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“ It will flourish, if naturalists, chemists, antiquaries, philologers, and men of science in different parts of *Asia*, will commit their observations to writing, and send them to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. It will languish, if such communications shall be long intermitted; and it will die away, if they shall entirely cease.” SIR WM. JONES.

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Gayā Çrāddha and Gayāwāls.—By MR. L. S. S. O'MALLEY, I.C.S.

Few districts perhaps in India afford so interesting a study of the evolution of different forms of religion as the district of Gayā. On the one hand, it is well known as having been the birthplace of Buddhism, and though Buddhism as an active form of faith has passed away from the hearts of the people, the great temple of Bodh Gayā and the sacred tree, under which the master attained Buddhahood, still attract devout pilgrims from Burma, Siam, Ceylon, Siberia, and even new converts to Buddhism from England and America. In striking contrast is the primitive form of religion which obtains throughout the district, and which is the real everyday faith of the great majority of the inhabitants. This may be perhaps best defined as Demonolatry and is well described in the words of George Elliott:—

“A shadowy conception of power, that by much persuasion can be induced to refrain from inflicting harm, is the shape most easily taken by the sense of the Invisible in the minds of men, who have always been pressed close by primitive wants and to whom a life of hard toil has never been illuminated by any enthusiastic religious faith.”

J. III. 1

Side by side, however, with this crude type of religion stands the special form of orthodox Hinduism, which is known under the name of *Gayā Çrāddha*. Thus in this district alone we find the past glories of the Buddhist religion perpetuated by the great rock caves of Barabar, the stately fane of Bodh Gayā and the sculptured remains the wondering peasant finds, together with the present prevalence of fetishism and demonolatry, the followers of which strive to propitiate evil spirits by offerings before stocks and stones : and then again in striking contrast, inside the town of Gayā, a living and intense Hinduism, which finds its manifestation in the *Gayā Çrāddha*. It is the last which is connoted by the name of Gayā to every pious Hindu and which yearly draws its throngs of pilgrims from every part of India. For our present purpose, however, the interest of this worship largely lies in the fact that it culminates and finds expression in the priestly caste of Gayā, the *Gayāwāls*. The name, which is probably a corruption of *Gayāpāla*, implies their position as guardians of Gayā. The origin of the caste is not easy to discover ; the *Gayāwāls* themselves base their claims on the legend contained in the *Gayā Māhātmya*, which is part of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, attributed to Vyāsa. According to this a giant demon, *Gayā Asura*, performed a rigid penance for a thousand years. The gods, anxiously fearing that they could give no sufficient reward, came to him and asked what reward he wanted ; his request that he might be the holiest of all things was granted, with the result that all who saw or touched him went to Heaven. Yama, the God of Hell, finding that he was monarch of an empty realm, appealed to the gods. They persuaded *Gayā Asura* to allow a sacrifice to be performed on his body ; the sacrifice (*Yajña*) was accordingly performed, but the demon was not yet laid. Yama brought a sacred rock from his home, which he placed on the demon's head, and then all the gods sat on his body, but still the demon moved. At last Viṣṇu was called in ; he struck *Gayā* with his club and " removed " with this blow, as the account euphemistically has it, all his fatigue and pain. *Gayā Asura* then begged as a last boon that the gods should abide for all time on his body ; that this should be the holiest of spots, within the limits of which all men might obtain salvation by offering *Çrāddha*. His prayer was granted and his body became the holy ground of Gayā.

At the time of this great sacrifice *Brahmā*, seeing that the *Brāhmaṇas* refused to accept the sacrificed offerings of the *Yajña*, incarnated the *Gayāwāl Brāhmaṇas* in fourteen gotras to assist in the sacrifice. On its completion he made them gifts of mountains of silver and gold, tanks and rivers of milk and honey, on the one condition that they should never accept gifts for *Çrāddha*. Yama, however, after perform-

ing *Āradha*, gave them gifts of gold and jewels secreted in betel leaves. Brahmā therefore cursed them, and their mountains turned to stone, their rivers and tanks to water. They threw themselves on Brahmā's mercy; in pity he promised that, though the precious mountains and rivers were for ever lost, they should have their one means of livelihood in the gifts of devotees who performed *Āradha* at Gayā and that, though void of knowledge and learning, they should be respected and worshipped by all. The curse certainly has been fulfilled as far as regards their ignorance and want of education, as the present Gayāvāls are notoriously destitute of learning and even of knowledge of the Hindu scriptures, for which, however, they can claim divine sanction.

This is the legend on which the Gayāvāls base their claims to be considered first of Brāhmaṇas, as having been incarnated by Brahmā himself as sacrificial Brāhmaṇas, as the only persons entitled to receive the offerings of the *Āradha*, and as possessing the key of salvation for ancestors, a right proved by their worship by the pilgrims and by their utterance of the "*Suphal bākya*," whereby alone salvation is assured.

In this legend the erudite scholar, Dr. Rājeṇdrālāla Mitrā, finds an allegory of the triumph of Hinduism over Buddhism between the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era. His arguments, however, are not very convincing, *viz.*, that the benevolent demon made salvation too easy a matter and was therefore an enemy to Brāhmaṇism, and that Buddhists were as pious and self-mortifying as the Asura in his penance and like him did away with Brāhmaṇism and all sacrifice; he further adds that the distance covered by Gayā's body is perhaps an allusion to the area over which Buddhism obtained, that the crushing of the good devil represents an appeal to force, and the rock placed on his head corresponds in extent to the present Gayā.

It is difficult to extract a substratum of truth from Indian mythology, which has been stigmatized by one writer as "an incrustation of dead matter" or to deduce conclusions from the distances given among the fantasies of a Hindu legend. The demon, moreover, is represented throughout as a devout worshipper of Viṣṇu and quite obedient to him, though the premise is that he represents the antithesis of Viṣṇuism.

On the other hand, analogy is found in similar legends, such as that of the Piṅāca (or Ogre) Mocana, who tried to force his way into the assembly of the gods at Benares: he had almost entered the city, when its guardian, Bhairabanātha, smashed his head in with his club. The demon prayed that, as he was so near success, Mahādeva should allow him a place in the holy city; the prayer was granted and the demon deified. Here, too, it is contended that the story of the struggle points to a religious strife between Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism, which ended in a

compromise, the latter religion not being rooted out, but incorporated with Brāhmanism. The two legends have several points of similarity, and it is possible that there may be some such meaning buried under the fantastic form of the Gayā legend. Hindu mythology is, however, full of instances of holy men, whose penances would force the kingdom of Heaven, and whom the gods therefore crush like Gayā, seduce like the father of Çakuntalā, or persuade like Dharmāvartta. If the theory of Dr. Rājendralala Mitra be correct, the origin of the Gayā Çrāddha and of the Gayāwāls must be put in the early centuries of the Christian era. Fa Hian, the Chinese pilgrim, who visited India 399-413 A.D., found in his travels both Brāhmaṇa and Buddhist priests; the temples of both religions flourishing side by side, but Gayā was desolate and deserted. The great Chinese traveller, Hinen Tsiang, who visited Gayā in the course of his long pilgrimage (629 to 645 A.D.), found it a Hindu town with a small population and a thousand families of Brāhmaṇas, the descendants of a Rīṣi, who were highly respected by the people and exempted by the king from the service of vassals. Even Bodh Gayā, the birthplace of Buddhism, he found, was given over to the Brāhmanical idolater. Are we to consider these Brāhmaṇas the first Gayāwāls? There is nothing to shew they presided over any Çrāddha; and, further, it has been stated in the early years of the last century* that the universal opinion was that "five or six centuries ago Gayā as a place of pilgrimage was in comparative obscurity, when probably the legend now current was invented and adapted to prevailing opinions."

The Gayāwāls themselves profess as their religion the Vaiṣṇavism established by the Drāviṇa Brāhmaṇa, Mādhavāchāryya, in Southern India during the fourteenth century A.D. and acknowledge as their spiritual head the Mahant of Hari Narsimhapura, a connection still kept up, as evinced by a visit he paid to Gayā some ten years ago.

Examination of the Gayā Māhātmya, however, leaves one impressed with the prominent position taken in it by Yama, the God of Hell, as well as, or perhaps even more than, by Viṣṇu. The part taken by Yama in the crushing of Gayā Asura has been already described: further, we find another legend embodied in the work, which seems to give a parallel account of the sanctity of the city of Gayā and its connection with the God of Hell: this is to the effect that the stone, which Yama placed on Gayā's head to crush him, was the rock into which Dharmāvartta was turned at her request; that as this was the holiest rock on earth, all the gods abiding on it, all mortals who bathed and worshipped upon it attained heaven. As in the former version, all

1 Hamilton's East Indian Gazetteer, 1828.

who touched it went to heaven; Yama, finding his kingdom empty, prayed to be allowed to abdicate and was told by the gods to solve the difficulty by taking it to his house. He did so and brought it thence to crush the demon Gayā. In both accounts it is Yama that is the moving spirit in the suppression of the Asura, and it is noticeable that the presentation of Yama is very far removed from the conception given in the Vedas and is more that of the popular devil.

The most marked feature of the *Gayā Mahātmya*, though in many respects *Vaiṣṇava* in tone and in its invocation of *Viṣṇu*, is the emphasis laid on the necessity of propitiating Yama and delivering the ghosts of ancestors from the lives of fiends and evil spirits. The long invocation called the *Piṇḍa Kharāṣi*, which is prescribed at the time of offering *piṇḍas*, clearly shews the idea of propitiation of the disembodied souls of those who have died violent and unnatural deaths. This *Mantra* specifies those to whom offering is made, *viz.*, among others those whose funeral rites have not been performed, those who have died through abortion, been burnt, been devoured by dogs, been poisoned or hanged; those who have committed suicide or been shot by arrows; died by drowning, of starvation or thirst; ancestors who have been lame or maimed or who are roaming about as evil ghosts or who by the snare of their deeds have made it difficult ever again to live human lives. This list is a very fair category of those who are popularly conceived as malevolent dead, whose worship is incumbent.

In the same spirit offering at *Pretaṣilā*, *i.e.*, the Hill of Ghosts, is enjoined that Yama may not beat or bruise the ghosts of the dead, and his two hell-hounds must be worshipped at *Rāmaṣilā* that they may not bark and bay at the unhappy spirits.

In this spirit, too, many of the *vedis* or holy spots, which the pilgrim must visit, are sacred to the God of Hell. On *Dharmmaṣilā* Yama is said to be immovably settled; the *pīpal* tree at *Dharmmarāya* (*Boḍh Gaya*), the king of trees to which there is a special invocation, was planted by *Dharmarāj*, and this *vedi* is sacred by reason of the sacrifices and *Ārādha* performed there by him. Again, there is at *Gayā* a tank named *Baitaraṇi* by bathing in which salvation is obtained; this is named after the Hindu *Styx*, which flows by the halls of Yama, the infernal judge, which the souls of the dead must cross.

At other holy spots offerings are ordered to be made to the Hounds of Hell, to the four crows of Hell, and to the God of Hell himself with the prayer: "I offer this to thee, O Yama, for the deliverance of my ancestors." Again it is laid down that "whoever will worship the Immoveable and Eternal *Ādi Gadādhara* at one *vedi*, the *Munda Prishta Hill*, shall overcome the God of Hell."

The *Gayā Ćrāddha*, then, is essentially a gloomy rite intimately associated with the terrors of the nether world and far removed from the *Vaiṣṇavism* of *Jagannātha*. The conception of the state of evil roaming spirits, who are to be saved by offering, is not distinctively Hindu and appears to warrant a suggestion that the worship bound up with the *Gayāwāls* represents an amalgamation with the popular demonolatry which preceded *Brāhmaṇism* and has co-existed with it. The Hindu abhorrence of *Magadha* is usually explained by its having been the ancient home of Buddhism: thus in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of *Tulasī Dāsa* the writer contrasts *Magadha* with *Kāṣi*, as he contrasts evil with good, pain with pleasure, demons with gods; and in another place speaking of some smooth words spoken by *Kaikeyī*, he says: "These fair words in her mouth were like *Gayā* and other holy places in *Magadha*." May not this feeling be as fairly attributed to the dislike of *Magadha* as a home of aboriginal peoples, beliefs, and cults? In the *Gayā* District to this day we find the prevalent form of religion consists in the propitiation of evil spirits, while in *Gayā* itself there seem to be much of the same belief under the cloak of orthodoxy.

If this assumption be allowed it helps to explain the position of the *Dhāmis* at *Gayā*. These priests alone have the right to officiate at the ceremonies performed at five *vedis*, *Pretaṣilā*, *Rāmaṣilā*, *Rāmakunḍa*, *Brahmakunḍa* and *Kāgbali*, out of the total of forty-five *vedis*, the *Gayāwāls* having a monopoly of the remainder. These five *vedis*, the *pāncḥ vedit* which comprises the second day of the pilgrims' tour, are all situated on or about the two hills, *Rāmaṣilā* and *Pretaṣilā*, which are peculiarly devoted to *Yama* and evil spirits. As regards the offerings of the pilgrims, the practice is that the *Gayāwāl* collects the pilgrims' fees and dues when the *Gayā Ćrāddha* is completed, and he pronounces the word *Suphāl*, thereby certifying that he gives salvation. Among these are the gifts promised at the hills, and these are given to the *Dhāmi* after deducting one quarter which the *Gayāwāl* keeps.

The general custom is for the offering at *Rāmaṣilā* or *Pretaṣilā* to be merely promised there: the *dakṣiṇā* at the hill is *Bāk-dakṣiṇā*. Apparently if the offering is actually made at the hill, it is not made by the pilgrim personally, but by the *Gayāwāl's* servant who accompanies him and pays the *Dhāmi* three quarters of the amount on the spot. In either case the *Gayāwāl* gets a quarter, whether when advancing or realizing the fees. This arrangement between the *Gayāwāls* and the *Dhāmis* seems to point to a compromise in the past. The *Dhāmis* are a distinct order and, though holding the position of *Brāhmaṇas*, stand on an inferior plane.

They, too, base their claims on the *Gayā Mahātmya*, in which paren-

thetically it is stated that they, too, received gifts from Brahmā at the time of the great Yajña, and it is directed that the devotee must give them offerings, worship their feet and circumambulate their persons when performing *Āradhā* at Pretaṣilā. This, however, does not find place in the account of the crushing of Gayā Asura, but is inserted in the body of the work, in the middle of the description of different *vedīs*, and may be a later interpolation. Little is known about the origin of the Dhāmis or of their name; the only other Dhāmis, found north of the Ganges, are said to be a low and probably non-Aryan caste. The two hills, at which they officiate, are at some distance from Old Gayā town, where the Gayāvāls reside, one of them, Pretaṣilā, being five miles away, and it is probable that originally a mass of jungle cut them off. It is not improbable that the arrangement between them and the Gayāvāls, represents an old compromise between Brāhmaṇism and aboriginal demonolatry practised on the jungle hills: such a view is confirmed by the marked tendency throughout the *Gayā Āradhā* towards a primitive conception of roaming spirits, which is peculiarly pronounced in the case of the hill shrines, of which the Dhāmis are the guardian priests. The feeling on this subject appears to be exemplified by the fact that the greatest rush of pilgrims occurs in Āṣvin, this being popularly regarded as the month in which, as an educated Hindu of Gayā once expressed to me, "accounts should be settled with the Bhūts." It is true that the direct propitiation of the dead as primarily malevolent is not specified by the *Gayā Māhātmya*, or expressly contained in the *Gayā Āradhā*, but the description of the spirits invoked in the *Pinḍa Kharāṣi* and their invocation shews that it is those spirits in particular who have met with a violent or unnatural end who are to be saved from the state of evil spirits: indeed it is expressly stated that offerings are made to them whether roaming as evil spirits or suffering in the obscurest Hell. Thus at Pretaṣilā the pilgrim sitting with his face to the south—the realm of the God of Hell is to throw *Ārtu* and *til* in the air and pray: "May those of my ancestors who live the lives of evil spirits be pleased to take this *pinḍa* and be satisfied. May they accept the water given by my hands and go to heaven."

The idea of worship of the dead seems inculcated again in such passages as the invocation, "Come, all my ancestors and feed yourself to your satisfaction," and by part of a *mantra* to be recited at the time of offering, praying that the concoction of *til* may be received by the ancestors, and again by the direction that by the satisfaction of the Gayāvāls the gods and spirits of ancestors are satisfied.

It will be seen that this closely approaches the practice of the more vulgar demonolatry, which consists in offerings to, and propitiation of,

the spirits of the dead particularly when malevolent: it is far removed from the Vaiṣṇavism of which it is assumed to be a part.

Whatever the origin of the *Gayā Ćrāddha*, it is certain that at the present day it is regarded as essentially orthodox and as fulfilling the highest duty of a Hindu. In the words of a *Gayā* proverb: "*Mātā pitā kul tarāneko jo Gayā na gayā, so kahiñ na gayā*":—He who has not gone to *Gayā* to procure salvation for his parents has gone nowhere. Not only is it the Hindu's duty to save the souls of his ancestors, but it accumulates merit for himself: he is, in fact, said to be making a ladder to Heaven by his pilgrimage. The *Gayāwāls* therefore occupy an interesting position, as without them the *Gayā Ćrāddha* is impossible. At the end of the pilgrimage it is indispensably necessary to worship the *Gayāwāl's* feet and receive his blessing when he pronounces the word '*Suphal*' and thereby certifies that the offerings have been fruitful and the souls of the ancestors are saved. They alone have the right to officiate as priests and receive offerings, and no *Ćrāddha* is efficacious without their patronage. It is as incumbent on the pilgrim to propitiate them as to appease the gods by gifts. Their position is therefore a very high one and not, as has been said, that of a degraded sub-caste of *Brāhmaṇas*. A committee of Hindu gentlemen, appointed by the Magistrate of *Gayā* during the last census to determine the classification of castes, held them to be a high class of *Brāhmaṇas* as "the Hindus of the whole of India, including *Brāhmaṇas* of all the countries who come to *Gayā*, worship the *Gayāwāls* in the same way as if they were worshipping *Ćri Viṣṇu* himself":—they accordingly classed the *Gayāwāls* with the *Pancha Gaur*, *Pancha Drāvira* and *Ćākadvīpi Brāhmaṇas*. At present there appears to be a danger of their total extinction at no very distant future. The number of their houses is said to have been originally fourteen hundred and eighty-four; in Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's time they numbered about one thousand families; in 1893 a prominent *Gayāwāl* counted the number on the occasion of a visit of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and found there were only 128 families; while the census of 1901 shews there were of pure *Gayāwāls* only 168 males and 153 females. The cause of this rapid diminution must be sought partly in the life they lead, which is indolent and sedentary. They are, in general, notoriously idle and dissolute and do not affect even the appearance of asceticism. As an observer has remarked: "The votaries of superstition do not gain any addition to their prior stock of morals from intercourse with them." But the chief cause of their gradual decrease is the marriage difficulty. A peculiar class of *Brāhmaṇas*, able to marry and adopt only within their own ranks, marriage is a serious difficulty, as marriageable girls

are few and most of the widowers are unable to marry. This has led to a mistaken view of their marriage laws which has been perpetuated to the present, e.g., in Balfour's Cyclopædia of India, 1885, it is quaintly stated that "Gayālese widowers are barred the privilege of wiving after the death of their first wife as Hindu widows after the death of their first husband." This is no new development, for in 1860 I find that a Bengali traveller, Bholānātha Candra, is struck by the same peculiarity. The necessity of perpetuating the race has led to a curious form of adoption which is quasi-commercial in character. Old families are constantly dying out and in the nature of things new houses cannot arise. To further complicate matters the heads of many of the surviving houses are women. The Gayāwāls fifty years ago were more or less emancipated, but at the present day they are *pardā-nashīn*. As *pardā-nashīn* they can receive foot-worship only from women, and nowhere but in their own houses, whereas strictly this should be performed at the Akṣayabaṭa or Undying tree, where the pilgrim's round ends. There must therefore be some delegated recipient of worship, as no pilgrimage to Gayā and no offerings made are valid without this rite. The difficulty is met by adoption of which there are two forms. There is, first, the Dattaka form in which a child is adopted (I know indeed of one case in which a child of five received foot-worship); in this form the adoptee must be under five years of age, he changes his family and the adoption is final and irrevocable. The majority of adoptions, however, are of a different kind, and are really matters of business convenience. In order to remove the inconvenience caused by the Gayāwālin's inability to receive pilgrims, and to save her from the loss of income caused thereby, the practice has sprung up of adopting by deed and, in many cases, of adopting adults. In some cases the Dattaka ceremonies are copied in these irregular adoptions, but the adoption is governed entirely by the terms of the deed. Generally, according to the terms of the deed, the adoptee comes into the property on the death of the adoptrix, but the deed generally reserves her right to repudiate the adopted son in case of misconduct; indeed cancellation of the adoption is almost as common as the custom of such adoption itself; it generally depends on the terms of the deed, and in some cases is effected after the convocation of a *Panchāyat* and sometimes independently. According to some Gayāwāls the position of such an adopted son is little better than that of a servant, as he can be dismissed or not, as the lady chooses, but if he is still with her when she dies, he inherits the property devised by the deed of adoption.

As might be expected, these adoptions which are not according to the

Çāstras, and which do not imply the authority required by a widow from her husband under the Hindu Law, have led to much litigation, and when contested by the natural heirs have been held by the courts to be invalid. As far back as 1865 the Judge of Gayā, finding this to be an open question on which there was no decision, held an enquiry by calling an assembly of Gayāwāls and Āchāryyas and recording evidence on the question of custom in a Gayāwāl's house. He found the practice of adoption by deed to be common, and that mature age, near relationship, except in ascent, and the previous marriage of the adoptee were no bar. He concluded that the Gayāwāls were not governed by the tenets of the *Çāstras*, but by customs of their own. Since, then, these cases of adoption have come occasionally before the courts of law, and it has been found that this arrangement by which the practice of a deceased husband is carried on through the adopted son is quite common. The adopted son is considered to have succeeded to the *gaddi* of the deceased, but his position in his own family is not affected and he conducts the business of both families.

A *cause célèbre* finally occurred in 1894 which was fought up to the Privy Council, which affirmed the decision of the Judge of Gayā, *viz.*, that none of these adoptions by deed, which were neither ancient nor certain, could be considered a *Kṛtrima* adoption in the *Mitakṣārā* form or according to the *Dattaka-Mimāmsa*. The details of this case are typical and interesting as illustrating this peculiar form of adoption. The case arose from a Gayāwālin without male issue having adopted a son on the death of her husband. Though according to the custom and usage of the Gayāwāls she herself had power to adopt, the husband in this particular case had actually executed a deed of permission. A Gayāwāl was accordingly, with his own consent, adopted and became her agent and representative; it was stipulated by the deed that he should not interfere with her property during her lifetime, but succeed as her heir, and, further, she reserved the right to repudiate him should he prove disobedient or bring disgrace upon her, after consultation with the Gayāwāl community. Subsequently he was repudiated with the consent and upon the advice of a body of Gayāwāls, who sat upon and considered his misdoings, the chief of which was that he began to live separately and, setting up for himself, appropriated the pilgrims and their gifts, which belonged by right to his adopted mother. This, it may be noted *en passant*, is not uncommonly the sequel of such adoptions. After his repudiation another son was adopted by another deed.

This case clearly shews the motive of these adoptions; it is a device by which the adoptee preserves the veneration and keeps the offerings of families of pilgrims devoted to his own house, while he also acquires

as their representative those of the family which he enters by adoption. He sometimes adds the name of this family to that of his own, though still remaining a member of his own family: for change of family is regarded as impossible owing to cases in which a man may be adopted by several families.

This form of adoption, then, has been the result of the necessity of adaptation to circumstance. It is an expedient to meet a practical difficulty devised without much regard to its legal validity. Indeed, like most of the organization of the Gayāwāls, it is partly spiritual and partly commercial in its character. The system by which books with details of the pilgrims and their homes are kept, emissaries sent all over India to keep up the old, and form new, connexions, the provision made not only for their spiritual welfare, but also for their bodily comfort at Gayā, the parcelling out of India among the various houses so that each has its recognised sphere of influence, all shew that, to an hereditary religious sanctity, the Gayāwāls add a keen commercial shrewdness. It is probably due to this organization that we find it stated in the early part of last century* that "there are numerous regulations among the Gayāwāls for the internal management, but they are a sort of freemasonry, the particulars of which have never been communicated to the public." It is indeed true that their organization is that of a guild, a close corporation, membership of which is hereditary.

It is in consequence of the peculiar conditions of their position that this unusual kind of adoption has sprung up: its nature must be interpreted in the light of their spiritual claims and of the business which is their result. The Gayāwāl's means of livelihood is the pilgrims' fees, and there must be a Gayāwāl to receive these and grant the spiritual blessing which accrues from the worship of his feet. By adoption by deed, a male representative is secured, and the income of the house, on the one hand, and, on the other, its spiritual powers, by which the deliverance of the spirits of ancestors is pronounced, are assured. By this form the prestige of the family and its source of income are maintained. The *Dattaka* form, again, directly aims at the perpetuation of the race, though the narrow limits, within which such adoption can take place, render it only a partial safeguard against the extinction of the race of Gayāwāls, which the conditions of their life and the exigencies of their marriage law promise to bring about in no very distant future.

* Hamilton's East India Gazetteer, 1828.

Some notes on the Religion and Superstitions of the Orāḥs.—By THE REV.
F. HAHN.

A.—Benevolent spirits.

1. *The Sun* is called Biḍi or the shining one. "Dharmē" is the supreme spirit, but his abode is in the sun, with whom the supreme Godhead is almost identical. When an Orāḥ has done all he can to satisfy the evil spirits and so get rid of a certain disease, without the desired effect, then he will turn in prayer to "Dharmē" the Sun-god or Sun-spirit and say, "*Akkun ninim ra' adai,*" i.e., "Now art even thou," meaning "Now the case rests with thee." Vows are made in sickness to Dharmē and sacrifices are promised to obtain recovery by his aid. Vows to Dharmē are made especially in diseases of the organs of generation. The sacrifices consist of fowls and goats, which must be of a white colour. At the beginning of the harvest time Dharmē is generally worshipped, a white fowl being sacrificed in his honour.

2. *The Earth.*—She is worshipped as a goddess, and her marriage with "Dharmē" is celebrated annually at the time when the *sāl* tree flowers. The marriage is celebrated in the following manner: All bathe; then the men proceed to the *Sarnā* or sacred grove, whilst the women assemble at the house of the village priest. After sacrificing some fowls to Dharmē and the *Sarnā* demon, the men eat and drink. The priest is then carried back to the village on the shoulders of some strong man. Near the village the women meet the men and wash their feet. With beating of drums and singing, dancing and jumping, all proceed to the priest's house, which has been decorated with leaves and flowers. Then the usual form of marriage is performed between the priest and his wife, symbolizing the supposed union between Sun and Earth. After the ceremony all eat and drink and make merry; they dance and sing obscene songs, and finally indulge in the vilest orgies. The object is to move the mother earth to become fruitful. This festival is called by the Orāḥs the *Khadī* or relationship through marriage. In Hindī this festival is called *Sarhūl*.

3. *The departed souls or the spirits of the ancestors.*—When a person dies the soul is supposed to hover at first over the corpse and then over the grave or cremation place. At the time of the *Haḍḍībar*—the festival kept in the month of January or December, called by the Orāḥs *Kōhā-beñjā*, 'the great marriage,'—the relics or ashes of the corpses are

deposited at a place called Kuṇḍī, which is in some field or grove. It is a pit set apart for the purpose and is generally covered with huge stones. Before the relics are deposited they are put in a small earthen pot, which is carried in a procession with dancing and singing, and this ceremony, combined with the final deposit of the relics, is considered to be a marriage ceremony performed to cause the departed souls to be admitted into the circle of the spirits of ancestors in the other world. The departed souls or spirits of ancestors are worshipped and sacrifices and offerings of eatables, etc., are made to them for a twofold purpose: Firstly, to ensure their own repose; and, secondly, to obtain help from them. At each festival in the year some morsels of the meal, together with some of the liquor, is allowed to fall to the ground or is purposely dropped for the benefit of the ancestors. When the first new rice in the year is cooked, before anybody will partake of it, a dole of it is put outside the house as an offering to the ancestors, and a fowl is sacrificed in their name. Some go so far in their worship of their ancestors that at each meal, and when every cup of rice beer is taken, a little is dropped for their benefit. In times of great distress, accidents or danger, vows and sacrifices are made to the spirits of ancestors in order to obtain their help.

4. *The Karam tree* (*Nanolea parvifolia*) is also worshipped as a benevolent godling. The *Karam* festival is held at the beginning of the harvest, as a thanksgiving festival. For this purpose the young people go to the jungle and fetch a branch of the tree, which is carried to the village dancing-place with much singing, dancing, and beating of tomtoms. Here it is stuck into the ground, lights and flowers are put into it, and after eating and drinking, the people make merry with dancing the whole night; at dawn the tree or branch is carried to the nearest river and thrown into the water.*

B.—Malevolent spirits.

1. *Darhā*, the fiercest of all, lives in the sacred grove of *Sāl* or *Bāl* trees and is represented by a wooded pole. The *Darhā* is a village *bhūt*, but he is not found in all villages. To him human sacrifices must be made, at least once in each generation. The men who are employed to secretly catch a human being, generally a boy or girl are called *Otaṅgā*; in Kurukh *Ondkā*, which means taken. In defiance of the law prohibiting such sacrifices, and in spite of the vigilance of the police, human sacrifices are still believed to be made secretly.

2. *Dēswāli*.—This is another *bhūt*, a female, and is found in every

* See also Dalton's *Ethnology*, page 269 (Ed.)

village. This, too, is represented by a block of wood. Every third and tenth year sacrifices of buffaloes and fowls must be made to her to secure her favour, otherwise she will create mischief like *Darhā*, and fatal diseases will break out among men and cattle.

3. *Khüntā*.—This is the *Nād* or *bhūt* of the *Khünt* or sept. It is represented by a small wooden peg stuck in the field. Every third year when the rice is transplanted, a sheep is immolated to the *Khüntā*, and fowls are sacrificed yearly. Each *Khüntā Nād* has its own name, which is kept secret by the members of the sept. If the name is revealed, mischief will certainly be done by the demon, who appears to be of a very irritable temper, since she is easily disturbed and infuriated through spells or neglect.

4. *Erpā-nād*, the house demon, kept in the house in the shape of a wooden peg. Sacrifices of fowls and goats are made in her name when any severe illness occurs.

5. *Ohālō-Pachō* or *Jhākṛā-Buḍhi* or *Sarnā Buḍhi* is the name of the spirits of the Asur women whose husbands were killed by the son of *Dharmē*, according to the well-known Asur legend. She is especially worshipped at the sacred *Sāl* grove, at the time of the *Khadi* festival; the sacrifices to her consist of black fowls. Her sisters take up their abode in the *Pīpal* and *Dumbarī* (fig) trees.

6. *Ohandī* is the goddess of hunting. She is worshipped in the form of a stone. Fowls and goats are sacrificed to her to ensure success in hunting.

7. *Baraṇḍā* is supposed to live on the hills. He causes misfortune and poverty by taking up his abode in the dwelling-houses, which he is always trying to enter. To prevent him from entering, or to get rid of him, sour or tasteless food is offered to disgust him, and so induce him to go elsewhere.

8. *Ohuril* or *Chōrdēwā*.—This is one of the worst *bhūts* who disturb the quiet life of the Orāṣ peasant. The *Ohuril* is the departed spirit of a woman who died during confinement. She appears in the form of a woman, but her feet are turned backwards. She also enters the house in the shape of a black cat. She is specially dangerous to newborn children and to women at the time of confinement. Sacrifices must be made to her at the place where her corpse has been deposited and during his wife's confinement the husband must guard the house to ward her off.

9. *Muā*.—These are the spirits of people who have died a violent death, e.g., by strangulation, or accident, or from starvation, or who have been killed by wild beasts or poisonous reptiles.

10. *The unknown village bhūt* is supposed to haunt fields kept

fallow at certain places, which must never be brought under cultivation ; only cattle may graze there, otherwise the evil spirit will take offence and give trouble.

O.—Noxious spirits and apparitions.

1. *Bkh.*—Nightmare, supposed to be the shadow or apparition of a departed soul which seeks repose.
2. *Barandō.*—Whirlwind, also a disquieted soul which is seeking rest.
3. *Aerolites and Meteors* are likewise departed spirits who have been disturbed.
4. Evil spirits who cause delirium, epilepsy, fainting fits, and lunacy.
5. Evil spirits who appear as huge giants or without a head.
6. Evil spirits who cause frightful dreams.
7. Evil spirits who haunt ruins or guard hidden treasures.
8. Evil spirits who infest mountains, jungles, and lonely places.

D.—The offices connected with the religious cult of the Orāḍe.

1. The *Naigā*, or *pāhān* or priest, whose duty it is to perform the sacrifices at the appointed times to keep the village *bhūt* quiet ; he has also to officiate when sacrifices are made in special cases for the benefit of the community or of particular individuals. The *Naigā's* office is not hereditary, but it is generally held by a person of the *Pāhān Khünt*. The manner of electing the priest is as follows :—

On the day of resignation, death, or apostasy of a *Pāhān*, the headmen of the village assemble at the *ākhrā*. A ball-shaped stone is taken from some place or other and after some spells have been uttered over it, it is hit and rolled about the village. When it happens to fall near the house of a man eligible for the post, he generally obeys the divine oracle and goes to the former priest's house, where he receives charge of the *Kētēr* or winnowing fan, the sacred emblem of the priest's office.

2. The *Pūjār*, a later invention apparently, is the assistant of the *Naigā* and at his instance may also perform sacrifices ; in his absence he acts as his delegate.

3. The *Panbharā*, also a recent creation, is the person whose duty it is to make the necessary preparations for a sacrifice.

4. The *Dēḍras* or *Mati*, the medicine man, who in sickness prescribes medicines, and endeavours to remove disease by his spells. He is the exorcist who expels the devil or the poison from the aching belly by sucking the navel, after having duly pronounced his spells. The substance he draws out of the belly is said to resemble a worm or to take the form of the small bones of a chicken. Besides some

really powerful and good drugs, he uses stones, hair, the kernels of fruits, worms, etc., etc., either as charms to be worn around the neck, or in a powdered form to be taken in food or water. A red-hot sickle or plough-share is frequently applied in the case of an obstinate headache or enlarged spleen. In the case of snake-bite the Dēśras bites off the head of a fowl. Then, after reciting his oracles, he sucks the patient's navel and repeatedly spits on the sacrificed fowl. If the patient does not die the Dēśras is credited with having saved his life. He is further credited with the power to bewitch a person and so to cause his death. His post is thus a lucrative one, and there are regular schools in which pupils are taught the use of medicines, charms, and spells.

5. The *Sōkhā* or *Ojā*, the sorcerer or detector of *bhūts* and witches. All disease, according to Orāṣ belief, has its source either in some malignant spirit or malicious person, a witch, or some person who has induced a Dēśras to cause the disease. This is done either by spells only, or by spells combined with other devices, e.g., burying the head of a fowl, etc., under the threshold of the house, or smearing some blood of a secret sacrifice on the door, or by secretly giving poison. Consumption and dropsy are generally held to be the result of secret spells. Cholera and cattle disease are the work of both witches and demons. To find out the malefactors one must go to the *Sōkhā*; he enquires about the circumstances, just as a police officer would do in a theft case, and endeavours to detect the miscreant. He sacrifices a fowl and offers rice, some of which he puts into a winnowing fan, with an oil lamp over it, and then begins to mutter his spells. Now he gazes fixedly upon the flickering of the flame of his lamp. By and by the demon's name, or the shade of the evil spirit, or the form of the witch by whom the havoc has been made, as the case may be, will appear to his vision; if not, then he will try divination. He shakes his head and dances or jumps about until he falls into a trance, and in that state discovers the cause of the affliction. He makes this known to his employers, who either themselves bring the required sacrifices, or appeal to the village *panch* to cause them to be provided by the people who have disturbed the *bhūt*, or to fix the amount of a fine to be paid by such person or by the witch who has caused the trouble. In the latter case, if the woman implicated denies the charge, she is subjected to the most cruel treatment to make her confess; and if, yielding to her tormentors, she at last confesses, she must leave the village in order to escape being killed.

E.—Cult-lands.

1. *The Bhūt Khētā or Mardānā.* Several acres of land are set apart in every village for the purpose of making the triennial or decen-

nial sacrifices to the village *bhūt* and the feasting which accompanies these sacrifices. These lands are cultivated by the *Pāhān Khūt* people or are rented by the *panch* to other *rāiyats*.

2. *Pāhānāi Khēt*, generally about four to five acres, cultivated by the priest in office as his service land.

3. *Panbharā* or *Pūjār Khēt* or *Dālīkaṣāri* is found in some villages.

4. *Mardanā propria* is not exactly church land, but is rather of the nature of public land, kept to defray the expenses connected with religious festivals and the like. It is not found in many villages and is not recognised by law as belonging to the community.

5. *Bhūt lands* called *partiadiid* or *partikadim*, which are not cultivated for fear of the *bhūt* living there.

6. *Hādgāḍi* and *Masnā*—the burning or burial ground, the abode of the *Ohuril* and the *Munās*.

7. The *Sarnā* or sacred grove of the *Sakhuā* or other trees the favourite dwelling-place of *Chālō-Pachō*.

F.—Some principal superstitious beliefs of the Orāḥs.

1. *To expel disease from men or cattle.*—In the case of men all the old cooking-pots and brooms are taken to the village boundary and deposited there on a cross road, to show the evil spirit who caused the mischief a way out of the village. In the second case the wooden bell from one of the herd is hung round the neck of the herdsman, who is beaten with sticks and driven out of the village to a place as described above, where bell and sticks are deposited, or a fowl is sacrificed and the head is carried to a cross road and there interred; or a piece of cotton yarn is wound round it, the end of which is laid across the road. Any person passing over this string, who touches it with his right foot is sure to catch the disease and the patient will get rid of it.

2. *Protection from the evil eye.*—A woman after childbirth must expose herself to the rays of the sun with the child. A young child must wear a tuft of hair and some wristlets or anklets. The wearing of charms round the neck or in the ear is very useful.

3. *Mild forms of possession.*—Delirium in any disease and also epilepsy and fainting fits are caused by the temporary possession of an evil spirit; nightmare is the visitation of a departed spirit; so are frightful dreams. As a rule, all lunatics are held to be possessed.

4. *Dreams* are forebodings of future events. The vision of a snake indicates a visitor; swimming through water, recovery from illness; a new pot, pregnancy; fighting a bull, disease; catching fish, death in the house; fall of a tree, the death of a neighbour; and so on.

5. *Good and bad omens.*—Bad omens are: If one hears somebody

sneeze when starting on an errand ; if one meets a woman carrying a waterpot with ashes ; if one meets men throwing away a carcass ; if a tree or branch suddenly comes down on the path where one is walking ; if a wild animal or vulture or snake crosses one's road ; if a jackal crosses the road from right to left ; if a pot breaks at the time when preparations for a betrothal are being made ; the cry of the owl and the jackal. If the kernel of the fruit of the Koenār, the Castor oil tree, in falling hits a person passing underneath, he is destined to die soon.

Good omens are : If one meets a woman carrying a waterpot or throwing away cowdung, or troops of monkeys crossing the road, a jackal crossing the road from left to right, the hearty cry of a cow, &c. If the palm of the hand itches, it is a sign that one will get money.

Evil days are Thursday and Saturday ; lucky days are Sunday and Tuesday.

G.—Orāḥ—Totems.

The *totems* of the Orāḥs are held sacred in some way or other. Each sept has its own *totem*. The respect paid to them is regarded as paying homage to ancestors :—

1. *Lakrā*, tiger ; nothing of a tiger is eaten by the members of this sept.
2. *Chigaḥ*, jackal ; nothing of a jackal is eaten by the members of this sept.
3. *Kispotā*, the intestines or stomach of a pig are not eaten by this sept.
4. *Kayā*, the wild dog ; nothing of him is eaten.
5. *Kartu*, the black *hanumān* ape ; ditto.
6. *Tigā*, the field mouse ; not eaten.
7. *Tyrki*, young mouse ; do.
8. *Orgorā*, hawk ; do.
9. *Gidhi*, vulture ; do.
10. *Khākhā*, crow ; do.
11. *Chelek Chatā*, swallow ; do.
12. *Toppō*, woodpecker ; do.
13. *Kerkettā*, quail ; do.
14. *Dhicūā*, swallow-tailed bird ; not eaten.
15. *Ekkā*, tortoise ; do.
16. *Minj*, eel ; do.
17. *Kindō*, carp fish ; do.
18. *Khalkhō*, shād fish ; do.
19. *Kujur*, a creeper, from the fruit of which an oil is obtained, which is not used by the Kujur people.
20. *Barā*, the *Ficus Indica* ; the fruit of which is not eaten.

21. *Chitkhā*, the *Ficus religiosa* ; the fruit of which is not eaten.
 22. *Bakhla*, tank weed ; the roots of which must not be eaten by this sept.
 23. *Khes*, paddy. The cony is not used by this sept unless it is diluted.
 24. *Madgi*, *Mahnā* ; the flower of which must not be eaten.
 25. *Kisskocol*, a thorny tree, the fruit of which is forbidden to this sept.
 26. *Pannā*, iron ; must never be touched with the tongue or the lips.
 27. *Bēk*, salt ; must not be eaten on the tip of the finger.
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Notes on the Koch, Poliyā, and Rājvaṁçi in Dinājpur.—By
BABU HARI MOHAN SIMHA.

The Koches in Koch Bihār and in Jalpaiguri call themselves Rājvaṁçis meaning thereby that they are connected with the royal family of Koch Bihār, of whose kingdom the districts of Rangpur and Dinājpur once formed a part. The Rājvaṁçis of this district are descendants of the Koches connected with the royal family who settled here either as officers or agriculturists. They cannot adduce any evidence that they are a distinct caste. It may therefore be concluded that they are Koches in origin, but as they were connected with the royal family they assumed the name of Rājvaṁçi to distinguish themselves from their more plebeian brethren. Being morally and intellectually superior to the latter, they more readily adopted the manners and customs of the Hindus and thus came to be regarded as a distinct caste, somewhat superior to that of the Koches. Now we come to the Poliyā. No people of this name are met with in districts on the other side of the river Padmā. Even if the term Poliyā is, as alleged, a corruption of the Sanskrit Palāyita, there is no sufficient proof that it means Palāyita Kshatriya. If it were so, they would have been recognised as such, like the Rājputs of Rājputānā. The fact of their having the same Brāhmaṇ priest as the Rājvaṁçis and the same manners and customs goes far to prove their common origin. Even their own traditions show that they are the same people as the Koch. It is believed that they came from the Pāhārs or hills in different batches and at different times, and were accordingly classed differently. The word Poliyā can be easily derived from the word Pāhār or hill. The hill tribes are called *Pāhāris*; from *Pāhāriā* we get *Pāriā* and from *Pāriā* we get *Pāliyā* or Poliyā. Some, however, suppose that the *Poliyās* are the same as *Pāri* Koches. They are regarded by the Hindus of the district as slightly purer than the Koches and are allowed to prepare the *hukā*, a privilege which is denied to the latter.

The Desā is not a distinct caste. It is a mere subdivision both of the Koch and of the Poliyā caste. The term means "of the country" and refers to those members of the caste who were the first to settle in this country and who held aloof from the subsequent settlers.

If we carefully examine the character; the manners, the customs, nay, the very appearance of these castes, we cannot but come to the

conclusion that they are very closely allied. They are all timid and inoffensive in nature and weak in intellect; their marriage customs are the same; they all have Kāçyapa as their one and only *gotra*, and widow-marriage is prevalent, as it is among all non-Aryan hill tribes. In the matter of dress they resemble the Santals and the hill tribes of Chota Nagpur more than they do the Hindus. The males wear only a narrow strip of cloth called *nengti*, while the women wear a broader cloth tied round their breast and reaching to their knees; they do not cover the head, but when they go out they wear a second cloth over the shoulders. They carry their children on the back like other hill tribes. Some still eat non-Hindu food. In appearance they resemble the hill tribes of Nepal and the adjoining countries. Their flat nose, sparse hair on their chins and lips, high cheekbones, and thick lips—all these go to show that they are of Mongolian origin.

I. KONCH OR KOCH.

The Koches of this district do not consider themselves connected with either the Poliyās or the Rājvaṃṣis. They look down upon the latter and the feeling is fully reciprocated. Each asserts his superiority to the other.

They are divided into the following sub-castes:—

- (1) Kantāi Koch.
- (2) Desi.
- (3) Vyavahāri or Dākāi.

The first is further subdivided into (a) Kantāi proper; (b) Dalāi; (c) Tiyar. The latter two, however, are not found in this district. The Dalāis are so-called because they are *pālki* bearers, from *dolā* a *pālki*. The Koches of this district are *pālki* bearers and I think they all belong to the Dalāi sub-caste, though they themselves do not know it.

The Kantāi Koches till lands and make *chirā* (beaten rice), which is here eaten by all castes. In other districts the higher castes would not eat *chirā* prepared by the Rājvaṃṣis. The Kantāis do not permit their women to buy and sell at *hāts*, nor to serve as maidservants or day labourers. Their women do not carry umbrellas over their heads, as those of other sections do. Like others, the Kantāis eat pork, but they do not drink spirits. They have Varna Brāhmaṇs as their priests at marriages and important religious ceremonies.

The Desis are so-called because, as has been observed above, their ancestors came first. A sub-section of this class is called Dohāsi or bi-lingual, probably because at one time they spoke the language of

the tribe as well as Bengali. A Kantāi Koch and a Desi will carry the same *pālki* and take food under the same roof, but the one will not partake of food cooked by the other. The Desis, both males and females, keep shops, and the women buy and sell at *hāts*. They also press oil. They will plough with a bull and a heifer yoked together. Some of them have Brāhmaṇ priests, while others perform their religious rites without the intervention of a Brāhmaṇ. All of them eat pork.

The Vyavahāris or Dākāis are much despised on account of their eating fowls and drinking wine. They get their bulls castrated, till their lands with cows and bulls indifferently, keep shops, and allow their women to buy and sell at *hāts*. They hunt wild cats and other beasts of the forest and sell the skins. The Vyavahāri Koches take food and water touched by the Kantāi and Desi, but those latter will not eat under the same roof with the Vyavahāri sub-castes.

Intermarriage between any two sub-castes is forbidden. All of them are *pālki* bearers and in that they differ from the Poliyās and the Rājvaṅṅis. The males serve as menials or labourers. These people are surnamed Kasya. Those who want to establish the Kshatriya origin of this caste derive this word from Kāṅyapa, the patronymic of the Kshatriyas of the solar race. But none of the Kāṅyapa *gotra* are surnamed after their *gotra*, and so this explanation cannot hold good. Probably Kasya is a mispronunciation of Koch. The Assamese pronounce *ch* as *s*.

II. RĀJVAṅṅI.

The Rājvaṅṅis are subdivided into two classes: Bhajana Rājvaṅṅi and Rājvaṅṅi. This is not a social but a religious distinction. Those who follow Caitanya are called Bhajana and resemble the Sādhu Poliyās. The others do not belong to a special sect. They worship indifferently the Hindu gods and goddesses as well as their own. The Bhajana Rājvaṅṅis have Brāhmaṇ priests, but the others have not. Some families surnamed Adhikāri act as their priests and spiritual guides. The Bhajanas are disciples of Vaishava Goṅṅins of Malda and do not indulge in meat or wine, while the others eat pork and other meats eaten by the Hindus; they thus differ from the Bābu Poliyā and the Vyavahāri Koches who eat fowls.

The Rājvaṅṅis, like the Koches, plough with bulls and cows. Like the Poliyā, they get their bulls castrated by Chāmārs. But the people who call themselves Bhajana Rājvaṅṅis are generally better off and better educated and have succeeded in inducing the Maithil Brāhmaṇ beggars who swarm in the district to take meals in their houses during their religious ceremonies, and to drink water brought by them;

and, now taking advantage of their caste name, lay claim to a pure Kshatriya origin. The poorer classes here as in other districts still hold to their old manners and customs and are indifferently called Rājvaṃçi, Koches or Rājvaṃçi Poliyās. They are agriculturists and catch fish and serve as menials and day labourers. They do not carry the *pālki* like the Koch, nor do they take to any other callings as the Poliyās.

III. POLIYĀ.

The Poliyās are, like the Koches, subdivided into three sub-castes, viz.: (1) Sādhu or Bhajana Poliyā; (2) Desi Poliyā; (3) Vyavahāri or Bābu Poliyā. According to tradition, they represent the sons of three mothers, but the names of the sub-castes signify simply the difference of manners and customs and the time when they came to the district. The first is so-called because its members are more religious than the others. The Desis, as the name indicates, were the first settlers.

The Sādhus and the Desis have the same Brāhmins to officiate at their social and religious ceremonies. They do not eat pork and fowls, nor do they drink wine. They follow Caitanya, but the Sādhus are in the habit of saying their prayers daily and are more earnest than the Desis. The Bābus are nominally Vaishnavas, but they indulge in wine and animal food, including pork and fowls. The Sādhus and the Desis perform the *Srādha* on the 12th or 30th day—the poorer the people the shorter the time of mourning, but the shorter period is now becoming the rule. A few of the Bābu Poliyās have a separate class of Brāhmins of their own, but the majority employ men of their own sub-caste called Dehariās to act as priests. The Sādhus and the Desis do not eat food prepared by one another. Intermarriage among the several sub-castes is strictly prohibited.

The Poliyās of all sections can follow any calling, and in this respect they differ from the Koch and the Rājvaṃçi. They are oil-pressers, shopkeepers, sellers of milk and its preparations, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, masons, thatchers, carpenters, cultivators and menial servants. They follow all the callings assigned in the Hindu *śāstras* to the lowest and middle classes of Hindu society.

GENERAL REMARKS.

No hard-and-fast rule is observed by any of these castes in respect of the period of impurity to be observed at childbirth.

In fact, only the well-to-do class observe religious and social ceremonies according to the rules laid down in the *śāstras*.

Their marriage customs differ greatly from those of the Sudra castes of Bengal. They perform the *hom* ceremony (*i.e.*, they offer

oblations to the god of fire). They plant five plantain trees and place five earthen *kalasis* filled with water, whereas the higher castes use only four. The bride and bridegroom are seated on a wooden seat placed on the same piece of cloth, which is also a custom peculiar to these people. A husband can divorce his wife on account of unchastity, ill-treatment, &c. Marriage by mutual consent, by force, and by purchase are prevalent. In the case of widow-marriage, no religious ceremony or intervention of priests is required. The widow is brought to the house of her intended husband, when the man and woman take their seat facing each other in the presence of friends and relatives. A *lotā* filled with water is brought, and the woman washes the feet of the man and wipes them dry with her hair; a sheet is then thrown over their heads and the man paints the woman's forehead with vermilion; this completes the ceremony. The proposal of marriage on behalf of the bridegroom is usually made by a go-between, called a Ghatak, who is usually, but not always, a member of the same caste. At the wedding he receives some small present, such as a pair of *Dhuttis*. The preliminaries of the marriage contract are settled in a peculiar way. After the proposal has been formally made by the exchange of Betel leaves and arecanut, the omens are carefully watched. If the boiled rice be burnt, if a *hāndi* be broken, if anybody or a head of cattle be taken ill or die, if a weaving cloth be torn, or if any like mishap happen within a certain period, it is believed that the proposed alliance would not prove a happy one and the match is broken off; if otherwise, the proposal is accepted. Amongst the Poliyās the maternal uncle has the right to bestow in marriage a girl whose father is dead; this is not the practice with the other two castes, but in all cases the maternal uncle is regarded as a principal and receives from the bride's father a present of a *dhuti* and *chādar*. The sons of a *nikā* wife inherit a man's property when he has no sons born in lawful wedlock; in other cases they receive only a small share, bequeathed by the father or awarded them after his death by the caste people. In society they are somewhat looked down on, and are not usually allowed to marry the children of virgin wives. *Nikā* wives are not allowed to prepare or distribute food at a social gathering.

In the matter of religion these three castes resemble one another. By faith they are either Vaishnavas or Saiyas. In this district the majority follow Caitanya, but all of them worship the goddess Kālī under various names. Their patron deities are: Buri, Kālī, Biṣahari, Bindeer Tulasi (Tulsi plant), Kriṣṇa Balibhadra Ṭhākur, Hudum Deo, Bāstu Devatā, Subachani, &c. Most of these household deities are worshipped without the intervention of Brāhmins, with the aid of tribal priests called Dehuriā or Deosi.

These people believe that illness is produced by ghosts or by the displeasure of their deities and they place their faith in charms, incantations, and exorcism rather than in medicine. All epidemic diseases are ascribed to a demigod or demon called "Sur" and certain Exorcists, called Mahats, are employed to pacify the godlings or drive out the ghosts who cause the disease. In this they differ from other Hindus who worship Rakshā Kālī or the sun, the moon, the planets, Viṣṇu, Çiva, &c., on such occasions.

SUPPLEMENT.

(a) *Caste Notes.*

The Khyān or Khen Caste.—This caste is found nowhere except in Northern Bengal. They are supposed to be of the same origin as the Kalitās of Assam. They say that their ancestors were Kāyasthas of the Sena family who came here from Bengal proper in quest of service, and eventually settled. The word "Sen" was mispronounced by the local people as Khen or Khyān and hence they have come to be known under this name.

They admit, however, that their ancestors, being cut off from home, could not procure caste girls for marriage and married local girls of the Kaibartta caste, and hence they were supposed to be a sub-caste of the latter. At one time the Khens or Kalitās were very influential people in Assam and were rich and literary men. Before the time of Viçva Simha of Koch Bihār the Kalitās acted as priests to the Koch tribe and long afterwards they were still the Court Astrologers.

In appearance the Khens are good looking, and resemble the Aryan type. In religion they are staunch Hindus. They do not marry within the prohibited degrees. Child marriage is in vogue. Divorce and widow re-marriage are not practised. They have Brāhmaṇs of their own and high-caste Hindus drink water and eat sweetmeats brought by them. They occupy a position in society much higher than the Kaibarttas or the Koches and, as a rule, they are more intelligent and more readily take to learning.

They are, however, subject to local superstitions and in case of illness or trouble resort to the usages prevailing among the lower classes.

[HARIMOHAN SĪMHA, *Dinajpur.*]

The characteristic features of the Khens are thin flat faces, broad noses, and high cheek bones. These peculiarities are more noticeable in the females than in the males. They are a distinct caste, but seem allied to the Koches. Their priests are Kāmrupi Brāhmaṇas. They are employed as menial servants of high-caste Hindus.

[Report by MAGISTRATE of *Bangpur.*]

Origin of the Pods and Chandals.—The following story is said to be current in Khulna :—

A beautiful girl succumbed to the blandishments of a low-caste lover and gave birth to a son. The intrigue and its result were kept

secret and in due course the girl was married to a man of her own rank in life. She had several other sons who were brought up in comfort, while her firstborn shifted for himself as best he could. When the legitimate children grew up they learnt the story of their mother's frailty and persecuted their half-brother in all possible ways. Once when he was away from home they pulled up his paddy seedlings and planted them upside down. This was more than the bastard could bear and he was about to commit suicide when the goddess Lakṣmī appeared and caused the injured plants to bear a crop of golden grains. The bastard is said to be the ancestor of the Pods, while the legitimate sons were the forebears of the Chandāls.

[Report by MAGISTRATE of *Khulna*.]

Aboriginal Lohārs in Ranchi.—There are undoubtedly two classes of blacksmiths in this district, the Lohār *mistris*, who are Aryans and Hindus, and the aboriginal Lohāras, whose skill does not generally extend beyond the making of ploughshares and who are to all appearances aborigines pure and simple, both in race and habits. I have known one of these marry a Mundā girl on payment of a fine, and I am told that in the more out-of-the-way Mundā villages a genuine Mundā will occasionally do blacksmith's work to the extent of making ploughshares. Should he, however, exhibit such skill as to manufacture a rough country needle he is held to have become a Lohāra. I have endeavoured to get a distinction made between these two classes in the census schedules—the Aryans being shown as Lohārs and the Aboriginal blacksmiths as Lohāras, but the two classes merge into each other, especially near the towns and in the less backward parts of the district, where the Lohāras claim to be Hindus and are endeavouring to identify themselves with the Lohārs.

[MR. H. C. STREETFIELD, I.C.S.]

[In Ranchi 2,348 Kol Lohāras were returned at the census as speaking Mundāri and 145 as speaking Kurukh, the language of the Orāons. *Ed.*]

Disposal of the Dead among the Limbus.—The Limbus both bury and cremate. They bury about four feet deep, enclosing the corpse in a case of stone. The head is placed towards the west, as being the direction from which their ancestors came. On the top of the grave is placed a cairn with four tiers for a man and three for a woman. Four days after death (in the case of a woman three days) the Phedangmā or tribal priest, in the presence of the mourners who accompanied the funeral procession, delivers an address to the departed, telling him

to go where his ancestors have gone, and not to stay on earth troubling those still alive. In the interval between the burial and this funeral address the men abstain from wearing hats and the women from wearing jewels.

[MR. C. A. BELL, L.C.S., *Kalimpong.*]

Lepchā Customs when wild animals are killed.—When a Lepchā hunting in the forest kills an animal, he will first split the hoof, the tip of the tongue, and the top of its ears; he will then take out a portion of the liver, heart and lungs, and utter a prayer over it to the forest deity, after which he roasts and eats it. If he shoots an animal with a poisoned arrow, he will cut out the part of the animal where the arrow entered and bury it in the ground. Again, if while carrying along a dead animal, he meets a woman pregnant with child he will always cover up the head of the animal to prevent the woman from seeing it.

[MR. STOLKE, *Darjeeling.*]

Ancestor Worship among the Lepchās.—Of ancestor worship there seem to be at least three grades. Near and immediate ancestors are worshipped twice a year, being known as *Payi Būm* and *Pundā Būm*. In times of sickness also they are worshipped. The sacrifice is performed by the head of the family in person and not through a priest. Every three years a sacrifice is performed to a wider circle of ancestors and on a larger scale. A pig, some fowls, fishes, *māruā* (rice beer), sugarcane, ginger, and all kinds of eatables are offered. And every five years an ancestor sacrifice is performed to a still more numerous body of ancestors and on a still larger scale.

[MR. C. A. BELL, C.S., *Kalimpong.*]

The Religion of the Khambus.—Their chief god is described to me under the name of Mangohamā and as being worshipped with the sacrifice of a pig or fowl and an offering of rice, ginger, and *maruā*. He is worshipped at the sowing time as well as at the harvest of the rice-crop. Some rice, ginger, and *maruā* are placed inside the house on a plantain leaf. A pig and a fowl, or a pair of fowls, are sacrificed outside the house, after which neighbours of all castes are feasted. Mangchamā is the household god, or Khipmang or Khyinomang. His worship should take place once about April and again about November.

The Earth is worshipped in February and November in order that good crops may be vouchsafed to the worshipper. A fowl may be sacrificed, and rice with other grains offered.

The tribe do not resort to Brāhmins, but conduct their sacrifices

through their own priests, who are called "Homā." When an epidemic breaks out, the villagers meet a long distance outside their village, taking a goat or a pigeon with them. On arrival at the appointed place they imprint some *Sindur* on the head of the animal (or bird) and turn it loose saying: "We who are poor have not been able to afford you a more liberal sacrifice; go then to where people are richer and take the sickness with you."

Those who by reason of sudden death or suicide leave their spirits on earth are invoked by the Exorcist known as Mangpā, who explains to the ghost that he cannot remain on earth, but should proceed towards heaven, which is reached by two routes, the one easy, for those who have done well, the other for evildoers and difficult.

In case of illness a Mangpā or Mang-Mo (Bijhuā or Bijhuān) is called in. The Mangpā takes some grains of rice and, by a system of drawing lots, divines what god or devil is troubling the sick man, who, by describing his symptoms, confirms the accuracy or otherwise of the Mangpā's diagnosis. This determined, the troubling spirit is invoked by the Mangpā in the sick man's presence, and pieces of ginger are sprinkled on the floor. Should the sick man not obtain any relief the Mangpā prays to Mahādeva and Pārbati asking them to eject the spirit. The devil which is giving most trouble at present, so my Mangpā informant tells me, is a Limbu spirit, known to the Limbus as Kaiporā or the "white spirit" and to the Bhotiās as Gokar or "white head."

[MR. C. A. BELL, C.S., *Kalimpong.*]

Wealthy Khambus burn their dead: the poorer ones bury them. If a Khambu can afford it, he observes the following quaint ceremony at burial: He brains a pig with a *Musli* or pestle for grinding corn, cuts off its tail and ears, and places them under the armpits of the dead person before burying him.

[MR. E. H. KEALY, *Darjeeling.*]

Marriage Ceremonies of the Khariās.—On the occasion of marriage amongst the Khariās, the bride goes to the bridegroom's house accompanied by her relatives and friends. On reaching his village they are not at first allowed to enter it, but are assigned a camping place outside, where they pass their time, day and night, in dancing and other festivities. All the attendants of the bride dance with her in turn. The *mergharāi* ceremony (meeting of the two *Samadhīs*, i.e., of the fathers of bridegroom and bride) takes place after midnight. The boys and girls on the bridegroom's side go to meet those who came with the bride. The two *Samadhīs* use ill-words to each other (in joke) and the boys catch hold

of the girls and indulge in all sorts of obscenities, culminating in sexual intercourse, without interruption or reproof from their elders. They pass the night in this way, and in the morning the villagers go home, the bride's party remaining at their camping ground, where the bridegroom supplies them daily with *hāmrī*, rice, *dāl*, and goat's flesh. In due course they go to make over the bride to the bridegroom. On arriving at the bridegroom's house, the bride has to *salām* to everyone with her eyes covered. After this she is thrust by force into the bridegroom's room and the friends of each party again abuse each other. The bridegroom's younger brother or sister chaffs the bride regarding the approaching loss of her virginity. The bridegroom's elder brothers are next called in, and the bride gives them *hāmrī* and tells them her name. The husband's elder brother sprinkles water over the bride with a mango leaf saying: "You will be a famous man." From that time the bride ceases to touch her *Bhaimśurs*, i.e., the husband's elder brothers and cousins. In the event of her touching them, even by accident, she has to pay a fine. If a woman's *Bhaimśur* chance to see her while she is combing her hair or changing her dress, a fine is imposed on her.

[REV. L. CARDON, S.J., Ranchi.]

(b) *Notes on popular religion and superstitions, etc.*

Gambhira.—The adoration of the Grāmyadevatā or tutelary deities of villages is celebrated by the Koch, Poliyā, and allied castes by a peculiar festival called *Gambhira*. After washing the gods and goddesses, some of the villagers, especially the younger folks, put on paper, *solā*, or wooden masks, one representing the deity in whose honour the festival is held, and the others representing other deities or ghosts, and also beasts. They dance before the shrine and at the houses of villagers. The man representing the principal deity falls in a swoon, real or feigned. This the people believe to indicate the advent of the deity in the person of the dancer. Formerly the person representing the principal deity, when in a state of trance, was consulted as to the future; but, at the present time, the people seem to have lost their faith in these vaticinations. The masqueraders go about in procession accompanied by the village musicians and followed by a large concourse of people. The proceedings last from afternoon to midnight and are continued for two or three days together. These festivals are generally held in the months of Chaitra and Baiçākh.

[HARIMOHAN SIMHA, Dinajpur.]

The Cow.—In connection with the worship of the cow it may be noted that in some Hindu families, whenever a new cow is purchased, its

forehead is smeared with turmeric paste and vermilion and it is fed with much ceremony.

Insulting forms of worship.—Usually the object of the worshipper is to propitiate the deity he is addressing, but occasionally his aim seems to be to inspire disgust. Thus in the worship of Alakṣmi the officiating Brāhmaṇ offers jute leaves, not flowers, with his left, or impure, hand. The idea seems to be that the goddess will be annoyed at this treatment and will in consequence depart elsewhere. In the same way the Orāons offer sour or tasteless food to the evil spirit, Baranda, so as to make him depart in disgust.

Human Sacrifices in Rānchi.—There is no question that at one time they were of universal prevalence in the district. The aborigines even now will not pass the house of a big Zamindār by themselves at night at certain seasons of the year and especially at sowing time. They suspect any stranger about their villages to be an *Otamgā* or *Horkār*, *i.e.*, a capturer of human sacrifices. There is little doubt that such sacrifices are, even now, not uncommon among the aborigines; but the only authenticated case I have come across was one in which a girl was caught, killed, and buried under an embankment which had been twice breached, the perpetrator being a Hindu. From what I can learn no special qualifications are required for a human victim. Any friendless wayfarer may be captured, beheaded on the spot, and his blood sacrificed to the deity who has to be propitiated. Such sacrifices are usually only required for some special object or in times of distress and drought. There is an interesting legend in Palāman that in the Kherwār rising of 1831 a Sonār was captured and ordered, before being sacrificed, to say "*Rāj āngrez ki chai Rāj Kherwār ki jai.*" Having no desire to help his persecutors he reversed the *chai* and the *jai* and thereby ruined the rebellion.

Among the Mundās witches used to be hung head downwards from a *Pipal* tree over a slow fire, the whole village dancing as they were slowly roasted, but whether this ceremony was sacrificial or purely vindictive there is nothing to show.

[MR. H. C. STREATFIELD, I.C.S., *Rānchi.*]

Worship of Bees in Rānchi.—The Zamindārs of Bhamr Pahār in the south of the district sacrifice two goats every three years to the bees that infest the hill under which their residence is situated. They are Bhogtās by caste and have no tribal association with bees, though there is a legend that the ancestors of the present Zamindār received the Parganā as a grant for bringing his bees to the assistance of the Mahārājā in

ancient wars. It is said that formerly human sacrifices were offered to the bees; as far as I can make out, these sacrifices originated purely from fear of the bees as near neighbours and have no true mythological basis.

[MR. H. C. STREETFIELD, I.C.S., Ranchi.]

The Jhāpāri Pujā.—The Jhāpāri *pujā* is an instance of girlish superstition somewhat akin to the *Intay Kumdra pujā* of Eastern Bengal. A plantain tree is set up to represent a deity named Jhāpāri Gosāi, and an earthen mound is made round it. He is worshipped by young unmarried girls in the evenings throughout the month of Chaitra. A *purohita* assists at his worship on the last day of the month, but in spite of this the Gosāi does not seem to have anything to do with the orthodox Hindu pantheon. The daily *pujā* by the girls consists in offering flowers and *durbbā* grass on the earthen platform and uttering certain *mantra*, such as :—

Jhāpāri Gosāi bhālo.
Dādā āmār kālo.
Bābā āmār kālo.
Didi āmār kālo.
Jhāpāri Gosāi khāṅṅi.
Dādā āmār nimer kāṅṅi.

[or, being translated :—

Jhāpāri Gosāi is good.
My elder brother is black.
My father is black.
My elder sister is black.
Jhāpāri Gosāi is straightforward.
My brother is (hard) like a rod of *nim*.

The object of these self-depreciatory remarks seems to be to obtain the godling's favour or to convince him that his worshippers are not worth his notice. Many flowers are offered to him which cannot be used in the worship of the ordinary Hindu deities. Paddy also is sometimes offered on the last day of Chaitra. The girls invoke him as a male deity (as the name Gosāi implies), but the *Purohita*, when he comes to worship him on the last day, turns him into a female, which he treats as a form of the goddess *Çitalā*.

[ANNADANANDA SENA, Bogra.]

Manasā is a favourite object of worship amongst the Gandhabaniks, owing to the legend that their caste-fellow, Lakhindara, son of Chāḍ

Saodāgar, was bitten by a snake on his wedding day because he had neglected her worship. They engage parties called Manasā Mangala to sing her praises in their houses two or three days before a marriage is celebrated.

[Birbhūm.]

Ṣaṣṭhi.—*Ṣaṣṭhi* is a female benignant deity represented by an idol with human features and riding a cat. She is the guardian deity of children and is worshipped for the purpose of protecting children and their mother during childbirth. She is worshipped by all Hindu females several times during the year and specially in the month of Jaiṣṭha, when offerings of fruit are made to her. The offerings are taken by those present and rags besmeared with turmeric are tied round the arms of children. She is also worshipped after the delivery of each male child, when a goat is sacrificed and is subsequently taken by the worshipper and eaten. On this latter occasion, a Brāhmaṇ priest performs all the necessary ceremonies, ut at other times the worship is conducted by the females themselves without *mantras*.

[NIBARANCHANDRA GHATAK, *Natore*.]

Methods adopted to drive away Spirits in Dinajpur.—Various methods are in vogue to prevent ghosts or demons from haunting places and persons. The safest and the best course is to get *piṇḍas* or funeral cakes offered to spirits at the Viṣṇupad temple at Gayā. It is said that since the opening of railway communication with that holy shrine the number of ghosts and of cases of possession by ghosts has greatly fallen off. The fact seems to be that with the spread of education the belief in ghosts and in their evil influence has been much shaken. Attempts to drive away ghosts are made by what they call the *Harisamkirtan* and *Rāmāyāṅgān*, i.e., by songs sung in praise of *Hari* (Viṣṇu) and *Rāma*. The *Harisamkirtan* is sung either by amateurs or by professionals, but the *Rāmāyāṅgān* is sung only by the professionals.

It is a popular belief that ghosts cannot stand the very mention of the name of Rāma. The word is therefore written on the doorways or openings of confinement rooms to scare away ghosts. The people carrying dead bodies call on his name to prevent ghosts from taking possession of the corpse. Similarly, whenever a man happens to pass by a haunted place or is terrified by an apparition he utters the name of Rāma and hurries away. Īva, Kālī, and Viṣṇu are likewise worshipped, and oblations are offered to them and other gods and goddesses for the purpose of driving away ghosts.

Amongst other preventives the most popular are charms or amulets. Their use is not confined to low and illiterate castes, but is also common

to the so-called educated class. The charms consist of *Kavacas*, that is, *mantras* or formulas written in red ink on the bark of the *Bhurjja patra* tree (Bentola Bhoorja) or a *Bel* leaf, or a piece of tin, or of roots and leaves of medicinal plants in a metallic cover (usually copper, silver, or gold, rarely iron) in the form of an ornament which is tied round the neck or the arm of the person liable to be annoyed or haunted by spirits. Sometimes a coil of thread or a tuft of human hair and a cowry or the fur of some animal are used. These are rendered efficacious by certain religious rites as enjoined in the *Tantras* or by the pronouncement of some *mantras* over them. When roots and leaves of plants are used, they are collected on a particular day and in a particular manner as laid down in the *tantras*. The new moon and the last day of Caitra are auspicious times for collecting them. Amongst other rites it may be mentioned that certain of the plants must be uprooted by a woman in a state of nudity with her hair hanging loose. Plants growing on graves or at burning-ghâts are preferred. The Muhammadans, as a rule, prefer pieces of a peculiar stone engraved with a text of the *Korân*.

Houses, and particularly confinement rooms, are often protected from evil spirits by enchanted dust, mustard seeds, or *Matikolai* (*Phaseolus radiatus*) strewn over the doorway, or by burning the skull of a dog or the horn of a cow, or by hanging up a piece of fishing-net or a piece of the bark or twig of certain plants.

An Exorcist is called *Rohâ*—a corruption of *ojhâ*. Formerly Brâhmanas of Kâmrup, the cradle of the *Tântrik* literature, used to practise exorcism. Now-a-days, and particularly in this district, no Brâhman or higher-caste Çûdra is an exorcist. The *Rohâ* is always a man of low caste—a Koch, Poliyâ, Râjvamçi, or Kaiyartta, or a Muhammadan. The first thing he does is to protect himself by reciting certain *mantras*. Next the house or the room of the patient is rendered secure against the free egress and ingress of the spirit. The exorcist then holds parley with him, calling upon him to say who he is, and what he wants, and ordering to leave his victim. If the spirit is not willing to go away at his bidding, the exorcist takes a twig of the *Nim* tree (*Melia azadirachta*) and brushes the body of the patient with it, repeating *mantras* or incantations while doing so. Some water, over which certain *mantras* are repeated, is given to the patient to drink and is sprinkled over his person and bedding. Mustard oil or *ghi*, similarly enchanted, is sometimes rubbed over the patient's body. If these measures do not succeed, the exorcist asks the relatives of the patient to get him materials for worshipping the goddess *Kali*; or the god *Mâsûâ*, or the ghost, as the case may be. The mode of worship is practically the same as that followed in adoring these deities on other occasions.

If the exorcist is a Muhammadan he adores his *pir* instead of the Hindu deities. The Hindu exorcist would require red flowers—namely, *Jabā* (red China rose), *Aparājītā* (*Clitoria ternatia*), Karabis or rosebag (*Oleander Nirium adorum*), and also a piece of red cloth, rice, sugar, plantains, and *ghi* for offerings. Roasted fish, unripe plantain fruit, pigeons and, more rarely, goats are sacrificed by Hindus, and a fowl or a castrated goat by Muhammadans. The worship is held at dead of night, either in a lonely room of the house or in a temple of Kāli or Çiva, or at the neighbouring *çmāçan* (burning *ghāt*) or, in the case of a Muhammadan exorcist, at an *āstānā*, i.e., the abode of a Pir. The man is assisted by other exorcists or by his followers. Having thus propitiated the patron deity of the ghosts, or the ghost himself, the exorcist repeats his incantations again and again, burning all the while a lamp fed by enchanted *ghi*. If this also does not prove effectual, an exorcist who is reputed to have got some familiar spirit under his control is sent for. These spirits are called *Ohera* or *Piçāca*. The exorcist summons his spirit, gives him some favourite food to eat, and asks him to drive out the ghost that has taken possession of the patient. A fight then ensues between the two and the ghost is defeated and brought under control. If the illness of the patient is owing to the evil influence of some god, the familiar spirit is believed to advise the exorcist what to do, i.e., how to propitiate the deity. When the evil spirit has been brought under control, he is asked to give some proof of his leaving the patient, and this is usually done by breaking a bough of a tree or uprooting it, throwing down a piece of masonry, lifting a heavy load or a shoe, or doing any similar humble task as a token of utter discomfiture.

The familiar spirit employed is usually the ghost of some deceased member of the exorcist's family. The exorcists, who are popularly believed to control a *piçāca*, are men of some culture and acquire their power after much trouble and the labourious performance of certain religious rites as enjoined in the *çāstras*. This class of exorcist is fast disappearing.

There is still another class of exorcists in this part of the country called *Mahata* (c.f. *Mahātma*). The low-caste Hindus as well as the Muhammadans place great faith in their power.

The first thing a *Mahata* does is to adore Kāli, Burtu, or Māsuā or any other deity or demigod whose wrath produced the disease, or who is supposed to have influence over the ghost who has possessed the patient. To ascertain the deity or demon in question, he causes the patient to touch a *Tulasi* leaf. He then places pieces of plantain leaf in a row in front of him to represent the deities or spirits who are supposed to have produced the disease. He takes the *Tulasi* leaf in the palm of his right

hand, and placing his hands on a piece of stone, mutters his incantations until both the stone and the hands move forward and touch one of the plantain leaves. The deity or demon represented by the particular plantain leaf thus touched is held to be the one responsible for the disease and is accordingly worshipped. A plantain leaf is placed in a room and on it is put a bunch of plantains painted with oil and vermilion. Jabā flowers, rice, and water are also offered. The Mahata generally has two or more assistants with him. The *pujā* being over, the Mahata sings a hymn in praise of the deity or demon and prays for his kindness. His companions repeat the words, and when a couplet or stanza is finished, he utters the mystical monosyllable "Hū." This process is repeated for three or four days, and when the patient is cured he removes the offerings to a place where three paths meet and, after repeating certain incantations over them, leaves them there.

If the above measures do not result in a cure the Mahata will adore Kāli or Māsūā in the form of an image painted on a leaf spread over a *solā* frame. In addition to the usual offerings of rice, plantain, and flowers small pieces of silver and copper are presented. The *pujā* is held at dead of night in a lonely place by the riverside or at a shrine. The Mahata performs the worship alone and no one else is allowed to approach, far less to observe the rites. The offerings of metal are intended to fix the deity or demon. After the ceremony, the offerings and image are placed at a trijunction point of the village paths or in a neighbouring village or hamlet. This process is called *cālāni* or the transmission of ghosts or deities from one person or village to another.

[HARIMOHANA SIMHA, *Dinajpur.*]

Driving away Disease in Ranchi.—If any disease rages in a village, whether among the people or among the cattle, they drive away the disease with great *tamāshā*. A *pujā* of the *Khunt Pāt* is performed every year to drive away disease. If this proves ineffectual all the villagers assemble by night and walk about the village in a body armed with clubs, searching for the disease, and break everything that they find outside the house. Therefore on this day all keep their broken pots, pitchers, or other useless things in their courtyard, so that the searching party may come and break them. It is believed that the sound of breaking indicates that the disease has departed. In this way they go along beating and breaking everything they come across and making a loud noise so that the disease may not remain hidden anywhere.

If anyone finds blood in the rice of his house (*Sindur Bhāt*), it is thought that some disease is likely to break out in the village. The

villagers collect their old pots, brooms, &c., and throw them away at some place outside the village, where two boundaries meet, and the old women collect and beg alms in the village and throw away old pots in a similar way. If any woman has crossed a plough or a yoke or has put them on her shoulder, they make a plough and a yoke and throw them away outside the village to ward off the evil, which is otherwise likely to be the result of her ill-omened act.

If any disease prevails amongst the bullocks, the villagers seize an *Ahir* and, tying a bell to his backside, chase him with sticks to the outside of the village where he throws down the bell and is then allowed to escape.

[MR. H. C. STREETFIELD, I.C.S., Ranchi.]

A case of exorcism in the 24-Parganas.—On the 17th October, 1898, a woman who was previously perfectly healthy, after bathing in a tank near her house, became very uneasy and eventually swooned. By the application of restoratives she regained consciousness, but she then commenced to laugh and cry alternately, now talking to herself, and again raving like a maniac, and screaming in fright; in short, showing all the symptoms popularly associated with possession. A son of Gangā Mayrā, the famous *ojhā* of Naihāti, was called in. He came about a week later and asked for a *tulasi* leaf. As soon as the woman saw the *ojhā* she shouted out: "Kristo Mayrā, why are you here?" Without making a reply, he repeated certain incantations and touched her head with the *tulasi* leaf, and she at once became quiet and fainted away. The *ojhā* then left the woman and made arrangements in a separate room for the necessary *pujā*. Three wooden seats were provided in this room. The *ojhā* sat on one, the second was placed in front of him, with *Jabā* flowers in the four corners, and, in their midst, a brass vessel filled with water from the tank where the patient had taken her bath; the third seat was reserved for the patient herself. When the *pujā* was over, he made three low taps on the third seat and the woman instantly came running in and sat down there. The *ojhā* drew a circle round her, repeating certain *mantras* the while. The woman again asked if he was not Kristo Mayrā of Naihāti. The *ojhā* answered in the affirmative and enquired what she had to do with his name. She said: "You have no business to molest me. I have done you no harm. Why should you tease and trouble me? I beg you to leave me." The *ojhā* replied firmly: "I have come to drive you out. If you depart quietly I shall not be hard upon you." The patient said: "I am *Īçvara Ghoṣ*" then retracting the words, she said: "I am Aunt Kamala." The

ojhā said angrily: "You lie and prevaricate. If you don't tell me the truth I shall punish you severely." The patient took no further notice of him and began again to talk incoherently.

The *ojhā* thereupon drew with a piece of chalk the outline of a human figure on the floor and taking a red hot knife drove it into the figure about the region of the heart. The patient at once screamed and looked as if dangerously hurt and stammered out: "My name is Yogin. I am 17 years old. I died uncared for, of ulcers all over my body, about seventeen months ago. I and the patient were playmates and I always loved her greatly. I have been hovering near her all this time, but had previously no opportunity to get into her. On the 17th, after her bath, as she was wiping her hair, a lock of it happened to touch me and I at once got possession of her."

The exorcism lasted for several hours. By alternate coaxing and threatening a promise was exacted from the spirit that it would leave the patient without injuring her and would never again come to the village. The patient then took a cup of milk and lay unconscious for five or six minutes. When she regained her consciousness, she was surprised at the crowd collected about her and putting down her veil with her accustomed modesty went inside the house as if nothing had happened. The spirit had been successfully exorcised.

[PROBODHACHANDRA CHATERJI, *Alipore.*]

Disease Transference in Nadia.—The following method of cure is sometimes adopted: The sufferer visits the exorcist at the appointed hour, usually on a Sunday morning. The exorcist places some herbs in a yellow-coloured rag and after passing the bundle seven times over the patient's body, muttering *mantras* the while, he hands it to him to be thrown away at a point where three roads meet. The disease is supposed to be transferred to any person who treads upon the bundle.

[Report by MAGISTRATE of *Nadia.*]

Divination in Birbhum.—Divination is frequently practised by the low-caste priests of West Bengal, especially after the worship of *Mangalā* and other disease godlings when epidemics break out. The priest, usually a man of low caste, sits still, holding his head over the fumes of the incense. After a time he throws himself into a frenzy, and as the fit passes off the worshippers ask him the cause of the calamity. He replies, assigning it to some wrongful act or omission on their part which has brought down the wrath of the deity, and stating what sacrifice is necessary in order to appease him. The necessary offerings are at once made.

[Report by MAGISTRATE of *Birbhum.*]

Prayer cure amongst the Kaibarttas of West Bengal.—When a person is seriously ill the family Goskī is called in. He picks some leaves of the *Tulasi* plant, reciting the while certain *mantras* or charms. These leaves he offers to Viṣṇu with the following prayer: "Oh! God, release this my disciple from his difficulties. I offer these *Tulasi* leaves to you to propitiate you, and I earnestly pray and trust that you will kindly hear these my prayers and deliver him from his trouble." The Goskī is then fed and given a suitable fee.

[C. PEREIRA, *Howrah.*]

Harvest Festivals in Muzaffarpur.—With a district in which there is so little irrigation, and where, owing to the natural moisture of the soil in the south and the action of the rivers in the north, so little is ordinarily required, the anxiety with which the whole country watches for the coming of the monsoon, the superstitious panic into which anything abnormal in its conditions drives them, cannot fail to strike the observer. Their feelings find vent in a variety of superstitious practices. Thus it is believed by the vulgar that the cry of a frog is most readily heard by the God of rain. In a year of drought, therefore, the low-caste females of a village assemble in the evening, collect water from the pitchers of five houses, and seize a frog which they put in a small earthen pot, together with water taken from the five pitchers. The pot with the frog shut in it by an earthen cover is put in the hollow wooden cup into which the lever used for crushing rice falls. Then the lever is raised with the foot and dropped on to the frog; this barbarously cruel performance being repeated until the frog croaks, which no doubt he does, unless killed with too great suddenness. Meanwhile these women sing songs in a loud voice about the dearth of water. The months of *Bhādo* and *Āṣin* (September and October) are marked by many religious observances and ceremonies, because this is the most critical season of the year to the cultivator, when he must have rain. Towards the end of the former month the agriculturists have to observe the fast of *anant vrat* in gratitude for the ingathering of the *bhādoi* harvest and in the hope of further prosperity. During the first fortnight of *Kuār* or *Āṣin*, since it is on the rain of this period that a successful harvest of the *aghāni* and moisture for the *rabi* depends, they devote much time to religious offerings and oblations to their deceased ancestors. This is followed by *Naurātra* or nine nights of abstinence from worldly enjoyments and devotion to the goddess *Durgā*. When the *rabi* sowings have been completed and the *Naurātra* is over, there follows a day of universal rejoicing, when alms are given to every *Brāhmaṇ* who produces seedlings of barley, which here, as

in other districts of Bihār and the Upper Provinces, forms the chief *rabi* crop. Thus is the germination of the *rabi* harvest celebrated.

During Kārtik (October-November), when the paddy harvest is taking ear, many devotional performances are observed, especially by the women and unmarried girls. They bathe before dawn and worship the sun as the producer of rain every morning until *Purnamāsi* or the period of a full moon, when large crowds of the people, both male and female, repair to bathe at the confluence of the Ganges and Gandak, and offer the holy Ganges water to Mahādeo or the Great God. It is then that the famous Sonpur fair is held. Towards the end of this month the longest of all fasts is observed by the people, especially females, who, before breaking it, offer sweatmeats, vegetables, and cow's milk to the Sun God. Even the pastime of the unmarried girls during this month is marked by a devotional spirit born of the mental suspense pending the arrival of the rice crop to maturity. The game of *sama* and *chako* is played by them during the whole month of Kārtik, by the end of which the *aghāni* should be fit for reaping. Babu Nand Kishore Lal has given the following description of this popular game:—

“All the children and young women go singing together to the fields for the feeding of what are called their ‘*sama* and *chako*.’ These are clay images made to personify the agricultural gods. They do this every evening for the whole of the month of Kārtik (October November), and on the 30th day they take the images to a neighbouring river or pond, and submerge them. Some go to the river Ganges for the purpose. This is chiefly a female pastime, but the young children of either sex are allowed to take part. No adult male is allowed to be present. Placing the images by turn in several plots (producing paddy, *maruā*, and *makāi*, etc.), the females make a circle round them and sing songs, dancing round and round. The songs last till late in the night. There are always two images, one representing the male and the other the female god.”

When, however, the *rabi* crop is assured, the devotional attitude is abandoned, anxiety is at an end, and on the first of *Oait* the people celebrate the *Holi* festival, breaking forth in unrestrained and hilarious enjoyment. The vitality which religious observances connected with agriculture still enjoy here arises no doubt from the almost entire dependence of agriculturists on the rainfall for their immunity from famine, whose grim visits have been too frequent to be easily forgotten.

[MR. C. J. STEVENSON-MOORE, in the *Muzaffarpur Settlement Report*.]

Variations in tribal Practices and Beliefs.—There is, I believe, no question that a generation or two back the Muṇḍās invariably burnt their dead; but with the spread of Christian customs and with the diminution of the fuel supply, for the last generation or so, burial has almost entirely superseded cremation, and there are very few Muṇḍās now who can say what the ancestral custom was. The Christmas festival is now generally recognized among even the heathen Muṇḍās as the *Pous Parab*, and I have no doubt that in another ten years it will be confidently claimed as a traditional Muṇḍā festival. As an instance of the almost frivolous reasons for which Muṇḍās will adopt a new custom or even a new religion, it may be mentioned that one of the most successful arguments used by the proselytizers of the late Birsā Bhagwān was that his religion was a nice economical one in which no sacrifices were required. As an instance of the light-hearted manner in which a Muṇḍā will give absolutely unfounded reasons for his belief, a Muṇḍā being asked by Father Hoffman to explain how the fact that a certain local deity was a male could be reconciled with the tradition that all *bongās* (spirits) were the Asur woman released by Singbongā after the destruction of their husbands, in accordance with the well-known legend, promptly replied that one of the women was pregnant when they were dismissed by Singbongā and that the deity in question was her son, a story invented absolutely on the spur of the moment. The local beliefs being so amorphous and vague, it seems impossible to draw any ethnological conclusions from any given belief on the part of any given tribe. All the tribes being ready to make any excuse for a holiday or to propitiate any deity who may possibly prove troublesome, it cannot be concluded with any certainty that the correspondence of the great aboriginal hunting festival of the Phāguā with the Hindu Holi points to the aboriginal origin of the latter, that the worship of Jagannāth on the Rath Yātrā day by aboriginals points to any tendency towards Hinduism, or that the coincidence of all the principal festivals among the Muṇḍās, Khariās, and Orāons points to any common origin of these tribes.

[MR. H. C. STREATFIELD, I.C.S., Ranchi.]

(c) *Miscellaneous.*

Mock Marriages of Mango Groves.—Among Hindus to plant a mango tree is considered a religious act, productive of spiritual benefit, and in this district 88 per cent. of the population is composed of Hindus. The popular belief is that as long as rainwater falls from the leaves of a mango tree, or, in other words, so long as it stands, its planter will, after death, abide in *Svarga*, or heaven.

In fact, the approach of a mango grove to maturity is celebrated, by even the humblest cultivator, with all the show of a marriage ceremony. When the trees are sufficiently grown to give promise of fruit, the branch of a *bar* tree, to represent the *bar* or bridegroom, is brought and fixed near one of the mango trees in the grove; and both are wrapped round with the same piece of cloth by the owner of the grove and his wife, if alive, in the presence of a Brāhmaṇ priest. They then repair to a place of worship erected in the grove, where the Brāhmaṇ officiates. The priest, after calling down the blessing of the gods, takes an earthen pitcher, in which he places water, a few copper coins, and some *kasali*. Over the top of the pitcher are placed mango leaves, and resting on them, a country lamp full of *ghi*, which is lighted. To make the symbolical ceremony complete, a bamboo basket, containing a bride's belongings and dowry on a miniature scale, is provided, and the priest having finished his worship, vermilion, the emblem of completed marriage, is applied to the mango tree, as to a bride. Then a sacrificial fire is set alight, and the owner and his wife go round their grove; the former holding a mango leaf with a silver coin on it, over which a third person, accompanying them, from time to time sprinkles milk. This ceremony is called *pradakṣiṇa*, the ordinary Sanskrit term for going round a sacrificial fire with the right side towards it. The quaintest feature of this ceremony is that a wooden statue of a man, two feet in height, is fixed in a corner of the garden to witness the marriage, and is called a *chumglā* or backbiter, the idea presumably being to disarm scandal. Needless to say, the ceremony ends with a feast to the priest and other Brāhmaṇs. But the emoluments of the priest who officiates do not end here, for he is usually given one of the trees. Thus in preparing the record-of-rights, we have not unfrequently had to record an isolated tree, in the middle of a mango grove, as in the possession of a Brāhmaṇ. Sometimes it formed the subject of a dispute. The raiyat willingly allows to the priest the enjoyment of the fruits, but objects to him cutting the tree down. The priest, on the other hand, owing to the difficulty of watching the fruits of isolated trees, usually attempts (as an Assistant Settlement Officer, who is a Hindu and a native of Bihār, assures me) "to cut and sell its timber when the tree has attained a sufficient growth, thereby violating the religious faith of the planter." The priest's enjoyment of *Svarga* evidently does not depend on the period during which rain falls from the leaves of his mango tree.

[MR. C. J. STEVENSON-MOORE, in the *Musaffarpur Settlement Report*.]

Mock Marriages of Tanks.—Similar ceremonies of marriage are performed in the case of every newly-excavated well and tank. The inter-

esting feature in the marriage of tanks is the flight of the *dudhpiou*, or the milk-drinker. A small quantity of the milk of every available class of animal is procured. The various kinds are then mixed together, and a Brāhmaṇ is induced by a money consideration, which sometimes reaches Rs. 400, to drink the combination. Having drunk it, he runs away to the distance of a mile, the people after him, pelting him with clods of earth. He thus personates the *asuras* or enemies of the gods; and the *jāt* or wooden pole, with a *tripāl* or a three-pronged iron spear at its top, fixed in the centre of the tank, is an emblem of the weapon with which Mahādeo or the great God fought and overthrew them. It is now, however, popularly believed to be set up for the purpose of counter-acting the evil eye.

[MR. C. J. STEVENSON-MOORE, in the *Muzaffarpur Settlement Report*.]

Low-castes less able to protect themselves from Enhancement of Rent.—But we can go further and place our finger on the class of cultivators that the law has proved insufficient to protect from illegal enhancement of rent. Of the 177 holdings in which rents have been illegally enhanced, 92 per cent. belong to lower castes and 8 per cent. only to the higher ones. Adding also legal enhancements, 12 per cent. of the holdings affected belong to the higher and 88 per cent. to the lower castes. It would thus appear that landowners have been able to enhance the rents of the higher castes to an inappreciable degree. Of the total number of enhancements, 40 per cent. affect the *Jolāhā*, *Dosādā*, and *Oāmār* castes; and the enhancements in their case are, with few exceptions, illegal.

[MR. C. J. STEVENSON-MOORE, in the *Muzaffarpur Settlement Report*.]

Riddles current in Bihar.—Babu Tula Ram Sukla of Ajodhiā writes as follows regarding riddle No. 67 given in Babu Sarat Chandra Mitra's paper on 'Riddles current in Bihār' (J.A.S.B., 1901, Pt. III, page 55):—

The riddle as here current is:—

घारो गुदड़ी जलगरई जबा न एको ताम ।

घर का माणिक पकडगा घर खिड़की से ताम ।

and means that the whole net (*गुदड़ी*) was cast into the water, that the masters of the house (*water*), meaning fish, were caught, and the house (*water*) escaped through the meshes of the net—the play being on the words *जलगरई जलजाना*, which stands for (1) *जलजाना* to be burnt; (2) *जल नै जाना* to be dropped in water.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHS.

With a view to making the photographs of independent enquirers, travellers, Collectors, Museum officials, and others, generally available to those interested in Anthropological Science, who would not otherwise be able to obtain them, for the purpose of comparison or enquiry, the Council of the Asiatic Society of Bengal have decided to adopt for India a similar method to that which the British Association for the Advancement of Science has adopted in England, full particulars of which will be found in the Circular on the subject, issued by the British Association, which is given below.

The Council have decided to establish a *Depôt* for the registration and storage of Anthropological Photographs at the Asiatic Society's Building. Anyone who possesses photographs of anthropological interest, is therefore invited to send one unmounted print of the same, which will be mounted by the Society, together with the particulars of the photographs sent, as noted in the annexed form, and also to state whether he is willing to deposit the negative with the Society.

Measures will be taken for keeping all negatives so deposited carefully and in good order, but the Society cannot hold themselves responsible for the negatives although every possible care will be taken.

The Society will also arrange to have prints made when required, at the lowest possible rates, and the price at which a copy of any photograph can be so obtained will be entered in the list that will be published by the Society.

The copyright of all such photographs will, of course, remain the property of their owners, and this will be clearly stated whenever any prints of them are supplied on application.

The Circular issued by the British Association, which gives fuller particulars of the proposal is given below.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHS COMMITTEE.

President: C. H. READ, F.S.A., Pres., Anthr. Inst., British Museum, W.C.

Secretary: J. L. MYERS, F.S.A., F.R.G.S., Christ Church, Oxford.

This Committee was appointed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science in September, 1898, to provide for the "Collec-

tion, Preservation, and Systematic Registration of Photographs of Anthropological Interest."

A similar Committee on Geological Photographs was appointed in 1889, and has organised the valuable collection preserved in the Museum of Practical Geology. The Royal Geographical Society has gradually collected a large number of geographical photographs, many of which are also of anthropological interest. More recently the Hellenic Society has announced a large special collection for the use of students of the topography, civilisation and art of Greece. And the Anthropological Institute possesses a considerable collection of photographs, which have been lately mounted and classified; and has permitted the registration of these in the list of the new Anthropological Photographs' Committee.

The considerations which led to the appointment of this Committee are briefly as follows:—

(1) A very large number of Anthropological phenomena can only be studied in the field, or by means of accurate reproductions: but the latter are in many cases difficult to procure, except where typical examples have been regularly published; and even then it is frequently of advantage to be able to acquire separate copies of single plates or illustrations, for purposes of comparison, without breaking up a collection or a volume.

(2) On the other hand, most travellers, collectors, and museum officials find it necessary to make many photographic negatives in the course of their own work, for which they themselves have no further use, but which they would gladly make accessible to other students, if any scheme existed by which this could be done without trouble to themselves. Such negatives also accumulate, and take up valuable space; and are very liable to damage through neglect.

(3) Further, though many professional photographers in remote parts of the world have made admirable use of their opportunities of recording native types, customs, and handiwork, there has hitherto existed no single record of what has been done in this direction; with the result that valuable collections have remained practically inaccessible to those in whose interest they have been made. In the case of the Hellenic Society, already cited, the inclusion, in the reference collection, of selected prints from the negatives of professional photographers abroad has been found to be of great advantage to teachers and students; who consult it with the view of choosing the best representations to add to their own series.

What appears therefore to be required is, in the first place, a Register of the photographic negatives which can be made generally avail-

able, illustrated by a permanent print from each, preserved at an accessible centre; together with an arrangement by which properly qualified students may be enabled to have duplicate prints made from them for their own use, at a reasonable price. In any such scheme it would be understood that the copyright, for purposes of publication, would remain with the owner of the negative, and that all duplicate prints distributed under this arrangement would be subject to that qualification.

In establishing such a Register or Collection of Anthropological Photographs, the Committee invites the co-operation of all owners of suitable photographic negatives, who are requested to submit for registration one unmounted print from each negative (which will be mounted by the Committee and preserved either at the office of the British Association, or in some central and accessible place); together with a full description of the photograph. The latter should state, as on the form appended:—

- (1) The subject of the photograph, and the place where the original is (or was) to be found.
- (2) The name and address of the owner of the negative.
- (3) The whereabouts of the negative itself; *i.e.*, whether it is retained by the owner, or deposited with a professional photographer or with the Committee.
- (4) The terms on which prints, enlargements, and lantern slides will be supplied when ordered through the Committee.

The Committee has made arrangements for the storage, and insurance, of any negatives which may be deposited on loan; and for the production of prints and lantern slides from them to order: and a number of negatives have already been so deposited.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHS COMMITTEE.

Number.	Size of Negative.	Subject.	Photographed by	Address at which Negative is deposited.	Price of Print.

This form should be filled in and enclosed with the prints or negatives submitted to the Anthropological Secretary, Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Additional copies may be obtained from the Secretary, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 57, Park St., Calcutta.

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Exorcism of wild animals in the Sundarbans.—By D. SUNDER, Esq., *Commissioner in the Sundarbans.*

[Read 8rd June, 1903.]

The belief that charms and exorcism are efficacious for the dispersion or destruction of noxious animals has prevailed from a remote period, and it still exists in India. In the middle ages, history makes frequent mention of the calamities caused in England and other places by plagues of insects. Few remedies for preventing or mitigating the ravages were known, and recourse was consequently had to the clergy, who heard the complainants, interposed on their behalf with prayers, and declared these scourges of mankind to be the work of the devil.

Between the months of October and May crowds of wood-cutters come in boats from Barisal, Khulna, Faridpur, Calcutta, and other districts, and enter the forests of the Sundarbans for the purpose of cutting timber. These forests are full of man-eating tigers, and the loss of life that annually occurs from their attacks is so heavy that nothing will persuade wood-cutters to proceed to the jungles without their *faqir*. He is the one person who is believed to possess power to drive away

tigers and prevent them from attacking human beings. The belief in the power of the *faqir* is so great that wood-cutters and others declare that even crocodiles, which also cause great loss of life and are frequently met with in the jungles, are under his control. It is said that he can make these great saurians rise or sink in water by his charms, and by his exorcism close their mouths and prevent them from doing any harm.

No work is begun in the forests by wood-cutters until the *faqir* has gone through his charms and incantations, and has performed his *pujās* for the dispersion of all noxious animals.

For this purpose he has to be provided with a black kid and the following articles :—5 seers of *bātāsās* (sweetmeat), $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers of sugar, 40 plantains, 10 cucumbers, 7 musk melons, 2 cocoanuts, 5 seers of *ātap* rice, 5 yards of white cloth for a *dhoti*, 2 yards of red cloth for flags and wicks, 2 packets of vermilion, $\frac{1}{4}$ seer of incense, an earthen plate for burning incense, 2 earthen water-pots, 7 *chirāghs* (earthen lamps), 7 earthen pots for water for the deities, and 11 poles for flags. With these articles the *faqir* and wood-cutters proceed to the block of land selected for the wood-cutting operations. On arrival the *faqir* repeats a charm for the safety of the boat. Translated, it is as follows :—

“O Kālī, thou knot on the head of *Çivī* ; thy name is a sufficient charm over this place, and by it I have made the place as secure as a fort. Keep tigers away. Let them not come anywhere near us. If tigers break into this place and cause any injury, may you, O Kālī, eat the head of *Kāmākhya* of *Kāmarūpa*.”

Having said this, the *faqir* and his companions go ashore and select a piece of ground on which to propitiate the deities. The jungle is cleared, and the *faqir* makes a circle on the ground with his right foot and then repeats the incantations, of which a translation is given below :—

(1) “I have made a circle on this ground and it is now like a hive: 13,000 evil spirits and *Dāno*, *Dudh*, *Deo*, and *Pori* must keep out of my circle. O tiger, if you injure my enclosure, may you eat the head of *Kāmākhya* of *Kāmarūpa*.”

(2) “The clouds in the heavens and the circle of the world are my boundaries. Eighty thousand evil spirits, tigers, and pigs must keep off this boundary. If they dare to put their shoulders within it, may they drink the blood of the goddess.”

(3) “I adore thee, O Kālī! Darkness, thou art the hairs of *Çiva*. I am thy son. I make a circle round the whole world in thy name. I pray thee that thou surround me and all my men with thy darkness and protect us from tigers.”

(4) “*Rāma*'s bow is on the other bank of the river and his cottage is on this bank. I make a circle and have taken in the whole world. If this my charm be without effect, may *Mahādeva* lose his head.”

The four words *Dāno*, *Dudh*, *Deo*, and *Pori* mentioned in the first of the above charms are names for the devil.

After this the *faqir* builds in his circle seven small huts made of stakes and leaves. Beginning from the right, the first hut is given to Jagabandhu and the second to Mahādeva. Four flags hang over them, one on each side, and a *chirāgh* is kept burning in front of an offering of *bātāsās*, rice, plantains, etc., which is made to the deities. The third house is assigned to Manasā and the same offering is made to her; but a pot of water, with mango leaves over it, is also given to her. A figure of a deity is made with vermilion on the pot. Next to the third hut a small platform is erected in honour of Rupapori, and an offering of plantains, rice, cocconut, etc., is made on it on a plantain leaf. Next to the platform is a hut for Kāli-māyā and Kāli. The hut is divided into two compartments, in each of which a pot of water, covered with mango leaves and anointed with vermilion, is placed. A picture of a deity holding a stick in the right hand is made with vermilion on the pot which is on Kāli-māyā's side of the hut. The offerings to these deities are the same as those made to Mahādeva; but a larger quantity of *bātāsās* is given to Kāli. A flag hangs on each side of the hut, and a *chirāgh* is kept burning in each compartment. The next is a small platform similar to the one of Rupapori. Offerings of rice, plantains, cocconut, sugar, etc., are made on it to Orpori. After this is a hut with two compartments, one being for Kāmesvari and the other for Burhi Thākuraṇī. A pot of water covered with mango leaves is kept in each compartment, and each pot has a picture of a deity on it, made with vermilion. The offerings are the same as those made to Manasā and Mahādeva. The next is a tree, the trunk of which is smeared with vermilion. It is called Rakṣyā Chaṇḍī. No offerings are made to it. Then come two more huts, with two compartments in each and flags flying over them. The first hut is given for the Ghāzi Sāhib and his brother Kalu, and the next is given for Chawal Pir and Ran Ghāzi. Chawal Pir is said to have been the son of Ghāzi Sāhib, and Ran Ghāzi is alleged to have been Ghāzi's nephew. Five balls of earth are placed in each compartment, and an offering of sugar, *bātāsās*, and cocconut is made to these saints. A *chirāgh* is kept burning in front of the offering inside each compartment. The last deity propitiated is Bāstu Devatā (the earth). The offerings are the same as those made to Jagabandhu, but they are kept on the open ground on plantain leaf. There is no hut or platform.

When everything is ready and the offerings have been arranged, the *faqir* retires to purify himself. He has a bath, and returns wearing the *dhoti* provided for him by the wood-cutters, and having his hands, arms, and forehead anointed with vermilion. He then, with hands folded before his face, goes on his knees and bows his head to the ground, and

remains in this attitude for a few seconds before each of the deities in turn. His prayers to each of them may be translated thus :—

- “Jagabandhu (Friend of the World),—I pray to thee. Shield thou me and keep me under thy care.”
- “Mahādeva (the Destroyer),—Take me in thy lap and cover thou me. Keep the tigers of the jungles far off.”
- “Manasā (Goddess of Serpents),—Hear my prayer. Keep all serpents and other noxious things very distant.”
- “Rupapori (a spirit of the jungles),—I beseech thee to hear me. Keep thy eyes on my companions. Let none of them be injured.”
- “Kāli-māyā (said to be the daughter of Kāli),—O my mother ; look thou on me in mercy. Keep far away all injurious things, tigers and bears, from this place.”
- “Kāli,—O Kāli of this world ! all things are visible to thee. Have mercy upon us. Hear my cry, and let nothing do us any harm.”
- “Orpori (a jungle spirit having wings),—Thou who livest in the air and dost fly about, thou also art a tiger of the jungle. I beg at thy feet. Do us no harm.”
- “Būrhi Thakurāni (wife of Dakṣa Bājā, the father of Durgā),—I am at thy feet praying and pleading. Injure me not.”
- “Rakṣyā Chaṇḍī (another name for Kāli),—I pray thee, preserve my life.”
- “Ghāzi Sāhib,—Thou hast become a *faqir*. As a *faqir* I fall at thy feet and plead. Thou hast come to these jungles with 300 tigers. I beg thee to shut the mouths of the tigers.”
- “Kalu,—Thou art brother of Ghāzi, and I salute thee in his name, and ask for thy help. If thou shouldst injure me after this salutation, thou shalt die and burn in hell.”
- “Chawal Pir,—I pray thee to look upon me as thy son. Be a father to me and protect me from all danger and injury.”
- “Ran Ghāzi,—Thou who hast power over them, and dost ride about on them I pray thee that thou drive out from these jungles all tigers and bears.”
- “Bāstu Devatā,—Thou dost remain on this earth, and all things are under thy control. I pray to thee that thou keep everything peaceful. Let no injury come on us, else thou wilt offend all the other deities.”

These prayers have to be offered and the deities propitiated every seven days, while wood-cutting is going on.

Ghāzi Sāhib and his brother Kalu are said to have been Muhammadan *pirs* or saints. They are alleged to have had complete power over all living things. It is believed that they possessed the power of bringing to pass whatever they desired, and that tigers would come to them or disperse at their command ; also that they used to ride about the jungles on tigers. They are venerated by all Muhammadans and Hindus of these parts, and whenever any person desires to enter any jungle, he first bends to the ground, with hands folded before his face, and says :

“In the name of Ghāzi Sāhib.” Having done this, he goes into the jungle, believing that Ghāzi Sāhib will keep him perfectly safe.

Faqirs and others are unable to say who Ghāzi Sāhib was, and there is nothing in writing about him. In paragraph 524 of his report on the Bengal Census of 1901, Mr. Gait writes as follows :—

“‘Zindah Ghāzi,’ from Zindik-i-Ghāzi, ‘conqueror of infidels,’ rides on a tiger in the Sundarbans, and is the patron saint of wood-cutters, whom he is supposed to protect from tigers and crocodiles. He is sometimes identified with Ghāzi Miyān and sometimes with Ghāzi Madar. One Muhammadan gentleman tells me he is Badiruddīn Shāh Madar, who died in A.H. 840 fighting against the infidels. Songs are sung in his honour and offerings are made after a safe return from a journey. Hindu women often make vows to have songs sung to him if their children reach a certain age. His shrine is believed to be on a mountain called Madaria in the Himālayas.”

After finishing his prayers to the several deities, the *faqir* proceeds to ascertain whether a tiger is present in the locality or not, and he addresses it as follows :—

“O tiger and tigress! if thou be on my right, roar on the right: if thou be on the left, roar on the left.”

Having said this, the *faqir* blows over his left arm. He then spans the arm from elbow to any finger of the hand. If the span meets the end of any finger exactly, the *faqir* waits a few minutes and spans a second time. If the span fails to meet the same finger exactly, it is a sign that a tiger is present, and the *faqir* then has to drive it off. He is said to be able to do this by repeating an incantation, a translation of which is given below :—

“In the name of my brothers Hingli, Bingli, and Maṅgalā, and the horses of Ghāzi Sāhib, also in the name of Barkat (God). O mother Kāmeçvari, thou art uppermost in my mind. I have put Azrael the Rider on the backs of the tigers and tigresses of this jungle. Go eastward, thou of colour of fire; go eastward or westward, go to the right-about, I command thee, and feed thyself by killing deer and pig. If this my charm fails, may the top-knot of Mahādeva fall at the feet of Kāli.”

The above charm is not much unlike an old Scotch rhyme which runs thus :—

“Ratton and mouse,
Lea’ the puir woman’s house:
Gang awa’ owre by to the mill,
And there ye’ll a’ get yer fill.”

It was believed in Scotland that, if the above rhyme was put on paper and pasted against the wall of a house troubled with rats, these vermin would immediately disappear.

Hingli, Bingli, and Mangalā, mentioned in the *faqir's* charm for driving away a tiger, are said to be deities of the jungles and the fathers of tigers. Azreal the rider is alleged to be a spirit who is always on the backs of tigers.

The *faqir* then repeats charms for the protection of the wood-cutters and himself. Translated, they run thus :—

“ In the name of Jaya Durgā and Qiva, I put this guard over my body [here he blows over the right and then the left side of his chest]. O tiger and tigress! I warn thee that thou leave this place.

“ The name of my father and mother is *Amara* (immortal) and that of my companions is *Akṣaya* (indestructible), and my name is also the same. O tiger and tigress! if thou injure any of my men, thou wilt drink the blood of thy mother and brother.

“ O Muni! I am filled with thee! O Bhagavati! do not fail to aid me, or you will put your foot on the head of Qiva and will eat the heads of Ganeṣa and Kārtika.”

After this the eyes of the tiger have to be closed, and the *faqir* repeats an incantation to effect this. Translated, it reads as follows :—

“ Dust! dust! The finest dust be on thy eyes, O tiger and tigress! I lifted it with my feet and rubbed it on my body. Thou canst not see me now. O mother Nidrāpati! grant my prayer and put sleep into the eyes of the tigers. Kāli is on my right, and Dadh (the devil) is on my left. O Nidrāpati! hear me, I pray thee! I stand here a child of Kāli. Be thou watchful over me.”

If a tiger is believed to be in the vicinity of the wood-cutters, the *faqir* repeats the following charm to drive it away :—

“ On the north is a stone, the hut of Rāma, and with it I have stopped the shedding of blood. If this my charm fails, Mahādeva shall know how the tigers and tigresses were born. If this my charm be without effect, may the head-knot of Mahādeva fall at Bhagavati's feet. In the name of Kāmeṣwari I command thee. O tiger and tigress! to either come forward or vanish.”

If the growl of a tiger be heard anywhere near the place where the wood-cutting is going on, the *faqir* repeats an incantation to banish it, which may be translated thus :—

“ God is here and God is everywhere. Tiger and tigress! do thou begone! Hark! their roaring has ceased, and they have fled with five spirits mounted on them. In the name of God I have tied the mouths of the tiger and tigress.”

If a tiger be seen in the jungle prowling anywhere near the wood-cutters, the *faqir* has to turn towards it at once and shew it the palm of his left hand and to exorcise thus :—

“ O thou of fiery eyes! thou art furious for a drop of blood. I command thee that thou stand where thou art: stand, or turn back, thou bastard! I warn thee to retire, else thou shalt die!”

This resembles a charm which was formerly used in Normandy, where, during the eight days before Christmas, the people in some of the cantons placed bundles of hay under the fruit trees, and children under 12 years of age were sent with torches to set fire to the hay, which they did, crying out:—

“ Mice, caterpillars, and moles,
Get out, get out of my field !
I will burn your beard and bones,
Trees and shrubs :
Give me three bushels of apples.”

So much for the *faqir* and his exorcisms. He believes in prayer and pleads before his gods. Whether his prayers and intercessions are sincere or not, is a matter on which we should express no opinion ; rather let us respect him for what he does, even if his methods do not fit in with our own ideas. That he is thoroughly believed in by wood-cutters there is no doubt, and it is equally certain that his charms and exorcism give them courage to enter the forests and embolden them to work there, notwithstanding the many dangers by which they are surrounded. Without him they would be utterly helpless. That his incantations have little effect has been proved, for it often happens that the *faqir* himself, instead of the wood-cutters, is carried off by the tiger. This occurred in the cases of two of them, within my knowledge, during the present season, in the Barisal tract of the Sundarbans, where tigers have increased considerably and have caused great loss of life since the people were prohibited from keeping guns. But the people and wood-cutters allege that the two *faqirs* were carried off because the propitiation of the deities of the jungles where the *faqirs* lost their lives had been neglected a long time, and that the tigers there are consequently very angry.

Some superstitious beliefs about the “ King of the Indian Forests,” prevailing among the people who frequent the Sundarbans, may be mentioned here.

In other parts of Bengal the word “*çial*” means jackal ; in the Sundarbans it means tiger.

There is a superstition that the tongue of a tiger is a sure remedy for enlarged spleen. It may be taken in two ways. A small piece should be cut and put within the upper part of a ripe plantain, and the patient should bite that part of the plantain and swallow it the first thing in the morning, for five consecutive days. Another way is to grind a bit of the tongue with a peppercorn into a paste, mix it with a little *hukkah* water, and drink it every morning for seven days.

The whiskers of a tiger are considered to be a cure for foot-and-mouth disease of cattle. If a few of the hairs be tied in a piece of cloth to a leg of the animal; it is believed that all vermin on it will instantly drop off.

The fat of a tiger is much sought after and is believed to be an infallible remedy for rheumatism. It should be rubbed over the affected parts of the body night and morning.

The skin of a tiger is considered to be a cure for ophthalmia. It should be burnt and ground into a paste with *kukkah* water and applied all round the affected eye.

Tiger-claws are often worn by men and women as a charm against attacks from tigers. Children sometimes wear tiger-claws mounted on silver as a charm against the evil eye.

When a tiger carries off a *mān̄jhi* of a boat, the helm used by him is removed from the boat and planted with the blade upwards on the spot where the man was killed, and a piece of white cloth, with some rice tied in a corner of it, is attached to the helm. When a boatman is killed by a tiger, his oar is planted, blade upwards, on the place where he was attacked, and a white flag, with some rice tied in a corner of it, is fixed to the oar. If any person attempt to remove either the helm or the oar and fail to draw it out of the ground by a single pull, it is believed that he will be killed by a tiger; but nobody ever interferes with these simple memorials to the dead, which are to be seen on the banks of streams and in the jungles throughout the Sundarbans.

Note about certain sections of the Kakars living in the Zhob District of Baluchistan. Collected by RAI SAHIB DIWAN JAMIAT RAI, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Imperial Gazetteer, Baluchistan.*

[Read 3rd June, 1903.]

Mehtarzais and Sargarās.

I obtained the following information, about the Mehtarzai and Sargarā sections which seems to be of ethnographical interest, from :—

1. *Mulla Gulzār*, son of Faizullah, Lālāzai Mehtarzai of Taleri, 'Alozai, age about 60 years.
2. Utman, son of Shah Husain, Sargarā, of Hindubāgh.

The *Mulla* said it is the command of the *shari'at* (Muhammadan law) that a man is by nature stronger than a woman and hence the birth of a son is the occasion of rejoicings and that of a girl is not, though the latter has a considerable market value.

Customs at birth.—When a son is born, sweets are distributed among relations and friends. In pre-British days *Shināi* (*Pistachia Khanjak*) took the place of sweets. People who come to offer their congratulations, do not come empty handed but bring some sweets with them. This is called *Peshkash* (literally a present). The sweets distributed by the parents of the boy are called *Khwanai* (sweet). On the third day, one or more sheep, according to the means of the parents, are killed, and boiled and the boiled meat is distributed. This is called *Khushkai* (rejoicings). The same day, if a *Mullā* is at hand, he breathes the *Azān* (the call to prayer) in the ears of the newborn child, pronounces the *Kalimā* (the orthodox Muhammadan formula in pronouncing the names of god) and gives it a name. If a *Mullā* is not at hand, this ceremony is performed by the father of the child. In the case of girls, no ceremony is performed, and the name is given by the parents. On the day a son is born, guns are fired, as a token of rejoicing, from the top of the parent's house and one of the women of the household comes and proclaims in the village that a son has been born to the happy parents. On the third day the men and women dance in separate groups and sing. [Arrangements are being made to obtain the songs sung on the occasion.]

A woman after child-birth, is considered unclean for forty days,

* For some account of this tribe of Afghans, see Baluchistan Census Report for 1901, by E. Hughes-Buller, Esq., C.S.

and during this period she should not be visited by her husband. No purification ceremony is necessary. A woman after child-birth is called *Lan-gā* (Persian *Zachā*), and the child until it is weaned is called *Kuchnote* (Persian *Shir Khār*). For forty days the child is wrapt up in a piece of cloth, the head and neck being left bare, and is tied over with a thin cord. No opening is left for the water, &c. This cloth is untied every-day and cleaned, and wrapped round again. The cloth is called *wanri* and the rope with which it is tied is called *Sanzali*. In case of a son, after forty days, the parents of the mother present a shirt, which is given to the child. This shirt must be coloured, not white. The father of the child in return gives a *chadar* (long cloth worn over the head) to the female relations who have presented the shirt.

On the day of birth congratulations are offered by females to the mother and by males to the father. Near female relations also offer congratulations to the father.

Professional *dāis* (midwives) are unknown in this part of the country. Old and experienced women help at child-birth. The *langā* is given *ōgrā* (a porridge made of crushed wheat) for ten to fifteen days, with which are mixed *gur* (molasses) and *ghī* (clarified butter). The last named articles are sometimes given separately. Dry bread is not given as it is considered to lessen the mother's milk.

Trousers (*partūk*) are given to boys when they are eight to twelve years old and they are then called *Palast* (grown up). *Kākars* generally count their age from the date on which they begin to wear *partūk*. Circumcision (*khatnā*) is generally performed a few days before the *partūk* is first worn. The circumcision of girls is not known in this part of the country. On the day, the *partūk* (trousers) is given to a boy, friends and relations assemble and *sanjad* (Elaeagnus) or *gur* (molasses) is distributed. Some well-to-do people kill a sheep. Dancing (*atanr*) also takes place this day. Every village has a *Mullā* or other expert to perform circumcision. The ceremony is generally performed a few days before the Muhammadan festival of the *I'd*. The apparatus used is a piece of tender bone of sheep or goat (called *walai*) in which a round hole is made. The end of the generative organ is passed through this hole, and the foreskin which covers the gland (*hashfāh*) is then cut off with a razor (the *Sar Ohara*), so as to uncover the gland. A small cloth bag is then made and filled with ashes and the wounded part is placed in the bag in order to heal the wound. This bag is called *Kosōrai*. A thread is passed through the ends of the bag and tied round the waist. The wound heals in about a week. Among the *Kākars*, a boy cannot lawfully kill a sheep or goat until he has been circumcised. *Qamis* (shirt) is worn by the girls at a very early age. The shirt of an unmarried

girl differs from that of a married girl in that the latter is tight at the waist and has more silk work in front.

Betrothal.—When a man wishes to take a wife he manages by some means to see the girl. If he likes her, he sends some elderly men (*astāzai*) to her guardian to make overtures on his behalf. If the latter consents *walwar* (bride-price) is fixed, and Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 are given as earnest money. This is called *Zarūnkai*. In pre-British days, the *walwar* varied from Rs. 60 to Rs. 240, but it has now risen to Rs. 300 or Rs. 600, and in some cases as much as one thousand rupees are paid. The reason for this high price is the prosperity of the people. On receipt of the earnest money the father of the girl presents the would-be son-in-law with a needle in which a piece of red or green silk thread has been inserted. This union is significant (so the *Mullā* said) of the union between the girl and the boy, the needle representing the former and the thread the latter. The father also presents a handkerchief. This completes the betrothal (*Kozhdah*) ceremony and the parents or the guardians of the girl cannot afterwards withdraw from it. On receipt of the articles mentioned, the bridegroom's party distributes sweets; sheep are killed and dances held. On the second day a few friends of the boy take some money with them and go to the girl's house. This is called *Bandai*. The girl's father presents turbans to the party; these are called *Khillats*. Among the Mehtarzais the first *nikah* (marriage ceremony) is performed on the day of the betrothal and thenceforward the bridegroom is at liberty to visit his intended wife in her father's house, and enjoy all the privileges of married life. Among other *Kakars* in Zhob, such visits are said not to be permitted. The system of marriage by exchange also prevails. This is called *Sarai*. In the course of such an exchange, the parents of the younger girl have to make a small additional cash payment the amount of which varies. To quote an actual case, Mir Bāz of 'Alōzai Tilerai gave his sister to Pezwa of Firōzi Kanr, taking Pezwan's daughter for himself. Pezwan's daughter being the younger, he has agreed to pay Rs. 80 in cash as well.

Exchanges are arranged by the guardians of the parties concerned. In these cases also it is necessary to present the needle and thread and handkerchief.

Marriage ceremony.—Marriages are not generally performed in the month of *Ṣafar* (second month of the Musalman year). Among the Mehtarzais, Thursday and Friday is preferred for marriage. The date is fixed by the parents of the bridegroom. Among the Mehtarzais, the bridegroom with his relations goes to the girl's house and the *Mullā* belonging to the bridegroom's party performs the *Nikah* (marriage service) there. The bridegroom wears a new dress, and so does the girl.

Among the Sargarās, the bridegroom with his relations goes to the girl's house; all eat their evening meal there and stay for the night. In the morning the girl is clad in a new dress and is brought to the bridegroom's home and the *Nikah* (marriage service) is then performed at the bridegroom's house. The *Mullā's* marriage fee varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 which is paid by the guardians of the bridegroom. Before the British occupation, the Mehtarzais used to pay to their village headman from Re. 1 to Rs. 2 on the marriage of their sons. This has now been discontinued. Among the Sargarās the mother of the girl accompanies her to her new home and lives with her for a few days to initiate her into her new duties. The bridegroom then presents her with a *chadar* (cloth for covering the head) and escorts her back to her home.

Among the Mehtarzais, the *Nikah* (marriage service) is performed in the morning and the girl's mother and a brother accompany her to her new home. The brother soon returns to his home, but the mother stays with her daughter for a week or ten days, and makes the bride familiar with her new duties.

Dower (Kolang).—A Sargara of the middle class generally gives the following dresses, &c., to a daughter on her marriage :—

Dress. One *Chadar* (long cloth for covering the head) white.

One long shirt, generally red *Sālū* with silk work.

Ornaments, *Pasol (Panj, Downi)* an ornament worn on the forehead
Gharā (Hasī) necklace.

Bangles (of brass).

A pair of *Multānī* shoes. These are seldom worn except on the occasion of weddings.

Furniture.

One *Kambal* (Carpet).

One pair *Khurjins* (saddlebags).

Palman (Razai) (Quilt).

Gholde (A grain bag).

Gaḍwā (Copper vessel for water).

A skin for *āttā*, etc.

Kāsā (wooden grain measure).

Naghrai (iron tripod for cooking).

To the bridegroom :—

One pair white trousers (*partuk*).

One shirt (white).

Paṭkā or *lungī* (Head dress).

The new moon of Safar.—When the moon appears in the month of

Şafar (the second month of the Musalman year) young unmarried girls assemble, light a fire and all sing the following verse:—

Safar pase or walagadō.

Agha mur shū nor walagadō.

which may be rendered:—

The month of Safar is inauspicious and full of calamities. These fires are burnt to reduce or burn away its evil tendencies.

Rain compelling.—If no rain falls after the wheat crop is cut in June or July, the women assemble and make a doll from a piece of wood covered with cloth, which is called *Lādō*. One of them carrying it in her hand, acts as leader, and the procession goes round the village, singing the following song:—

Lādō Lādō ci ghwāri? What does *Lādō* want?

Pa Mazaka shinā wāshā ghwāri. She wants green grass in the land.

Pa asmān shinkai wara ghawāri. She wants gray (literally green) clouds in the sky.

Kurwe Khurwe ūro ghwāri. She wants a Kurwa (measure used for flour).

The villagers give them *āttā*, *ghi*, and other articles of food, and cakes are baked and distributed. This procedure is said to bring rain. In some cases the party visits neighbouring villages also.

*The origin of the Sanzarkhels.**

Mullā Macakh gave me the following account of the origin of the Sanzarkhel *Kākars*:—

Sarlai and *Sughrak* were two brothers, both of whom were married. *Sughrak*'s wife died in his old age leaving him no issue. One day his sister-in-law (*Sarlai*'s wife) enquired from *Sughrak* whether he would like to re-marry, and whether he considered himself fit, in view of his old age, for the function of procreation. He replied that he was quite fit. She mentioned this to her husband, who in his turn made enquiries from his brother. *Sughrak* again answered in the affirmative and asked his brother *Sarlai* to arrange to get him a woman named *Lazgi Lūni*. *Lazgi Lūni* was an old maid, a *Saiad* by birth, who had so far declined all offers of marriage. She was living in the *Duki* country in the *Thal-Chotiali* District. *Sarlai* proceeded there, and entreated *Lazgi Lūni*'s parents to give her in marriage to his brother *Sughrak*. They replied that their daughter had so far refused offers of marriage from the young, the handsome and the wealthy and that she would never care to be

* One of the main clans of the *Kākars* (*vide* Baluchistan Census Report).

married to an old man like Sughrak. Lazgi herself, however, volunteered to marry Sughrak, but obtained a promise from Sarlai that in the event of Sughrak's death, she should be sent back to her parents in Duki. Sarlai brought her with him to the Hindūbāgh country where she was married to Sughrak. The couple lived happily together in the Marza-gḥān hills for some time, and then Sughrak died, leaving Lazgi in a state of pregnancy. According to his promise, Sarlai sent Lazgi back to her parents in Duki, giving her a seal belonging to her husband, and telling her that in case of the birth of a son, she should give the ring to him, and send him back to his father's country, but if the child happened to be a girl, she might retain her. In due time, a male child was born, and Lazgi gave him the name of Sanzar. I have not been able to gather the precise meaning of this name. When he grew up his companions taunted him by saying his father was unknown, and he thereupon enquired from his mother, who his father was. His mother gave him the seal and said that it was his father's who used to live in Zhob, in the kingdom of Miro Mughal. The headquarters of this Mughal were at Khānki in the Hindūbāgh valley. The lad, Sanzar, taking a slave with him, left Duki and came to Zhob. When he reached Marza-gḥān he saw some young girls picking up a wild herb called *Sandai*. He took the herb, by force, from the girls and ate it. The girls came to their father who happened to be Sarlai, and informed him of what had happened. It was Sarlai's duty to get a supply of this herb every day for the Mughal. The lad, Sanzar, had meanwhile followed them to their home. The girls pointed out the lad and said that it was he who had snatched the herb from them. Sarlai attempted to strike him, and Sanzar raised his hand in self defence. Sarlai thereupon noticed his brother's ring and recognized it. He embraced the lad and informed him that he was his uncle. At this juncture, a king's messenger came to Sarlai to ask for the herb. Sarlai told him that the herb had been eaten by Sanzar. The messenger returned to the king and informed him of what Sarlai had said. Thereupon the king commanded that Sanzar should be summoned to his presence. A messenger was sent, but Sanzar would not obey the king's summons. Armed men were then sent to bring him, and they too failed to take him to the king. The king then sent a messenger with the Korān to Sanzar and with an assurance that he would do him no harm, if he came to him. Sanzar then went to the king. His slave also accompanied him. Sanzar told his slave that if he received orders to loosen the girths of his horse, he should tighten them, but if he was ordered to tighten the girths, he should loosen them. Before Sanzar's arrival, the king in consultation with his courtiers had decided to kill him. The king's daughter who was seated

in an upper storey of the court-room heard of this, so to warn Sanzar of the fate that awaited him, she pricked her finger with a needle and the blood fell on the spot where Sanzar was sitting. Sanzar's dog began to lick the blood, whereupon the king's daughter cried to the dog, "Is your master blind?" Sanzar heard the voice, took the hint, and ordered his slave to loosen the girths of his horse. The slave as pre-arranged, thereupon tightened them. Sanzar then mounted, caught hold of the king's daughter, seated her behind him on his mare and told his slave to catch hold of the tail of the mare. Then he made the mare jump the parapet of the *Khānki* fort and in one leap she covered a mile and arrived at a place called *Manzaki*, where now stands a heap of stone called *Sanzar silai* (Sanzar stone). With another leap she covered another mile. On coming out of the fort, Sanzar cursed the king, saying: "May your town be burnt by fire." In consequence the town caught fire and was reduced to ashes with all its inhabitants. At the same time the forts at *Hindūbāgh*, *Shīnā Khōrā*, *Margha*, *Kārezgai*, *Bori*, and *Duki*, which were in the possession of the *Mughals*, suddenly caught fire and were burnt to ashes. Sanzar married the king's daughter, and he got a wife for his slave also. Each of them had twelve sons. Sanzar's sons killed eleven out of the twelve of the slave's sons, and Sanzar was very angry with them on this account. He then blessed the twelfth son of the slave, saying: "May God grant you the powers of your eleven dead brothers." Then he sent him away. The *Dumars** of *Sāngān*, *Baghāō*, and *Sumālan* are said to be the descendants of this slave.

Kākar dwellings in Tang Haidarzai.

The *Tangi* (pass) is about half a mile in length, and the slopes of the surrounding black hills are covered with huts, several of them being made of stone walls, and roofed with *Kizhdi* blanket, belonging to the *Haidarzais*. These are called *Khads*. I visited one of them. The general description of this primitive habitation is somewhat as follows:—

(1). It is about 50 feet long and 10 feet broad; the height inside is hardly over 4 feet, and outside about 2 feet, both the sides are somewhat rounded.

(2). The ground has been dug about 2 feet below the surface and stone walls (loose stones without mortar of any kind) have been erected on all sides, leaving two apertures which answer as doors.

(3). Over these walls are placed small poles, which are curved, the lower ends resting on the ground and the upper ends being tied

* The origin of the *Dumars* is obscure.

together with ropes and pieces of gunny. Over these are placed blankets. Ropes are attached to the ends of these blankets, and they are then fastened down to stones along the walls. Out of the total length about 10 feet are set apart for the family, the partition being effected by means of a *kirā* (matting made of the sticks of the tamarisk (*gaz*). The rest is allotted to the sheep. Inside the family enclosure there is a small plot reserved for the sheep which are being specially fed and fattened for *Landis*, (salted meat, the Afghān equivalent of billtong.)

(4). The sheep pen has a sort of *Manhā* (platform) in the centre. It is made of four sticks stuck in the ground, with other sticks placed across them, and the top covered with rags and leaves. The shepherd reposes here during the night amidst his flock. I entered this place, and it was full of sheep-dung and warm almost to suffocation.

(5). The household furniture consisted of some *khōsās* (coats made of felt), old rags, *gaḍwā* (bowl), *kaṭwā* (cooking earthen pot), *tobi* (flat stone for baking bread), and a few skins for water and grain.

R. H. B.

Note on the Faqirs of Baliya-Dighi in Dinajpur.—By MAULAVI ABDUL
WALI.

[Read 3rd June, 1903].

Twenty-six miles west of Dinajpur town is a police station called Hemtabad. Within its jurisdiction is situated the Mauza Baliya-Dighi, which, since the time of Shāh Shujā, has been the seat of certain faqirs.

It is said that there was a Hindu Rājā, named Baliya, who lived there. A faqir named Shāh Sultān Hasan Muria Burahna came to see the king and shouted so loud that the palace shook, nay, even, the Rājā himself trembled. He demanded an audience. This was refused, but various things were offered him which he declined to take, till at last he asked for as much ground as he might cover with the skin he used to sit on. This was agreed to,—whereupon it began to spread, till it reached the palace and throne of the Rājā. The Rājā jumped into a tank or dighi shouting "*Rām, Rām*" and was drowned, but he is still believed to be living in the water. The tank is known as *Baliya-Dighi*.¹

Two of the gate-keepers of the king, after what they had witnessed of the sanctity of the saint, became converts, and were permitted to marry the two daughters of their late master but the princesses fled. One of them was turned into stone when she reached Mauza Bendal—three quarters of a mile towards the north-west of Baliya-Dighi. The stone is now worshipped by the Hindus as Bhairapī. The other princess drowned herself in a tank close to the fair of *Nikmard*. The faqir settled at Baliya-Dighi and began to preach among the people.

A man named Khapru Mandal who used to supply milk to the saint, became his disciple and grew very rich by the blessings which he bestowed. It is said that people still find coins of that period at the place where his house was situated.

The saint, after his death, was succeeded by his principal disciple who, when advanced in years, entered his tomb alive. The present faqir is tenth in succession from the founder of the colony.

¹ An almost identical story is related by Mr. C. J. O'Donnell in his "Note on Mahāsthān, Bagura." J.A.S.B. for 1875, page 185. Similar stories of religious mendicants appearing and subjugating Hindu kingdoms and principalities are very common in this part of the country.

The beliefs and practices of these faqirs are in many ways anti-Islāmic. They grow long hair on their head, which they call *bhik* or *jata*; put on coloured cloths, wear a small piece of cloth instead of breeches called *kofni*, and use shackles of iron and long iron tongs. They sit with thick sticks placed as a support under their arms. They never take food touched by other persons, and subsist mainly on unboiled rice, clarified butter and salt. They do not eat fish or meat.

The faqirs are the members of the Basriā grōh, Taifūriā *Khānwādā* and Tabāqāti *ghar*. In other words—as I understand from this—the Taifūriā *Khānwādā* is a branch of Basriā grōh and the Tabāqāti *ghar* is again a branch of Taifūriā *Khānwādā* an order introduced by Shāh Madar.¹ Until recent years they lived a life of celibacy. They possessed large *jaigirs*, given them by former kings and lived in great style. In their tours, they carried the fish standard called *mahi-omuratib* and were accompanied by a large retinue. The *Sanad* granted by Shāh Shujā which I copy below gives curious details of the former powers and privileges of these faqirs.

The father of the present faqir broke the rule of celibacy. Embarking on litigation, lost the estates. Their title is *Burahna* or nude; till recently they wore only one simple piece of cloth and even this was probably not worn in earlier times.

¹ The disciples of Shāh Madar or Zinda Shāh Madar are divided, it is said, into four classes: lovers, judges, lunatics, and seekers after truth.

In a small manuscript recently found by me the following orders of faqirs are distinguished:

I. **امامشاهی** the third grōh (order) is *Imamshahi* founded by Shāh Daulat *Khān* Bukhārī, who gave up *amāri* (the life led by the wealthy) and accepted *faqiri* (poverty) and Shāh Daulat set fire to his *Khirqā* and out of the dust drew (the letter) *alif* on his forehead. He thus tore his egotism (*nang*) into shreds. That is the sign of the members of the order in the midst of the saintly fraternity.

II. **حاجی قاسمی** the second *Hāji 'Qāsimi*, founded by Shāh Qāsim. Those who belong to this order fasten a bell in a leather belt round the waist, and do *dhamāl* (i.e., dance while jumping). The third Karimāl *Jhiti*, otherwise called Karāl *Jhiti*. The members of this cult being intoxicated with love (*ishq*) flog their own body. The fourth order traces its birth to Mūsā *nang*. They, of this order, put on the dress and ornaments (jewels) of women (*randis*) and dance in the assembly of the faqirs. The fifth is called Jalaliyā after Saiyed Jalālud-Din Bukhārī. The faqirs of this order hold in their hands the *Mārkhōr* branches (?) (*shakh-i-mārkhōr*) and when mad with love say *ahyān ishqul-lah* (?) But they call themselves *Jiddiya*.

III. The *Khānwādā-i-Tabāqātiā* is called after *Khwāja* Abū Yazid Bistāmī Taifūr-i-Shāmī. Basriā is called after Shāh Hasan Basri.

When the Baliya-Dighi faqir makes a disciple, the following initiatory formula is taught him:—

Whose word ? God's
 Whose kalima (creed) ? Muhammad's
 Whose fakiri ? Shāh Madar's, who is living.

Upon whose hand of laiat (initiation) ? (The name of the present faqir).

It would seem that these faqirs are a survival of a corrupt form of ancient *sufism* mixed with Hindu Jogi ideas.

The following mystic formula is either incorrect in its construction, or the wording has been so altered that none but the faqirs can understand it. The faqir was rather reluctant to explain its purport to me and the copy I took, I suppose, was defective—

حال علي كي عشق - كلمه بروز كي - ذات و صفات صدوح مدوح تاك فاك آشكارا نيم -
 كل نفس ذوق و شوق - هادي هداكم - سيند صفاكن - فقر عطاكن - هادي هو الله -
 فقر ذات الله مرشد عين الله

The translation of the passages not underlined may be made thus:—
 The love of Ali is the *Hāl* (ecstasy); the (thought) of *barzakh* (the interval between death and the day of Resurrection), is the Creed; the person and essence (of the Deity) is *o sudduhun mudduhun tāk fāk āshkārā nāim kull-o nafsīn zauq shauq*.¹ May the redeemer redeem thee; sanctify the heart; acquire spiritualism. The Redeemer is He—the God; the spiritualism is the person of God; and the *murshid* (priest) is God himself.

COPY OF SANAD.

Seal.

شاه محمد شجاع (ولد) صاحب قران ثاني
 شاه جهان پادشاه غازي

Text.

صاحب كرامت انساب مكرم و معظم مظهر فيض بخش - آفتاب شرح

¹ The *sufis* generally write and speak their thoughts in figurative and ambiguous language. The so-called ignorant mendicants, specially when they wish to speak against Islām or Muslims, conceal their real feelings, like gipsies, by altering the words. *Sudduhun mudduhun* might have been intended for the Qurānik words *subbuhan Quddusan*. *Ashkārā naim* (I am not clear) may be a hint for what precedes or follows. The ungrammatical *kull-o-nafsīn zauq shauq* (every being joy and ecstasy) may be contrary to the Quranik verse *kull-o-nafsīn zāiqatul maut* (every man must taste death). I cannot guess what is meant by *tāk fāk*. *Tāk* means a vine-plant, and may mean *wine*, which may help to acquire (contrary to Islāmic law) that joy and ecstasy.

شربت . کاشف اسرار طریقت . جامع الکلمات حقیقت . جناب شاه سلطان حسن
موریہ برهنہ دام عنایتہ *

چون خلوص حقیقت (—) سرکار ابد پایدار (با) بن سالک مالک
حقیقت و معرفت بدرجہ غایت است لا جرم حسب استدعای ان مجمع الکلمات
سبحانی - و مظهر فیض بخش ربانی - برای جلوس غلامان خاندان فقیری -
و تجمل عرفان و پیری و مریدی - از سرکار عالیمدار اجازت عام و حکم تمام داده
می شود . کہ آن فضیلت پناه بان و نشان و علم و چرب و عصار و کویب و کوی و مہمی
و مراتب و چیراس و بردر نوبت و گہڑی و غیرہ لوازمہ جلوس ہمراہ خود داشته
بابت ہدایت خلیق و سیر و سفر و شہر و دیار (و) اصلاح و اصهار - و کفای و جوانب
و مقامات و منازل ہر جا کہ خواہش و رغبت و میلان طبیعت شود روند ہمگی
جلوس ہمراہ خود برند . بعد انتقال ان سالک حقیقت و معرفت - لوازمہ جلوس
نسل بعد نسل (۹) پیری و مریدی کردہ باشند و برای ہدایت خلیق خدا (و) دین
سلام یعنی حکم جاری فاضلان و فضیلت پناہ را اختیار است (۹) ولا وارثی مال یعنی
پیرپال ولا خراج ضبط نمودن درمیان ملک نیک و بہار و ازیسہ اختیار ان سالک
سالک است - و ہر جا رغبت (و) میلان طبیعت ان بزرگوار شود روند - زمینداران
و رعیان بر سر دادن حاضر خواہند ماند - و حضرت مخدوم سید شاہ جلال تبریزی
ساکن پتدوا پرنکہ بانیس ہزاری معال اوقاف و ملک و اسباب سلطنت و غیرہ ہمہ
چیزہا حضرت چنین لہولکر لکنا پنی (را) از جانب حضرت سید شاہ مخدوم جلال
عنایت و مرحمت یافت . بعد از ان جناب شاہ سلطان حسن موریہ را از جانب سرکار
عالیمدار عطا شد - درین مادہ سرکار عالیمدار باخذی (با) فوجداری یا دیوانی مانع
و متعرض اینمعی نخواہند شد . نوع من الانواع برای محصول گہات و گذر و غیرہ
بازیری مناخذ نخواہد ساخت - بنا بر سئدہ ہذا متضمن عنایت و اجازت لوازمہ جلوس
و غیرہ حضرت کمالات ان کرامت دستگاہ و اجازت حضور لامع النور عطا و مرحمت شد
تحریر فی التاريخ بست یکم شہر رجب المرجب سنہ ۱۰۶۹ ہجری فقط *

(میر علاء الدولہ) مہر وزارت پناہ مدارالمہام دیوان میر علاء الدولہ

فی التاريخ ۲۱ شہر رجب المرجب

(شاہ شجاع الدولہ)

[Note:—The certified copy of the above Sanad which is now in possession of the present Baliya-Dighi Shāh Sahib was transcribed from the original in the Rajshahi Court. It was filed in several cases. The Persian of the Sanad (Copy) is in several places defective owing to the

blunders of the Copyist. I have, therefore, put within brackets such words as were either omitted or could not be deciphered. The incomplete or vague sentences are marked with a note of interrogation, and the superfluous or incorrect words are underlined.]

ABSTRACT OF SANAD.

Prince Shāh Muhammad Shujā', son of Sahib Qiran-i-Sāni Shāh Jahān Padshāh-i-Ghāzi, who was Governor of Bengal granted this *Sanad* to Janāb Shāh Sultān Hasan Muria Burahna (may he ever be so kind), who is a holy man, can work miracles, is esteemed, venerated and kind, one who unites in his person the three qualities : *Shariyat*, *haqiqat*, and *marifat*.

Whereas, we, whose belief in the sanctity of that holy man is very deep, and in accordance with the requests of the saint, are hereby pleased, for the *Julus* (procession) of the servants and disciples of the holy man (*i.e.*, the saint himself) to order and sanction as under :—

1. Whenever you wish to go out for the guidance of the people, or for travel into the cities, countries, divisions and all sorts of places, where you may like to go according to your free-will and inclination, you may take all the articles of the *julus*; *e.g.*, banners, standards, flags, poles, staffs, band, *māhi* and *muratib*, etc.

2. After your departure from the world, the whole articles of the *julus* as well as the right of *piri-o-muridi* (the office of priest and disciple) will descend to your successors.

3. You will also be able for the good of mankind and the faith of Islām to be guided by the learned people.

4. You will be entitled within the countries of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, to confiscate, as you may like, property to which there is no heir, or *pirpāl* and rent-free tenures.

5. When you pass through any tract of the country, the land-holders and tenants will supply you with provisions.

6. Hazrat Chetan Lahu Lankar Laukapati (Lord of Ceylon) received from Hazrat Makhdum Saiyid Shāh Jalāl Tabrizi of Pandua the Pargana Baishazari, *waqf* mahals, milk tenures, and other things of Government. After that they were granted by the Sarkar (of the Prince) to Janab Shāh Sultān Hasan Muria.

7. No cess or contribution of any kind will be levied.

8. The *Sanad* was written on the 21st day of Rajab 1069 H (= 1659 A.D.) and was sealed by Mir 'Ala-ud-Daula, the Vazir and Madarul-Muham-i-Diwan (on the 21st Rajab) and by Shāh Shuja-ud-Daula.

Notes on the Hindus in the Nushki Tahsil of the Chagāi Agency in Baluchistan.—By R. S. DIWAN JAMIAT RAI, *Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Imperial Gazetteer, Baluchistan.*

[Read 1st July, 1903.]

The following notes are the outcome of enquiries made by me from some of the principal Hindu shop-keepers of Nushki, who have been in the District for a considerable time.

There are in all about thirty families, old inhabitants, of whom twenty-two have now built houses, and are living in the new bazar, the remaining eight families are still living in the surrounding villages. Some of them have been in the Tahsil for five generations. The majority of them came from Kachhi and Shikārpur. They are all Arorā Hindus and belong to the following clans:—

(1) *Dahra Olan*.—Mandaur, Sadānā, Tar-reja, Ghakar, Kālra, Rabar

(2) *Dhakra Olan*.—Katārā, Kaurā, Wadwā.

There are also about twenty Hindu families in Shorāwak, in Afghān territory.

The Nushki Hindus marry among themselves, but have also marriage relations with the Shorāwak Hindus. They do not marry in the same section, nor do they marry relations up to five degrees both on the father and mother's side. The marriages are all *pun sat* (free gifts), and no bride price is paid. They do not re-marry their widows. Girls are generally married between 10 and 16 years of age, and boys about the age of 15.

They have not very clear ideas about their religion. The majority profess Sikhism; but the Shikārpuris worship Daryā Baksh, the River Pir of Sind. So far as is known, none of the Hindus have been converted to Muhammadanism. There is, however, a curious instance of a Hindu taking a Muhammadan girl as wife. A Hindu named Chozhān, son of Daryā Baksh, caste Kaurā Arorā, now lives in Ahmadwāl, a village about 15 miles from Nushki. Some 30 years ago he fell in love with a girl named Sharo, a slave of Mirshāh, Fakirzāi Rakhshāni, bought her for Rs. 300 and began to live with her. The Naib and other men of influence raised objections to this connection, but Chozhān made them valuable presents to keep them quiet. From this slave girl, Chozhān had a daughter who is married to Shādi Khān, son of Dost Muhammad, Naib of Chagāi. Chozhān and his wife are said to be living in separate *Kuds* (huts) and have separate arrangements for food.

Hindus have been in the habit of buying and keeping Muhammadan slaves, but since the British occupation the slaves have been leaving them. The male slaves are employed in looking after cattle, bringing water and firewood, and doing other out-door work. The female slaves do household work, such as looking after children, cleaning cooking pots, and washing clothes. These Hindus have some peculiar usages of their own:—

(i) A Muhammadan can clean their pots with ashes, sand or dust, but he must not wash them with water.

(ii) A Muhammadan may bring them water in a skin, a brass pot or an earthen pitcher.

(iii) A Hindu may wash with water the *Tobi* (stone griddle for baking) belonging to a Muhammadan, sprinkle salt on it, and then bake his own bread on it.

(iv) A Hindu may drink water from a water skin belonging to a Muhammadan and *vice versé*.

(v) A Muhammadan must not touch the cooked food intended for a Hindu, but he may carry it in a pot, or in a piece of cloth.

The Hindus (males) wear the *choti* (tuft of hair) and the *Janeo* (sacred thread).

A Bikaniri Brāhmaṇ has been living among them for the last forty years. He names children on the day of birth and is given *As. 2 to As. 4* as a present. On the sixth day he comes and writes out a brief horoscope, called *Ohhati*, in the presence of the father, in one of his account books. The mother performs her bath that day, but she is not considered to be purified until after the tenth day.

On the birth of a son, *churi* (bread well pounded and mixed with *ghī* and sugar) is distributed among relatives and friends, and with it is given a cake (called *Ōti*) which is prepared of *gūr*. The ceremony of giving the *chola* (shirt) is performed on the fifteenth or twenty-first day or, in rare cases, at the end of three months. Till then the infant must be wrapped up in a piece of old cloth. On this occasion, a feast is given in the case of a son to relatives, and the Brāhmaṇ receives a fee of *Rs. 1-4* for officiating.

They perform *Ṣraddha* (giving food to Brāhmaṇs in the name of dead ancestors), but as the Brāhmaṇ does not eat the food cooked by the Aroras, he receives uncooked food; this is called *Sidhā*.

Betrothals are arranged by the Brāhmaṇ or by the family elders. The acceptance on the part of the parents of the girl consists in presenting a plate with 5 *chattāks* of *gūr*. If the middle-man is a Brāhmaṇ he receives a fee which varies according to the means of the bridegroom from *Rs. 2 to Rs. 10*.

The terms used locally are :—

Betrothed boy	Mangendā.	Best man	Ānar.
„ girl	Mangendi.	Husband	Munṛs.
Bridegroom	Ghoṭ.	Wife	Zāl.
Bride	Koṇwār.		

After betrothal, the boy and the girl are not allowed to meet, see, or speak to, each other until marriage. The parents, and other near relations of the boy do not speak to the girl, and the girl's relations do not speak to the boy.

The parents of the bridegroom consult the priest who, after examining the horoscope, fixes a date for the marriage. Then the elders of each party assemble and go with the bridegroom, who takes with him a plate full of rice on which are placed a pice and a lump of *gūr*, to the Brāhman who then announces to them, the date to be fixed for the marriage. This is called *Mahūrat*. The same evening the bridegroom, with his elders (*Panchāit*) goes to his father-in-law's house and, for the first time after the betrothal, speaks to him. This is called *Alāi galāi* (conversation). The father of the girl presents to the boy's father a cocoanut and also gives to each member of the *Panchāit* a cocoanut or some dates (*khajī*). The party then returns and sweets (*patāshās*) are distributed. On this occasion the bridegroom supplies both the morning and the evening meal to the *Panchāit*.

On the second day, the bridegroom takes with him his near relations (five in all) and pays a formal visit to his mother-in-law. This is also called *Alāi galāi*. The mother-in-law gives a cocoanut to her son-in-law and to each of his companions, and also gives the boy a new suit of clothing. This visit is paid about midday, and the party returns to the bridegroom's house, where another feast is given.

On the same day, in the evening, the bridegroom and the bride, each performs in his or her house the ceremony called *Buki* (literally handful). This consists of taking about two maunds of wheat and some barley and distributing by *buks* (handfuls) to poor men. On the same evening the bridegroom and bride are given new shoes, which they must not take off even at night, until after the marriage ceremony has been performed. Charms are read over a few grains of *chīnā* (millet) by the Brāhman and the grains are then placed in the shoes of the boy. This is done in order to ward off evil. It is believed that at this stage an evil-minded person may work some charm on the boy and render him permanently unfit for the performance of his conjugal duties.

On the third day, at midday, the father of the bridegroom goes to the father of the bride taking with him his *Panchāit* but not the bridegroom. The bride's father also collects his *Panchāit* and, after display-

ing the ornaments, clothes, etc., which he proposes to present to his daughter, distributes dates or cocoanuts among the bridegroom's party who then return to their home. In the evening the Brāhman is called in and the bridegroom after performing his ablutions is seated on a brass or wooden plate turned upside down under which some copper coins are placed; he puts on new clothes, and the marriage crown called *Mukat*, which is made of paper, and net of silver as is often the case in the Panjāb. He next arms himself with a knife (*kāti*) and bestrides a mare, while his best man (*Ānar*) arms himself with a sword and gets up behind him. After the evening meal, the bridal party (*Janj*) starts for the bridegroom's house, where they sit on *darris* which have been previously arranged. The bridegroom and the best man then go to the house where the girl is kept, and the latter cuts with his sword the rope with which the door is tied. This is called *Nori kaprān* (cutting the rope). The girl is then brought out shrouded in a cloth. She stands inside and the bridegroom outside. Both place their right foot on the threshold the girl's being below, and the bridegroom's above. Each of them is then measured three times with a rope. After this the girl is taken inside and is covered with a cloth and the boy returns to where his party are sitting. He again goes inside the house. On the cloth under which the girl is lying is placed a small quantity of cleaned cotton. The bridegroom, and the sister of the bride remove this cotton gradually, and when all is removed, it is weighed. This is done three times, and the bridegroom again returns to his party. After this, the bridegroom and the bride are bathed and the Brāhman performs the marriage ceremony in the presence of the near relations only. The marriage service is said to be the same as in the Panjāb except that three (instead of seven) turns are taken round the fire (called *lān wān*). After the service is over the bride is brought, usually in a *Dolt*, to the bridegroom's house.

On the fourth day (that is, the morning following the marriage ceremony) the bride's father gives a feast to the bridal party, including the bride and bridegroom. This is called *Satwārā*. After taking the evening meal the party, including the bride and the bridegroom, return to the bridegroom's house. The bride must not again visit her parents until a new moon appears. When this takes place the bridegroom with a few of his relations goes to his father-in-law's house, taking the bride with him. They take their evening meal and are given cocoanuts or dates and then return. After this the girl can visit her parents at any time. In well-to-do families the marriage expenses come to Rs. 500 on the bride's, and Rs. 1,000 on the bridegroom's, side. The Brāhman who officiates at marriage earns from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40.

The Hindus say that before the British occupation they did not pay fixed fees, in cash or kind, to the headman of the village, but they used to send him cooked food on the days they entertained their friends and relations. They had, however, to pay a poll-tax called *Jīja* (Arabic *Jiziya*), which varied from As. 8 to Rs. 2-8-0 a family, according to their circumstances. The proceeds were divided equally by Sardar Muhammad Ali Khān and the Khān's Nāib.

Like the Barkhān Hindus they also observe the ceremony called *Bhore*, or the distributing of cooked rice among the relations and friends on the completion of the seventh month of a married woman's first conception.

Boys and girls are cleau-shaved (called *Jhand*) within twelve months of their birth. This ceremony is performed on the bank of the Khaisār stream from which Nushki is watered. Boys are invested with the sacred thread (*Janeo*) when seven or eight years of age. On this occasion the priest is paid a fee of Rs. 2-8.

The corpses of children under seven years of age are buried, while those above that age are burnt, and their bones (*phul*) are thrown into a spring of water called *Dhārā Brahm Sar*, which is about 22 miles from Nushki in the Anguri hill. Recently they have begun to send the bones to the Ganges at Hardwār. The ceremonies to be performed on the occasion of a death cost about Rs. 100.

All the Hindus, including females and children, know Brāhūi, and most of the men speak Balūchi also, but in their homes they speak the Jatki dialect. Some of the words are given below:—

Father	Bābā.	Daughter	Dhi.
Mother	Amān.	Boy	Chhokar.
Brother	Bhirā, Bhāo.	Girl	Chhokir.
Elder Brother	Kākā or Lālā.	Father-in-law	Thakur.
Sister	Bhenṛ.	Wife	Zāl.
Son	Putr.	Widow	Rannaṛ.

The dress consists of:—

Males.

Sāfā or *Lungī* (turban).

Kurtā (*cholā*) (shirt).

Suthanṛ (white or red) (trousers).

Khes or *Chadar* (in winter only).

Females.

Chadar (*Kaprā*) any colour except dark blue or black.

Cholā (shirt) any colour except as above.

Paijāmā (coloured).

Before the British occupation, Hindus generally wore a red *Suthanṛ* or *Sāfā*. The women, like those of the Brāhūis did not wear *Paijāmā*,

but some of them have now begun to use them. The nose-ring (*nath*) is not worn by unmarried girls. Married women, but not widows, have plaits of hair (*zulf*) hanging on both cheeks. Hindu females did not formerly observe *pardah*, but since they have come to live in the new town they are keeping within doors.

In Sardar Rahman Khan's time, *Sung* was levied on imports and exports at the following rates:—

	Rs.	A.	P.	
Piece goods	0	4	0	a maund.
Wool	0	6	0	„
Ghi	4	8	0	per camel-load.
Tobacco	0	4	0	a maund.
Dates	0	4	0	a camel-load.

Wheat or other grains and salt were free. This *Sung* was abolished by Government some five years ago.



Notes about the Wanēcis (Spin Tarīn Afghāns) of the Shahrīg Thasil, Thal-Chotiali, Baluchistan.—By RAI SAHIB DIWĀN JAMIAT RAI, *Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Imperial Gazetteer, Baluchistan.*

[Received 15th June, Read 1st July, 1903.]

The Wanēcis are a section of the Spin Tarīn Afghāns, and the following extracts from Mr. Hughes-Buller's Census Report* of Baluchistan for 1901 will be of interest:

"The Spin Tarīns, with few exceptions, have left their original home in Pishin, and migrated southwards to the Shahrīg and Dūki Tahsils of Thal-Chotiali. Numerically their strongest group is the Waneci, which is said to come of an alien stock. Some of the names included in it are certainly suggestive; such for instance as Hōt Malānis, presumably Hōts from the country round Rās Malān, on the Makrān Coast; Marrāni (Afghāns from the Shīrāni Marrāni country), and Mehmāni (guests)."

* * * * *

"Theoretically, therefore, an Afghān tribe, as we find it in Baluchistan, is constituted from a number of kindred groups of agnates. That is to say, descent is through the father, and the son inherits the blood of the father. Affiliated with a good many tribes, however, are to be found a certain number of alien groups known as *Mindūn* or *Ham-sayah*. The latter term means: 'living in the same shade.' These groups are admittedly, 'not united to the tribe by kinship.' Take for instance * * * the Wanecis among the Spin Tarīns, the majority of whom are locally known as Marrāni and are presumably from the Shīrāni Marrāni country."

* * * * *

(a) The descendants of Saraban son of Qais Abdur Rashid.‡

(b) Descendants of Sharafuddin son of Saraban :

Spin Tarīn.

|
Wanēci.

"The Wanēcis are locally known as Marrānis and are probably an affiliated group."

—o—

* Pages 94 and 119, Volume I.

† The original stock of the Hōts is said to be found in Makrān.

‡ Page 139, Volume I, Subs. Table IV, and pages 214-15 of the Provincial Tables.

The number of Wan̄cis shown in Provincial Table No. 2, page 38, is 2,802, and the sections specified are :—

(a) 'Alizāi	8	(l) Mēhrāni	55
(b) Bādāni	61	(m) Mēlmāni	362
(c) Daltāni	71	(n) Musalmāni	6
(d) Darpat̄s	19	(o) Nēknāmzāi	1
(e) Hōt Malāni	561	(p) Qalandrāni	4
(f) Jalwāni	19	(q) Saninzāi	10
(g) Khamis	5	(r) Zaragwāl	83
(h) Maljāni	26	(s) Zik Wāni	15
(i) Marrāni	1,344	(t) Zirakzāi	2
(j) Maṭiāni	163	(u) Wan̄cis unspecified	34
(k) Mehmāni	3		

The locality of all is shown as the Thal-Chotiali District.

On going through the details by Tahsils, I find that :—

(a) 'Alizāi	(h) Maljāni
(g) Khamis	(k) Mēhmāni
(v) Musalmāni	

are shewn under Duki. But none of the Duki people being present, when I made the enquiries from which these notes have been written, I could not obtain any particulars about their sub-sections. (d) The Darpat̄s are not known in Shahrīg, while (p) the Qalandrānis are Marrīs, and it is probable that they were enumerated with the Wan̄cis, while grazing their cattle in the Wan̄ci limits.

Nawāb Khān, the head of the Khorāsāni Wan̄cis was away in Sanjāwi; the principal men present were Misri Khān Zakriṣzāi, Marrāni, and Zallā Khān Daltāni, and my enquiries were confined to the Shahrīg portion of the Wan̄cis—that is the sub-sections, ordinarily living in the limits of the Shahrīg Tahsil (*vide* page 247 Provincial Table No. 3). When I made the enquiries the following Maliks were also present :—

Mado, Mēlmāni of 'Ali Khān Hōt.

Isma'īl, Melmāni of Guda Darga.

Jahān, Nohzāi of Senri.

Lālāk, Mandlāni of Shīn Kach.

Mūsā, Nēkzai of Tēlu.

Fazal, Jalwāni of Dub.

The tract of the country where the Wan̄cis now live and own lands in the Shahrīg Tahsil is known as Bābihānṛ. The story about the acquisition of this land by the Wan̄cis is as follows :—

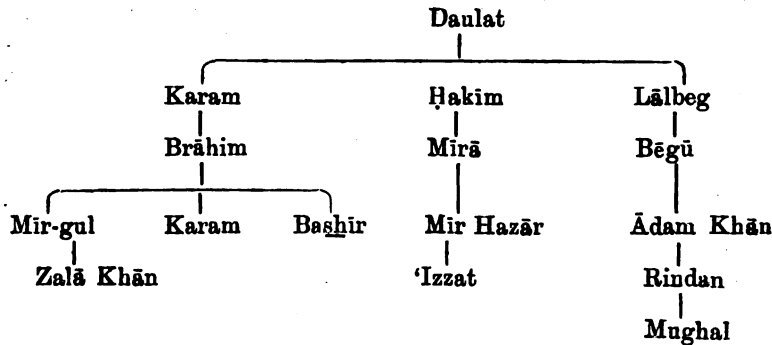
The country belonged to the Khamis, a section of the Makhiāni

Tarins. Karam son of Daulat and Misri son of Paind Khān obtained a portion of the land from the Khamis in exchange for a *Bihānr* (a filly) hence its name—*Bābihānr* i.e., the price of a filly. The Khamis agreed to give to the Wanēcis this land for so trifling a sum, first, because land had not much value in those days, and secondly, because the Khamis—not a very strong tribe—wanted a stronger people to stop the raids which were being constantly made on them by the Marris. The oldest village in *Bābihānr* is Kot Ali Khān. The Wanēcis who permanently reside in the warm climate of *Bābihānr* are called *Zaragwāl* (*Zaragwāl* is not the name of any particular sub-section), while those who live towards Wani, Shērin and Pūi (*Khorasān*) and move down to *Bābihānr* only during the winter are called *Khorāsānis*. The Wanēcis of Shahrig have two main divisions:—

(a) The Daultānis, the descendants of one Daulat, who are generally called Daltānis; and

(b) the Bihamdānis.

Zalla Khān, the present head of the Daltānis, cannot give the pedigree of Daulat. But the descendants of Daulat are said to have been the following:—



The Daltāni now consist of the following sections and sub-sections:—

1 Daltāni 2 Mirāzāi 3 Zakwāni

and to these are affiliated (a) Hōt Malānis, who are composed of the following sub-sections:—

1 Hadiāni 2 Jalwāni 3 Nikāzāi 4 the Tibhānrīs.

It is said that Hōt was a Faqir, who came from Uchh, in Bahawalpore, to Thal and obtained some land and a spring of water from the Tarins of Thal. Afterwards this spring dried up, Hōt then came to

Bābihānṛ where he settled and married a Wanēci woman. He had three sons named :—

Had (Hadiāni). Jalo (Jalwāni). Nikā (Nikāzāi).

The Tihānṛis are the descendants of Tōyi, a Khētrān Shaikh, who married a Wanēci woman and settled in the Wanēci Country.

Bādāni (b) is a misprint for Bazdāni who are Aspāni Tarins from Harnai and are now affiliated to the Daltāni Wanēcis. Thus the Daltāni section consists of :—

Daltāni	}	1 Daltāni	} Hōt Malāni Faqirs.	
		2 Mirāzāi		Real Wanēcis.
		3 Zakwāni		
		4 Hadiāni		
		5 Jalwāni		
		6 Nikāzāi		
		7 Tihānṛi		Khētrān <u>Shaikh</u> .
		8 Bazdāni		Aspāni Tarins.

If there be a feud among the Daltānis themselves the grouping is as under :—

I. Daltāni.	II. Hadiāni.
Mirāzāi.	Jalwāni.
Tihānṛi.	Nikāzāi.
Zakwāni.	Bazdāni.

(10). The Bihamdānis are composed of :—

(a). Mēlmāni. (b). Marrāni.

Mēlmānis are so called because they came from Mēl in Afghānistān and joined the Wanēcis. They were Afghāns, but to what particular tribe they belonged, Misri Khān and Zalla Khan cannot say. It is just as probable that they came as *mēhmans* or guests to the tribe and stayed on to share good and ill. The Mēlmānis consist of :—

1 Mandlāni	} Original stock.
2 'Ali Khel	
3 'Aliāni	

No. 3 Aliānis are an after-addition, they being Abdullāni Tarins. They now live in Tuka in the Bābihānṛ circle.

The sub-sections of the Marrānis with their grouping for internal warfare are given below :—

Group (i).	Group (ii).
1 Zakriāzāi	6 Shērānzāi
2 Nōhzāi	7 Nēknāmsāi
3 Bābzāi (Lūnis)	8 Mēhtarzāi
4 Dādzāi	9 Yūsafzāi

Group (i). (*Continued*)

5 Pēcī. (Saiads)

Group (ii). (*Continued*)

10 Makhamzāī (origin uncertain, affiliated section)

11 Harumzāī (origin uncertain, affiliated section)

12 Jānazāī

13 Zīrak zāī

of the above, No. 3, the Bābzāīs, were originally Lūnīs (Bābis) and No. 5 the Pēcīs are Saiads. The origin of the Makhamzāīs is not quite certain, but they are *Semdār* (an affiliated section). Similarly the Harumzāīs are an affiliated section. The story about them is that two Wanēcīs were once travelling along the road, when they saw a bundle wrapped in a blanket lying at some distance. They decided that one of them would take the wrapper, and the other the contents. On opening the bundle, they found a baby boy in it. This boy was brought up, was named Harum and afterwards married a Wanēcī woman.

The other sections—the real Marrānīs—are the descendants of Umar, a Wanēcī. Umar had the following sons:—

1 Zīrak.	2 Zakriā.	3 Mēltar.	4 Shirān.
5 Jānā.	6 Yūsaf.	7 Nēkuām.	

Misrī Khān claims his descent from Umar—the direct line being:—

Umar
|
Zakriā
|
Pir Wali
|
Bahādar Khān
Akhto
|
Pāind Khān
|
Misrī Khān
|
Dādū
|
Kālā Khān
|
1 Misrī Khān (my informant)
|
2 Jumā Khān
|
3 Shambē Khān.

The Hadiānis, and Tihānṛis among the Wanēcis are considered to be endowed with miraculous powers and they levy *Thuk** from the Wanēcis. They even receive these payments from Marris in Quat Mandāi and Thal. The Pecis also levy a *Thuk*. These sections are known as *Khurādār*. The *Khūrā* (religious payments) received by Tihānṛis, Hadiānis and Pecis consist of the following items :—

(1). On the marriage or birth of a son. One rupee or a sheep or a goat. This is called *Pathā*.

(2). At the time of each harvest, a *pūlā* (bundle) of wheat, rice or Jowāri cut.

(3). At each harvest, one *path* (one seer) of grain per family.

The Tihānṛis and Hadiānis claim to possess the power of curing blights among crops; they are believed to have the power of bringing rain, and of driving off locusts. The Pecis can cure snake bites. Every Pēci has the power of curing snake bites, but the powers of Wali, son of Sher 'Ali of Wani, in this direction are most highly prized. The method of effecting cures is simple. A Pēci is called in, and he makes small cuts with a razor on the arms and back of the patient, licks the blood and then spits it out. Bakhtiār, son of Zalla Khān, was bitten by a snake some ten days ago, and was cured in this manner by Yāsīn Pēci.

Some of the Hadiānis have divided the tribal area amongst themselves for their own purposes; Ghafūr Shāh works and practices among the Marris in Quat Mandāi and Hassan among the Makhīānis and Wanēcis. The Tihānṛis have a different system. They do not divide the area among themselves, but whoever happens to be present receives the dues from clients.

If more than one happens to come to a ceremony, they decide by lots (*Pucā*) the question as to who should collect and retain the dues.

In former days when a tribal war broke out, the first thing the Wanēcis used to do was to get two of the men of the sacred sections to hold up a sheet (*pota*) under which every fighting man would pass. By this means he was rendered proof against the enemies' bullets but not against their swords. If a bullet should hit him, it would not hurt him. Should no member of a sacred section happen to be available, the *pota* was held and the ceremony performed by two leading men of the tribe. About 30 years ago the Wanēcis had a fight with the Dumars in Marhatī in the Sanjāwi Tahsil. About 140 Zaragwāl Wanēcis collected. On that occasion the *pota* was held by Shakūr Zakriazāi and Zallā Khān Daltāni. None of the Wanēcis were killed. They killed some Dumars and brought away a number of their sheep.

* "*Thuk*" in Baluchistan consists of payments made to persons of religious sanctity such as Saiads, etc.

The Hadiānis also perform inoculation against small-pox (*Pacha*) and their fees vary from 4 annas to 8 annas per head.

In pre-British days the Zakriāzāis and Daltānis, so the leading men say, used to levy *Sung* (transit-dues) at Wani and in Bābihānr, on all trade passing through their country, the rates were :—

			Rs.	A.	P.
Per camel load	...	...	1	8	0
Per bullock load	...	...	0	8	0
Per donkey load	...	...	0	6	0

Animals brought for sale were exempt. The *Sung* was divided between the Zakriāzāi and Daltāni Sardārs, their respective shares being $\frac{3}{5}$ ths and $\frac{2}{5}$ ths.

The division of the property looted in tribal wars (called *natar*) was as follows :—

1st. The Sardār's share, called *Panjak*. This was not fixed but varied according to the amount of the loot obtained. Generally the best sheep or bullock was given to him.

2nd. Then the Rāhzan's share. The *Rāhzan* was an officer who commanded the tribal *Lashkar*, and guided them. His share was called *Gul*. It is said that Nawāb Khān (the present acknowledged Head of the Wanēcis) was not a *Sardār* but a *Rāhzan* and that he had no share in the *Sung* or the *Panjak*.

3rd. The remainder was divided as under :—

To each man with or without a sword	...	1	share.
To each gun	...	1	share.

But, previous to this division, compensation for men killed and wounded was deducted. The amount of this also depended on the property looted in the course of the raid, the compensation for a man killed varying from 10 to 100 sheep.

Marriages.—The Wanēcis marry among themselves and no distinction of rank exists. A sardār may give his daughter to, or take one from, any Wanēci belonging to the *Ulus* (clansmen).

The *Walwar* (bride-price) twenty years ago was usually Rs. 40, but as money is now comparatively abundant, the amount varies from Rs. 100 to Rs. 250. The system of exchange, called *Sarai*, also prevails and in such cases the owner of the younger girl pays Rs. 40 in advance. Thus, Bakhshū Zakriāzāi betrothed his daughter (an adult) to Bahādūr Zakriāzāi, and Bahādūr betrothed his daughter (a young girl) to Mian Khān, son of Bakhshū. Bahādūr married his bride first and paid Rs. 40 to Bakhshū. When Bakhshū's son was married to Bahādūr's daughter, Bakhshū repaid this Rs. 40. Had Bakhshū's daughter died in the

interval, *i.e.*, before marriage, the Rs. 40 advanced by Bahādur would not have been repaid.

The compensation for various offences used to be as under :—

	Rs.
(a). <i>For murder</i> Rs. 2,500 made up of :	
(1). Cash	600
(2). <i>Rok māl</i> , <i>i.e.</i> , cattle, etc., in good condition ...	600
(3). <i>Phok Māl</i> , <i>i.e.</i> , unfit and useless cattle, etc....	1,300

Note.—For purposes of the item : of Rs. 1,300

a gun was valued at ...	Rs. 100
a sword do.	Rs. 100
cattle : lean, but able to walk, each	Rs. 80
a girl (each) ...	Rs. 80

The compensation now fixed for a murder is seven hundred rupees.

(b). Compensation paid for injuries was as under :—

For a hand or foot	50
Teeth (each)	20

(c). In cases of adultery :—

Cash	170
1 gun (Useless.)	
1 sword (do.)	
16 goats (do.)	
3 bullocks (do.)	
1 bullock fit for work or	Rs. 40
a girl. Or	Rs. 30

The present compensation in such cases if the parties are *Wanācis* is Rs. 300, and one sword and one gun. The *Sīāh-Kārāh* (adulteress) is handed over to the adulterer. In olden days, the woman, if caught, was often killed, but the man was never killed. If the woman was killed, the compensation payable was half the amount mentioned above.

If a man of another tribe commits adultery with a *Wanāci* woman the compensation payable is Rs. 700. Thus *Bakhtār*, son of *Zalla Khān*, abducted the wife of *Mughal* (son of *Zindan*), and paid Rs. 300, one gun and one sword as compensation ; *Shambē*, son of *Kālā Khān*, abducted *Fattah Mālmāui*'s wife and paid the same amount ; a *Kanozāi Dumar* abducted 'Ali Sher *Harumzai*'s wife and paid Rs. 700 ; and 'Aziz *Harumzāi* abducted a *Kanozāi* woman and paid Rs. 700. The compensation for adultery with a marriageable girl and married woman is the same, but for adultery with a widow it is about half of this amount.

(d). Formerly in cases of theft, if the case was proved, the thief was made to repay seven times the amount stolen. If there was no proof, the guilt of the suspected person was determined by means of (i) ordeal

by water ; (ii) ordeal by fire, which consisted in walking through a ditch in which fire was burning ; and (iii) ordeal by placing a heated iron on the palm of the hand. This was called *Sila*.

The ordeal by water was performed in the Pir Dhand, near Pir Shahr. The ditch used in ordeal by fire was four yards long. A fire was lit in the ditch and four stones were placed in it at equal intervals until they became hot, when leaves of the *Ak* plant (*Calatropis Hamiltonii*) were placed on them. The man was then made to take four paces, putting his feet on the stones. If his feet were not hurt he was held to be innocent.

The procedure for *Sila* was that a heated iron was placed on the palm of the hand of the suspected person on the top of an *Ak* leaf and he was then made to take four paces. If his hands were unhurt, his innocence was proved.

The *shisham* trees (*Zagha*) which grow along the stream near Tuka village are considered sacred and are not cut. When they are washed away by floods, they are cut, but the timber, etc., is only used in Masjids. There is a *Kandi* tree in Pir Shahr which is considered sacred and is not cut by any Wanēci. The wild plants called *Piroti* and *Tairawāni* are cut by the Wanēcis. They are held sacred.

Note on the Grām Devatī or tutelary village deity of Orissa.—By BABU JAMINI MOHAN DAS, Deputy Magistrate, Cuttack. Communicated by the Anthropological Secretary.

[Received 21st June. Read 1st July, 1903.]

In describing the religious practices of the Bhuiyās of Keunjhar, in his "Descriptive Ethnology of Beugal," Colonel Dalton writes: "their private and most frequent devotions are paid to a blood-thirsty tutelary goddess called Ṭhakurāi something, generally "Ṭhakurani Mai," in all probability the origin of the Hindu Kālī, for I firmly believe that Goddess with her bloody sacrifices, specially human sacrifices, was borrowed by the Hindus from the aboriginals." This should not seem strange to the student of the Vedās, in which female Goddesses are of comparatively minor importance, and malevolence of the type represented by Kālī is almost unknown. The division of the creative energy into Prakṛiti and Puruṣa and the gradual ascendancy of the former over the latter are matters of history; but the association of the superior half of the energy with a drunken Goddess carrying a dagger for the destruction of human beings, and wearing a garland of their severed heads, is a development which the subtlest philosophical inventions must fail to connect with the original Vedic ideas. The Grām Devatī worship in Orissa has so many points in common with the fetichism of the aborigines on the one hand, and the more refined Saktī worship of the upper classes of the Hindus on the other, that it may almost be regarded as a connecting link between the two.

Throughout the plains of Orissa, every village has a tutelary Goddess, called Grām Devatī or Ṭhākurānī. Devatī and Ṭhākurānī are used as synonyms, but while etymologically the former represents the original Vedic conception of heavenly beings, the origin of the latter is involved in mystery. In the history of the word Ṭhākurānī, or its masculine form Ṭhākur, is probably looked up an important clue to the history of the grosser forms of image worship. The Grām Devatī is generally established under the shade of a tree; sometimes a house is constructed for her protection from the rain and the sun, and sometimes, though very rarely, she has not the protection of even a tree.

The Goddess is commonly represented by a piece of shapeless stone, surrounded by several smaller pieces of stone, also shapeless, representing her children. All the pieces are smeared with vermilion. Carved

images are also met with, though very rarely. They are not uniform in their details, and many of them were probably originally constructed for other purposes. A carved image representing the main Goddess is also commonly surrounded by small pieces of uncarved stone, representing her children. Sometimes the trunk of a tree supposed to possess supernatural properties, like the *Sāhārā*, is smeared with vermilion and worshipped as the village Goddess.

Like the people of the plains, the Gōnds and Sudhās of Āṭhmallik have stones to represent their female village Goddess, but, curiously enough, the Kondhs of *Nayāgarh* believe their village deity to be of the male sex, and use a wooden post about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high to represent it.

Besides the generic name *Grām Devatī*, each Goddess has a separate specific name, which is commonly one of the thousand names of the Goddess *Kālī*. Other names, indicating the nature of the Goddess or her location in the village, are also met with. The following names, commonly given to the *Grām Devatī*, contain the names of *Durgā* or *Kālī*:—*Ambikei Ṭhākūrāni*, *Bajra Mahākālī Ṭhākūrāni*, *Burhī Mangalā Ṭhākūrāni*, *Bata Mangalā Ṭhākūrāni*, *Bhagabatī Ṭhākūrāni*, *Bateṣwari Ṭhākūrāni*, *Candī Ṭhākūrāni*, *Cāmundeī Ṭhākūrāni*, *Ghata Mangalā Ṭhākūrāni*, *Hara Candī Ṭhākūrāni*, *Kālī* or *Kālīkei Ṭhākūrāni*, *Lakṣmī Mākālī Ṭhākūrāni*, and *Sārādā Ṭhākūrāni*. The general idea seems to be that the Goddess is like a mischievous old witch. The adjective *burhī* (old) therefore very commonly occurs. The names *Burhī Jāgulai Ṭhākūrāni*, *Burhī Mangalā Ṭhākūrāni*, *Burhiāni Ṭhākūrāni*, *Sāna Burhī Ṭhākūrāni* and *Burhī Mājāgulai Ṭhākūrāni* are commonly met with. It is believed that the Goddesses wander about at night, riding animals; earthen figures of horses, elephants and other animals are therefore placed before them. The following names were apparently suggested by this belief: *Bulā* (wandering) *Ṭhākūrāni*, *Hasti bāheni* (carried by elephant) *Ṭhākūrāni*, and *Singha bāheni* (carried by lion) *Ṭhākūrāni*. When several pieces of stone are put together, the Goddess is sometimes named *Sāt Bhāuni* (seven sisters) *Ṭhākūrāni* or *Sāt Poa mā* (seven sons and mother) *Ṭhākūrāni*. When the Goddess is exposed to the sun, she is named *Kharākhāi* (heat-eater). When she is represented by the trunk of the *Sāhārā* tree, she is named *Sāhārā Sundarī Ṭhākūrāni*. Some of the other names commonly met with are:—*Andhārūni* (dark) *Ṭhākūrāni*, *Angakhāi* (body-devouring) *Ṭhākūrāni*, *Aṣurāni* (demoniacal) *Ṭhākūrāni*, *Bhuasani* (married) *Ṭhākūrāni*, and *Raṅgabatī* (coloured) *Ṭhākūrāni*.

The Gōnds and Sudhās of Āṭhmallik name their Goddesses *Pitābali* or *Khambeṣvari*. The meaning of *Pitābali* is not known, but *Khambeṣvari* is probably derived from *Khumba* or post which represents the male god of the *Kandhs*.

The most noticeable feature of the *Grām Devatī* worship is the non-priestly caste of the men who conduct it. In the plains, the Bhandāri, Māli, Rāul, or Bhopā is usually the priest. The aborigines select men from their own tribes to officiate as priests. The Sudhās, Sabars, and Gōnds call their priests *dehuri*, and the Kandhs call them *jani*.

The worship of the village Goddess is largely supported by small rent-free grants called "*mafi Grām Devatī*." The land is held by the priest who gets, in addition, daily doles from the rich men of the village, and weekly doles on Thursdays from the poorer people. Thursday, commonly regarded as Lakṣmī day, or the day of the Goddess of fortune, is considered specially auspicious for the regular *pujā* of the Goddess. The first essential in the *pujā* is a bath or wash which keeps the *Ṭhākurānī* cool and well-disposed towards the village. The bath includes smearing with *ghī* and turmeric, and after it is completed, a paint of vermilion is put on. After the toilet is over, a light *bhōg* of fruits and sweetmeats is offered. The daily *pujā*, including both the bath and the *bhōg*, on a very moderate scale costs about an anna. When provision cannot be made even for this small daily expenditure, the priest contents himself by pouring a little water over the Goddess, and sometimes even this inexpensive offering is dispensed with.

Special offerings of sweetmeats and fruits are made on all festive occasions. On the occasion of every marriage in the village, the Goddess is bathed before the bride-groom or bride takes the last celibate bath called the *bārhuā pānī snān*. After the bath, the Goddess is of course propitiated by refreshments. The worship is conducted with special pomp and ceremony on the Mahāṣṭami or 2nd day of the *Durgā Pujā*.

The *Ṭhākurānī* receives special attention on the out-break of epidemic disease. She is supposed to possess more powers for doing or averting mischief than for doing positive good. Within her own village, she is believed not to commit any mischief. Epidemics are supposed to be the work of neighbouring Goddesses, whom the tutelary village Goddess expels by persuasion or superior force, if duly propitiated. The occurrence of a single case of cholera in the village is the signal for "*Ṭhākurānī Mārjanā*" or washing of the *Ṭhākurānī*. The villagers immediately raise the necessary funds by subscription, and propitiate the goddess by the cooling wash and refreshing offerings. The ceremony is repeated, if the epidemic does not cease.

The ceremony performed on the out-break of cholera is as follows :— A little before dusk the villagers come with music, the materials required for washing the Goddess, and the fruits, sweetmeats, etc., to be offered to her. The priest then washes the stone or trunk representing the god-

dess and smears it with turmeric and *ghī*. The turmeric is next washed off with water, and a paint of hair-scent and vermilion is laid on. If funds permit, a piece of new cloth is purchased and laid as a covering on the *Ṭhākuraṇī*. This completes the “*Mārjanā*” or washing proper. Incense is then burnt and the *Ṭhākuraṇī* is garlanded. The Hom or Fire ceremony under the Vedic rules is then performed if the villagers can provide *ghī* for it. The *bhōg*, consisting usually of fruits and sweetmeats, is then placed before the Goddess in three or four earthen pots and formally offered by the priest. Nobody touches these offerings, although the people freely take what is offered to the Goddess on other occasions. The pots with their contents are taken to the trijunction point of roads and left there for the parting evil Spirits. On a moderate scale, this ceremony costs about a rupee.

The people have a peculiar means of knowing the wishes and decrees of the Goddess. In almost every village there is a male or female medium, called *Kālaṣī*, through whom the Goddess communicates with the people. The presentation of a betel-nut is the token of engaging the *Kālaṣī*. Before the appointed time, he takes a purifying bath, puts on a new cloth, and paints his forehead with vermilion. Then, holding two sticks in his hands, he appears before the Goddess, and with dishevelled hair swings his body to and fro. After a time, he begins to tremble, and in the course of his confused mutterings gives out some secrets of the village to win the confidence of the people. He then predicts evil to some and good to others, prescribing at the same time the remedies required in the shape of special offerings to the Goddess and special favours to himself. While going through these antics, the *Kālaṣī* is sometimes offered a fowl, the blood of which he drinks after pulling off the head. The services of the *Kālaṣī* are specially required on the occasion of the Cholera “*Mārjanā*.”

In *Āṭhmallik*, the aborigines regularly worship their village Goddess only once during the year, in the month of *Aṣaḥ*; but a special *pujā* is offered whenever an epidemic of cholera or small-pox breaks out. The priest, or *dehuri*, washes and paints the goddess in the same way as in the plains. There is, however, a very curious way of sacrificing animals. Rice, milk, sweetmeats, etc., are mixed up, and small quantities of the preparation are placed separately on *Bel* leaves. The animals to be sacrificed are then brought up, and as soon as they touch the offerings on the *Bel* leaves their heads are severed. The blood of the one first killed is offered in a leaf-bowl, and its heart, roasted over a lamp, is also offered. The blood of the other animals killed is simply poured over the representation of the Goddess. The people then retire after offering pudding and cakes previously made.

The wooden post representing the village god of the Kandhs of Nayāgarh is put up at some central spot in the village and worshipped, ordinarily at harvest times. The priest, called *Jani*, washes the post with water and turmeric, and paints it with vermilion in the usual way. Offerings of milk, rice, spirituous liquor, and the newly harvested crop, are then made; and a fowl is sacrificed. Special *pujā* is offered on the out-break of epidemics, when fowls and sometimes even goats are sacrificed.

Certain village Goddesses in the plains are regarded as "Parama Baiṣṇavis" or devoted followers of Viṣṇu, and animal sacrifices are not allowed before them. Such sacrifices are also sparingly made before the other Goddesses, probably owing to the spread of Vaiṣṇavism. In the *Mahāstamī pujā* and special *pujās* offered in fulfilment of vows, animals are generally sacrificed. Fowls are also let loose before some of the Goddesses by the upper classes of Hindus who do not eat them, and are killed and eaten by the lower classes.

It seems hardly open to question, that this worship of the malevolent Spirit, through the medium of shapeless stone, is an off-shoot of the fetishism of the aborigines. It still includes, though to a restricted extent, the sacrifice of animals, which is one of the most characteristic features of aboriginal worship. The offering of fowls, which are so rigorously excluded from the houses of the upper classes of Hindus, can hardly be said to be anything other than an aboriginal practice. The relegation of the priestly function to the Sudra castes is another link in the chain of circumstances which indicate the aboriginal origin of this form of worship. While the Brāhmaṇ stood aloof, the mass of the people, leavened in their lower strata by the aborigines, adopted the faith which, by its easy explanation of the origin of evils, appealed most strongly to their simple minds. The Brāhmaṇ could not, however, long stand against the popular current which thus set in, and he eventually invented more refined forms of worshipping the same malevolent Spirit. The aboriginal mode of village worship seems thus to have preceded the Paurānik rites of Sakti worship, although the present names of the Goddesses are apparently of later date.

SUPPLEMENT.

Resemblance between Ladakhi Folktales and Negro legends.—Babu Sarat Chandra Mittra, M.A., B.L., points out the close resemblance which exists between some of the Ladakhi Folktales about Reynard the Fox published in the Proceedings of this Society for November, 1902, and certain North American Negro legends told by Uncle Remus about the adventures of Brer Fox, Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin.

[SARAT CHANDRA MITTRA, M.A., B.L.]

Exorcism in Chota Nagpur.—The following account of a case of “*Jhar Phuk*” or devil driving, which took place at the headquarters of the Native State of Jashpur in Chota Nagpur, has been received from a reliable eye-witness:—

The *dhobi* came running to us saying his wife was seized by a devil, that her teeth had set and that she was talking nonsense. He then went off to call a Muhammadan, who, it was given out, was able to drive away devils. I was very anxious to see this performance, so after the Muhammadan had arrived and was interviewing the *dhobi*, I walked down to the house very quietly and stood behind the door. The scene I saw was this. The woman was lying on a charpoy and her husband was sitting on the ground near her. The Muhammadan and an assistant of his were sitting on the threshold of the door with an earthen pot in front of them. The earthen pot had a charcoal fire in it. Then the Muhammadan started reading out of a book and every now and then he would throw some sort of a powder into the fire which gave out a smell like incense. After five or ten minutes of this he varied the performance by blowing twice at the woman. Then he called out to the devil in her to go away, using all sorts of threats. This did not seem to succeed, so he told the husband to hammer her as by doing so he would frighten the devil in her. This succeeded and the woman sat up on her bed and looked about her in a dazed sort of way. When asked how she felt she complained of pains down her legs. The Muhammadan said this pain was caused by the devil leaving her. After a little while the woman asked for water which was at once given her. Then the Muhammadan said she was all right and that the devil had gone. He remained a short time with them and then went off with his assistant. I met him outside and enquired how the woman was, and he told me the devil had gone off to a big *Pipal* tree some few hundred yards away, where they (the devils) were accustomed to live. I asked him what

power he had to drive out devils, and was told by him that he had read up all about devils and had now got a certain amount of power over them, also that devils were afraid to remain in the same place with a person who knew so much of their habits.

[MR. W. MAUDE, I.C.S., Ranchi.]

The averting of danger from wild animals.—In Chota Nagpur, especially in the Native States one often comes across heaps of stones or, sometimes, of leaves and branches, which have gradually accumulated at places where some person is supposed to have been killed by a wild animal. These are thrown there by passers-by and the belief is, that if any person who passes does not add to the heap, he will sooner or later be seized and devoured by the animal in question.

[MR. W. MAUDE, I.C.S., Ranchi.]

Acceptance of a Muhammadan as a Hindu Saint.—A Musalman named Amir Khan, better known as Amrit Bāva (ascetic), died at Yavatmal, in Berar, on the 11th May, 1902. Born of Muhammadan parents at Adgav, in the Darva Taluka of the Vani District, he began worshipping Dattatraya; he was punished for so doing by his father, during his childhood, but persisted in his adoration of the Hindu gods after he came of age. He died in the house of a Raṅgāri Dalāl. The day after his demise Muhammadans and Hindus both claimed his body, for burial and cremation respectively, but the Hindus prevailed and his remains were carried *on their shoulders* by Brāhmanas, and disposed of according to the tenets of the Hindu religion. It is well-known that the touch of a Musalman pollutes even the water a Brāhmaṇ has stored for his bath, and that a Brāhmaṇ will refuse to perform even marriage and other "clean" ceremonies in the house of a Çudra, but here is an instance of Brāhmanas not only touching a Musalman's dead body, but undertaking, nay claiming, the right of performing his obsequies. The Patel of Yavatmal has granted in perpetuity a *bigha* of land for the tomb, and it will not be long before Hindus and Muhammadans will worship the Bāva with equal fervour. He is said to have performed a few miracles, which, however, can only be called so out of courtesy to the undeveloped intellect of his admirers.

[MR. B. A. GUPTA.]

The philosopher's stone.—At pp. 193-4 of his Popular Religion in Northern India, Mr. Crooke quotes a couple of cases of the transformation of iron into gold. Both these cases are from Western India, but Mr. C. A. Silberrad has brought to my notice an example from the United Provinces. The ruined fort of Deogarh stands high on a cliff

over-hanging the Betwa, in the Lalitpur sub-division of Jhansi, and the philosopher's stone was kept there in a temple. When the fort was taken, the stone was thrown into the Betwa by the priests and the conqueror tried in vain to recover it. The story quoted by Mr. Crooke omits to mention that the chains which were turned to gold were being used to drag the river, being pulled by elephants on either bank, in an attempt to get the stone.

[MR. R. BURN, I.C.S., *Supdt. of Ethnography, United Provinces.*]

Fortune-telling amongst the Bandijas.—The Bandijas are a Muhammadan tribe of cowherds and camel-keepers who live in the Hab valley in Baluchistan. They claim, without much apparent reason, a descent from the Kalmati Baloch, but some sections are said to trace their origin to the Samras of Sind; the name of one of these sections, Rādhāni, may point to an old claim to be the offspring of Rādhā, Krishna's favourite mistress, or to their being bastards,* but at the present time they detest Hindus and disclaim all connection with them. Instead of using grains of wheat, as in India, divination is commonly performed with the aid of shreds of the leaf of the date palm, which are knotted and thrown on the floor by the fortune-teller, after invoking his *pīr* or familiar spirit. The answers to questions are indicated by the number, position and character of the knots. Odd numbers are regarded as lucky and even ones as unlucky, while as regards shape, the formation of a triangle, the symbol of the *yoni*, is held to be most auspicious.

[MR. B. A. GUPTÉ.]

Traces of fraternal polyandry amongst the Santāls.†—Among the Santāls, the wife of a younger brother is treated most deferentially by the elder brother. To quote a familiar saying “the *Bokot bahu* (younger brother's wife) is like a *bonga* (god).” From the day of her marriage, when the *bokot bahu* catches the elder brother round the ankles and demands a present (a ceremony known as *Katkom*),‡ the *bokot bahu* and the elder brother must never so much as touch one another. The relations between them become very strict; they can-

* The word *Rādheya* is used in this sense as a term of reproach because *Rādha* was not regularly married. [*Rādheya* means “born of *Rādha*” and *Rādhāni* means the same thing.]

† These notes may be compared with Mr. Earle's account of polyandry amongst the Bhotias which will be found in Appendix V. to the Bengal Census Report for 1901. (Ed.)

‡ The literal meaning of *katkom* is “Crab,” which is supposed to indicate the firmness of the girl's grip.