GENERAL CODE OF TRIBAL CUSTOM IN THE SIRSA DISTRICT OF THE PANJÁB.

INTRODUCTION.

ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS TRIBES.

THE BÁGRÍ JÁTS.

ACCORDING to the Census of 1881 there are in the Sirsa District 62,973 Jats or Játs, who thus form 25 per cent. of the total population. Of these, 38,320, or more than half, are returned as Hindús; 21,855, or about one third, as Sikhs; and 2,798 only as Musalmáns. The Sikhs and Musalmáns call themselves Jat, speak Panjábi, have all come in recent times from the north and west, and live chiefly along the north-east border of the district; while the Hindús call themselves Ját, speak Hindí, have all come in recent times from the south and east, and live chiefly along the south-west border of the district. There are other differences between them and between each of these divisions and the Desí or Deswál Játs of Hariána and Rohtak, but these are probably due to religion and to history and surroundings, and they all seem to belong to one great Ját race, which forms the most important part of the population in all this part of the country. Not only are they the most numerous tribe in this district, but in Bíkáner to the south, the Bágrí Játs are the most numerous tribe, being estimated at 50,000 out of a population of 300,000: in Hissár to the east, the Játs, partly Bágrí, partly Deswál, are by far the most numerous tribe, and form 27 per cent. of the total population: Rohtak, further east, may be considered the head-quarters of the Deswál Játs, 33 per cent. of the population of that district being Játs: in Pattiála to the north, the most important part of the population are the Sikh Jats; while on the west, in Montgomery, the Musalmán Jats form 10 per cent. of the population. (Indeed, one-fifth of the total population of the Panjáb are

returned as Jats.) In the Sirsa District, then, all these four sections of the race may be said to meet. The Sikh Jats from the north and Musalmán Jats from the west, while differing greatly among themselves in religion and in many other respects, are evidently more closely inter-connected than they are with the Bágrí and Deswáli Játs. Both Sikhs and Musalmáns talk Panjábí; they are taller and finer men than the others, and more independent and self-asserting. Their *gots* are in many cases the same, and both sides admit that they are descended from the same ancestors and have adopted different religions from choice or by compulsion. The Bágrí and Deswál Játs speak very much the same dialect of Hindí, are somewhat similar in physique and in character, though the Deswáls are much superior in both to the Bágrís, and may be said to be between them and the Sikh Jats.

I have used the terms Deswál and Bágrí as they are used by the Játs themselves. They both seem to have reference not to the men, but to the country of their origin. According to the Játs of Sirsa, Desí or Deswál means an inhabitant of the country to the east of Hissár, known as the Bángar or Hariána (Bángar = the upland); the name may mean an inhabitant of the country (Des) of the Játs (in Rohtak, to which especially it is applied by the Sirsa Játs, Deswál seems to be now attached to a particular *got* only). Bágrí means a resident of the Bágar (quite a different word from Bángar, which has a nasal and a different *r*), the country lying between Hissár, Sirsa, and Bíkáner. The Bahníwál Játs of the Darba Pargana sometimes call themselves Deswál, to distinguish themselves from their Bágrí brethren to the south and west, but they are called Bágrís by the Játs further east, and, notwithstanding some dialectical peculiarities, speak the same Hindí as the Bágrís and resemble them so strongly that they may be included in that division of the Játs, while the term Deswál is, according to their own showing, confined to the Játs of Hariána or the Bángar, east of Hissár.

According to the Bágrí Játs of Sirsa, while there is some change of dialect every 12 *kos* (say every 20 miles), the Ját race may be divided into five sections according to the dialects spoken:—

(1) Jangal or Singh *kí bolí* spoken by the Sikh Jats-Panjábí.
(2) Deswálí, spoken by the Deswál Játs of Hariána or the Bángar.

(3) Bágrí, spoken by the Bágrí Jats of the Bágar between Sirsa and Bikaner.
(4) Márwárí, spoken in Jodhpur and Jaysalmer.
(5) Dikhnád *kí bolí* the southern dialect, spoken in Jaipur.

The Bágrí dialect is a pure Hindí, much more closely resembling the dialects to the south and east than it does the Panjábí, from which it differs greatly in vocabulary and inflections, but most noticeably perhaps in the broadness of its vowel sounds, especially in the frequency of the long *á*, which is at the end of words pronounced *au* or *o*, and indeed sometimes spelt *o*. A Bágrí's language is exceedingly broad and coarse in sound, but comparatively free from the nasals so common in the sharper Sikh Panjábí, and not spoken through the nose like the Musalmán Panjábí of the Satlaj.

Like the Bœotians and other peoples distinguished for the broadness of their dialect, the Bágrí Játs are also famous for the slowness of their intellect. This may be partly due to their long residence in the Rájputána desert country cut off from intercourse with other tracts. Under the oppressive rule of the Rájput Thákurs, too, they have been a downtrodden race, and are greatly wanting in spirit and the power of self-defence. In the Mutiny many of them fled into Bikaner, and left their villages to be plundered by their Musalmán neighbours. In physique they are generally small and dark and badly put together, with coarse, unintelligent faces, especially noticeable, perhaps, among the women. They are not very cleanly in their persons, and their clothing is generally coarse and often ragged and dirty. They often live in wretched hovels or carelessly built houses, and their standard of comfort is low, as might be expected of a people who for generations have inhabited a dry and sandy country, which may almost be called a desert. They are much given to hoarding up wealth, and very reluctant to spend their gains except on the occasion of a funeral feast (*káj*), when the expenditure in ghí, sugar, &c., is sometimes enormous. They perform almost all their agricultural operations with the aid of camels, which form their chief wealth; and coming from a region of little rainfall, they are accustomed only to cultivate the poorest kharif crops by the roughest processes in light sandy soil, and are only now learning from their Sikh neighbours how to cultivate a rabi crop. They are little

given to pasturage, and keep few cattle, though some of them have large flocks of sheep famous for the fineness of their wool. They call themselves *par excellence* agriculturists (*zamíndár* being here almost equivalent to Ját), and are, and have evidently for generations been, essentially an agricultural race, and yet until lately they attached little value to their land, and were ready to migrate in numbers on the slightest pressure of famine. But in truth such rights as they had in such soil as was available were of little value.

I have attested separately the Tribal Customs of the Bágrí Játs, as I thought they might differ considerably from those of the Sikh Jats. I have included the Bishnoís, most of whom are Ját by tribe and Bágrí by origin. Indeed, the Bishnoís are Bágrís of the Bágrís, and show in their extremest form all the typical features of the Bágrí character. The Bágrí Játs generally follow an ordinary type of Hindú religion, paying great respect to Bráhmans, and having great regard to rules of caste, but usually by no means bigots. The Bishnoís are somewhat bigoted, being very particular about rules of caste, and especially tender of animal life. They are exceptionally quarrelsome (in words), given to coarse abuse in their ordinary talk, and destitute of all idea of politeness.

According to the Bágrí Játs, all Játs and Jats, whether Sikh, Hindú or Musalmán, belong to the same race. The Sikh Jats marry the daughters of the Bágrí Játs, though they do not often give their daughters in marriage to the latter, whom they consider their inferiors, partly because they make their women do hard field-work. There are some instances of Bágrí Játs having recently become Sikhs and adopted the dialect, dress, and manners of Sikhs, while on the other hand there are instances of Sikh Jats having given up their *kes* and the other marks of the Sikh religion, adopted the Bágrí dialect, and become to all intents Bágrís. The Musalmán Jats, as shown by their *got* names and the traditions of themselves and their neighbours, are of the same stock as the Sikh Jats and Hindú Játs around them. There are some Játs, notably the Jhorars of Nathauhar, Bani, and Bachíhar, who cannot say whether they are Sikhs or not. They do not wear the *kes* as their ancestors did, but they follow to some extent the precepts of the *guru*, and their dialect is more Panjábí than Bágrí. They are called Bágrí by the Sikhs to the north and Sikh by the Bágrís to the south. These Jhorar Játs, who are related to the Sikh

Jhorars to the north and to the Musalmán Jhorars on the Ghaggar and elsewhere, are said to have been the first Ját settlers in this tract. According to tradition, they first came from near Bhatinda in Pattiála and settled at Rámpura in Pargana Mahájan of Bikaner, where there are still some fifteen villages of Jhorars. Then they settled here some 360 years ago on or near the Sotar valley, and have lived here ever since, notwithstanding famines and forays.

There are a few Márwárí Játs at Ludesar, Naráyan Khera, &c., in the Darba Pargana and in the neighbouring part of Hissar District. They all came from Márwár in the famine of 1869 Sambat (1812 A.D.), and still retain their peculiar dress and dialect.

The Bahniwál *got* which now holds Darba and Jamál, and some fifteen other villages in that pargana, has been settled in this neighbourhood for many years, and gave its name to the mahál in which this tract was placed by Akbar. The chief seat of the *got* is Bahádra in Bikaner, 18 miles south of Darba, where they have lived for some 28 generations. They came originally from Sámbhar, where their ancestors lived as Chauhán Rájputs. In Akbar's time they held the Darba Pargana, but they were driven back to Bahádra by the famine of 1840 Sambat, and the raids of the Bhattís about 100 years ago, and only returned some 70 years ago and re-settled their deserted villages.

The Godáras, another important clan, say they were originally Gahlot Rájputs from Chittor. They own 360 villages in Bikaner territory near Rúniya, and have recently settled a few villages here. Among other important *gots* deriving their traditional origin from the Rájputs are the Sahu from Chauhán Rájputs, the Saháran from Bháti Rájputs, the Kaswán from Panihár Rájputs, the Siyág from Tunr Rájputs, the Kásaniya from Panwár Rájputs, the Jhorar from Bará Rájputs. The only important *got* which does not claim a Rájput origin is the Púniya, an important *got* in Bikaner, which calls itself Sheogotra, and says it was originally created a Ját *got* by Sheo (Shiva). All the other *gots* of Játs say they were originally Rájputs, and that they separated off from the original stock by taking to agriculture and *karáwa*, or re-marriage of widows; the eldest son remained a ruler and a Rájput, and the rest became cultivators and were called Ját. Possibly the reverse may be true. The Rájputs may simply be Játs who acquired the ruling power and kept it in their families, and made them-

selves into an exclusive caste. We see the same tendencies among ruling families in the present day.

If physique, language, custom, religion, and tradition are any evidence of origin, the Játs are Aryans and Hindús, probably of as purely a Hindú origin as the Bráhmans and Rájputs themselves.

The Bágrí Játs own in the Sirsa District 107 of the 650 villages, and shares in 65 others.

THE SIKH JATS.

The Sikh Jats are returned in the Census of 1881 as numbering 21,855, or about 9 per cent. of the total population. They are found chiefly along the north-east boundary of the district, and have immigrated from Pattiála, Firozpur, and other districts to the north within the last 70 years. They admit that they are of the same great race as the Bágrí Játs and Musalmán Jats, and, like the Bágrís, apply the word *zamíndár* to all Jats and Játs as distinguished from other races, implying that they are agriculturists *par excellence*.

The Sikh Jats are the best peasantry we have. They are fine, tall, strong men, well made, orderly, industrious, thrifty, intelligent, and self-respecting. They are fond of manly games, like a good joke, and can laugh even at a bad one. They wear their hair long, as it is against their religion to cut it, and the long white beards and intelligent-looking faces of the older men give them a venerable and prepossessing appearance. They are fairly clean and tidy in their persons, and generally build themselves comfortable houses and keep them and their villages neat and clean; they are good, industrious cultivators, and while ready to spend their gains, generally manage to keep clear of the money-lender. Their women are capital housewives, but do not ordinarily work in the fields.

There is some little doubt about the definition of a Sikh. The full Sikhs are followers of Guru Gobind Singh, and are distinguished outwardly by five marks, the names of which begin with *k*: (1) *kes*, the uncut hair; (2) *kachch*, the short breeches ending above the knee; (3) *karad*, the knife; (4) *kanggá*, the comb; (5) *karáa*, the iron bracelet. They follow the Granth, venerate the cow, are forbidden the use of tobacco, but allowed to drink spirits and eat opium. The

Nánakpanthis or followers of Guru Nának, but not of Guru Gobind Singh, are also called *muna Sikh*, or shaven Sikh, because they do not wear the *kes*. They do not wear the other *ks* either, do not eschew tobacco, and altogether have fewer points of difference from the ordinary Hindús than have the followers of Guru Gobind Singh, who sometimes deny them the right of being called Sikh. There are some Kúka Sikhs, followers of the carpenter Rám Singh, but they are few and of little importance in this district.

The Sikh Jats are, like the Bágrís, divided into *gots* or clans composed of agnates and deriving their descent from a common ancestor. The chief *got* is that of the Siddhus, to which the Rájás of Pattiála, Nábha, Jínd, and Faridkot belong. According to the Siddhus of this district, they were originally Bhátí Rájputs, and came from Sialkot to the neighbourhood of Sirsa (so called from one of them, Rájá Sirkap), where they were settled when the first Musalmán invaders came from Ghazni. Some of the Bhátis became Musalmán, and are now called Wattu, while the others, to avoid being made Musalmán, left this part of the country and went to Kachhbhuj and afterwards to Jaysalmer, where there are still Hindú Bháti Rájputs, their relatives. Some 30 generations ago, an emigration of Bhátis from Jaysalmer northwards took place. Some became Musalmán and are the Bhattis of the Sotar valley, who gave its former name of Bhattiána to the district. The others took to agriculture and remarriage of widows (*karewa*), and so became Jats. Lalbáí, Kakkhánwáli, and Bidowáli, between Dabwáli and Malaut, are said to be in the neighbourhood where they first settled as Jats. Siddhu, from whom the *got* is named, lived 25 generations ago; and Barár, who gave his name to that section to which all the Siddhus in this neighbourhood belong, lived 18 generations ago. As all the parties acknowledge the connection, it may be taken as a fact, and one of some political importance, that there is a close relationship between the Hindú Bhátis of Jaysalmer, the Musalmán Bhattis and Wattus of the Ghaggar and Satlaj and the Siddhu Sikh Jats of the Málwa.

The Dandíwál *got* about Rori say they were Chauhán Rájputs, who went from Delhi to Garhdadera, somewhere beyond Jaysalmer, and from there emigrated to Rori and its neighbourhood, took to *karewa*, and became Jats with the name of Dandíwál, because this part of the country was called Dandí. Their neighbours on the Ghaggar, the Bháne-ke-

Musalmáns, were formerly Dandíwál Jats, who became Musalmán only 9 or 13 generations ago under the Musalmán emperors of Delhi, either by choice or compulsion. This relationship also may be accepted as a fact, as it is acknowledged by both parties.

The Gill and Jhorar *gots* have the same origin and were formerly *Bará* Rájputs. They came originally from about Bhatinda. Bani, a Jhorar village west of Ránia, remained inhabited all through the troublous times of last century, when the other Jats were driven back to their older settlements.

The *gots* are sub-divided into branches called *munhín* (corresponding to the *al* in other tribes) named after the common ancestor, *e.g.*, in the Siddhu *got* the branches Dádu ke, Jagá ke.

The Sikh Jats own 119 of the 650 villages in the district, and shares in 58 others.

THE MUSALMÁN RÁJPUTS AND JATS.

With the exception of those Musalmán tribes which have a distinctly foreign origin, such as the Shaikh, Saiyad, Pathán, Mughal, and Biloch, and of the one or two small tribes which claim an Arab origin on more doubtful evidence, such as the Bodlas, who call themselves Sadíkí Shaikhs, the Chishtis, who claim to be Fárúkí Shaikhs, and the Háns, who say they are Kureshis, all the Musalmáns of the Sirsa District admit that their ancestors were at one time Hindús, and state that they have lived for many generations in this tract of country or in the regions immediately bordering on it. They may thus be reckoned among the indigenous inhabitants of the country. They are all of them known collectively as Pachháda or Ráth, the first seemingly from Pachham, "the west," because they mostly lived to the westward of the Hindús who gave them the title, and because many of them have within the last few centuries, and indeed within the present century, migrated eastwards from the Panjáb rivers; and the second Ráth seemingly meaning "hard," "cruel," "violent," and supposed to describe their general character. These names are similar to that of Ránghar used to describe the similar tribes in Hissár and Rohtak. The word Ránghar is known in this district, but is applied to the Hissár Musalmáns. The boundary between the Ránghars and the Pachhádas, or Pachádas, may be taken as about Agroha, between Hissár and Fathábád.

These miscellaneous Musalmán tribes, according to the Census of 1881, number 45,717, or about 18 per cent. of the total population of the district. Of these, 42,919 are returned as Rájputs and 2,798 as Jats; but really there is no clear distinction between these classes. All of them trace their descent from some well-known Hindú Rájput stock; but while some admit they have fallen into a lower social grade marked by the adoption of the custom of marrying their widows and of intermarriage with inferior tribes and call themselves Jats, others maintain that, notwithstanding the change of religion, they have lost none of their former high position, and attempt to keep up their rank by an assumption of exclusiveness, intermarrying only with a few other tribes with like pretensions to themselves, and in a few cases forbidding the marriage of widows. Some of these latter tribes, such as the Bhattis, Wattus, and Joiyas, are admitted by their neighbours to occupy a high position, while others, such as the Mahár and Sangla, are considered by their neighbours to be Jat. All of them have traditions connecting them with their Hindú neighbours. For instance, the Jhorar and Bháneke Musalmáns admit that they have become Musalmán within the last 10 or 15 generations, and that they are descended from the same ancestors as the Jhorar and Dandíwál Sikh Jats respectively. Again, the Bhattis and Wattus claim connection with the Hindú Bháti Rájputs of Jaysalmer, but they admit a close connection with the Siddhu Barár Sikh Jats. It seems very probable that all these Rájputs and Jats, Hindú, Sikh, and Musalmán, belong to one great Jat race, forming by far the most important part of the inhabitants of the whole surrounding region. In Hindú times the families of Játs which attained power became exclusive, especially in the matter of marriage. They were really "the sons of the kings," and called themselves Rájputs, princes, nobles, aristocracy. The Jats who lived on the river banks were the first to come under the influence of the Muhammadan invaders; they were more exposed to their attacks, more reluctant to leave their valuable lands, and perhaps more enervated by the malarious nature of the climate in which they lived. On the other hand, the Jats who lived in the dry tracts were more difficult to reach, had little reluctance to leave their lands, which were of comparatively little value, and could easily take refuge in the jungles or the desert until the invading armies passed by, while the dryness of their climate had developed a more robust physique and independent character.

Accordingly we find the inhabitants of the dry tracts in the interior between the Ghaggar and the Satlaj are still Hindús, while along the banks both of the Ghaggar and the Satlaj, Muhammadans greatly predominate, and almost all the Musalmáns who are found in a band of country stretching from one river to the other between the Sikhs on the north-east and the Bágrís on the south-west, say that they have come within the last three or four generations either from the Ghaggar to the south-east or the Satlaj or Ráví to the north-west.

These Musalmáns are sharply distinguished from their Hindú and Sikh neighbours by their religion and the manifold differences it creates. Their characteristic dress is the *lungi*, a striped or checked cloth worn kilt-fashion, while their women wear a petticoat (*gagrá*), a vest often bright scarlet, and a *chaddar*. Their dialect is distinctly Panjábí, even the Ghaggar Muhammadans pronouncing their vowels short and using the characteristic Panjábí inflections and vocabulary. They are many of them tall, strong, well-made men, of a good physique, as a rule darker in complexion, less intelligent looking, and of a lower type than the Sikhs, but superior in these respects to the Bágrís. They all used to live a pastoral life, roaming about the prairie with great herds of cattle, on the produce of which they fed, and cultivating only a few patches of grain here and there, especially near the Satlaj and Ghaggar. Whenever they saw a chance they would combine and make a raid on some distant Hindú village. But soon after the beginning of this century the approach of British power and the colonies of Sikh and Bágrí Játs from the north and south circumscribed the limits of their wanderings, and by degrees they settled down to agriculture within fixed boundaries, which were finally determined when, in 1853-57, the whole waste was divided off into townships, many of which were settled with Sikhs and Bágrís. As generally happens when the undefined rights enjoyed by a pastoral tribe over a large tract of country are exchanged for well-defined rights over a smaller area, the Musalmáns show a disposition to claim rights in the land made over to the colonists, and it was partly for this reason, partly owing to their former predatory habits, that in the Mutiny many of them seized the opportunity to plunder their defenceless Hindú neighbours. Since they were given proprietary rights in the land, a good deal of it has passed out of their hands into those of Hindús. As compared with the Sikhs and

Bágrís, they are unthrifty and extravagant and more in the clutches of the money-lender; yet, on the whole, as compared with similar tribes in other districts, they are not badly off.

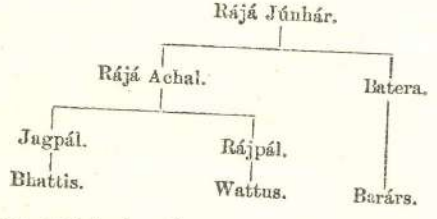
As already said, there are no distinct races of Rájput and Jat among the Musalmáns. The important division is that into tribes (*ját* or *qaun*), each tribe consisting of agnates descended from a common ancestor; thus the *ját* resembles the *got* of other tribes, though not known to these Musalmáns by that name. The *al* is a smaller branch of the tribe, consisting of the agnatic descendants of some not very remote ancestor, by whose name they are known.

The most famous tribe of Musalmáns in the district are the Bhattis, who say they are a branch of the Bhátí Rájputs of Jaysalmer. They migrated northwards and settled about Bhatner, which they held for many generations, but were within the last hundred years turned out of it by the Bikaner Maharaja. Their Nawábs held Ránia and Fathábad for a time until, in 1818, the country came under British rule; but the last titular Nawáb was hanged in the Mutiny, and his family are now hardly distinguishable from their neighbours. That their former dignity is still remembered, however, was shown by the voting of the Bhatti headmen for a relative of the late Nawáb to be their Zaildár, though he is now but an octroi clerk at Ránia, the seat of his ancestors' power. The Bhattis admit their connection with the Bhattis of Pattiála, Lahore, Bháwalpur, &c., and have a tradition of relationship with the Wattus and Siddhu Barár Jats. Owing to the leading part taken in this neighbourhood by the Bhattis about the beginning of the century, the word Bhatti became applied to all the Musalmán residents of the tract, which from them was long known as Bhattiána, or the Bhatti territory. They are not really very numerous, and are found chiefly along the Ghaggar from Sirsa to Bhatner, though members of the tribe may be found scattered about the Musalmán villages all over the district.

West of the Bhattis, along the course of the Sotar or Ghaggar valley in Bikaner territory, from Bhatner towards Súratgarh, come the Joiyas, another ancient and powerful Muhammadan tribe who used to contest the possession of Bhatner with the Bhattis and the Bikaner Rájputs. They seem to cover a large tract of country to the west, and occupy both banks of the Satlaj south-west of the Wattu country, and especially in Bháwalpur territory. They own little land in this district, but are found scattered about the Musalmán

villages where they have settled within the last hundred years from the neighbourhood of the Satlaj (Nai). They speak of Mahmúd Khán and Farid Khán, two brothers, as famous Joiya Nawábs in Akbar's time at Shahr Farid, now in Bháwalpur territory. They say they are of princely descent and closely related to no other tribe, having no ancestor but Adam common to them and other tribes!

The Mirásís (bards) trace the descent of the Wattus from Noah through Shám, his son, and then through a long list of famous Rájás, one of whom settled at Sirsa, while another reigned over Arabia. However this may be, they consider themselves Raghbansi Rájputs, and some importance may be given to their tradition, already mentioned, that they are closely connected with the Bhatti Rájputs of Jaysalmer and Ránia, and with the great clan of Barár Sikh Jats. This relationship they give as follows:—



There are said to be now no Hindú Wattus. They became Musalmán some 16 generations ago, in the time of Khíwa, who ruled at Havelí across the Satlaj in Montgomery, and was succeeded by Lakhe Khán, a famous Wattu.

The Wattus now hold the country along both sides of the Satlaj from about Baggeki, 16 miles north of Fazilka, to Phulálí, 70 miles south. They are bounded on the north by the Dogars and on the south by the Joiyas. They settled on this side of the Satlaj only four or five generations ago, when Fazil, Dalel, Rána, &c., came across from Jhang near Havelí and settled near the river in country which was then unoccupied. They seem at first to have lived a pastoral life, but gradually, as the country grew quieter, they settled down to agriculture. They are of the ordinary type of Musalmán cultivators, not very thrifty, diligent, or enterprising, but yet more so than their neighbours, the Bodlas, with whom they contrast favourably in personal appearance. They are of a smaller, thinner make in body, and their faces are more intelligent, their features smaller and sharper, lips thinner, and noses not so prominent. Their language is the ordinary

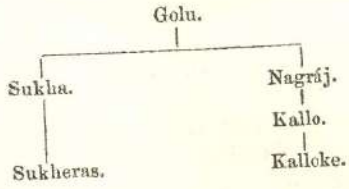
Musalmán Panjábí, spoken much through the nose and full of nasals.

North of the Wattus, along the Satlaj, come the Dogars, whose country extends along both banks of the river to about Firozpur, where it meets the country of the Gújar and Naipál Bhattis. Mamdot is the chief seat of the Dogars. There are only three villages in this district held by them.

A few Kharals from the Ráví are to be found here and there, especially near the Satlaj.

There is an influential family of Bhúrs in Dabwáli tahsil, who say they settled there from Pathrála in Pattiála, but came originally from Púghal, west of Bikaner, where they have still 100 villages. They call themselves Panwár Rájputs, and are very exclusive, intermarrying only with the Parihár Rájputs who border them at Púghal to the south. There are some other Pánwars scattered about the dry tract. A few Dhudhís from Bháwalpur and Montgomery are found in villages near the Satlaj. They are said to be of Panwár origin. The Kharals, too, are said to be related to the Panwárs. The Chímnas, a few of whom are found near the Satlaj, are said to be a branch of the Kharals. The Chhínas, who own two villages on the Bikaner border, came from the Satlaj, and claim to be Bhattis.

A considerable number of villages are owned by Tunr Rájputs who belonged originally to the Sotar valley, about Fathábád in Hissár. The Kalloke branch of them is found chiefly about Fathábád and between that town and Sirsa. The Sukhera branch migrated from that neighbourhood to the Satlaj, and after some wanderings with their cattle settled at Abohar, where they hold some villages. Their relationship to the Kalloke is thus given:—



Another branch of the Tunrs are the Kuháras.

The Bháneke Musalmáns, who call themselves Chauháns, hold a number of villages along the present Ghaggar, north-east of Sirsa. They admit that they were Dandíwál Jats, like their Sikh neighbours, until a few generations ago, when

they became Musalmán. They are a very quarrelsome lot, and gave trouble in the Mutiny.

The Jhorars, like the Bháneke, became Musalmán only a few generations ago, and are closely related to the Sikh Jhorars close by. They are found a little north-west of Sirsa; and they, too, are given to quarrelling and took to plunder in the mutiny. Other Musalmán Jat tribes are the Khod about Chánmal, who say they came from Jaysalmer, and that there are some villages of their tribe on the Ráví. There are a few Musalmán Jatánas related to the Sikh Jatánas of Pattiála. Some Mahárs and Sanglas are found on the Satlaj. They claim to be Rájputs, but are generally considered Jats.

Some Ránghars of Hariána beyond Hissár, of the Sisodiya and Chauhán *gots*, have settled in the district.

Labána originally was not the name of a caste, but was applied to all, whether Hindú or Musalmán, engaged in the carrying trade with pack-bullocks. It has now, however, like Banya, come to mean something like a separate caste. There are twelve sections of Labána, such as Punwár, Gújar, and Hární, generally claiming to be of Rájput origin; but the Rájput *gots* of those names do not intermarry with the Labánas, who marry among themselves. A few of them are found on the Bikaner border. They hold many villages in Bikaner and Bháwalpur.

Many of the Náís (barbers) call themselves Bhatti Rájputs, or say they belong to other Rájput tribes. The Bhattis proper admit that many Náís were originally of their tribe, and are now called Náís only because they have adopted the trade of barber. The agriculturist Musalmáns, however, do not now intermarry with such Náís. Some of the Lohárs give a similar account of their origin.

THE BODLAS.

The Bodlas claim descent from Aba Bakr Sadík Khalífa, and call themselves Shaikh Sadíkí. According to their tradition, their ancestor, Shaikh Shaháb-ud-dín, known as Shaháb-ul-mulk, came from Arabia to India three or four centuries ago, and became a disciple of Khwája Muhammad Irák Ajami at Multán. One day that saint told Shaháb-ul-mulk that he was to him Bo-e-dil (heart's fragrance), explained to mean that he knew intuitively his preceptor's

every thought; hence the descendants of Shaháb-ul-mulk are known as "Bodlas."

Shaháb-ul-mulk afterwards settled at Khái near the Satlaj, in Bháwalpur territory, some 70 miles south-west of Fazilka. All Bodlas derive their descent from Shaháb-ul-mulk and their origin from Khái.

Two small families of Bodlas seem to have come directly from Khái to this district within the last 60 years. One of these holds Ranga on the Ghaggar, in the Dabwáli tahsil, and the other owns Saráwan and four other villages in the Fázilka Rohí. But the chief immigration of Bodlas is said to have taken place some four generations ago under Muhkamdín, who came from Khái through Sangráur in Faridkot and settled at Áhal, where the remains of his town are still to be seen, not far from Bahak. The country was then uninhabited, and the Bodlas kept large herds of cattle and drove them hither and thither for pasture over the tract of country afterwards known as Pargana Bahak, from Bahak, their chief village after the destruction of Áhal. The Bodlas had many contests with the Nawáb of Mamdot, who claimed jurisdiction over their country, and it was not till about 1855 A.D. that they were removed from his control and the pargana was attached to the Firozpur District and settled. It was transferred to the Sirsa District in 1858. The greater part of Pargana Bahak was declared to belong to the Bodlas in proprietary right, and one-sixteenth of the revenue of the whole pargana was conferred on them in jágír, as it seemed that, on account of their saintly character, they had been allowed this grant by the native rulers. Those Bodlas who belong to this pargana still enjoy the allowance, which is divided into complicated shares, founded chiefly on ancestral descent. When the country to the south and east was being settled 35 years ago, some of the Bahak Bodlas acquired villages or shares in villages outside the pargana, and a few of them obtained further grants for good service in the mutiny.

Their claim to a saintly character and to some sort of precedence has always been allowed by their neighbours, and has, by fostering a spirit of exclusiveness, probably had some effect upon their tribal custom. They are supposed to be able to curse with efficacy, and instances are given in which the evils called down by them on their enemies were fulfilled; but their special gift is the cure of the bite of mad dogs or jackals, which is performed by a species of

incantation; and large numbers of all classes, Hindú as well as Musalmán, apply to them in cases of bite, and are said to be cured by their miraculous power. They were until about 25 years ago essentially a pastoral tribe, and even now a large part of their wealth consists in horses and cattle. They do not cultivate much themselves and are bad managers, unthrifty, and extravagant, and the proprietary rights conferred on them at the settlement in 1858 are fast passing out of their hands into those of Sikh Jats. Their tenants are almost all Musalmáns, paying rent in kind, and to an unusual extent under the power of their landlords. The Bodlas are generally large, stout men, with broad flabby faces, large, broad, prominent noses, and thick but not projecting lips, which give their wide mouths a weak appearance. Their language and customs are those of the Wattus and other Panjábí Musalmáns among whom they live and with whom they are closely connected by marriage. They have no connection with other Shaikhs, and, notwithstanding their proud traditions, are probably, as surmised by Mr. Oliver, really of Wattu descent, or at all events of indigenous origin, and distinguished from their neighbours only by the assumption of superior sanctity and the spirit of exclusiveness it has bred.

In this district they own, in whole or in part, 42 villages, most of which are in or near Pargana Bahak, and not far from the Satlaj. They are said to hold, besides, some twenty villages in Montgomery, fourteen in Firozpur, six in Bháwalpur, four in Bikaner, and four in Lahore; but these figures are probably exaggerated. They are a small but comparatively important clan, found, it seems, only in the neighbourhood of the Satlaj. They own to no leader, either political or religious, among living men.

THE LAKHEKE BHATTIS.

The Lakheke Bhattis are closely connected with the Bodlas, and claim, like them, a sacred character. They are known as Bhattis, but say they have now no connection with the Bhatti Rájputs. They trace their descent from Lakha, a fakír who came from Abohar to the Satlaj a few generations ago, and are probably the beginning of a special family or clan like the Bodlas. They own two villages in this district in Pargana Bahak, and are allowed by the Bodlas to share in the jágír to a small extent. The family owns elsewhere only three villages in Firozpur District close by. It was hardly worth special mention, and only finds a place here because it refuses to be

their neighbours, the Bhattis, and at last the famine of 1840 Sambat (1783 A.D.) broke them altogether and drove most of them from the country to settle across the Jumna near Bareli and Rámpur. The few who remained shut themselves up in Sirsa, Ránia, and Sikandarpur, and it was only when the country came under British rule that they ventured again to settle villages of their own. They say that the old *thehris* (or *thehs*), which are so numerous in the old Ghaggar valley, were not inhabited by their ancestors, but were deserted before they came to the country. They deny connection with the Ráins of the Satlaj and the Panjáb proper, and endeavour to maintain their exclusiveness by intermarrying only with Ráins of the Ghaggar and of Bareli. There is only one village, Abdul Khálik, on the Satlaj owned by Ráins, but a good many of the tribe are to be found scattered about as tenants among the villages near the Satlaj. Those Satlaj Ráins are of the same class as the Ráins of Montgomery, Lahore, &c., and admit their connection with Hindú Kambohs, who, like themselves, are good cultivators, devoting themselves especially to market gardening. As there are very few of those Satlaj Ráins in the district, there being only one headman of that class, I have not attempted to work out their customs, which seem to be in some respects different from those of the Ghaggar Ráins. The following Ráin customs are those of the latter class only. There are altogether, according to the Census of 1881, 4,742 Ráins in the district, all Musalmán, chiefly dwelling on the Ghaggar. Ráins or Aráins are very numerous in the north of the Panjáb, but south-eastwards, with the exception of the Bareli Ráins, only a few are known of in the Hissár District and the Bikaner State.

It seems probable, then, that these Ghaggar Ráins are an offshoot from the Satlaj Ráins, who again are probably Musalmán Kambohs, and that they came to this neighbourhood in comparatively recent times from about Multán and settled in considerable numbers in the Ghaggar valley about Sirsa and Ránia, but were driven out by the famines of last century and the depredations of the Bhattis, and that the Bareli Ráins, with whom they intermarry, are really emigrants from near Sirsa. On the introduction of British rule, the remnants of the tribe, who had not lost their instincts of industry, took up land in the alluvial Choya and Ghaggar valley; and now the tribe owns in whole or in part some 20 villages in this valley. They speak of themselves, however, as "the twelve villages," and give as the names of the twelve—Ránia,

Nakaura, Muiz-ud-dín, Fírozabád, Gídránwálí, Mangála, Nitár, Kanganpur, Khairpur, Baidwála, Sikandarpur, Bhonpur. They are very exclusive, and until very lately were strictly endogamous, allowing intermarriage only with Ráins of "the twelve villages" and their near relations of Bareli.

They are, as a rule, middle-sized men with intelligent features, and as their old men do not generally dye the beard, some of them are prepossessing in appearance. Their language is almost pure Panjábí, very similar to that of the Satlaj Musalmáns, but having fewer differences from Hindústání. Their dress is like that of the Panjábí Musalmáns, the men commonly wearing a *lúngi* checked with blue, and a *chaddar*, often striped; while the women's dress is a petticoat (*gágra*) and a jacket and sheet (*orhna*). They are very thrifty and industrious, and have been for generations devoted to agriculture, especially on irrigated land. On the Ghaggar the rice cultivation is either in their hands or has been learned from them. They erect considerable embankments and dig long water-cuts for the irrigation of their rice, and work hard and continuously in the rice season. Their villages have hitherto paid a comparatively high assessment, but their thrift and industry have generally enabled them to maintain considerable prosperity. Numbers of them take land as tenants in other villages, and they often carry goods for hire in their large carts. Their agriculture is carried on with the aid of bullocks, which are generally strong and good. Their houses and villages are kept clean and tidy, many of them being well and tastefully built of *pakka* brick. They are unusually intelligent, but unfortunately much given to quarrelling and litigation. They seem always to have been simple cultivators, and have no tradition of any Ráin having been a Nawáb or Rájá. The distinction into *gots* is not strongly marked, but they have so-called *gots*, such as Khokhar, Bhatti, and Koreshí; another sub-division is into *als*, or branches, named after the place of origin of the branch, such as Kanganpurriya, Sháhpuriya, from the villages of Kanganpur or Sháhpur; or from the ancestor, as Básan and Lakhá in Sikandarpur. They own to no particular leader, but talk of Kamál of Sháhpur and Manga of Kanganpur as two of their ancestors who were called "Mahr," a title meaning something like "headman." They pronounce their name not Araien, but Ráin, with a strong nasal.

THE KUMHÁRS.

The Kumhárs come fourth of the tribes of the district in order of numbers. They were returned at the Census of 1881 as numbering 16,112, or 6 per cent. of the total population. Of these, 12,287, or three-fourths, are Hindús, 880 Sikhs, and 2,917 Musalmáns. There are two large sections of Kumhárs: (1) the Jodhpuriya, so called because they are supposed to have immigrated from the direction of Jodhpur; and (2) the Bikanerí, or Desí, who belong originally to this part of the country. The Jodhpuriya Kumhárs are partly engaged in agriculture, but chiefly in potter's work, making bricks and earthen dishes and vessels of all sorts; they also keep donkeys and employ them in carrying about their vessels and bricks for sale, and generally in carrying grain and goods for hire. The pottery trade is almost wholly in their hands, and probably the 861 males returned at the Census as engaged in making earthen vessels are almost all of this branch of the tribe. A number of them are to be found as far north as Bhatinda. The Bikanerí or Desí Kumhárs rarely engage in making earthen vessels; although this seems to be the original trade of the tribe or caste, they look down upon it, and engage in it only in extremity. They are in this district chiefly employed in agriculture as tenants or proprietors, and many who have no land of their own engage in agricultural labour in preference to the making of pottery. It is said that the Desí Kumhárs, when they do make earthen vessels, burn them in a *pajáwa*, which takes three days to bake properly, while the Jodhpuriyas bake their vessels in a regular kiln (*bhatti*) and have them ready in 24 hours. Many of the Kumhárs in this district are as much devoted to agriculture as the Játs, some villages being owned by Kumhárs who have surrounded themselves with tenants of their own tribe, so that in some cases the whole of the proprietary and cultivating part of the community are Kumhárs. They are excellent cultivators and managers, not inferior to the Bágrí Játs, from whom they are hardly to be distinguished in dress, physique, habits, and language. They are most numerous about Abohar, but are found all over the district. The Sikh Kumhárs are chiefly found in Sikh villages, and the Musalmán Kumhárs in Musalmán villages. They seem to be all closely connected and to form one great tribe, the origin of which is, according to these Sirsa men, from about Jodhpur and Bikaner. The Sikh

Kumhárs who now speak Panjábí say they came from Bahádra in Bikaner some hundred years ago. The Musalmán Kumhárs have forgotten their connection with the Hindús, and say they are a class by themselves and have been Musalmán for generations. The Kumhár tribe is spread over the whole Panjáb except on the frontier, and forms 2 per cent. of the population of the province.

THE KHÁTÍS, OR TARKHÁNS AND SUTHÁRS.

The Khátís are returned as seventh in order of number of the tribes of the district, with 6,922 souls, of whom two-thirds are Hindú and the rest Sikh and Musalmán. The Sikh and Musalmán Khátís are called Tarkhán, which is simply the Punjábí word for Khátí. The 997 adult males returned at the Census as engaged in trade as carpenters are no doubt of this tribe, which numbers altogether 2,484 males over 15 years of age; but many Khátís and Tarkháns are now wholly engaged in agriculture, and make excellent cultivators, hardly to be distinguished from the Jats. A few villages and shares in villages are owned by them.

The Khátís are divided into two great sections: (1) the Khatti or Khátí, with 1,444 *gots*, and (2) the Dhamán, with 120 *gots*. These two sections rarely intermarry. The Suthárs belong to the Dhamán section. They are evidently closely connected with the Khátís and sometimes allow intermarriage with them, but with no other tribe. They are almost exclusively devoted to agriculture, and evidently look down upon the trade of carpenter, which they follow only when in poor circumstances. They say they came originally from Jodhpur, and that Suthárs hold some villages and a jágír there and in Bikaner, where they also serve in the army. They have a tradition that in Akbar's reign 12,000 Suthárs went to Dehli from Jodhpur as artificers and were there compelled to become Musalmán, after which they took to working in iron and became *Lohárs;* and many of the *gots* of the Lohárs bear the same names as those of the Suthárs. Indeed, the Suthárs say they are more closely connected with those Lohárs than with the Khátís. This is admitted by a section of the Lohárs, and has probably some foundation of truth. Those Lohárs, they say, got land in Sind, and thence came and settled in villages about here, and are called Multání Lohárs.

The Sikh Tarkháns, who are found chiefly among the Sikh Jats near the Pattiála border, and who speak Panjábí,

say they came from Bikaner (the Thalí) three or four generations ago, and then became Sikh. Some of them, like the Kumhárs, are ashamed of their ancestral trade, and devote themselves almost exclusively to agriculture. Some Sikh Tarkháns do ordinary work in iron, when they are called *lohárs* and are hardly to be distinguished from the Lohárs proper, with whom, in such a case, they sometimes intermarry. Some of the Musalmán Tarkháns say they came from Jaysalmer with the Dandíwál Jats of Rorí; some claim a connection with the Bhatti Rájputs. The Tarkhán tribe is spread over the whole Panjáb, and forms 2½ per cent. of the population.

THE LOHÁRS.

The Lohárs, or workers in iron, are returned as 1,642 in number, chiefly Musalmán, but some Hindú and Sikh. They comprise the 398 adult males who are returned as iron-smiths. They seem to consist of three sections: (1) the Suthárs and Khátís who have taken to working in iron, and so formed an endogamous caste of Lohárs, sometimes called Multání, as they are supposed to come from Multán; (2) ordinary Jats and Rájputs who have taken to the trade of blacksmith. The Lohárs of the Satlaj say this is their origin: they have the same *gots* as the Jats and Rájputs, such as Panwár, Dhudhí, Joiya, and probably the tradition has some foundation. These Lohárs, too, are endogamous,—*i.e.*, marry only Lohárs,—and seem to admit some connection with the first section; they say, however, that sometimes they intermarry with Jats and Rajputs. (3) The wandering or Gádiya Lohárs, so called because they have no fixed dwelling, but go about from village to village with their families in carts (*gádí*), carrying their simple tools with them. They are Hindús of Bágrí origin, and wander about this district, Hissár, Rohtak, and the parts of Rajputána to the south. They are looked down upon by the stationary Lohárs, who have a natural jealousy of them, and deny all connection with them. They have no home but their cart, which is generally a sort of rectangular body on small strong wheels. They carry about no iron; that is furnished by the peasant, and they work it up with their simple tools, the chief of which are called by them—*airne*, the anvil; *hathora*, the small hammer; *ghan*, the sledge hammer; *sandasí*, pincers; *dháwan*, the bellows, made of two goatskins with a double iron nozzle worked alternately by the hands. Ordinarily

the women work the bellows seated on the ground, and sometimes they take a turn at the sledge hammer. In return for their working in iron (*gharái*) they often take payment in grain or fodder instead of cash.

THE CHAMÁRS.

According to the Census of 1881, the Chamárs of this district number 18,022, or 7 per cent. of the total population; of these only 314 are returned as Sikh, and the rest as Hindú. It is the third tribe in point of numbers in the district. They are very numerous also to the south and east in Bikaner, Rohtak, and much further east, and form about 10 per cent. of the population of the whole south and east of the Panjáb. If the number of Chamárs was rightly given at last census as 11,701, they have increased in numbers 54 per cent. In the Musalmán villages their place as leather-workers is taken by the Mochís, who number 3,073, all Musalmán except 132 who are Hindú. All the leather-work is done by Chámars or Mochís, who also work as labourers in the fields for wages in money or kind. But in this district land is so plentiful that many of the Chamárs are ordinary tenants and have given up leather-work for agriculture, making very good, prosperous cultivators, little inferior to the Játs. The Chamárs also do the weaving of blankets and coarse cloth in the Hindú villages, their places as weavers being taken in the Musalmán villages by the Juláhás.

The Panjábí Chamárs are known only by the name of Chamár or Chimiyár. Those from the Bágar like to be called Meghwál, and say they are descended from Meghrikh, who was created by Naráyan. Any one wishing to be abusive calls a Chamár "Dhed," which seems to be the name of a large tribe holding a similar position in Kachh and Sind. They are also sometimes called Bhámbí. Possibly all the tribes—Chamár, Bhámbí, Meghwál, Dhed, Juláhá or Páolí, and Mochí, engaged in weaving coarse cloth and working in tanned leather—are originally the same race, or at all events closely connected.

The Chamárs are divided into several distinct sections, which will not intermarry with each other. Almost all the Chamárs of this neighbourhood are of the Chándor section, and will not intermarry with the Jatiya Chamárs in the neighbourhood of Delhi, who (they say) work in leather made from camels' and horses' skins, which is an abomination to the Chándors. On the other hand, some Márwári Chamárs

settled in Dehli, who make trips in this direction in the cold weather, selling leather ropes in the villages, refuse to have any connection with the Chamárs here, who (they say) tan leather and eat the flesh of animals that have died, while the Márwári Chamárs eat only the flesh of animals that have been killed in the Musalmán manner (*halál*). All the Chamárs of this neighbourhood intermarry with each other. They do not claim to be descended from any other tribe, and have no tradition of any special origin. The Chamárs of this neighbourhood do not themselves tan leather—that is done by the Rahgar and Khatík; but the Jativa Chamárs of Dehli and the Chamárs of the Pawádh about Ludhíana do tan leather. The Sirsa Chamárs eat the flesh of cows, buffaloes, goats, and sheep, and work in their leather, but they will not eat the flesh of camels or horses, or work in their leather, nor will they eat fish, lizard, or pig. The skins of the camel and horse are left to the Chúhras.

Chamárs are practically Hindú. They have no special deity of their own, but worship the ordinary Hindú deities, and make pilgrimages to shrines commonly held sacred, such as Rámdeo Gosáyan of Runícha in the Bágar, Mairi-ka-pír or Gúgá Pír, not far from Sirsa in Bikaner, Hanumán, Masáni of Gurgaon, Debí of Nagarkot near Kángra, Bhiron of Ahror near Rewárí. They have a caste of Bráhmans of their own called Gurra or Chamrúa Bráhman, who wear the sacred thread (*janeu*), and do not eat with Chamárs, but are quite distinct from the ordinary high-caste Bráhmans. They accept offerings from Chamárs and preside at their marriage ceremonies, which are performed, as among Hindús, by walking round the sacred fire. It is worthy of note that among the Chamárs the dead are either buried or burned, as is most convenient; neither custom is binding. Towards Bikaner it is more common to bury the dead; towards the Panjáb both customs are common, even in the same family. In either case the *phúl* (if burned, the ashes; if buried, the nails) are taken to the Ganges. They have no belief in transmigration, but believe the good in this life go to heaven (*surg*) and are happy after death, while the wicked go to hell (*narag*) and are miserable. At funerals the women remain at home and weep, while the men go out with the corpse, mourning somewhat as follows: "*tu hí haí; tainne paidá kiya aur tainne márliya*"—"Thou alone art. Thou madest and thou hast struck down." The Chamárs have also a separate caste of Mirásís (Musalmán), and another of

Bháts (Hindú), both endogamous and distinct from the Chamárs on the one side and from the ordinary Mirásís and Bháts on the other, but probably originally belonging to the latter, and separated from them only when they took to serving Chamárs.

THE CHÚHRAS.

The Chúhras are returned as numbering 16,051, or 6 per cent. of the total population, and thus stand fifth in order of numbers of the tribes of the district. Of these, 10,215, or two-thirds, are returned as Hindús, and have come chiefly from Bikaner and the country to the south and east; the remainder, 2,078 Sikh and 3,758 Musalmán, are chiefly from the north and west. Many of the latter living in Musalmán villages have become Musalmán within the last few years, and the tide of conversion is still advancing. Many of the converted Chúhras, known as Díndár or Khoja, are admitted in a wonderful degree to terms of equality, even by the Musalmán Rájputs. The Chúhras perform all the menial and dirty work, and help as servants in house and field, but in this district many of them live and prosper as independent tenants. The tribe forms nearly 5 per cent. of the population of the Panjáb.

Chúhra is the proper name for the tribe and the name by which they describe themselves. The Sikhs, when they want to please them, call them Rangreta ("*Rangreta—guru ka beta*"). They do not like to be called Bhangi, a term which is applied to them in contempt. A Sikh Chúhra is called Mazhabí; a Musalmán Chúhra, Díndár, or in derision Khoja (eunuch). Chúhras are also called Halálkor, Khákrob, and Mihtar. There are some seven or eight *gots* which are numerous in this neighbourhood; they all intermarry with each other. They do *begár* work, carry burdens, run messages, work for wages, sweep streets and houses, &c. One of the differences between Chúhras and Dhánaks is that Dhánaks clean up anything but night-soil, and Chúhras sweep up even night-soil. The Chúhras say that the Dhánaks are their equals, because neither of them will eat the leavings of the other; but the Sánsís are beneath them, for a Sánsí will eat a Chúhra's leavings (*jhút*), while a Chúhra will not eat a Sánsí's. Chúhras eat the leavings of all other tribes, however, such as Báwariya, Chamár, Khatík. Chúhras also take the clothes of the dead. They eat the flesh of the camel, horse, lizard, fish,

and pig, except that Chúhras who live in Musalmán villages will not eat pig.

All Chúhras bury their dead, and do not send any remains to the Ganges. They have a separate caste of Bráhmans of their own who officiate at their marriages; they are quite distinct from the ordinary Bráhmans, and do not intermarry with the Chúhras. Chúhras living among Hindús perform the marriage ceremony by walking round the sacred fire: those living among Musalmáns have the nikáh performed by a Chúhra fakír who is not a Musalmán. There is also a separate caste of Bhangi Doms or Mirásis, distinct from the ordinary Doms, intermarrying only among themselves, but eating with the Chúhras. The Chúhras who live among the Sikhs wear the hair long (*kes*), but, with the exception of Mazhabi Sikhs, do not have the regular initiation (*pahul*) and allow smoking.

They worship one supreme deity called Lálbeg or Lálguru, the only god without form or dwelling-place. A small shrine of earth is made, a stick with a piece of cloth put up as a flag, a simple offering of ghí, &c., made, and the worshipper bows down before the shrine and offers up his prayer to be saved from illness and trouble. The Chúhras do not believe in transmigration. Who does good in this life will go to heaven, where he will bathe and sit at ease in happiness; and the wicked will go to hell (*dozakh*), where he will be tormented by wounds and fire until the deity is pleased to release him.

THE BÁWARIYAS.

The Báwariyas are returned as 3,335 in number in 1881, an increase of 40 per cent. on the number returned at last Census; of these, 297 are returned as Sikh, and the rest as Hindú. They are divided into four sections, called (1) Bídáwatí, from Bikaner territory, claiming a connection with the Bídáwat Rájputs and giving Chitor as their origin; (2) Deswálí living in the country about Sirsa; (3) Kápriya to the east towards Dehli; (4) Kálkamaliya, or black-blanket men, who generally wear black blankets (especially their women) and are found among the Sikhs of the Jangal and Málwa country. These four sections do not eat together or intermarry. They all come originally from about Bikaner. Báwariyas are numerous only in the Lahore, Ferozpur, and Sirsa Districts of the Panjáb. The name of the tribe seems to be derived from the Báwar, or snare formed of many

nooses of leather tied together, into which they drive herds of antelope and other animals. Many of the Báwariyas, however, look down upon this their ancestral occupation, and indeed it seems now to be practised only by the Kálkamaliya or Panjábí section. The Báwariyas are seemingly an aboriginal tribe, being of a dark complexion and of inferior physique, though resembling the Bágrí Játs. Many of them are fond of a jungle life, and given to wandering, living in wretched huts and feeding upon lizards and other jungle animals. In other districts they are known as a criminal tribe, but here many of them are fairly respectable cultivators; some are employed as village watchmen and professional trackers. They are divided into *gots* or *naks* with Rájput names, as Chauhán, Panwár, Bhátí, Solankhí. The Báwariyas who live among the Sikhs (Kálkamaliya) wear the hair long (*kes*), and some of them have received the *pahul* and become regular Sikhs. The Kálkamaliya speak Panjábí and the Bidáwatí speak Bágrí, but they have besides a dialect peculiar to themselves and not understood by the ordinary zamíndárs. One peculiarity of it is the *kh* sound for *s*, or rather for the Sanskrit *s* or *ç* (the palatal sibilant): for instance, the names of the numbers are as follows: *ek, bai, tren, chár, pánch, chhau, hát, áth, nau, daukh, gyara*, &c., *vikh. khakhra* = *súsra* (father-in-law), *khakhu* = *sas* (mother-in-law). They seem also to use *h* for *s*,—*e.g.*, *hando* = *sánda* (lizard), *haru* = snake.

Báwariyas eat lizards (the *go* and *sánda*), jackals, foxes, &c., but not fish. They hold the cow sacred, and will not eat beef; and if a man kill a cow by accident, they make him go on pilgrimage to the Ganges to expiate it. All Báwariyas burn their dead and send the ashes (*phúl*) to the Ganges, where a fee of Re. 1-4 is given to the officiating Bráhman. At marriage regular Bráhmans officiate, the same as those who officiate for Játs and Banyas.

THE HERÍS.

The Herís, as they call themselves, are also called Náik (a sort of honorific title) and Thorí (somewhat in contempt). They are returned as 3,368 in number, all Hindú. In appearance and physique they resemble the Báwariyas, and, like them, come from the Bágar. They are found chiefly in the Hissár Division and in Rajputána. They speak a Bágrí dialect and have no special dialect of their own. Many of them are given to wandering, and bands of them

come north when the harvest is ripe, and help to reap it, wandering off again when it is over to work on canals or wherever they can find earth or field labour. Some of them, however, have settled down as cultivators in villages, being generally made to reside outside the village ditch as an inferior caste. Some of them are chaukídárs. The Herís form one homogeneous tribe; all eat and drink together and intermarry. They come originally from about Jodhpur, where there are many, as well as in Jaipur and Bikaner. They do not keep donkeys, but carry their bundles on their heads when they wander with their families. They worship the ordinary Hindú deities, such as Debi and Mátá of Gurgaon, but chiefly Bábújí of Kolumand in Jodhpur, and also Khetpál of Jodhpur. The Gurre or Chamárs' Bráhmans perform the marriage and other religious ceremonies for them. The Herís burn their dead and send the *phúl* to the Ganges. They do not eat beef. They are divided into *gots* with Rájput names.

THE BANYAS.

According to the Census of 1881, the Banyas number 10,213, or 4 per cent. of the total population of the district, which makes them the sixth tribe in order of numbers. Of these, only 22 are returned as Sikh and 799 as Jain or Saráogi; the remaining 9,392 are Hindús. The Banyas almost all came into this district from the east and south, from Hariána and Rájputána, and their dialect is the broad Hindí spoken by the Bágrí Játs. They are still found chiefly in the east and south of the district among the Bágrís with whom they immigrated; their place to the north and west is taken by the Roras. A line drawn across the narrowest part of the district about Dabwáli would roughly mark the boundary of the two great trading castes. The word "Banya," pronounced by the Bágrís "Bánya," is from the Sanskrit *Banij*, which simply means "a trader," and is more the name of a caste or occupation than of a tribe. The word *kirár* is used by the Panjábí-speaking tribes in the same sense, and is applied by them to Banyas as well as Roras. Both *kirár* and *banya* are used in a somewhat opprobious sense, and the more respectable members of the caste do not like to have these names applied to them. They prefer to be called *mahájan* as a caste, and the chief merchants and bankers among them are generally known as *Seth* (from *Sreshtha*=eldest, best)—a title, however, which is in ordinary usage confined to only a

few wealthy families forming important firms. There are one or two branches in Sirsa of large commercial houses whose head-quarters are in Bikaner and other parts of Rájputána, and whose ramifications extend over the whole of North India.

The Banyas generally seem to derive their origin from Rájputána and the country immediately bordering on it, and are most numerous in the south and east of the Panjáb. Of the tribes to which the name is commonly applied, the most numerous in this neighbourhood is the Aggarwál, which originally came from Agroha between Sirsa and Hissár, where their ancestor, Rájá Aggar, a man of the Vaish caste, once held sway. They are very numerous in all the country between here and the Jumna. In this neighbourhood by far the greater number of them are Bishní or Vaishnava,—that is, orthodox Hindús or followers of Vishnu; but a considerable proportion of the tribe, comprising many of the most wealthy members of it, belong to the Jainí or Saráogí sect, who worship Párasnáth and have a great tenderness for animal life. There is some difficulty about the intermarriage of Bishní and Saráogí Aggarwáls, but these are simply religious sects, not separate castes or tribes, and the difficulty is caused only by religious animosity, not by caste rule or tribal custom. Instances are to be found of late years in which Bishnís and Saráogís have intermarried. The Saráogís in this district were returned in 1881 as numbering only 1,084—a very small increase on the 1,015 of the 1868 Census; and as many of these must be Oswáls, there must be very few Aggarwál Saráogís in the district.

Next to the Aggarwál Banyas in numbers come the Mahesrís, who say they were originally Rájputs, and have *gots* with names similar to those of the Rájputs. They have a tradition that they were turned into stone by the curse of some fakír, but were restored to human shape by Mahesh or Mahádeo, whence their name of Mahesrí. They mostly are Bishní or orthodox Hindús.

The only other Banya tribe of importance is the Oswál, known also among the Sikhs as Bhábra, who say they came from a town called Osanagari in Jodhpur. They are all, or nearly all, Saráogís.

These three are distinct tribes, having no close connection with one another, each marrying within itself only.

The Banyas of this district are of course chiefly engaged in trade, and more than half of them are in the towns. In

the villages some of them cultivate land as tenants, the trade of the district being insufficient to employ them all in their traditional calling. In this district they have not such a hold on the cultivating classes as in most places, as many of the proprietors and cultivators are sufficiently prosperous and provident to be quite independent of the money-lender; and many peasants even carry their own grain to market and sell it there for ready money. The import trade, however, and the shop-keeping trade for the supply of salt, sugar, and ordinary necessaries which are not actually produced in the district, is altogether in the hands of Banyas and Roras. The Banyas marry earlier than most tribes do, and have a closer connection with the Bráhmans, who find them their best clients. At last Census the number of Banyas was returned at 7,819; the present Census gives 10,213, an increase of 31 per cent., while the total population has increased only 20 per cent.

THE RORAS.

In order of number the Roras come eighth among the tribes of the district, their number being returned at 5,554, or about 2 per cent. of the total population, 407 being Sikh and the rest Hindús. I believe, however, that many of these Hindú Roras are what are called *muná*, or shaven Sikhs,—followers, not of Guru Gobind Singh, but of Guru Nának. The Roras are a Panjábí tribe, and speak the ordinary Panjábí dialect; they seem to have immigrated from the country to the north, and from across the Satlaj on the west. They are most numerous in the west of the Panjáb, and in several districts form 10 per cent. of the population. They are born traders like the Banyas, and occupy a similar position. They take the place of the Banyas in the Fazilka tahsíl, and a considerable portion of the trade of Fazilka town is in their hands. More than two-thirds of the Roras, however, live in the villages. They are, like the Banyas, called *kirár* by the Sikhs and Musalmáns, but call themselves Rora, or more rarely Arora. They say they were originally Rájputs, and give an account of their separation from that class similar to that given by many tribes, *viz.*, when Parasrám was slaying the Rájputs, their ancestors, when asked whether they were not Rájputs, said they were not, they were another tribe—*aur qaum*; since when they have been called Arora. The tribe is divided into two sections, the northern Roras, whose women wear red ivory bracelets;

and the southern Roras, whose women use bracelets of white ivory. The northern Roras are again sub-divided into the 12-*got* and the 52-*got* sections, and the southern into the Dahra and Dakhnádhain. The 12-*got* section do not give their daughters in marriage to the 52-*got* section, but take daughters from them. Similarly the Dakhnádhain take the daughters of the Dahra, and do not give them their daughters.

THE BRÁHMANS.

The Bráhmans are the ninth tribe in the district in order of numbers, being returned at 5,389, all Hindús—an increase of no less than 55 per cent. on 3,466, the number returned in 1868. One-third of the total number is found in the towns, and the remainder chiefly in the Hindú villages. The caste is sub-divided into tribes, of whom the most numerous in this neighbourhood is the Gaur, and next to them the Sársut. The Sársut Bráhmans are more engaged in agriculture and less in religious services than the Gaur.

The Gaur Bráhmans, besides the sub-division into *gots* founded on agnatic relationship which is common to all Bráhman tribes, are also sub-divided into Sásans, named from the place of origin of the branch. There are said to be in all 1,444 Sásans. The sub-division is of some importance, as attention is paid to the Sásan in deciding prohibited degrees of marriage. The Sársut Bráhmans derive their name from the Sarsuti (Saraswati), the present Ghaggar, which is held especially sacred by them. The Gújar Gaurs are a branch of the Gaur Bráhmans, and say their name is derived from *gújjh*=secrecy, because at one time for some reason their ancestor had to conceal his religion. More probably it marks some connection with the Gújar tribe. The Párík tribe of Bráhmans are found chiefly towards Bikaner, while the Sársut are more numerous to the north, and the Gaurs to the east about Dehli. According to the Khandílwál Bráhmans, they are a branch of the Gaur tribe, and derive their name from *khandan* (to break or divide), because at Parasrám's great sacrifice their ancestors arrived too late, and the only thing left to give them was a golden stool which they broke up and divided among them. There are also a few Bráhmans of the Dáhmán tribe, but they have no tradition of their origin.

These are all high-caste Bráhmans who perform religious ceremonies for the Banyas, Jats, Ahírs, and other ordinary

agricultural tribes. There is an inferior and quite distinct class of Bráhmans called Gurre, who perform such ceremonies for the Chamárs, Herís, and other impure low-caste tribes.

Some Bráhmans, especially of the Sársut tribe, are employed wholly in agriculture, but most of them are employed in conducting religious ceremonies, attending to temples, &c., and are supported by fees and offerings, especially by the Hindús, to whom they are necessary as ministers of religion. They are honoured to a less extent by the Sikhs, but even the Musalmáns sometimes show them special respect, owing to their semi-sacred character. The Bráhmans form 5 per cent. of the total population of the Panjáb, and are found in all districts, but especially in the eastern half of the province.