especially the Sikhs, and by such castes as the Lodhis and Rāj-Gonds who aspire to rank as Rājput̃s. A Rājput̃ is usually addressed as Thākur or lord, a title which properly applies only to a Rājput̃ landholder, but has now come into general use. The head of a state has the designation of Rāja or Rāna, and those of the leading states of Mahārāja or Mahārāna, that is, great king. Mahārāna, which appears to be a Gujarāti form, is used by the Sesodia family of Udaipur. The sons of a Rāja are called Kunwar or prince. The title Rao appears to be a Marāthi form of Rāj or Rāja; it is retained by one or two chiefs, but has now been generally adopted as an honorific suffix by Marātha Brāhmans. Rawat appears to have been originally equivalent to Rājput̃, being simply a diminutive of Rājput̃ra, the Sanskrit form of the latter. It is the name of a clan of Rājput̃s in the Punjab, and is used as an honorific designation by Ahīrs, Saonrs, Kols and others.

13. Seclusion of women.

Women are strictly secluded by the Rājput̃s, especially in Upper India, but this practice does not appear to have been customary in ancient times, and it would be interesting to know whether it has been copied from the Muhammadans. It is said that a good Rājput̃ in the Central Provinces must not drive the plough, his wife must not use the *rehnta* or spinning-wheel, and his household may not have the *kathri* or *gudri*, the mattress made of old pieces of cloth or rag sewn one on top of the other, which is common in the poorer Hindu households.

The Rājput̃s as depicted by Colonel Tod resembled the knights of the age of chivalry. Courage, strength and endurance were the virtues most highly prized. One of the



Rājput trials of strength, it is recorded, was to gallop at full speed under the horizontal branch of a tree and cling to it while the horse passed on. This feat appears to have been a common amusement, and it is related in the annals of Mewār that the chief of Bunera broke his spine in the attempt; and there were few who came off without bruises and falls, in which consisted the sport. Of their martial spirit Colonel Tod writes: "The Rājput mother claims her full share in the glory of her son, who imbibes at the maternal fount his first rudiments of chivalry; and the importance of this parental instruction cannot be better illustrated than in the ever-recurring simile, 'Make thy mother's milk resplendent.' One need not reason on the intensity of sentiment thus implanted in the infant Rājput, of whom we may say without metaphor the shield is his cradle and daggers his playthings, and with whom the first commandment is, 'Avenge thy father's feud.'¹ A Rājput yet loves to talk of the days of chivalry, when three things alone occupied him, his horse, his lance and his mistress; for she is but third in his estimation after all, and to the first two he owed her."² And of their desire for fame: "This sacrifice (of the Johar) accomplished, their sole thought was to secure a niche in that immortal temple of fame, which the Rājput bard as well as the great minstrel of the West peoples 'with youths who died to be by poets sung.' For this the Rājput's anxiety has in all ages been so great as often to defeat even the purpose of revenge, his object being to die gloriously rather than to inflict death; assured that his name would never perish, but, preserved in immortal rhyme by the bard, would serve as the incentive to similar deeds."³ He sums up their character in the following terms: "High courage, patriotism, loyalty, honour, hospitality and simplicity are qualities which must at once be conceded to them; and if we cannot vindicate them from charges to which human nature in every clime is obnoxious; if we are compelled to admit the deterioration of moral dignity from continual inroads of, and their consequent collision with rapacious conquerors; we must yet admire the quantum of virtue

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. pp. 543, 544.

³ *Ibidem*, ii. p. 52.

² *Ibidem*, i. p. 125.

which even oppression and bad example have failed to banish. The meaner vices of deceit and falsehood, which the delineators of national character attach to the Asiatic without distinction, I deny to be universal with the Rājputs, though some tribes may have been obliged from position to use these shields of the weak against continuous oppression."¹ The women prized martial courage no less than the men: they would hear with equanimity of the death of their sons or husbands in the battlefield, while they heaped scorn and contumely on those who returned after defeat. They were constantly ready to sacrifice themselves to the flames rather than fall into the hands of a conqueror; and the Johar, the final act of a besieged garrison, when the women threw themselves into the furnace, while the men sallied forth to die in battle against the enemy, is recorded again and again in Rājput annals. Three times was this tragedy enacted at the fall of Chitor, formerly the capital fortress of the Sesodia clan; and the following vivid account is given by Colonel Tod of a similar deed at Jaisalmer, when the town fell to the Muhammadans:² "The chiefs were assembled; all were unanimous to make Jaisalmer resplendent by their deeds and preserve the honour of the Yādu race. Muhāj thus addressed them: 'You are of a warlike race and strong are your arms in the cause of your prince; what heroes excel you who thus tread in the Chhatri's path? For the maintenance of my honour the sword is in your hands; let Jaisalmer be illumined by its blows upon the foe.' Having thus inspired the chiefs and men, Muhāj and Ratan repaired to the palace of their queens. They told them to take the *sohāg*³ and prepare to meet in heaven, while they gave up their lives in defence of their honour and their faith. Smiling the Rāni replied, 'This night we shall prepare, and by the morning's light we shall be inhabitants of heaven'; and thus it was with all the chiefs and their wives. The night was passed together for the last time in preparation for the awful morn. It came; ablutions and prayers were finished and at the royal gate were convened children, wives and

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 552.

² Vol. ii. p. 227.

³ A ceremony of smearing ver-

million on the bride before a wedding, which is believed to bring good fortune.



mothers. They bade a last farewell to all their kin; the Johar commenced, and twenty-four thousand females, from infancy to old age, surrendered their lives, some by the sword, others in the volcano of fire. Blood flowed in torrents, while the smoke of the pyre ascended to the heavens: not one feared to die, and every valuable was consumed with them, so that not the worth of a straw was preserved for the foe. The work done, the brothers looked upon the spectacle with horror. Life was now a burden and they prepared to quit it. They purified themselves with water, paid adoration to the divinity, made gifts to the poor, placed a branch of the *tulsi*¹ in their casques, the *sāligrām*² round their neck; and having cased themselves in armour and put on the saffron robe, they bound the marriage crown around their heads and embraced each other for the last time. Thus they awaited the hour of battle. Three thousand eight hundred warriors, their faces red with wrath, prepared to die with their chiefs." In this account the preparation for the Johar as if for a wedding is clearly brought out, and it seems likely that husbands and wives looked on it as a bridal preparatory to the resumption of their life together in heaven.

Colonel Tod gives the following account of a Rājput's arms:³ "No prince or chief is without his *silla-khāna* or armoury, where he passes hours in viewing and arranging his arms. Every favourite weapon, whether sword, dagger, spear, matchlock or bow, has a distinctive epithet. The keeper of the armoury is one of the most confidential officers about the person of the prince. These arms are beautiful and costly. The *sirohi* or slightly curved blade is formed like that of Damascus, and is the greatest favourite of all the variety of weapons throughout Rājputāna. The long cut-and-thrust sword is not uncommon, and also the *khanda* or double-edged sword. The matchlocks, both of Lahore and the country, are often highly finished and inlaid with mother-of-pearl and gold; those of Boondi are the best. The shield of the rhinoceros-hide offers the best resistance, and is often ornamented with animals beautifully painted

¹ The basil plant, sacred to Vishnu.

to be a form of Vishnu.

² A round black stone, considered

³ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 555.



and enamelled in gold and silver. The bow is of buffalo-horn, and the arrows of reed, which are barbed in a variety of fashions, as the crescent, the trident, the snake's tongue, and other fanciful forms." It is probable that the forms were in reality by no means fanciful, but were copied from sacred or divine objects; and similarly the animals painted on the shields may have been originally the totem animals of the clan.

15. Occu-
pation.

The traditional occupation of a Rājput was that of a warrior and landholder. Their high-flown titles, Bhupāl (Protector of the earth), Bhupati (Lord of the earth), Bhusur (God of the earth), Bahuja (Born from the arms), indicate, Sir H. Risley says,¹ the exalted claims of the tribe. The notion that the trade of arms was their proper vocation clung to them for a very long time, and has retarded their education, so that they have perhaps lost status relatively to other castes under British supremacy. The rule that a Rājput must not touch the plough was until recently very strictly observed in the more conservative centres, and the poorer Rājputs were reduced by it to pathetic straits for a livelihood, as is excellently shown by Mr. Barnes in the *Kāngra Settlement Report*:² "A Miān or well-known Rājput, to preserve his name and honour unsullied, must scrupulously observe four fundamental maxims: first, he must never drive the plough; second, he must never give his daughter in marriage to an inferior nor marry himself much below his rank; thirdly, he must never accept money in exchange for the betrothal of his daughter; and lastly, his female household must observe strict seclusion. The prejudice against the plough is perhaps the most inveterate of all; that step can never be recalled; the offender at once loses the privileged salutation; he is reduced to the second grade of Rājputs; no man will marry his daughter, and he must go a step lower in the social scale to get a wife for himself. In every occupation of life he is made to feel his degraded position. In meetings of the tribe and at marriages the Rājputs undefiled by the plough will refuse to sit at meals with the Hal Bāh or plough-driver as he is

¹ *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, art. Rājput.

² Quoted in Sir D. Ibbetson's *Punjab Census Report* (1881), para. 456.



contemptuously styled; and many to avoid the indignity of exclusion never appear at public assemblies. . . . It is melancholy to see with what devoted tenacity the Rājput clings to these deep-rooted prejudices. Their emaciated looks and coarse clothes attest the vicissitudes they have undergone to maintain their fancied purity. In the quantity of waste land which abounds in the hills, a ready livelihood is offered to those who will cultivate the soil for their daily bread; but this alternative involves a forfeiture of their dearest rights, and they would rather follow any precarious pursuit than submit to the disgrace. Some lounge away their time on the tops of the mountains, spreading nets for the capture of hawks; many a day they watch in vain, subsisting on berries and on game accidentally entangled in their nets; at last, when fortune grants them success, they despatch the prize to their friends below, who tame and instruct the bird for the purpose of sale. Others will stay at home and pass their time in sporting, either with a hawk or, if they can afford it, with a gun; one Rājput beats the bushes and the other carries the hawk ready to be sprung after any quarry that rises to the view. At the close of the day if they have been successful they exchange the game for a little meal and thus prolong existence over another span. The marksman armed with a gun will sit up for wild pig returning from the fields, and in the same manner barter their flesh for other necessities of life. However, the prospect of starvation has already driven many to take the plough, and the number of seceders daily increases. Our administration, though just and liberal, has a levelling tendency; service is no longer to be procured, and to many the stern alternative has arrived of taking to agriculture and securing comparative comfort, or enduring the pangs of hunger and death. So long as any resource remains the fatal step will be postponed, but it is easy to foresee that the struggle cannot be long protracted; necessity is a hard task-master, and sooner or later the pressure of want will overcome the scruples of the most bigoted." The objection to ploughing appears happily to have been quite overcome in the Central Provinces, as at the last census nine-tenths of the whole caste were shown as employed

in pasture and agriculture, one-tenth of the Rājput̃s being landholders, three-fifths actual cultivators, and one-fifth labourers and woodcutters. The bulk of the remaining tenth are probably in the police or other branches of Government service.

Rājput̃, Baghel.—The Baghel Rājput̃s, who have given their name to Baghelkhand or Rewah, the eastern part of Central India, are a branch of the Chalukya or Solankhi clan, one of the four Agnikulas or those born from the fire-pit on Mount Abu. The chiefs of Rewah are Baghel Rājput̃s, and the late Mahārāja Rāghurāj Singh has written a traditional history of the sept in a book called the *Bhakt Māla*.¹ He derives their origin from a child, having the form of a tiger (*bāgh*), who was born to the Solankhi Rāja of Gujarāt at the intercession of the famous saint Kabīr. One of the headquarters of the Kabīrpanthi sect are at Kawardha, which is close to Rewah, and the ruling family are members of the sect; hence probably the association of the Prophet with their origin. The *Bombay Gazetteer*² states that the founder of the clan was one Anoka, a nephew of the Solankhi king of Gujarāt, Kumarpāl (A.D. 1143–1174). He obtained a grant of the village Vaghela, the tiger's lair, about ten miles from Anhilvāda, the capital of the Solankhi dynasty, and the Baghel clan takes its name from this village. Subsequently the Baghels extended their power over the whole of Gujarāt, but in A.D. 1304 the last king, Karnadeva, was driven out by the Muhammadans, and one of his most beautiful wives was captured and sent to the emperor's harem. Karnadeva and his daughter fled and hid themselves near Nāsik, but the daughter was subsequently also taken, while it is not stated what became of Karnadeva. Mr. Hira Lāl suggests that he fled towards Rewah, and that he is the Karnadeva of the list of Rewah Rājas, who married a daughter of the Gond-Rājput̃ dynasty of Garha-Mandla.³ At any rate the Baghel branch of the Solankhis apparently migrated to Rewah from Gujarāt and founded that State

¹ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Baghel.

² Vol. i. part i. p. 198.

³ See also a history of the Baghels,

called *Pratāp Vinod*, written by Khān Bahādur Rahmat Ali Khān, and translated by Thākur Pratāp Singh, Revenue Commissioner of Rewah.



about the fourteenth century, as in the fifteenth they became prominent. According to Captain Forsyth, the Baghels claim descent from a tiger, and protect it when they can; and, probably, as suggested by Mr. Crooke,¹ the name is really totemistic, or is derived from some ancestor of the clan who obtained the name of the tiger as a title or nickname, like the American Red Indians. The Baghels are found in the Hoshangābād District, and in Mandla and Chhattisgarh which are close to Rewah. Amarkantak, at the source of the Nerbudda, is the sepulchre of the Mahārājas of Rewah, and was ceded to them with the Sohāgpur tahsīl of Mandla after the Mutiny, in consideration of their loyalty and services during that period.

Rājput, Bāgri.—This clan is found in small numbers in the Hoshangābād and Seoni Districts. The name Bāgri, Malcolm says,² is derived from that large tract of plain called Bāgar or 'hedge of thorns,' the Bāgar being surrounded by ridges of wooded hills on all sides as if by a hedge. The Bāgar is the plain country of the Bikaner State, and any Jāt or Rājput coming from this tract is called Bāgri.³ The Rājputs of Bikaner are Rāthors, but they are not numerous, and the great bulk of the people are Jāts. Hence it is probable that the Bāgris of the Central Provinces were originally Jāts. In Seoni they say that they are Baghel Rājputs, but this claim is unsupported by any tradition or evidence. In Central India the Bāgris are professed robbers and thieves, but these seem to be a separate group, a section of the Badhak or Bāwaria dacoits, and derived from the aboriginal population of Central India. The Bāgris of Seoni are respectable cultivators and own a number of villages. They rank higher than the local Panwārs and wear the sacred thread, but will remove dead cattle with their own hands. They marry among themselves.

Rājput, Bais.⁴—The Bais are one of the thirty-six royal

¹ Article Baghel, quoting Forsyth's *Highlands of Central India*.

³ *Punjab Census Report* (1881), para. 445.

² *Memoir of Central India*, vol. ii. p. 479.

⁴ This article consists entirely of extracts from Mr. Crooke's article on the Bais Rājputs.

races. Colonel Tod considered them a branch of the Sūraj-
 vansi, but according to their own account their eponymous
 ancestor was Sālivāhana, the mythic son of a snake, who
 conquered the great Rāja Vikramaditya of Ujjain and fixed
 his own era in A.D. 55. This is the Sāka era, and Sālivā-
 hana was the leader of the Sāka nomads who invaded
 Gujarāt on two occasions, before and shortly after the
 beginning of the Christian era. It is suggested in the
 article on Rājput that the Yādava lunar clan are the repre-
 sentatives of these Sākas, and if this were correct the Bais
 would be a branch of the lunar race. The fact that they are
 snake-worshippers is in favour of their connection with the
 Yādavas and other clans, who are supposed to represent the
 Scythian invaders of the first and subsequent centuries, and
 had the legend of being descended from a snake. The Bais,
 Mr. Crooke says, believe that no snake has destroyed, or ever
 can destroy, one of the clan. They seem to take no pre-
 cautions against the bite except hanging a vessel of water
 at the head of the sufferer, with a small tube at the bottom,
 from which the water is poured on his head as long as he
 can bear it. The cobra is, in fact, the tribal god. The name
 is derived by Mr. Crooke from the Sanskrit Vaishya, one
 who occupies the soil. The principal hero of the Bais was
 Tilokchand, who is supposed to have come from the Central
 Provinces. He lived about A.D. 1400, and was the premier
 Rāja of Oudh. He extended his dominions over all the
 tract known as Baiswāra, which comprises the bulk of the
 Rai Bareli and Unao Districts, and is the home of the
 Bais Rājputs. The descendants of Tilokchand form a
 separate subdivision known as Tilokchandi Bais, who rank
 higher than the ordinary Bais, and will not eat with them.
 The Bais Rājputs are found all over the United Provinces.
 In the Central Provinces they have settled in small numbers
 in the northern and eastern Districts.

Rājput, Baksaria.—A small clan found principally in
 the Bilāspur District, who derive their name from Baxār in
 Bengal. They were accustomed to send a litter, that is to
 say, a girl of their clan, to the harem of each Mughal
 Emperor, and this has degraded them. They allow widow-



marriage, and do not wear the sacred thread. It is probable that they marry among themselves, as other Rājput̃s do not intermarry with them, and they are no doubt an impure group with little pretension to be Rājput̃s. The name Baksaria is found in the United Provinces as a territorial subcaste of several castes.

Rājput̃, Banāphar.—Mr. Crooke states that this sept is a branch of the Yādavas, and hence it is of the lunar race. The sept is famous on account of the exploits of the heroes Alha and Udal who belonged to it, and who fought for the Chandel kings of Mahoba and Khajurāha in their wars against Prithwi Rāj Chauhān, the king of Delhi. The exploits of Alha and Udal form the theme of poems still well known and popular in Bundelkhand, to which the sept belongs. The Banāphars have only a moderately respectable rank among Rājput̃s.¹

Rājput̃, Bhadauria.—An important clan who take their name from the village of Bhadāwar near Ater, south of the Jumna. They are probably a branch of the Chāuhāns, being given as such by Colonel Tod and Sir H. M. Elliot.² Mr. Crooke remarks³ that the Chāuhāns are disposed to deny this relationship, now that from motives of convenience the two tribes have begun to intermarry. If they are, as supposed, an offshoot of the Chāuhāns, this is an instance of the subdivision of a large clan leading to intermarriage between two sections, which has probably occurred in other instances also. This clan is returned from the Hoshangābād District.

Rājput̃, Bisen.—This clan belongs to the United Provinces and Oudh. They do not appear in history before the time of Akbar, and claim descent from a well-known Brāhman saint and a woman of the Sūrajvansi Rājput̃s whom he married. The Bisens occupy a respectable position among Rājput̃s, and intermarry with other good clans.

¹ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Banāphar.

² *Rājasthan*, i. p. 88, and *Supplementary Glossary*, s.v.

³ *Tribes and Castes*, s.v.

Rājput, Bundela.—A well-known clan of Rājputs of somewhat inferior position, who have given their name to Bundelkhand, or the tract comprised principally in the Districts of Saugor, Damoh, Jhānsi, Hamīrpur and Bānda, and the Panna, Orchha, Datia and other States. The Bundelas are held to be derived from the Gaharwār or Gherwāl Rājputs, and there is some reason for supposing that these latter were originally an aristocratic section of the Bhar tribe with some infusion of Rājput blood. But the Gaharwārs now rank almost with the highest clans. According to tradition one of the Gaharwār Rājas offered a sacrifice of his own head to the Vindhya-basini Devi or the goddess of the Vindhya hills, and out of the drops (*bund*) of blood which fell on the altar a boy was born. He returned to Panna and founded the clan which bears the name Bundela, from *bund*, a drop.¹ It is probable that, as suggested by Captain Luard, the name is really a corruption of Vindhya or Vindhyela, a dweller in the Vindhya hills, where, according to their own tradition, the clan had its birth. The Bundelas became prominent in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, after the fall of the Chandels. "Orchha became the chief of the numerous Bundela principalities; but its founder drew upon himself everlasting infamy, by putting to death the wise Abul Fazl, the historian and friend of the magnanimous Akbar, and the encomiast and advocate of the Hindu race. From the period of Akbar the Bundelas bore a distinguished part in all the grand conflicts, to the very close of the monarchy."²

The Bundelas held the country up to the Nerbudda in the Central Provinces, and, raiding continually into the Gond territories south of the Nerbudda on the pretence of protecting the sacred cow which the Gonds used for ploughing, they destroyed the castle on Chauragarh in Narsinghpur on a crest of the Satpūras, and reduced the Nerbudda valley to subjection. The most successful chieftain of the tribe was Chhatarsāl, the Rāja of Panna, in the eighteenth century, who was virtually ruler of all Bundelkhand; his dominions extending from Bānda in the north to Jubbulpore in the

¹ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Bundela.

² *Rājasthān*, i. p. 106.



south, and from Rewah in the east to the Betwa River in the west. But he had to call in the help of the Peshwa to repel an invasion of the Mughal armies, and left a third of his territory by will to the Marāthas. Chhatarsāl left twenty-two legitimate and thirty illegitimate sons, and their descendants now hold several small Bundela States, while the territories left to the Peshwa subsequently became British. The chiefs of Panna, Orchha, Datia, Chhatarpur and numerous other small states in the Bundelkhand agency are Bundela Rājputs.¹ The Bundelas of Saugor do not intermarry with the good Rājput clans, but with an inferior group of Panwārs and another clan called Dhundhele, perhaps an offshoot of the Panwārs, who are also residents of Saugor. Their character, as disclosed in a number of proverbial sayings and stories current regarding them, somewhat resembles that of the Scotch highlanders as depicted by Stevenson. They are proud and penurious to the last degree, and quick to resent the smallest slight. They make good *shikāris* or sportsmen, but are so impatient of discipline that they have never found a vocation by enlisting in the Indian Army. Their characteristics are thus described in a doggerel verse: "The Bundelas salute each other from miles apart, their *pagris* are cocked on the side of the head till they touch the shoulders. A Bundela would dive into a well for the sake of a cawrie, but would fight with the Sardārs of Government." No Bania could go past a Bundela's house riding on a pony or holding up an umbrella; and all low-caste persons who passed his house must salute it with the words, *Diwān ji ko Rām Rām*. Women must take their shoes off to pass by. It is related that a few years ago a Bundela was brought up before the Assistant Commissioner, charged with assaulting a tahsil process-server, and threatening him with his sword. The Bundela, who was very poor and wearing rags, was asked by the magistrate whether he had threatened the man with his sword. He replied "Certainly not; the sword is for gentlemen like you and me of equal position. To him, if I had wished to beat him I would have taken my shoe." Another story is that there was once a very overbearing Tahsildār, who had a

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer*, articles Bundelkhand and Panna.

shoe $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long with which he used to collect the land revenue. One day a Bundela mālguzār appeared before him on some business. The Tahsildār kept his seat. The Bundela walked quietly up to the table and said, "Will the Sirkār step aside with me for a moment, as I have something private to say." The Tahsildār got up and walked aside with him, on which the Bundela said, 'That is sufficient, I only wished to tell you that you should rise to receive me.' When the Bundelas are collected at a feast they sit with their hands folded across their stomachs and their eyes turned up, and remain impassive while food is being put on their plates, and never say, 'Enough,' because they think that they would show themselves to be feeble men if they refused to eat as much as was put before them. Much of the food is thus ultimately wasted, and given to the sweepers, and this leads to great extravagance at marriages and other ceremonial occasions. The Bundelas were much feared and were not popular landlords, but they are now losing their old characteristics and settling down into respectable cultivators.

Rājput, Chandel.—An important clan of Rājputs, of which a small number reside in the northern Districts of Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpore, and also in Chhattisgarh. The name is derived by Mr. Crooke from the Sanskrit *chandra*, the moon. The Chandel are not included in the thirty-six royal races, and are supposed to have been a section of one of the indigenous tribes which rose to power. Mr. V. A. Smith states that the Chandels, like several other dynasties, first came into history early in the ninth century, when Nannuka Chandel about A.D. 831 overthrew a Parihār chieftain and became lord of the southern parts of Jejāka-bhukti or Bundelkhand. Their chief towns were Mahoba and Kālanjar in Bundelkhand, and they gradually advanced northwards till the Jumna became the frontier between their dominions and those of Kanauj. They fought with the Gūjar-Parihār kings of Kanauj and the Kālachuris of Chedi, who had their capital at Tewar in Jubbulpore, and joined in resisting the incursions of the Muhammadans. In A.D. 1182 Parmāl, the Chandel king, was defeated by Prithwi Rāja, the



Chauhān king of Delhi, after the latter had abducted the Chandel's daughter. This was the war in which Alha and Udal, the famous Banāphar heroes, fought for the Chandels, and it is commemorated in the Chand-Raisa, a poem still well known to the people of Bundelkhand. In A.D. 1203 Kālanjar was taken by the Muhammadan Kutb-ud-Dīn Ibak, and the importance of the Chandel rulers came to an end, though they lingered on as purely local chiefs until the sixteenth century. The Chandel princes were great builders, and beautified their chief towns, Mahoba, Kālanjar and Khajurāho with many magnificent temples and lovely lakes, formed by throwing massive dams across the openings between the hills.¹ Among these were great irrigation works in the Hamirpur District, the forts of Kālanjar and Ajaigar, and the noble temples at Khajurāho and Mahoba.² Even now the ruins of old forts and temples in the Saugor and Damoh Districts are attributed by the people to the Chandels, though many were in fact probably constructed by the Kālachuris of Chedi.

Mr. Smith derives the Chandels either from the Gonds or Bhars, but inclines to the view that they were Gonds. The following considerations tend, I venture to think, to favour the hypothesis of their origin from the Bhars. According to the best traditions, the Gonds came from the south, and practically did not penetrate to Bundelkhand. Though Saugor and Damoh contain a fair number of Gonds they have never been of importance there, and this is almost their farthest limit to the north-west. The Gond States in the Central Provinces did not come into existence for several centuries after the commencement of the Chandel dynasty, and while there are authentic records of all these states, the Gonds have no tradition of their dominance in Bundelkhand. The Gonds have nowhere else built such temples as are attributed to the Chandels at Khajurāho, whilst the Bhars were famous builders. "In Mirzāpur traces of the Bhars abound on all sides in the shape of old tanks and village forts. The bricks found in the Bhar-dihs or forts are of enormous dimensions, and frequently measure 19 by 11 inches, and

¹ *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, pp. 390-394.

² Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Chandel.

are $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick. In quality and size they are similar to bricks often seen in ancient Buddhist buildings. The old capital of the Bhars, five miles from Mīrzāpur, is said to have had 150 temples."¹ Elliot remarks² that "common tradition assigns to the Bhars the possession of the whole tract from Gorakhpur to Bundelkhand and Saugor, and many old stone forts, embankments and subterranean caverns in Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Mīrzāpur and Allahābād, which are ascribed to them, would seem to indicate no inconsiderable advance in civilisation." Though there are few or no Bhars now in Bundelkhand, there are a large number of Pāsis in Allahābād which partly belongs to it, and small numbers in Bundelkhand; and the Pāsi caste is mainly derived from the Bhars;³ while a Gaharwār dynasty, which is held to be derived from the Bhars, was dominant in Bundelkhand and Central India before the rise of the Chandels. According to one legend, the ancestor of the Chandels was born with the moon as a father from the daughter of the high priest of the Gaharwār Rāja Indrajit of Benāres or of Indrajit himself.⁴ As will be seen, the Gaharwārs were an aristocratic section of the Bhars. Another legend states that the first Chandel was the offspring of the moon by the daughter of a Brāhman Pandit of Kalanjar.⁵ In his *Notes on the Bhars of Bundelkhand*⁶ Mr. Smith argues that the Bhars adopted the Jain religion, and also states that several of the temples at Khajurāho and Mahoba, erected in the eleventh century, are Jain. These were presumably erected by the Chandels, but I have never seen it suggested that the Gondhs were Jains or were capable of building Jain temples in the eleventh century. Mr. Smith also states that Maniya Deo, to whom a temple exists at Mahoba, was the tutelary deity of the Chandels; and that the only other shrine of Maniya Deo discovered by him in the Hamīrpur District was in a village reputed formerly to have been held by the Bhars.⁷ Two instances of intercourse between the Chandels and Gondhs are given, but

¹ Sherring's *Castes and Tribes*, i. pp. 359, 360.

² *Supplemental Glossary*, art. Bhar.

³ See art. Pāsi.

⁴ Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Chandel.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ *J.A.S.B.* vol. xlv. (1877), p. 232.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 233.



the second of them, that the Rāni Dūrgavati of Mandla was a Chandel princess, belongs to the sixteenth century, and has no bearing on the origin of the Chandels. The first instance, that of the Chandel Rāja Kīrat Singh hunting at Maniagarh with the Gond Rāja of Garha-Mandla, cannot either be said to furnish any real evidence in favour of a Gond origin for the Chandels; it may be doubted whether there was any Gond Rāja of Garha-Mandla till after the fall of the Kālachuri dynasty of Tewar, which is quite close to Garha-Mandla, in the twelfth century; and a reference so late as this would not affect the question.¹ Finally, the Chandels are numerous in Mirzāpur, which was formerly the chief seat of the Bhars, while the Gonds have never been either numerous or important in Mirzāpur. These considerations seem to point to the possibility of the derivation of the Chandels from the Bhars rather than from the Gonds; and the point is perhaps of some interest in view of the suggestion in the article on Kol that the Gonds did not arrive in the Central Provinces for some centuries after the rise of the Chandel dynasty of Khajurāho and Mahoba. The Chandels may have simply been a local branch of the Gaharwārs, who obtained a territorial designation from Chanderi, or in some other manner, as has continually happened in the case of other clans. The Gaharwārs were probably derived from the Bhars. The Chandels now rank as a good Rājput clan, and intermarry with the other leading clans.

Rājput, Chauhān.—The Chauhān was the last of the Agnikula or fire-born clans. According to the legend: "Again Vasishtha seated on the lotus prepared incantations; again he called the gods to aid; and as he poured forth the libation a figure arose, lofty in stature, of elevated front, hair like jet, eyes rolling, breast expanded, fierce, terrific, clad in armour with quiver filled, a bow in one hand and a brand in the other, quadriform (Chaturanga), whence his name was given as Chauhān." This account makes the Chauhān the most important of the fire-born clans, and Colonel Tod says that he was the most valiant of the Agnikulas, and it may be asserted not of them only but of

¹ *J.A.S.B.* vol. xlv. (1877), p. 233.

the whole Rājput race ; and though the swords of the Rāhtors would be ready to contest the point, impartial decision must assign to the Chauhān the van in the long career of arms.¹ General Cunningham shows that even so late as the time of Prithwi Rāj in the twelfth century the Chauhāns had no claim to be sprung from fire, but were content to be considered descendants of a Brāhman sage Bhrigu.² Like the other Agnikula clans the Chauhāns are now considered to have sprung from the Gurjara or White Hun invaders of the fifth and sixth centuries, but I do not know whether this is held to be definitely proved in their case. Sāmbhar and Ajmer in Rājputāna appear to have been the first home of the clan, and inscriptions record a long line of thirty-nine kings as reigning there from Anhul, the first created Chauhān. The last but one of them, Vighraha Rāja or Bisāl Deo, in the middle of the twelfth century extended the ancestral dominions considerably, and conquered Delhi from a chief of the Tomara clan. At this time the Chauhāns, according to their own bards, held the line of the Nerbudda from Garha-Mandla to Maheshwar and also Asīrgarh, while their dominions extended north to Hissar and south to the Aravalli hills.³ The nephew of Bisāl Deo was Prithwi Rāj, the most famous Chauhān hero, who ruled at Sāmbhar, Ajmer and Delhi. His first exploit was the abduction of the daughter of Jaichand, the Gaharwār Rāja of Kanauj, in about A.D. 1175. The king of Kanauj had claimed the title of universal sovereign and determined to celebrate the Ashwa-Medha or horse-sacrifice, at which all the offices should be performed by vassal kings. Prithwi Rāj alone declined to attend as a subordinate, and Jaichand therefore made a wooden image of him and set it up at the gate in the part of doorkeeper. But when his daughter after the tournament took the garland of flowers to bestow it on the chief whom she chose for her husband, she passed by all the assembled nobles and threw the garland on the neck of the wooden image. At this moment Prithwi Rāj dashed in with a few companions, and catching her up, escaped with

¹ *Rājasthān*, i. pp. 86, 87.

³ *Imperial Gazetteer, India*, vol. ii.

² *Archaeological Reports*, ii. 255, p. 312.
quoted in Mr. Crooke's art. Chauhān.



her from her father's court.¹ Afterwards, in 1182, Prithwi Rāj defeated the Chandel Rāja Parmāl and captured Mahoba. In 1191 Prithwi Rāj was the head of a confederacy of Hindu princes in combating the invasion of Muhammad Ghorī. He repelled the Muhammadans at Tarāin about two miles north of Delhi, but in the following year was completely defeated and killed at Thaneswar, and soon afterwards Delhi and Ajmer fell to the Muhammadans. The Chauhān kingdom was broken up, but scattered parts of it remained, and about A.D. 1307 Asīgarh in Nimār, which continued to be held by the Chauhāns, was taken by Ala-ud-Dīn Khiljī and the whole garrison put to the sword except one boy. This boy, Raisi Chauhān, escaped to Rājputāna, and according to the bardic chronicle his descendants formed the Hāra branch of the Chauhāns and conquered from the Mīnas the tract known as Hāravatī, from which they perhaps took their name.² This is now comprised in the Kotah and Bundi states, ruled by Hāra chiefs. Another well-known offshoot from the Chauhāns are the Khīchi clan, who belong to the Sind-Sāgar Doāb; and the Nikumbh and Bhadauria clans are also derived from them. The Chauhāns are numerous in the Punjab and United Provinces and rank as one of the highest Rājput clans. In the Central Provinces they are found principally in the Narsinghpur and Hoshangābād Districts, and also in Mandla. The Chauhān Rājputs of Mandla marry among themselves, with other Chauhāns of Mandla, Seoni and Bālāghāt. They have exogamous sections with names apparently derived from villages like an ordinary caste. The remarriage of widows is forbidden, but those widows who desire to do so go and live with a man and are put out of caste. This, however, is said not to happen frequently. A widow's hair is not shaved, but her glass bangles are broken, she is dressed in white, made to sleep on the ground, and can wear no ornaments. Owing to the renown of the clan their name has been adopted by numerous classes of inferior Rājputs and low Hindu castes who have no right to it. Thus in the Punjab a large subcaste of Chamārs call themselves Chauhān, and in the Bilāspur District a low caste

¹ *Early History of India and Imperial Gazetteer*, loc. cit.

² *Rājasthān*, ii. p. 419.

of village watchmen go by this name. These latter may be descendants of the illegitimate offspring of Chauhān Rājputs by low-caste women.

Rājput, Dhākar.—In the Central Provinces this term has the meaning of one of illegitimate descent, and it is often used by the Kirārs, who are probably of mixed descent from Rājputs. In northern India, however, the Dhākars are a clan of Rājputs, who claim Sūrajvansi origin; but this is not generally admitted. Mr. Crooke states that some are said to be emigrants from the banks of the Nerbudda; but the main body say they came from Ajmer in the sixteenth century. They were notorious in the eighteenth century for their lawlessness, and gave the imperial Mughal officers much trouble in the neighbourhood of Agra, rendering the communications between that city and Etāwah insecure. In the Mutiny they broke out again, and are generally a turbulent, ill-conducted sept, always ready for petty acts of violence and cattle-stealing. They are, however, recognised as Rājputs of good position and intermarry with the best clans.¹

In the Central Provinces the Dhākars are found principally in Hoshangābād, and it is doubtful if they are proper Rājputs.

Rājput, Gaharwār, Gherwāl.—This is an old clan. Mr. V. A. Smith states that they had been dominant in Central India about Nowgong and Chhatarpur before the Parihārs in the eighth century. The Parihār kings were subsequently overthrown by the Chandels of Mahoba. In their practice of building embankments and constructing lakes the Chandels were imitators of the Gaharwārs, who are credited with the formation of some of the most charming lakes in Bundelkhand.² And in A.D. 1090 a Rāja of the Gaharwār clan called Chandradeva seized Kanauj (on the Ganges north-west of Lucknow), and established his

¹ The above particulars are taken from Mr. Crooke's article Dhākara in his *Tribes and Castes*.

² *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, p. 391.



authority certainly over Benāres and Ajodhia, and perhaps over the Delhi territory. Govindachandra, grandson of Chandradeva, enjoyed a long reign, which included the years A.D. 1114 and 1154. His numerous land grants and widely distributed coins prove that he succeeded to a large extent in restoring the glories of Kanauj, and in making himself a power of considerable importance. The grandson of Govindachandra was Jayachandra, renowned in the popular Hindu poems and tales of northern India as Rāja Jaichand, whose daughter was carried off by the gallant Rai Pithora or Prithwi Rāj of Ajmer. Kanauj was finally captured and destroyed by Shihāb-ud-Dīn in 1193, when Jaichand retired towards Benāres but was overtaken and slain.¹ His grandson, Mr. Crooke says,² afterwards fled to Kantit in the Mirzāpur District and, overcoming the Bhar Rāja of that place, founded the family of the Gaharwār Rājas of Kantit Bijaypur, which was recently still in existence. All the other Gaharwārs trace their lineage to Benāres or Bijaypur. The predecessors of the Gaharwārs in Kantit and in a large tract of country lying contiguous to it were the Bhars, an indigenous race of great enterprise, who, though not highly civilised, were far removed from barbarism. According to Sherring they have left numerous evidences of their energy and skill in earthworks, forts, dams and the like.³ Similarly Elliot says of the Bhars: "Common tradition assigns to them the possession of the whole tract from Gorakhpur to Bundelkhand and Saugor, and the large pargana of Bhadoi or Bhardai in Benāres is called after their name. Many old stone forts, embankments and subterranean caverns in Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Mirzāpur and Allahābād, which are ascribed to them, would seem to indicate no inconsiderable advance in civilisation."⁴ Colonel Tod says of the Gaharwārs: "The Gherwāl Rājput is scarcely known to his brethren in Rājasthān, who will not admit his contaminated blood to mix with theirs, though as a brave warrior he is entitled to their fellowship."⁵ It is thus curious that the Gaharwārs, who are one of the oldest clans

¹ *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, p. 385.

² *Tribes and Castes*, art. Gaharwār.

³ *Tribes and Castes*, i. p. 75.

⁴ *Supplementary Glossary*, p. 33.

⁵ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 105.

to appear in authentic history, if they ruled Central India in the eighth century before the Parihārs, should be considered to be of very impure origin. And as they are subsequently found in Mīrzāpur, a backward forest tract which is also the home of the Bhars, and both the Gaharwārs and Bhars have a reputation as builders of tanks and forts, it seems likely that the Gaharwārs were really, as suggested by Mr. V. A. Smith, the aristocratic branch of the Bhars, probably with a considerable mixture of Rājput blood. Elliot states that the Bhars formerly occupied the whole of Azamgarh, the pargana of Bara in Allahābād and Khariagarh in the Kanauj tract. This widespread dominance corresponds with what has been already stated as regards the Gaharwārs, who, according to Mr. V. A. Smith, ruled in Central India, Kanauj, Oudh, Benāres and Mīrzāpur. And the name Gaharwār, according to Dr. Hoernle, is connected with the Sanskrit root *gah*, and has the sense of 'dwellers in caves or deep jungle.'¹ The origin of the Gaharwārs is of interest in the Central Provinces, because it is from them that the Bundela clan of Saugor and Bundelkhand is probably descended.²

The Gaharwārs, Mr. Crooke states, now hold a high rank among Rājput septs; they give daughters to the Baghel, Chandel and Bisen, and take brides of the Bais, Gautam, Chauhān, Parihār and other clans. The Gaharwārs are found in small numbers in the Central Provinces, chiefly in the Chhattisgarh Districts and Feudatory States.

Rājput, Gaur, Chamar Gaur.—Colonel Tod remarks of this tribe: "The Gaur tribe was once respected in Rājasthān, though it never there attained to any considerable eminence. The ancient kings of Bengal were of this race, and gave their name to the capital, Lakhnauti." This town in Bengal, and the kingdom of which it was the capital, were known as Gauda, and it has been conjectured that the Gaur Brāhmans and Rājputs were named after it. Sir H. M. Elliot and Mr. Crooke, however, point out that the home of the Gaur Brāhmans and Rājputs and a cultivating caste,

¹ Quoted in Mr. Crooke's article on Gaharwār.

² See art. Rājput, Bundela.



the Gaur Tāgas, is in the centre and west of the United Provinces, far removed from Bengal; the Gaur Brāhman now reside principally in the Meerut Division, and between them and Bengal is the home of the Kanaujia Brāhman. General Cunningham suggests that the country comprised in the present Gonda District round the old town of Sravāsti, was formerly known as Gauda, and was hence the origin of the caste name.¹ The derivation from Gaur in Bengal is perhaps, however, more probable, as the name was best known in connection with this tract. The Gaur Rājput̃s do not make much figure in history. "Repeated mention of them is found in the wars of Prithwi Rāj as leaders of considerable renown, one of whom founded a small state in the centre of India. This survived through seven centuries of Mogul domination, till it at length fell a prey indirectly to the successes of the British over the Marāthas, when Sindhia in 1809 annihilated the power of the Gaur and took possession of his capital, Supur."²

In the United Provinces the Gaur Rājput̃s are divided into three groups, the Bāhman, or Brāhman, the Bhāt, and the Chamār Gaur. Of these the Chamār Gaur, curiously enough appear to rank the highest, which is accounted for by the following story: When trouble fell upon the Gaur family, one of their ladies, far advanced in pregnancy, took refuge in a Chamār's house, and was so grateful to him for his disinterested protection that she promised to call her child by his name. The Bhāts and Brāhman, to whom the others fled, do not appear to have shown a like chivalry, and hence, strange as it may appear, the subdivisions called after their name rank below the Chamār Gaur.³ The names of the subsepts indicate that this clan of Rājput̃s is probably of mixed origin. If the Brāhman subsept is descended from Brāhman, it would be only one of several probable cases of Rājput̃ clans originating from this caste. As regards the Bhāt subcaste, the Chārāns or Bhāts of Rājputāna are admittedly Rājput̃s, and there is therefore nothing curious in finding a Bhāt subsection in a Rājput̃ clan. What the real origin of the Chamār Gaurs was is difficult to surmise.

¹ Quoted in Mr. Crooke's article
Gaur Brāhman.

² *Rajasthān*, i. p. 105.

³ *Supplemental Glossary*, s.v.

The Chamār Gaur is now a separate clan, and its members intermarry with the other Gaur Rājput̄s, affording an instance of the subdivision of clans. In the Central Provinces the greater number of the persons returned as Gaur Rājput̄s really belong to a group known as Gorai, who are considered to be the descendants of widows or kept women in the Gaur clan, and marry among themselves. They should really therefore be considered a separate caste, and not members of the Rājput̄ caste proper. In the United Provinces the Gaurs rank with the good Rājput̄ clans. In the Central Provinces the Gaur and Chamār-Gaur clans are returned from most Districts of the Jubbulpore and Nerbudda divisions, and also in considerable numbers from Bhandāra.

Rājput̄, Haihaya, Haihaivansi, Kālachuri.—This well-known historical clan of the Central Provinces is not included among the thirty-six royal races, and Colonel Tod gives no information about them. The name Haihaya is stated to be a corruption of Ahihaya, which means snake-horse, the legend being that the first ancestor of the clan was the issue of a snake and a mare. Haihaivansi signifies descendants of the horse. Colonel Tod states that the first capital of the Indu or lunar race was at Mahesvati on the Nerbudda, still existing as Maheshwar, and was founded by Sahasra Arjuna of the Haihaya tribe.¹ This Arjuna of the thousand arms was one of the Pāndava brothers, and it may be noted that the Ratanpur Haihaivansis still have a story of their first ancestor stealing a horse from Arjuna, and a consequent visit of Arjuna and Krishna to Ratanpur for its recovery. Since the Haihayas also claim descent from a snake and are of the lunar race, it seems not unlikely that they may have belonged to one of the Scythian or Tartar tribes, the Sākas or Yueh-chi, who invaded India shortly after the commencement of the Christian era, as it has been conjectured that the other lunar Rājput̄ clans worshipping or claiming descent from a snake originated from these tribes. The Haihaivansis or Kālachuris became dominant in the Nerbudda valley about the sixth century, their earliest

¹ *Rajasthān*, i. p. 36.



inscription being dated A.D. 580. Their capital was moved to Tripura or Tewar near Jubbulpore about A.D. 900, and from here they appear to have governed an extensive territory for about 300 years, and were frequently engaged in war with the adjoining kingdoms, the Chandels of Mahoba, the Panwārs of Mālwa, and the Chalukyas of the south. One king, Gangeyadeva, appears even to have aspired to become the paramount power in northern India, and his sovereignty was recognised in distant Tīrhūt. Gangeyadeva was fond of residing at the foot of the holy fig-tree of Prayāga (Allahābād), and eventually found salvation there with his hundred wives. From about A.D. 1100 the power of the Kālachuri or Haihaya princes began to decline, and their last inscription is dated A.D. 1196. It is probable that they were subverted by the Gond kings of Garha-Mandla, the first of whom, Jadurai, appears to have been in the service of the Kālachuri king, and subsequently with the aid of a dismissed minister to have supplanted his former master.¹ The kingdom of the Kālachuri or Haihaya kings was known as Chedi, and, according to Mr. V. A. Smith, corresponded more or less roughly to the present area of the Central Provinces.²

In about the tenth century a member of the reigning family of Tripura was appointed viceroy of some territories in Chhattīsgarh, and two or three generations afterwards his family became practically independent of the parent house, and established their own capital at Ratanpur in Bilāspur District (A.D. 1050). This state was known as Dakshin or southern Kosāla. During the twelfth century its importance rapidly increased, partly no doubt on the ruins of the Jubbulpore kingdom, until the influence of the Ratanpur princes, Ratnadeva II. and Prithwideva II., may be said to have extended from Amarkantak to beyond the Godāvāri, and from the confines of Berār in the west to

¹ The above notice of the Kālachuri or Haihaya dynasty of Tripura is taken from the detailed account in the *Jubbulpore District Gazetteer*, pp. 42-47, compiled by Mr. A. E. Nelson, C.S., and Rai Bahādur Hira Lāl.

² *Early History of India*, 3rd edi-

tion, p. 390. This, however, does not only refer to the Jubbulpore branch, whose territories did not probably include the south and east of the present Central Provinces, but includes also the country over which the Ratanpur kings subsequently extended their separate jurisdiction.

the boundaries of Orissa in the east.¹ The Ratanpur kingdom of Chedi or Dakshin Kosāla was the only one of the Rājput states in the Central Provinces which escaped subversion by the Gond, and it enjoyed a comparatively tranquil existence till A.D. 1740, when Ratanpur fell to the Marāthas almost without striking a blow. "The only surviving representative of the Haihayas of Ratanpur," Mr. Wills states,² "is a quite simple-minded Rājput who lives at Bargaon in Raipur District. He represents the junior or Raipur branch of the family, and holds five villages which were given him revenue-free by the Marāthas for his maintenance. The mālguzār of Senduras claims descent from the Ratanpur family, but his pretensions are doubtful. He enjoys no privileges such as those of the Bargaon Thākur, to whom presents are still made when he visits the chiefs who were once subordinate to his ancient house." In the Ballia District of the United Provinces³ are some Hayobans Rājputs who claim descent from the Ratanpur kings. Chandra Got, a cadet of this house, is said to have migrated northwards in A.D. 850⁴ and settled in the Sāran District on the Ganges, where he waged successful war with the aboriginal Cheros. Subsequently one of his descendants violated a Brāhman woman called Maheni of the house of his Purohit or family priest, who burnt herself to death, and is still locally worshipped. After this tragedy the Hayobans Rājputs left Sāran and settled in Ballia. Colonel Tod states that, "A small branch of these ancient Haihayas yet exist in the country of the Nerbudda, near the very top of the valley, at Sohāgpur in Baghelkhand, aware of their ancient lineage, and, though few in number, are still celebrated for their valour."⁵ This Sohāgpur must apparently be the Sohāgpur tahsīl of Rewah, ceded from Mandla after the Mutiny.

Rājput, Hūna, Hoon.—This clan retains the name and

¹ *Bilāspur District Gazetteer*, chap. ii., in which a full and interesting account of the Ratanpur kingdom is given by Mr. C. U. Wills, C.S.

² *Ibidem*, p. 49.

³ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Hayobans.

⁴ The date is too early, as is usual in these traditions. Though the Haihaivansis only founded Ratanpur about A.D. 1050, their own legends put it ten centuries earlier.

⁵ *Rajasthān*, i. p. 36.



memory of the Hun barbarian hordes, who invaded India at or near the epoch of their incursions into Europe. It is practically extinct; but in his *Western India* Colonel Tod records the discovery of a few families of Hūnas in Baroda State: "At a small village opposite Ometā I discovered a few huts of Huns, still existing under the ancient name of Hoon, by which they are known to Hindu history. There are said to be three or four families of them at the village of Trisavi, three *kos* from Baroda, and although neither feature nor complexion indicate much relation to the Tartar-visaged Hun, we may ascribe the change to climate and admixture of blood, as there is little doubt that they are descended from these invaders, who established a sovereignty on the Indus in the second and sixth centuries of the Christian era, and became so incorporated with the Rājput population as to obtain a place among the thirty-six royal races of India, together with the Gete, the Kāthi, and other tribes of the Sacae from Central Asia, whose descendants still occupy the land of the sun-worshipping Saura or Chaura, no doubt one of the same race."

Rājput, Kachhwāha, Cutchwāha.—A celebrated clan of Rājputs included among the thirty-six royal races, to which the Mahārājas of the important states of Amber or Jaipur and Alwar belong. They are of the solar race and claim descent from Kash, the second son of the great king Rāma of Ajodhia, the incarnation of Vishnu. Their original seat, according to tradition, was Rohtās on the Son river, and another of their famous progenitors was Rāja Nal, who migrated from Rohtās and founded Narwar.¹ The town of Damoh in the Central Provinces is supposed to be named after Damyanti, Rāja Nal's wife. According to General Cunningham the name Kachhwāha is an abbreviation of Kachhaha-ghāta or tortoise-killer. The earliest appearance of the Kachhwāha Rājputs in authentic history is in the tenth century, when a chief of the clan captured Gwalior from the Parihār-Gūjar kings of Kanauj and established himself there. His dynasty had an independent existence till A.D. 1128, when it became tributary

¹ *Rajasthān*, ii. p. 319.

to the Chandel kings of Mahoba.¹ The last prince of Gwalior was Tejkarān, called Dūlha Rai or the bridegroom prince, and he received from his father-in-law the district of Daora in the present Jaipur State, where he settled. In 1150 one of his successors wrested Amber from the Mīnas and made it his capital. The Amber State from the first acknowledged the supremacy of the Mughal emperors, and the chief of the period gave his daughter in marriage to Akbar. This chief's son, Bhagwān Dās, is said to have saved Akbar's life at the battle of Sarnāl. Bhagwān Dās gave a daughter to Jahāngīr, and his adopted son, Mān Singh, the next chief, was one of the most conspicuous of the Mughal Generals, and at different periods was governor of Kābul, Bengal, Bihār and the Deccan. The next chief of note, Jai Singh I., appears in all the wars of Aurāngzeb in the Deccan. He was commander of 6000 horse, and captured Sivaji, the celebrated founder of the Marātha power. The present city of Jaipur was founded by a subsequent chief, Jai Singh II., in 1728. During the Mutiny the Mahārāja of Jaipur placed all his military power at the disposal of the Political Agent, and in every way assisted the British Government. At the Durbar of 1877 his salute was raised to 21 guns. Jaipur, one of the largest states in Rājputāna, has an area of nearly 16,000 square miles, and a population of 2½ million persons. The Alwar State was founded about 1776 by Pratāp Singh, a descendant of a prince of the Jaipur house, who had separated from it three centuries before. It has an area of 3000 square miles and a population of nearly a million.² In Colonel Tod's time the Kachhwāha chiefs in memory of their descent from Rāma, the incarnation of the sun, celebrated with great solemnity the annual feast of the sun. On this occasion a stately car called the chariot of the sun was brought from Rāma's temple, and the Mahārāja ascending into it perambulated his capital. The images of Rāma and Siva were carried with the army both in Alwar and Jaipur. The banner of Amber was always called the *Pānchranga*

¹ *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, p. 381.

² The above information is taken

from the new *Imperial Gazetteer*, articles Jaipur and Alwar States.



or five-coloured flag, and is frequently mentioned in the traditions of the Rājput bards. But it does not seem to be stated what the five colours were. Some of the finest soldiers in the old Sepoy army were Kachhwāha Rājputs. The Kachhwāhas are fairly numerous in the United Provinces and rank with the highest Rājput clans.¹ In the Central Provinces they are found principally in the Saugor, Hoshangābād and Nimār Districts.

Rājput, Nāgvansi.—This clan are considered to be the descendants of the Tāk or Takshac, which is one of the thirty-six royal races, and was considered by Colonel Tod to be of Scythian origin. The Takshac were also snake-worshippers. “Nāga and Takshac are synonymous appellations in Sanskrit for the snake, and the Takshac is the celebrated Nāgvansa of the early heroic history of India. The Mahābhārat describes in its usual allegorical style the war between the Pāndus of Indraprestha and the Takshacs of the north. Parikhīta, a prince on the Pāndu side, was assassinated by the Takshac, and his son and successor, Janamejaya, avenged his death and made a bonfire of 20,000 snakes.”² This allegory is supposed to have represented the warfare of the Aryan races against the Sākas or Scythians. The Tāk or Takshac would be one of the clans held to be derived from the earlier invading tribes from Central Asia, and of the lunar race. The Tāk are scarcely known in authentic history, but the poet Chand mentions the Tak from Aser or Asirgarh as one of the princes who assembled at the summons of Prithwī Rāj of Delhi to fight against the Muhammadans. In another place he is called Chatto the Tāk. Nothing more is known of the Tāk clan unless the cultivating Tāga caste of northern India is derived from them. But the Nāgvansi clan of Rājputs, who profess to be descended from them, is fairly numerous. Most of the Nāgvansis, however, are probably in reality descended from landholders of the indigenous tribes who have adopted the name of this clan, when they wished to claim rank as Rājputs. The change is rendered more easy by

¹ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Kachhwāha.

² *Rājasthān*, i. p. 94; Elliot's *Supplemental Glossary*, art. Gaur Tāga.

the fact that many of these tribes have legends of their own, showing the descent of their ruling families from snakes, the snake and tiger, owing to their deadly character, being the two animals most commonly worshipped. Thus the landholding section of the Kols or Mundas of Chota Nāgpur have a long legend¹ of their descent from a princess who married a snake in human form, and hence call themselves Nāgvansi Rājput̃s; and Dr. Buchanan states that the Nāgvansi clan of Gorakhpur is similarly derived from the Chero tribe.² In the Central Provinces the Nāgvansi Rājput̃s number about 400 persons, nearly all of whom are found in the Chhattisgarh Districts and Feudatory States, and are probably descendants of Kol or Munda landholding families.

Rājput̃, Nikumbh.—The Nikumbh is given as one of the thirty-six royal races, but it is also the name of a branch of the Chauhāns, and it seems that, as suggested by Sherring,³ it may be an offshoot from the great Chauhān clan. The Nikumbh are said to have been given the title of Sirnet by an emperor of Delhi, because they would not bow their heads on entering his presence, and when he fixed a sword at the door some of them allowed their necks to be cut through by the sword rather than bend the head. The term Sirnet is supposed to mean headless. A Chauhān column with an inscription of Rāja Bisal Deo was erected at Nigumbode, a place of pilgrimage on the Jumna, a few miles below Delhi, and it seems a possible conjecture that the Nikumbhs may have obtained their name from this place.⁴ Mr. Crooke, however, takes the Nikumbh to be a separate clan. The foundation of most of the old forts and cities in Alwar and northern Jaipur is ascribed to them, and two of their inscriptions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been discovered in Khāndesh. In northern India some of them are now known as Rāghuvansi.⁵ They are chiefly found in the Hoshangābād and Nimār Districts, and may be connected with the Rāghuvansi or Rāghwi caste of these Provinces.

¹ See article on Kol.

Nikumbh.

² *Eastern India*, ii. 461, quoted in Mr. Crooke's art. Nāgvansi.

⁴ *Rājasthān*, ii. p. 417.

³ *Tribes and Castes*, vol. i. art.

⁵ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Nikumbh.



Rājput, Pāik.—This term means a foot-soldier, and is returned from the northern Districts. It belongs to a class of men formerly maintained as a militia by zamīndārs and landholders for the purpose of collecting their revenue and maintaining order. They were probably employed in much the same manner in the Central Provinces as in Bengal, where Buchanan thus describes them :¹ "In order to protect the money of landowners and convey it from place to place, and also, as it is alleged, to enforce orders, two kinds of guards are kept. One body called Burkandāz, commanded by Duffadārs and Jemādārs, seems to be a more recent establishment. The other called Pāik, commanded by Mīrdhas and Sirdārs, are the remains of the militia of the Bengal kingdom. Both seem to have constituted the foot-soldiers whose number makes such a formidable appearance in the Ain-i-Akbari. These unwieldy establishments seem to have been formed when the Government collected rent immediately from the farmer and cultivator, and when the same persons managed not only the collections but the police and a great part of the judicial department. This vast number of armed men, more especially the latter, formed the infantry of the Mughal Government, and were continued under the zamīndārs, who were anxious to have as many armed men as possible to support them in their depredations. And these establishments formed no charge, as they lived on lands which the zamīndār did not bring to account." The Pāiks are thus a small caste formed from military service like the Khandaits or swordsmen of Orissa, and are no doubt recruited from all sections of the population. They have no claim to be considered as Rājputs.

Rājput, Parihār.—This clan was one of the four Agnikulas or fire-born. Their founder was the first to issue from the fire-fountain, but he had not a warrior's mien. The Brāhmans placed him as guardian of the gate, and hence his name, *Prithi-ha-dwāra*, of which Parihār is supposed to be a corruption.² Like the Chauhāns and Solankis the Parihār clan is held to have originated from the Gurjara or Gūjar invaders who came with the white Huns in the

¹ *Eastern India*, ii. p. 919.

² *Rājasthān*, i. p. 86.

fifth and sixth centuries, and they were one of the first of the Gūjar Rājput clans to emerge into prominence. They were dominant in Bundelkhand before the Chandels, their last chieftain having been overthrown by a Chandel prince in A.D. 831.¹ A Parihār-Gūjar chieftain, whose capital was at Bhinmāl in Rājputāna, conquered the king of Kanauj, the ruler of what remained of the dominions of the great Harsha Vārdhana, and established himself there about A.D. 816.² Kanauj was then held by Gūjar-Parihār kings till about 1090, when it was seized by Chandradeva of the Gaharwār Rājput clan. The Parihār rulers were thus subverted by the Gaharwārs and Chandels, both of whom are thought to be derived from the Bhars or other aboriginal tribes, and these events appear to have been in the nature of a rising of the aristocratic section of the indigenous residents against the Gūjar rulers, by whom they had been conquered and perhaps taught the trade of arms. After this period the Parihārs are of little importance. They appear to have retired to Rājputāna, as Colonel Tod states that Mundore, five miles north of Jodhpur, was their headquarters until it was taken by the Rāhtors. The walls of the ruined fortress of Mundore are built of enormous square masses of stone without cement, and attest both its antiquity and its former strength.³ The Parihārs are scattered over Rājputāna, and a colony of them on the Chambal was characterised as the most notorious body of thieves in the annals of Thug history.⁴ Similarly in Etāwah they are said to be a peculiarly lawless and desperate community.⁵ The Parihār Rājputs rank with the leading clans and intermarry with them. In the Central Provinces they are found principally in Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpore.

Rājput, Rāthor, Rāthaur.—The Rāthor of Jodhpur or Mārwar is one of the most famous clans of Rājputs, and that which is most widely dominant at the present time, including as it does the Rājas of Jodhpur, Bikaner, Ratlām, Kishengarh and Idar, as well as several smaller states. The

¹ *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, p. 390.

² *Ibidem*, pp. 378, 379.

³ *Rājasthān*, i. p. 91.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Mr. Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Parihār.



origin of the Rāthor clan is uncertain. Colonel Tod states that they claim to be of the solar race, but by the bards of the race are denied this honour; and though descended from Kash, the second son of Rāma, are held to be the offspring of one of his progeny, Kashyap, by the daughter of a Dait (Titan). The view was formerly held that the dynasty which wrested Kanauj from the descendants of Harsha Vārdhana, and held it from A.D. 810 to 1090, until subverted by the Gaharwārs, were Rāthors, but proof has now been obtained that they were really Parihār-Gūjars. Mr. Smith suggests that after the destruction of Kanauj by the Muhammadans under Shihāb-ud-Dīn Ghori in A.D. 1193 the Gaharwār clan, whose kings had conquered it in 1090 and reigned there for a century, migrated to the deserts of Mārwar in Rājputāna, where they settled and became known as Rāthors.¹ It has also been generally held that the Rāshtrakūta dynasty of Nāsik and Mālkhed in the Deccan which reigned from A.D. 753 to 973, and built the Kailāsa temples at Ellora were Rāthors, but Mr. Smith states that there is no evidence of any social connection between the Rāshtrakūtas and Rāthors.² At any rate Siāhji, the grandson or nephew of Jai Chand, the last king of Kanauj, who had been drowned in the Ganges while attempting to escape, accomplished with about 200 followers—the wreck of his vassalage—the pilgrimage to Dwārka in Gujarāt. He then sought in the sands and deserts of Rājputāna a second line of defence against the advancing wave of Muhammadan invasion, and planted the standard of the Rāthors among the sandhills of the Luni in 1212. This, however, was not the first settlement of the Rāthors in Rājputāna, for an inscription, dated A.D. 997, among the ruins of the ancient city of Hathūndī or Hastikūndī, near Bāli in Jodhpur State, tells of five Rāthor Rājas who ruled there early in the tenth century, and this fact shows that the name Rāthor is really much older than the date of the fall of Kanauj.³

In 1381 Siāhji's tenth successor, Rao Chonda, took Mundore from a Parihār chief, and made his possession secure by marrying the latter's daughter. A subsequent

¹ *Early History of India*, 3rd edition, p. 389.

² *Ibidem*, p. 413.

³ *Imperial Gazetteer*, art. Bāli.

chief, Rao Jodha, laid the foundation of Jodhpur in 1459, and transferred thither the seat of government. The site of Jodhpur was selected on a peak known as Joda-gīr, or the hill of strife, four miles distant from Mundore on a crest of the range overlooking the expanse of the desert plains of Mārwar. The position for the new city was chosen at the bidding of a forest ascetic, and was excellently adapted for defence, but had no good water-supply.¹ Joda had fourteen sons, of whom the sixth, Bika, was the founder of the Bikaner state. Rāja Sur Singh (1595–1620) was one of Akbar's greatest generals, and the emperor Jahāngīr buckled the sword on to his son Gaj Singh with his own hands. Gaj Singh, the next Rāja (1620–1635), was appointed viceroy of the Deccan, as was his successor, Jaswant Singh, under Aurāngzeb. The Mughal Emperors, Colonel Tod remarks, were indebted for half their conquests to the Lākh Tulwār Rāthorān, the hundred thousand swords which the Rāthors boasted that they could muster.² On another occasion, when Jahāngīr successfully appealed to the Rājputs for support against his rebel son Khusru, he was so pleased with the zeal of the Rāthor prince, Rāja Gaj Singh, that he not only took the latter's hand, but kissed it,³ perhaps an unprecedented honour. But the constant absence from his home on service in distant parts of the empire was so distasteful to Rāja Sur Singh that, when dying in the Deccan, he ordered a pillar to be erected on his grave containing his curse upon any of his race who should cross the Nerbudda. The pomp of imperial greatness or the sunshine of court favour was as nothing with the Rāthor chiefs, Colonel Tod says, when weighed against the exercise of their influence within their own cherished patrimony. The simple fare of the desert was dearer to the Rāthor than all the luxuries of the imperial banquet, which he turned from in disgust to the recollection of the green pulse of Mundore, or his favourite *rabi* or maize porridge, the prime dish of the Rāthor.⁴ The Rāthor princes have been not less ready in placing themselves and the forces of their States at the disposal of the British Government, and the latest and perhaps most

¹ *Rajasthan*, ii. pp. 16, 17.

² *Ibidem*, i. p. 81.

³ *Ibidem*, ii. p. 37.

⁴ *Ibidem*, ii. p. 35.