CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

SECTION III A.—STATISTICAL.

Chapter III. A. Statistical.

Distribution of population.

Table No. V gives separate statistics for each tahsil and for the whole district of the distribution of population over towns and villages, over area, and among houses and families, while the number of houses in each town is shown in Table No. XLIII.

The statistics for the district, as a whole, give the following figures :—

Percentage of total population who live in villages		Persons	87·05
		Males	87·06
		Females	87·03
Average rural population per village			508
Average total population per village and town			602
Number of villages per 100 square miles			16·5
Average distance from village to village in miles, nearly			2·4
Density of population per square mile.	Total area	Total	140
		Rural	131
	Cultivated area	Total	166
		Rural	172
	Culturable area	Total	153
		Rural	139
Number of resident families per occupied house.	Villages		1·01
	Towns		1·02
Number of persons per occupied house.	Villages		7·07
	Towns		6·80
Number of persons per resident family.	Villages		5·02
	Towns		4·84

The above figures bring out what would be expected *à priori* from a consideration of the history of the social and economical development of the district, *viz.*, that the rural far exceeds the urban element in the population; more so in fact than in other districts. The average population per village is certainly increasing; in other words the population, as it increases, tends to concentrate into previously inhabited units of a larger size rather than to found new villages. In a district where water is at a distance from the surface, the foundation of a new village is a matter of no ordinary difficulty, and in addition to this the increasing value of land induces the agriculturists to keep every possible acre for cultivation or for the pasturage of cattle.

Pressure of population on land.

The greater concentration of population is no doubt an usual concomitant of the earlier stages of social development, and Hissár is no exception to the rule.

The pressure of population, both on total and cultivated area, is, as measured by the above figures of density, far smaller than in many other districts. It is true that over 94 per cent. of the total area of the district is culturable, while over 80 per cent. of the latter is cultivated, and this would, as far as it goes, argue that there was room for a very considerably greater density

than is shown above; but it has to be borne in mind that more than 95 per cent. of the total cultivated area is not secured by any sort of irrigation, and agricultural results are dependent entirely on sufficient and seasonable rainfall. In addition to this a very considerable area of the district consists of light sandy soil, easily capable of exhaustion under frequent croppings. Such modifying considerations forbid us to expect that the density of rural population in this district, as a whole, will increase much beyond its present amount.

Pressure of population on land.

Table No. V gives comparative statistics for the density of rural population in the different tahsils of the district. Hánsi which is both the richest, most irrigated and most developed tahsil in the district has far the largest rural density, and it has probably reached the limit of development in this respect.

Density by tahsils.

The Fatahabad tahsil comes next in spite of its containing some of the most undeveloped parts of the district. A considerable area in it is watered by the Ghaggar, and this combined with the unthrifty habits of the Pachhádás who hold that tract and are content with a low standard of living accounts for the comparatively high density in this part. There is, however, no pressure of population on land, and it will doubtless develop largely in the near future, specially if the Sirsa Indri Canal is carried through it.

In the western portion of the Bhiwáni tahsil characterized by a light soil which is easily and as a fact has been to some extent exhausted, population has been decreasing for a considerable period. Little, if any, increase in rural density will take place in this part.

The rural density in Sirsa is far lower than in any other part of the district, but has increased largely during the last ten years. Under a light revenue assessment it is certainly developing, and density will, in all probability, increase rapidly.

On the whole, it cannot be said that pressure of population on soil is excessive in any part of the district, on the contrary in many tracts the limit of density possible under local conditions of soil, rainfall and climate is far from having been reached, while in other tracts population has increased up to that limit.

House room.

The statistics for the number of families per occupied house depends of course largely on the nature of the unit which is considered a house. In this district the unit taken in villages at the census was, as a rule, the *ángan* or enclosure opening by a single entrance or *páoli* on to the lane or *gali*. The subject will be discussed further on; here it is sufficient to say that the number of families or confocal groups, the outward and visible sign of each of which is the *chaulha* or common hearth, inside each an enclosure is very small; the figures give on the average 154 families to 1,000 houses. The fact is that hitherto there has been plenty of room for the expansion of the *thóddi* or inhabited site, and as soon as a son separated from his father, or

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one brother from his other brothers, he preferred to erect a separate *ágan* or enclosure and to live there with his family instead of remaining on in the paternal homestead. In many parts, however, the spread of cultivation up to the confines of the village site and the necessity which exists in most parts of the district for keeping a large space near the village clear in order to act as a watershed (*upráhan*) for the village tank is very considerably curtailing the space available for building new houses, and it is not improbable that the next few years will see a greater concentration of separate families into single enclosures. Hitherto it has been not uncommon in cases where the village area has been unusually large for new tenants to be settled in *dhánis* or outlying hamlets; but owing to the growing value of agricultural land, this practice will probably not be continued in future, and this so far as it goes will mean a greater concentration in the main village.

The number of persons per resident family seems to show that there has been as yet but little segregation of families or confocal groups. The result is probable a consequence of the comparatively recent colonization of the district. At a time when the majority of the population consisted of newly arrived immigrants, it would be natural for these groups to be small, and as the population became more fixed and permanent with increasing development they would probably increase in size with the arrival of new relatives from the original place of residence. Segregation of the confocal and certainly of the proprietary groups is already setting in.

Migration and birth-place of population.

Table No. VI shows the principal districts and States with which the district has exchanged population, and also the number of migrants in each direction and the distribution of immigrants by tahsils.

The total gain to the district by immigration as appearing in the results of the census of 1891 are shown in the margin. No correct figures are at present available for loss by emigration.

Proportion per mille of total population.

	Gain.	Loss.
Persons ...	188	...
Males ...	161	...
Females ...	223	...

The total number of residents born out of the district is 147,810 or 18·98 per cent. on the total population of the district. Of the total immigrants, 63,942 or 42·73 per cent. are males and 84,868 or 57·27 per cent. females. The district, as a whole, was, in the early years of the century after the establishment of British power, colonized from the adjacent States of Rájputána on the south and west, and the Sikh States on the east and north. From that time to within the last few years the stream of colonists rolled ceaselessly on. It has now stopped except, perhaps, into the Sirsa tahsíl, and its place has been taken by a stream of reciprocal immigration in which the females exceed the males; this is shown by the percentage of females among the immigrant population of the district,

Migration and birth-place of population.

The original colonists brought their wives and women folk with them, and the proportion of the sexes among them was fairly normal. Now, however, the flow of new colonists has ceased and the descendants of the original ones look to their original tribal seats for their wives. The following figures show the general distribution of the population by birth-place :—

Born in	Proportion per mille of resident population.								
	Rural population.			Urban population.			Total population.		
	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Persons.
The District	863	777	823	743	691	717	849	766	810
The Province	934	915	925	885	864	875	924	907	916
India	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Asia	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000

Sources of immigration.

Of the total immigrant population returned at the census of 1891 no less than 41·1 per cent. was born in the States of Rájputána, 21·7 per cent. in Patiála, and 10·2 per cent. in Jind. The statistics thus clearly show from what parts the district was originally colonized, though the immigration is now almost entirely of the reciprocal type. In years of scarcity, however, large numbers of poorer classes in the Rájpút States flock into the district on their way eastward in search of work and food, and as a set off to this temporary immigration, the lower classes of agricultural population of the district migrate toward Delhi, Umballa and the Sutlej in search of employment. But instead of settling in any place where they find work as they would have done a few years ago they are now sufficiently wedded by ties of association to their homes to return again when the distress is over.

Increase and decrease of population.

The figures in the following statement show the population of the district as it stood at the four enumerations of 1853, 1868, 1881 and 1891 :—

	Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Density.
Actuals.	1853	330,853	183,211	147,642	100
	1868	434,091	226,843	217,256	137
	1881	605,168	278,267	326,901	143
	1891	776,009	414,109	361,900	149
	Old district (1891)	582,947	311,046	271,901	107
Per cent.	1868 on 1853	146·5	146·7	147·1	137
	1881 on 1868	104·0	103·0	106·6	105
	1891 on 1881	128·9	128·4	128·7	104
	Old district 1891 on 1881 ...	115·6	114·2	117·3	117

The boundaries of the district have changed so much since 1855 that it is really almost impossible to form an accurate comparison. The area has increased since that date and especially since 1881 by the inclusion of the Sirsa tahsíl; the increase in population is therefore really smaller than would appear from the figures. During the ten years ending 1891, the percentage of increase in the population of the old Hissár district (excluding the Sirsa tahsíl) was as follows: 15·6 per cent. for persons,

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Increase and decrease of population.

14·2 for males, and 17·2 for females; this gives an annual increase of 1·5 per cent. for persons, 1·4 per cent. for males and 1·7 per cent. for females; at this rate the male population of the present district would be doubled in 49·8 years, the female in 41·1, and the total population in 46·5 years. If the above rates of increase hold good for the next ten years, the population of the district for each of these years would be as follows in hundreds:—

Year.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Year.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1891	767,6	468,0	307,2	1896	848,5	490,2	358,3
1892	789,4	454,3	373,5	1897	861,2	497,0	406,2
1893	811,4	480,7	372,8	1898	874,1	493,8	413,3
1894	833,6	497,1	366,3	1899	887,3	503,3	430,3
1895	835,9	473,7	366,0	1900	900,1	507,2	427,4

The figures given above show clearly to what an extent the population of the district has increased at any rate since 1855. The increase in fact amounts to 43 per cent. on the population of the old Hissár district in 1891. The largest and most rapid increase in population since 1855 took place in the period between 1855 and 1868. The district had, at the beginning of that period, been for some time under settled British rule, and the regular settlement of 1842 in the four southern tahsils of the district had, by according the first definite recognition to proprietary rights in this part, given a stimulus to colonization. The adjacent sandy plains of Rájputána locally known as the Bagar supplied a then almost inexhaustible supply of immigrants, and on the restoration of law and order after the mutiny the district entered upon a course of rapid development, colonists coming in from Bikánir, Patiála, Nábha and Jínd. The district was of course very far from having reached its full development at the time of the settlement of 1863 as evidenced by the fact that the assessment then imposed has, in the present settlement, been found quite inadequate and has been raised some 50 per cent. This being so, it is at first sight a matter of some surprise that the rate of increase of population should have dropped so noticeably in the period from 1868—1881. The famine of 1869—1870 supplies, however, a very sufficient reason; it resulted in a diminished permanent immigration from Bikánir, though temporary immigration for the moment was largely encouraged, and an increased emigration probably towards the north and east took place. Some 300,000 head of cattle are calculated to have perished in Sirsa and Hissár during the famine, and it was several years before the district could recover from its effects and anything like the normal rate of reproduction and immigration be again attained.

In the last ten years the rate of increase has risen again and taking the figures for the old Hissár district alone is now 15 per cent. above the population of 1881. Looking to the extent to which the district has developed of late years and the consequent cessation of the immigration of new colonists, it is not to be expected that this rate of increase will be maintained.

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Increase in towns.

The population of the eight towns of the district returned at the census of 1891 has increased by 15 per cent. since 1868, while the increase up to 1881 was only 8 per cent. The increase in the case of individual towns will be noticed in Chapter VI. The large increase in the urban population during the last ten years is without doubt to be attributed to the construction of the Rewári-Ferozepore Railway in 1884. It passes through the four principal towns of the district, Sirsa, Hissár, Hánsi, and Bhiwáni, and has given a large impetus to their trade, more especially to that of Bhiwáni and Sirsa.

Births and deaths.

Table No. XI shows the number of births and deaths registered in the district for the six years from 1885 to 1890, inclusive. The distribution of the total deaths and of the deaths from fever over the twelve months of the year is shown in Tables No. XI A and XI B.

The figures below show the annual birth-rates per *mille* on the population of 1868 for 1880 and on that of 1881 for each year from 1881 to 1890, also annual death-rates per *mille* for each year from 1868 to 1880 on the population of 1868, and from 1881 to 1890 on that of 1881 :—

	Birth-rates.											
	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	
Persons	33	38	37	...	37	39	40	39	34	37	35	
Males	33	37	37	...	37	39	40	34	34	37	35	
Females	32	38	38	...	37	39	39	32	33	37	35	

	Death-rates.												
	1868.	1869.	1870.	1871.	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.
Persons	9	24	15	19	16	13	16	16	12	12	26	42	29
Males	9	25	15	19	16	13	17	16	13	13	25	41	31
Females	8	23	14	18	16	12	16	15	12	12	24	43	29

	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.		
Persons	23	20	25	32	20	21	30	22	23	35		
Males	26	20	25	32	23	23	30	23	22	35		
Females	25	20	43	29	23	20	30	21	21	36		

Note.—Figures for births and deaths are available from 1880 in Table No. XI. These include those in Sirsa, and also those in Budhlada from 1889. Hence the population of 1881 on which the millage has been taken does not include Sirsa from 1881 to 1884 (inclusive).

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Births and deaths.

The registration is still imperfect, though it is yearly improving; but the figures always fall far short of the facts, and the fluctuations probably correspond, allowing for a regular increase due to improvement in registration, fairly closely with the actual fluctuations in births and deaths.

Further details as to birth and death-rates in individual towns, so far as available, will be found in Table No. XLIV, and under the headings of the several towns in Chapter VI.

Age, sex and civil condition.

The figures for age, sex and civil conditions will be found in great detail in the Census Tables of the district, and are fully discussed in the Census Report of the district.

Table No. VII appended to this work gives the numbers of the sexes for each religion.

Ages by sexes.

The following table shows the distribution by age of every 10,000 of the population according to the figures for the census of 1891 :—

	0—1	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	0—5	5—10	10—15	15—20
Persons	471	346	362	302	340	1,800	1,372	1,004	1,040
Males	435	335	319	290	345	1,724	1,354	1,127	1,008
Females	523	356	388	312	336	1,885	1,396	1,056	1,045

	20—25	25—30	30—35	35—40	40—45	45—50	50—55	55—60	Over 60
Persons	877	946	837	639	306	462	181	173	291
Males	897	914	847	616	336	462	209	158	296
Females	864	982	801	663	273	461	149	200	284

and below are compared the age statistics for the males of different religions by 10 yearly periods :—

Religion.	*Percentage of total males in each religion in each life period.*						
	0—9	10—19	20—29	30—39	40—49	50—59	60—
Hindu	30·08	21·81	16·88	12·72	9·29	5·67	3·56
Sikh	31·09	23·35	16·75	11·35	8·26	5·10	3·20
Jain	30·00	21·05	17·60	12·37	8·53	5·81	3·61
Musalmán	32·70	21·00	16·95	12·51	7·90	5·02	3·51

The first of the above tables shows that in the first decade of life the females considerably exceed the males, while in the

Ages by sexes.

later periods of life males are proportionately more numerous. This seems to point to greater longevity in the case of males than of females and the result is brought out still more clearly if the ages of adults over 20 years of age are analyzed as in the following table :—

Year.	Sex.	Percentage of total males and females [over 20] in each decade over 20 for the present Hissar District.				
		20—29	30—39	40—49	50—59	60—
1901	Male	29·17	29·62	17·03	11·23	8·26
	Female	29·74	29·52	16·78	11·46	8·73

The result is not discordant with the known facts of native society. Among the higher classes in the towns, the native female leads a life of seclusion prejudicial alike to healthy physical and mental development, while among many of the agricultural tribes her days are spent in hard and unremitting toil, often carried beyond the limit which is conducive to bodily health. At the same time in seasons of scarcity and famine the native female appears to possess greater powers of endurance than the male and to succumb less readily to want of bodily sustenance.

Ages by religion.

Taking the figures for ages by religion the Musalmáns would appear to be more fecund and longer lived than either Jains or Hindús, as shown by the larger percentages in their case in the first decade of life and also over 60. The figures in the margin show even more clearly that the fecundity of Musalmáns is greater than that of Hindús. Sikhs appear to be almost on a level with Musalmáns. Jains appear to be less fecund and less long lived than any other religion. The figures and inferences drawn from them probably represent the facts fairly closely.

Children under one year of age per hundred married females of ages between 20 and 40.	
Total population	38·04
Hindús	37·75
Musalmáns	41·36

Among Hindús are included the bulk of the menial and outcaste tribes, among whom owing generally to poverty and frequent distress a lower rate of reproduction and a lower standard of longevity would naturally be expected.

It is beyond question that Hindu girls are, as a rule, married at a far earlier age than those of Musalmáns, but the harmful effects which would be looked for from this practice on the fecundity of Hindu mothers is to a great extent obviated, among the Hindu agricultural tribes at least, by the much later age (generally 15—17) at which cohabitation or *muklávaa* takes place; but even so it is fairly certain that cohabitation is earlier among Hindús than among Musalmáns. Among Baniyás and urban Hindús generally cohabitation follows

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immediately upon marriage and the same is the case with the Jains, the bulk of whom are Baniyás by caste; and in their case the results disclosed by the figures are no doubt largely due to early marriage of females.

Sikhs, as would be naturally expected, rank high both in fecundity and longevity, due no doubt to their innate vigour and the healthy agricultural life which they "the finest peasantry in the world," lead.

Musalmáns are the highest of all four religions in fecundity and longevity, and the result, I think, is in the main be ascribed to the later age at which marriage takes place among them; on the other hand one would expect that polygamy would tend to diminish longevity among males.

In comparing the figures for Hindús and Musalmáns, it has to be borne in mind that among Musalmáns are not included such extremes of wealth and poverty as among Hindús; in other words Musalmáns are more on an equality as regards worldly circumstances than are Hindús, and this state of things is no doubt more favourable to an increase of population than the former. Again, practically, all the trading classes who lead an unhealthy and sedentary life are included among Hindús, and the average life among them is doubtless shorter than with the zamindár who leads an healthy outdoor life of constant manual labour, and this no doubt has had its effect on the figures. On the whole, then, fecundity and longevity are really greater among Musalmáns than Hindús, owing partly to difference in marriage customs, partly to a greater diversity in the standard of living among Hindús than among Musalmáns, and partly to the inclusion among Hindús of classes whose occupations are of a character prejudicial to healthy development and longevity.

Proportion of the sexes.

The number of males among every 10,000 of the population is shown below :—

Population.	Census.	Village.	Town.	Total.
All religions	1855	...	...	5,530
	1868	...	...	5,506
	1881	5,421	5,382	5,409
	1891	5,350	5,276	5,340
Hindús	1891	5,343	5,307	5,373
Sikhs	...	5,342	5,067	5,274
Jains	...	5,388	4,607	5,111
Musalmáns	...	5,264	5,242	5,259

The decrease at each successive enumeration is due to greater accuracy of enumeration.

The following table gives the number of females per 100 males by age periods for religions and for total population as returned at the census of 1891 :—

Period.	—1	1	2	3	4	0—4	5—9	10—14	15—19
Total population.	102·86	92·33	107·40	92·22	86·28	95·04	89·05	81·57	87·83
Hindu	103·97	99·06	98·50	91·08	83·97	94·45	89·04	80·18	85·28
Mussalman	103·07	88·62	106·81	93·02	87·84	97·39	91·47	82·58	93·69
Sikh	91·72	76·93	87·45	82·39	84·39	87·12	84·40	82·82	89·89
Year of birth.	1890-91.	1889-90.	1888-89.	1887-88.	1886-87.				
Period—contd.	20—29	30—	30—39	40—49	50—59	60—	All ages.		
Total population.	88·21	82·14	84·31	79·98	82·35	77·60	87·09		
Hindu	87·93	85·16	85·03	80·17	82·45	80·56	86·11		
Mussalman	91·03	85·09	85·83	79·96	80·63	79·86	89·45		
Sikh	86·88	82·20	83·20	73·98	87·50	84·43	90·09		

The figures show that at present in the infant stages of life, females are in excess of males, but after this stage females are in a minority which becomes more and more pronounced as the higher stages of life are reached. In other words the women are proportionately less and less in numbers as the age advances or in other words women are less long lived than men under normal conditions. The figures do not point to any special great mortality in the child bearing age which may be taken as between 20 and 40. A comparison with the results of the last census seems to show that the proportion of the females to males in all ages is rising and this is probably a fact due to two causes, one an amelioration in the conditions of female life with advancing development and, what has been already noticed, a large immigration of females as brides of the descendants of the original colonists of the district.

Among Sikhs the proportion of females to males is smaller than in any other religion.

The figures of the last table giving the percentages of female infants on male infants among the total population, and Hindús, Mussalmáns and Sikhs respectively, appear to almost absolve the district from any suspicion of the practice of female infanticide. The percentage among Sikhs is indeed considerably lower, but there is as a fact no need to suspect them of the practice. It is beyond doubt that the practice of taking a bride-price for girls given in marriage is spreading, and among Jats and other Hindu agricultural tribes, except Rájpúts, the women of the household are indispensable in outdoor agricultural work and in the ordinary duties of the household.

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Proportion of the sexes.

Civil condition.

These two considerations *primâ facie* render the existence of female infanticide in the district improbable, and there is no other evidence or indication that it does exist.

The following figures give the percentages of males and females who are respectively married, single, and widowed, as appearing in the results of the census of 1891:

	Males.			Females.		
	Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Married.	Single.	Widowed.
1891	41·52	52·73	5·70	48·24	37·76	13·99

They are of little use for determining the extent to which marriage is practised in the district. Table No. X appended to this work shows the actual number of married, single, and widowed for each sex in each religion, and also the distribution by civil condition of the total number of each sex in each age period.

The following table shows the percentages of males and females in each decade up to thirty years and of all those above that age who are married, single, or widowed, for total population, and for Hindús and Mussalmáns.

		0—9.			10—14.			15—19.			20—29.			30—		
1891.		Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Married.	Single.	Widowed.
Males.		1·47	98·53	·00	16·64	83·36	·00	42·69	56·78	1·23	71·05	26·46	2·49	76·46	6·46	17·08
Females.		4·09	95·91	·00	47·59	51·77	·73	90·90	6·64	2·46	91·53	·00	8·47	56·16	·00	43·84
Hindús.	Males.	1·76	98·23	·00	19·42	80·55	·03	45·90	52·74	1·36	72·11	26·09	1·81	73·58	6·47	17·4
	Females.	4·77	95·22	·00	53·53	45·47	·00	91·65	5·35	2·61	91·34	·00	8·66	52·47	·00	45·53
Mussalmáns.	Males.	·00	1·00	·00	12·15	87·85	·00	32·19	67·81	·00	67·55	29·79	2·66	79·67	6·76	13·57
	Females.	2·09	97·91	·00	30·90	69·04	·06	82·34	14·03	3·63	91·32	7·23	6·66	57·44	9·37	43·19

The above figures show that the bulk of the males are married between the ages of 20 and 29 and considerably less than half between those of 15 and 19, but a comparison of the above figures with those of 1881 seems to show that the age for male marriage is becoming lower, and this is probably a normal tendency of native society as it develops. The proportion of males who do not intermarry is small and seems to be diminishing. Prudential considerations in restraint of marriage no doubt act more forcibly in the case of males than of females, but the scope of their operation is gradually contracting under the influence of increasing development.

The figures which have been given show conclusively that females are markedly fewer than males in all above the infantile periods of life, and it would thus not be surprising if it were found to be a custom to take money for girls given in marriage.

The practice is common, not to say usual, among the poorer classes of the agriculturists, especially the Mussalman Ranghars and Pachhádás, and indeed it is customary in many agricultural tribes to regard the girl as a piece of valuable property, so much so, that if the bridegroom die after betrothal but before marriage, his family has a right to betroth the girl afresh to another member of the family.

The custom of taking money seems to be spreading into tribes and castes higher up in the social scale. It was at all events up to recent times generally regarded as a mark of poverty and inferior social position, but that the practice is now very prevalent, especially in Sirsa and the northern part of Tahsíl Fatahabad is probably beyond question. So far as it goes, it acts as a restraint upon male marriage, but as shown above, the latter has increased in spite of it, increasing wealth and development having more than overcome the restraint arising from the increased expenses involved in marriages.

Whether or not the prevalence of the custom is likely to increase or diminish, it is difficult to say; on the one hand, as will be shown below, we have an apparent tendency for the proportion of females to males to increase, and looking at the matter from the commercial point of view in which it is generally looked at in actual practice, the market price of the marriageable female will probably diminish; on the other hand the entire absence of a class of native gentry makes the formation of any public opinion adverse to the practice a matter of much difficulty; the population consists in the main of the Banyá and the agriculturist, both of whom, the one from habit and the other from necessity, take a more than usually sordid view of life and its relations.

At present, as far as can be gathered, the force of public opinion, such as it is, seems to be inclining more and more to favour the practice.

Chapter III. A. Statistical. Civil condition.

The statistics for female marriage show that it is universal and takes place at an earlier age than that of males. In fact nearly half the females are married before they are 15 and nearly all before they are 20, and the tendency is for the marriage age of females to become lower and lower.

Prudential considerations exercise no effect on the marriage of females, as the latter is both a source of profit to the family and an imperative social not to say religious duty. The fact is that males are in excess of females in the district, and wealth and development having advanced very considerably within the last 10 years, the population is ready to pay a price for females taken in marriage, and the marriageable female is thus now a marketable commodity.

The marriage figures given above for religions show clearly that the marriage both of males and females is very considerably earlier in the case of Hindús than in that of Mussalmáns. Hindu males who marry do so before they are 30, and a noticeable percentage remain single through life. Mussalman males marry on the whole later than Hindús, but fewer of them remain single. Hindu females are universally married before they reach the age of 20 and over half of them before they are 15; among Mussalmáns female marriage is neither so early nor so universal as among Hindús; in fact the usual age for marriage in the case of a Mussalman girl is some five years later than in the case of Hindús.

Polygamy and polyandry.

The figures in the margin show the number of married families per hundred males in the district, as shown in the returns for census of 1891.

Total population	101·1
Hindús	100·8
Mussalmáns	101·6

These figures would seem to show that polygamy is far from prevalent either among Hindús or Mussalmans; and as a matter of fact polygamy is almost non-existent among the higher classes of Hindús, such as Brahmans and Baniyás, Kayaths and Khatris; among the lower tribes, such as Jats, Málís and Gujars, who practise *karewa* marriage, a plurality of wives is at any rate allowed by public opinion, but it is doubtful whether it is often found, except in the form of *karewa*, which is, of course, common enough.

Among Mussalmáns polygamy is slightly more prevalent, but it is not probable that the legal limit of four wives is often reached.

The figures do not point to the conclusion that polyandry is prevalent to any extent in the district, at the same time, even if it was, this would hardly appear in the figures, for only one of the polyandrous husbands of a single wife would return himself as married. As a matter of fact, however, it is probable that polyandry is not prevalent at all events to any noticeable extent in the district.

Infirmities.

Table No. XII gives the number of insane, blind, deaf-mutes and lepers in the district by sexes returned at the census of 1891.

The proportion per 10,000 of total population and of each sex for each of these infirmities are given in the margin.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Insane	3	3	2
Blind	49	25	24
Deaf and Dumb ...	7	6	5
Leper	1	2	...

European and Eurasian population.

The figures given below show the composition of the Christian population and the respective numbers who returned their birth-places and their language as European. They are taken from census tables:—

Details.		Males.	Females.	Persons.
Races of Christian population.	Europeans and Americans	59	44	103
	Eurasians	50	46	96
	Native Christians	31	22	43
	Total Christians	130	112	243
Languages.	English	104	87	191
	Other European languages	2	1	3
	Total European languages	106	88	194
Birth-place.	British Isles	23	10	33
	Other European countries	1	...	1
	Total European countries	24	10	34

Table No. VII appended to this work shows the distribution of the Christian population by sexes and among tahsils.

SECTION B.—RELIGIONS.

Chapter III. B. Religions.

General statistics of religion.

Table No. VII shows the numbers in each tahsil who follow each religion as ascertained at the recent census, and Table No. XLIII gives similar figures for towns.

Religion.	Rural.	Urban.	Total.
Hindu ...	7,117	6,701	7,073
Sikh ...	813	83	296
Jain ...	66	203	71
Mussalman	2,513	1,979	2,554
Christian	...	34	3

The distribution of every 10,000 of the population by religion is as shown in the margin.

Sect.	Rural.	Total.
Sunnis	994	998
Shiahs	·000	·998
Others	·007	·000

The distribution of every 1,000 of the Mussalman population by sects is shown in the margin.

Roman Catholic	29
Church of England	197
Presbyterian	3
Methodist	1
Baptist	7
Unspecified Protestant sects ...	28
Total Protestants	169
Armenian Church	3
Unspecified	1
Grand Total	242

The figures for the Christian sects are as in the margin, and are taken from the census tables.

Table No. IX shows the religion of the major castes and tribes of the district, and therefore the distribution by caste of the great majority of the followers of each religion.

The local distribution of religions in the district, as a whole, can be gathered from the details given in Table No. VII.

It may be said generally that Hindús are fairly equally distributed over the district; the Sikhs on the other hand are confined to the Sirsa tahsil and the northern portion of Fatehabad. They are all either themselves colonists or the descendants of colonists from Patiála, and have not as yet spread southwards into the other tahsils of the district.

Nearly two-thirds of the Mussalman population are to be found in Tahsils Sirsa and Fatehabad, and consist to a large extent of Rájpúts and Pachhádás.

Christian missions.

Some ladies are working as Missionaries at Bhiwáni under the auspices of the Baptist Mission. A school has been built and a considerable amount of useful work is done in the town of Bhiwáni as well as some itinerating work in the adjacent villages. There is also a lady Missionary at Hissár under the local branch of the Church Missionary Society at Delhi.

Mussalmáns and their sects.

Islám, looked at as a religious organization and as embodying a system of religious belief, presents itself to its followers in a much more definite and tangible shape than is the case with Hinduism, and in so far as it does this, it would be expected to have a greater effect on the moral and social life of its adherents.

As a fact, the Musalman is a far more staunch defender of his faith and far less tolerant of adverse criticism than the Hindu. As often as not the Hindu zamíndár when asked to explain points in his own professed religious belief will laugh with scarcely concealed incredulity in that belief, remarking that his religion is a *kucha* one, made only for the profit and advantage of the Brahman, but will generally end by saying that after all "Naráyan is the only one." To the Musalman Islám is thus a far more living reality than is Hinduism to the Hindú, but its effects on morality are much the same. Without much reference to a religious standard, the Musalman regulates his conduct by the standard of social morality existing around him. In many cases the social customs of the peasant have not been affected much by Muhammadanism. Those tribes who were originally Hindu and were converted, whether forcibly or not, to Islám still retain their primitive social customs as to marriage, &c. But conversion to Muhammadanism has certainly had an effect on the character and temperament of the peasant which cannot be regarded as other than hurtful; in place of work carried on with contented thrift and industry, as in the case of the Hindu Jats, we find among the Musalman agriculturists a disinclination for hard labour at the plough, careless cultivation, prodigality and a finely marked propensity to appropriate other people's cattle.

There is little to be said in regard to Musalman sects as far as Hissár is concerned. The Musalmáns of the district almost without exception belong to the Sunni section, and Shiáhs are almost entirely absent. But although the orthodox sect is so predominant, it must not be supposed that the Musalman peasant is in any sense a strictly orthodox follower of the "Prophet." A mosque, it is true, varying from a pretentious three-domed structure to a mud cottage with three mud pinnacles and three entrance doors is to be found in most villages. A *fakir*, often of the Kureshi sect, is entertained by the village as a Muliah. He proclaims the *azán*, warms the water for the *wazu* or ablution, teaches the village boys to read or repeat passages of the Kurán in Arabic and reads the *nikkáh* at weddings. For these services he receives a share of grain at the harvest and fees at ceremonies. The mass of the population do not, however, often go near the mosque, and it is uncommon to see a peasant saying his prayers in his field at any of the prescribed times, which are—

Fajr	Day-break.
Zohr	2 P. M.
Asar	Before sunset.
Maghrib	After sunset.
Isha	8 P. M.

In spite of verbal admissions of the unity of Allah, the Musalman agriculturist is to no small extent affected by the superstitious reverence for local saints, heroes and demons which is so common among his Hindu neighbours, and, in spite of his

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Musalmáns and their sects.

being included within the fold of Islám, he still preserves almost intact the ancient customs of his tribe in regard to restrictions on marriage, rules of inheritance, &c. The ancestors of the mass of the present Musalman rural population of the district were converted in all probability in the time of the Mughal Empire as a general rule, if their statements are to be believed, of their own free will, but more probably in order to propitiate their rulers and to save themselves from confiscation of property and other disabilities.

Hindús and their sects.

Hinduism in Hissár does not differ in any material particular from the standard type prevalent in the south-eastern districts of the Punjab. The ordinary Hindu peasant, though, as a general rule, he returned himself or was returned at the census as a Vaishnava, is entirely ignorant of the more esoteric doctrines of the religion which he professes. He of course knows the names of Rám, Vishnu, Krishna and Náráyan, and habitually repeats them in and out of season, but the deities with which he is practically concerned are the godlings or local saints and heroes, and in their worship it might almost be said that any idea which he may have of belonging to a distinct religious body or organization disappears, for many of the godlings of the country side are reverenced equally by Hindús and Musalmáns. Beyond an occasional visit to the local *shiwála* or *thákurdwára* the principal concrete shape in which the idea of being included within the pale of Hinduism enforces itself on the mind of the peasant is the obligation which he is under, as much perhaps a social as a religious one, of feeding the Brahmans on every available opportunity. Beneath all the superstition by which he is trammelled the average Hindu peasant preserves in his own mind the idea of a Supreme Being, whether He be called Allah, Náráyan or Parmeshar. But neither this belief nor the mass of superstitions which do duty for his every day religion have probably the least effect on his rural life. For him morality and religion are completely divorced, religious observances being for the most part but a set of expedients to escape from the often undeserved wrath of a superior order of beings. The sanctions of his moral system are far more social than religious, and as his social horizon includes only his village or at most his tribe, to the same extent is the scope of his moral obligations limited. The Hindu of the village is by natural temperament far more than by religion inert and peace loving, his one object being to be allowed to enjoy in quiet the fruits of patient toil and industry.

The Hindu of the towns is of course slightly more acquainted with the inner doctrines of his religion, but viewed from a moral standpoint his position is much the same, if not lower, than that of the Hindu peasant.

The Hinduism of the rural tracts is far more a collection of the cults of national deities and local godlings (using local in a somewhat extended sense) than an organised system of theology; and the worship of the local godlings is a far more important element than that of the national deities. To the

mind of the zamíndár the former are much more nearly concerned with him and his affairs than the latter, who are far removed from him on the heights of the Hindu pantheon.

In a very large proportion of cases, if not, as a general rule, the sect of rural Hindús who could not be obviously classed as belonging to any well-known definitely distinct religious body, was entered at the census as Vaishnava or Bishni; but it must not be supposed that one in a hundred or even a less proportion of the persons whose sect was so returned had the least idea that they were Vaishnavas, or wherein the latter differed from any other sect or religious body. Judged by the standard of orthodox Hinduism, the classification was probably not incorrect, but its result was to obscure completely the statistics relating to the real and every day religious belief of the mass of the people. The Hissár peasant is in no sense an orthodox Hindu. He feeds and venerates, though he does not respect the Brahman, he knows of the existence and acknowledges the power of the great gods of the Hindu pantheon, Siva, Vishnu, the incarnate Krishna, &c., and occasionally worships them, especially Siva or Shibji and Krishna or Thákurji. The temples of the former are very common in the Jat villages, and have been generally built as an act of pus by Baniyás. The ceremony of temple worship is somewhat as follows. About once in two months or oftener, if he is getting on in years and has time on his hands, the zamíndár after bathing in the village tank proceeds to the village *shiwála* or *thákurdwára* and makes an offering (*charháwa*) to the deity, which is of course appropriated by the officiating priest or *pujári*. The worshipper then receives some Ganges water (*Ganga jal*), a supply of which is kept in the temple, and some leaves of the *tulsi* plant, which will be growing in the enclosure; the *tulsi* leaves are dipped in the water and then applied by the worshipper to his forehead, and if Siva is the deity who is being worshipped, some of the water is poured over the *linga* or symbol of the god which is invariably found in his temple. The worshipper also makes obeisance (*dhok-márna*) before the idol of the deity. The act of worship is called *darsan* or viewing, and as it occupies a considerable time, is not to be entered upon unless one has ample leisure. Of the more strictly orthodox but inferior gods perhaps Suraj Náráyan is the one who most commonly receives adoration from the Hindu peasant. He is worshipped mostly on Sunday; the more pious keep a fast (*barat*) in his honor on that day, which consists in eating only one meal with one sort of grain and abstaining from salt.

But although Siva and Suraj Náráyan are the two most important personages in the Hindu peasant's pantheon, they are too great for every day use. He lives as it were in an atmosphere charged with the spirits of departed saints, heroes, demons and others who are in a position to, and as a matter of fact do, exercise a beneficient or malevolent influence on the affairs of mankind, and it is from them that he selects those who are to be the

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Hindús and their sects.

recipients of his every day devotion. It is not perhaps so much the case that he worships them with fixed ceremonies as he does Siva and Suraj Náráyan, but they are always, unconsciously almost, present to him as the beings who have the most immediate connection with his destinies.

The more common objects of worship of this class are the Bhumia or god of the homestead, and Sítla, the goddess of small-pox, who is worshipped mostly by women who mix sugar with water and distribute it to children at her shrine. Fire is also venerated by some who drop *ghi* into it. The *pipal* tree is worshipped at dawn after bathing; a *lotah* of water is poured out at the foot of the tree and adoration made (*dhok-márna*). Khetrpál is another deity who lives in the *pipal* tree, he is worshipped by women when their children are ill.

A *tirbaini* or combination of the *nim*, *pipal* and *bar* trees growing together is specially sacred, and to plant such a combination is an act of *pun*. The *bair* tree is also worshipped by women in the hopes of thereby getting a child.

Bishnois.

The Bishnois probably form a true religious sect among the agricultural population, so much so that the sect has developed into a separate caste which holds no social intercourse with other Hindu tribes. Their social customs will be dealt with in another section, here the main features of their creed only will be noticed. Their principal object of worship is one Jámbhaji, who was an incarnation of Vishnu. The legend connected with his incarnation is given in the Narsingh Purán as follows:

One day the door-keepers of the house of Vishnu (Bishanpuri) by name Jai and Bije refused to allow Brahma's sons to go in and see Vishnu. Brahma's sons cursed them and they became Rákshas or demons under the names of Harnakash and Harnakashab. In order to slay Harnakashab Vishnu became incarnate as Berah. Brahma's sons became incarnate as Philád, a son of Harnakash. In order to procure salvation (*mukti*) to Harnakash Vishnu became incarnate as Narsingh. With Philád 33 *krors* of other creatures (*jiv*) were born. They opposed Harnakash who slew 5 *krors*. When Vishnu, in the form of Narsingh, had killed Harnakash, he asked Philád what he desired. Philád said that he desired salvation (*mukti*) for the 28 remaining *krors*. In order to effect the salvation of 12 *krors* who survived the Kala Jug, Vishnu became incarnate as Jámbhaji.

As an incarnation of Vishnu he is the principal object of veneration among the Bishnois, but Philád is also worshipped. The Bishnois are of course Hindús, and according to the orthodox standard would be classed as Vaishnavas, but they probably never think of themselves as such. Their deity is Vishnu, who is to be worshipped through his incarnation Jámbhaji. The other deities of the Hindu pantheon are neglected or rather regarded as other manifestations of Vishnu. None of the common local deities, such as Guga Pir, appear to be

worshipped by them, except the small-pox goddess, Sítla, who as usual comes in for a share of adoration by the women.

Bishnois.

The traditional account of Jámbhaji is much as follows:— At the village of Pimpásar in Bikánir lived a Punwar Rájpút, by name Lant, with his wife Hansa, a Bhatti. They had no children. While Lant was bewailing his fate, a *fakir* appeared and promised that he should have a son; at the end of nine months a son appeared miraculously and was suckled by Hansa; this is said to have happened in Sambat 1508. Up to the age of 34 he tended cattle but all the time spoke never a word though he frequently exercised miraculous powers which obtained for him the name of Achamba whence Jhamba. One day the Pandit Ishwar was sent to try and get him to speak. On this occasion Jámbhaji lighted a candle by merely snapping his fingers and began to speak. He then went off and lived on a sandhill near Samráthal in Bikánir. He did not marry but lived the life of an ascetic teacher. For six months after his death his body remained suspended on the *pinjra* without decomposing. A *samádh* was built over him which is now a place of pilgrimage with the Bishnois.

In addition to Jámbhaji the Bishnois reverence Phailád, the son of Harnakash, mentioned above; this is especially the case at the Holi, the tradition connected with which is as follows:— Holi, the sister of Harnakash, conspired with the latter to compass the death of Phailád for his belief in Vishnu. With this object she took Phailád in her lap and sat with him on a pyre to which Harnakash was to set fire. Holi being divine, her body was safe against the fiery elements; in the result, however, by the intervention of Vishnu, Holi was burnt and Phailád preserved. On the night of the Holi the Bishnois observe a fast, next morning they listen to the account of Phailád's torture at the hands of Harnakash and his deliverance by Vishnu, drink the *charan* in the ceremony called *pahál* or holy water, and then break their fast about 10 A.M. The Bishnois have no Brahmans but priests who are divided into two classes, the Sádhs and the Gaenas, who are an inferior class. Both classes are fed and receive fees and officiate at ceremonies. The priests do not intermarry with other Bishnois, nor do they take offerings from other than Bishnois.

A full account of the sect will be found in para. 107 of Mr. Wilson's Settlement Report Sirsa.

One of the principal acts of worship of the Bishnois is to burn the *hom* or sacred fire. They bathe in the Ganges and make pilgrimages to Allahabad, Hardwár and Benares. An offence against caste rules, such as marriage outside the caste, is condoned by payment of a fine (*lai*) which consists in the expenditure of 100 maunds of *moth* in feeding the pigeons who live at the *samádh* or tomb of Jámbhaji.

Sultánis.

Another Hindu sect is that of the Sultánis or votaries of Sakhi Sarwar Sultán of Nigáhya, in the Dera Ghází Khan district,

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He is extensively worshipped by Jats as well as by Mussalmáns and Sikhs. His followers will not eat the flesh of animals killed by *jhatka* or decapitation, but only that killed in the usual manner by *hallál*. The saint has a shrine at Nangthala in the Hissár tahsil. The offerings are taken by the guardians of the shrine who are called *pirdhis* or *bharáis*. Images of the saint's tomb are to be found in the villages, and offerings of sweetmeats, either 1¼ or 5¼ maunds, are made thereat.

Nának-panthis.

Nának-panthis are often regarded as a sub-division of the Sikhs, but are more properly a Hindu sect. They venerate Bába Nának, the first Guru, and are supposed to follow his teachings. They differ from the true Sikhs, the followers of Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, in shaving the head with the exception of the *choti*, in venerating Brahmans and in using tobacco, and they differ from the ordinary Hindu only in being more lax in regard to caste rules and ceremonial observances. They are often called *munna* or shaven Sikhs in contradistinction to the *pahuliya* or true Sikhs.

Village deities and saints.

As noticed above the worship of village deities and saints makes up the largest portion of the religious life of the Hindu peasant of the district. An account of some of the principal ones is given below:—

Perhaps the one most widely venerated is Guga Pír, the saint of the Bagar, whose votaries include both Hindús and Mussalmáns of all castes and tribes among the agricultural population of Hissár and the adjoining districts. Mussalmáns do not, perhaps, worship him, but at any rate they regard him as a fit object for reverence. The Bishnois are probably the only agriculturist caste who do not worship him.

An account of the saint is given at page 256 of volume I of Sir H. Elliot's Supplementary Glossary. The local tradition about him is as follows:—

Guga was a Chauhán Rájpút of Garh Dadera in Bikánir. His father's name was Jeoji, his grandfather's Amarji and his mother's Báchal. She was a daughter of Kamarpál, Sarohá Rájpút of Sirsa. He was miraculously conceived by the intervention of Gorakhnáth who gave his mother some gugal to eat; Guga's famous horse was born in the same way. When Guga grew up he had a dispute about lands with his cousins Arjan and Surjan, sons of Káchal sister of Báchal, who also had been miraculously born. The cousins wished for a share of Guga's possessions but Guga refused and they then induced the King of Delhi to attack him. In the course of the struggle Guga killed his two nephews. His sister, their mother, refused ever to let him see her again. Guga left his country and wandered off; near Bahadra in Bikánir he wished that the earth might swallow him up; this could not be till he became a Mussalmán, he thereupon repeated the Mussalmán "Kalma" and the earth forthwith opened and swallowed him.

His symbol or standard is a pole with a tuft of peacock's feathers at its summit (*Jhanda, chhari*). This is carried about in Sáwan and Bhádon by Chuhrás begging for alms. In these two months fairs are held at his shrine in Bikánir, and a considerable part of the country side turns out to be present at them.

Another very favourite object of veneration in this district is Shámji. Like that of many others of the rural deities his worship has been introduced into the district from the Native States of Rájpútána. The account which local tradition gives of Shámji is as follows. Like Guga he was a Chauhán Raja of Garh Dadera at the time of the war between the Pandavas and Kauravas. Krishna told the Pandavas that the Kauravas would conquer them if Shámji joined the latter; thereupon Arjan and Krishna, disguised as Brahmans, went to Shámji and asked him to give them whatever they asked for. He was famous for his generosity and consented. They at once asked for his head which he gave on condition that he should witness the struggle between Pandava and Kaurava. This was agreed to and Shámji's trunkless head, suspended on a pole, lived on and saw the battle. Shámji's shrine is at Katla in Jaipur. His worship is even more prevalent in Bikánir and Loháru than in this district. *Meláe* are held at his shrine on the 12th Chet and 12th Asauj.

Rámdei is another saint of Rájpútána and the Bagar whose worship is prevalent in the district. His father was a Tunwar Rájpút, who went on a pilgrimage to Dwárka so slowly that it took him a century to accomplish. On reaching Dwárka he worshipped the image of Krishna but not satisfied with this wished to make the god's personal acquaintance. He was told that Krishna lived in a tank, upon which he jumped in and obtained the interview which he sought. Krishna then expostulated with the man about the risk of drowning which he was incurring, this had, however, no effect, and he replied that he preferred drowning to leaving the gods' presence, whereupon Krishna promised to give the man his heart's desire; he replied that he wanted a son like Krishna. The result was that Rámdei was born as an incarnation of Krishna. Rámdei's shrine is at Rúnichá in Bikánir. In the course of the year one blind person and one leper are said to be cured at the shrine, many are said to go there in the hope of being the favoured ones. Baniyás, Jats and Chamárs often wear images of Rámdei suspended round the neck. There is a shrine of his at Rawatsar in Bikánir, where there is a fair on the 10th Mágh Sudi and also in Bhádon. He is a special deity of the Chamárs and they take the offerings made at his shrine. Small mud shrines erected in his honour and adorned with a flag are often to be seen in the villages in the Chamárs' quarters.

Bhairon or Khetrpal is a village deity, whose chief shrine is at Ahror near Rewári in the Gurgáon District. He is the chief object of worship with the Hindu Gujars of the district. Their

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tradition is that he was born of a virgin. Many of the Gujars of the district attend a great festival held in his honour at Ahror in the month of February.

Village deities and saints.

The worship of the Bhumia, or presiding deity of the village site, is of course common, and his small masonry shrine with its domed roof is often seen within the village site.

In addition to the above there are many purely local heroes or saints whose worship is confined to one tribe or a few adjacent villages, such as Kalapir, who is said to have been a Sidhu Jat, and is now worshipped by the tribe. He has a shrine at Khot Kalan, a Sidhu Jat village in the Hánsi Tahsíl.

Another good instance of a tribal deity is that of Dahdada worshipped by the Lohan Jats. Lohan, the progenitor of the gôt, had four sons—Mela, Tula, Ula and Chula. Mela and Tula founded Narnaund, the chief settlement of Lohans in the district, and Ula founded Bhaini, an adjacent village. Chula lived at Narnaund as an ascetic and became a Bhagat or worker of miracles, and was thus converted into a village godling. He is worshipped under the form of an oblong stone kept in a shrine at Narnaund. His Brahmans are Gaurs of the Indauria gôt. They are fed on the 11th Sudi of each month. He is also venerated by the distribution of ten sérs of sweetmeats and the digging and carrying of 101 baskets of earth from his tank.

Religion of the menial castes.

The religion of the menials may be noticed here.

The Chamárs as a rule worship Rámdas, Rahdas or Rehdas, said to have been a Chamár, who became an ascetic (Bhagat) at Benares. Many of them appear to regard him as an ancestor. Another special object of veneration with them is Guga Pir, and his *jhanda* or pole, surrounded by a tuft of peacock's feathers, is often to be seen in the Chamárs' quarter and is also carried in procession by Chamárs in August and September. Chamárs also worship Devi and Mata and reverence Guru Nának probably without any very definite idea as to who he was.

The Chamárs have a special class of Brahmans who are called Chamarwa Brahmans or Sádhs. No other Brahmans will hold any intercourse with them nor indeed are they generally regarded as Brahmans at all. The Chamárs sometimes burn and sometimes bury their dead.

Chuhrás.

The special object of worship of the Chuhrás (sweepers) or lowest caste of Hindu, is Lálbeg or Lálguru, whom they regard as an incarnation of the deity. His shrine is to be seen in almost every village in the Chuhrás' quarter, and consists of a mud platform (*chhántra* or *chabutra*) with a *ghara* sunk therein and a pole planted in it as a symbol. Some of the Chuhrás also reverence Balmik, who they say was a *chela* or disciple of Lálguru or Lálbeg.

Sikhs.

As has been already noticed the Sikhs of the district are confined entirely to Tahsil Sirsa and the northern part of Tashil Fatahabad.

Sikhs.

The true Sikhs are followers of the tenth Guru Gobind Singh and are distinguished by the five Kakka: (I) the *kes* or long hair and unshaven head; (II) the *kachh* or short drawers in place of the *dhoti* of the Hindús and the *tahmat* of the Musalmáns; (III) the *kara* or iron bangle; (IV) the *kanga* or comb, and (V) the *kard* or knife. They are initiated by *pahul* or baptism and are hence called *pahulia* as distinguished from *mona* or shaven, an epithet of the Nának-panthi Sikhs. The true Sikhs follow the Granth, venerate the cow perhaps even more than do the orthodox Hindús, are forbidden the use of tobacco but are allowed to indulge in spirits and drugs, a permission of which, as far as opium is concerned, they take the fullest advantage.

They eat the flesh of animals killed by the *jhatka* or decapitation. The true Sikhs of the district are not strict observers of the precepts of Gobind Singh. The *kes* is invariably worn, but the *dhoti* is often substituted for the *kachh* and the *kard*, *kara* and *kanga* are commonly discarded. They reverence the Brahmans to a certain extent and have no particular objection to the killing of cows by their Mussalmán neighbours. Many of them smoke tobacco. The manly and stalwart Sikh contrasts strongly with his neighbours, the puny Bagri Jat and the lazy Pachádá. He is far less trammelled by the web of caste restrictions than the Hindu, but it by no means follows that he will mingle with the lower castes.

In Sirsa the Sikh religion seems to be making some progress among the Bagri Jats, upon whom the example of their Sikh neighbours seems to be making an impression in matters other than religion.

Jains and their sects.

The Jains in point of wealth and education are a not unimportant class of the population, especially in the towns.

Jainism is certainly a development of Hindúism. The question has been fully discussed in the Census Report of 1881, and it is not necessary to touch on it here. The Jains appear to revere the gods of the Hindu pantheon, but reject the divine origin of the Vedas. Their supreme deity is Nirankár, corresponding apparently to the Hindu Náráin, but their immediate objects of worship and reverence are the 24 *arhats* or saints who have obtained final nirvan (*mukhti*) with Nirankár. They do not appear to reverence or feed the Brahmans, but they have Sádhús or priests of their own, and their *pun* or meritorious conduct consists to a large extent in worshipping Nirankár and in feeding the Sádhús. They do not wear the *janeo* or sacred thread, they have a certain amount of reverence for the cow, bathing is not considered any part of their worship nor do they appear to reverence the *linga*, the symbol of Siva. Their scriptures consist of the 32 Sutras written by Mahávir, the last *arhat*. The leading principle of conduct inculcated by their religion is abstention, not alone from taking animal life but from causing harm of any kind to any living creature (*jiv*).

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Religions.

Of the 24 *arhâts* worshipped by the Jains, the most famous are Rikabdás the first *arhát*, and Parasnáth and Mahávir the last two.

Jains and their sects.

Jain sects.

Of the Jains there are two main sections, the Mandirpanthis and the Dhundiapanthis. The distinction between them consists in this that Mandirpanthis worship images of the 24 *arhâts* in temples, while the Dhundiapanthis worship no idols and have no temples. The present Mandirpanthis are the successors and representatives of the original Jains, while the Dhundiapanthis are a schismatic offshoot.

Mandirpanthis.

(a) In the temples of the Mandirpanthis are always found images of one or more of the 24 *arhâts* and in any case that of Parasnáth the 23rd *arhát*.

The Mandirpanthis are themselves divided into two sections—the Swetambaras, whose images are clothed and adorned with jewels, and the Digambaras, who worship nude idols.

Swetambaras.

(i) The priests of the Swetambaras are called *jatis*. The Swetambaras believe that women can obtain salvation (*mukhti*), while the other Jains deny that this can be unless the woman is first born again as a man. The principal caste who follow the doctrines of the Swetambaras Jains are the Oswal Baniyás. There is a tradition explaining how the caste came to adopt this form of faith. The Oswal Baniyás were originally Rájpúts of Osanagri in Rájpútána; while they were yet Rájpúts, a boy was bitten by a snake; a Swetambara Sádhu sucked the poison from the wound and restored the boy to life, and the people of the place in consequence adopted the Jain religion and became members of the Swetambara sect.

Digambaras.

(ii) As stated above, the idols of the Digambaras are nude; their Sádhús are called *munis;* they carry a sort of *chauri* or brush wherewith to drive away insects, &c., and no leather of any sort, probably as being an animal product, is allowed in their temples.

There is a further sub-division of the Digambaras into (1) the Bispanthi section who reverence the 24 *arhâts*, the Guru and Shástras; and (2) the Teraphanthi section, who accept the *arhâts* and the Shástras, but deny that there is now any Guru other than the Shástras themselves. The priests of the Digambaras are naked, except for a *langoti* round the loins.

Dhundiapanthis.

(b) The second great section of the Jains consists of the Dhundiapanthis. It was originally an offshoot from the Swetambara section of the Mandirpanthis as noted above. The Swetambaras were originally divided into 84 sub-divisions; of these one was the Lanka, which was again split up into three minor sub-divisions, or *gadtis*, *viz.*, the Nagári, Gujaráti and the Uttradhi. Under the influence and guidance of 22 men called Gurus, the Lanka Nagári developed into a large sect, distinct not only from the Swetambara section but from the whole body of Jains as then constituted; its members, however, still retained the name of

Jains, in order to distinguish themselves from other Hindús. The section thus formed was called the Báistola and subsequently the sect of the Dhundiapanthís. The schism which led to its formation appears to have occurred in Sambat 1709 near Ahmadabad under the leadership of Dharm Dás and Dharm Singh. Dhundiapanthís.

In Sambat 1817 the Báistola or Dhundiapanthís was itself split up by the defection from its midst of the sect of the Terahpanthís under Bhíkam Sen. The name of the sect appears to have arisen from the fact that at first it included only 13 men, and it must not be confused with the Terahpanthi section of the Digambaras. They have had five Gurus, whose seat is Rájnagar in Bikánir, *viz.*, Bhíkam Sen, Bás Mal, Rái Chand, Jít Mal, Meg Ráj.

The main features which distinguish the religion of the Dhundiapanthís from that of the other Jains is the absence of idol worship in their temples.

The Dhundias do not reverence Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu in any way apparently, nor do they make pilgrimages. The Dhundias wear a cloth over their mouths, in order to prevent the entrance and consequent destruction of animalculæ; probably for a similar reason the Dhundias will not drink water in its natural state (*kacha pani*), but only that which has been warmed or otherwise treated (*pakka pani*).

The Baistola section of the Dhundias reverences the 32 Sutrás of Mahávír, which form the Jain scriptures, but the Terahpanthís have a separate scripture consisting of 52 slokas. The Terahpanthís will not protect one animal from the attack of another, but the regard of Baistola section for animal life will rise even to the length of doing this. On the whole the Terahpanthís, as compared with the Baistola, are a more advanced and more heterodox sect.

The subject of superstitions is intimately connected and in fact merges, as shown above, in the entire religious system of the Hindu. Religion and superstition are to a great extent the same thing in his case. Superstitions.

A few superstitions connected with agriculture may be noted here.

Mangal (Tuesday) is a bad day for the commencement of ploughing (*kalotia*); Wednesday, on the other hand, is an especially good day. During the first 15 days of Asauj the Srádáh or ceremonies for the repose of the spirits of ancestors are celebrated. The period is called (Kanágat), and it is considered unlucky to sow in that interval. On the day of Sukhrant, in the month Máh, no wells are worked, nor is any cart nor plough driven. The Brahmans are fed on that day and cattle are better fed than ordinarily.

When cattle disease breaks out in a village a rope is stretched across the *pahu* (a village gate), and an earthen

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saucer with a charm written on it is fixed to the middle of the rope through which are stuck wooden pegs. The cattle after being driven under it enjoy immunity from the disease.

When a well is being dug a small shrine to Hanuman is erected near, in order to avert accidents during the construction, especially the sinking or dislocation of the well cylinder, and to ensure that the water shall be sweet.

The Hindús of Sirsa, as a precaution against theft of grain when stacked in the fields, trace a circle of ashes round the heap.

Odd numbers are considered unlucky. A woman must not mention her husband's name, nor should a man mention his wife's name. One should not mention one's father-in-law (Suara) but should call him uncle. Should a Hindu be so unlucky as to kill a cow he must take her tail to the Ganges there to be purified at considerable expense, and on the way he bears the tail aloft tied to a stick in order that all may know that he is impure.

When a *pakka* house is being built the *mistri* suspends the figure of a parrot over the door; this is supposed to bring good luck, and when it is first inhabited a string of *nim* leaves is tied over the doorway for the same reason.

Fairs, fasts, holy places and shrines.

The religious gatherings of the district are numerous.

At Deosar, in the Bhiwani tahsil, a fair in honour of Devi is held twice in the year in Asauj and Chet. It only lasts for one day on each occasion and is attended by some 1,000 persons from the adjacent villages. There is a small temple to Devi on a hill close to the village. The proprietors of the village take the offerings made there on the occasion of the fair.

A fair in honour of Shibji is held at Jugán in the Hissár tahsil on the day of Sheoratri (Phágan Badi 13). It is attended by only some 400 persons and lasts only for one day. A similar fair on the same date is held at Muhabbatpur in the same tahsil, attended by some 600 persons.

A fair in honour of Guga Pir, attended by some 8,000 persons, is held at Hissár on the ninth day of the dark half of Bhádon. It lasts only one day.

Three fairs, at which Rámdei is the object of veneration, are held at Talwandi Raka in the Hissár Tahsil during the year on the following dates: Magh Sudi 10, Bhádon Sudi 10 and Chet Sudi 10. They last for one day each. The first is attended by some 300 and the last two by some 100 persons.

There is a temple in honour of Devi at Bhanbhauri in the Hánsi tahsil, some 10 miles from Barwála. The tradition is that the goddess became incarnate at this place in order to contend with the *Rakshas* (demon) Bal. Fairs are held there in her honour on Asauj Sudi 6 and Chet Sudi 6. The fair is attended by some 6,000 persons, many of whom come from considerable distances.

There is a shrine in honour of Devi Sitala (the small-pox goddess) at Dhanana in Tahsil Hansi. Fairs are held there on every Wednesday in the month of Chet; the final one is the biggest. Devi Sitala is worshipped at these fairs principally by women and children as a prophylactic measure against small-pox. Offerings of cocoanuts, clothes and grain are made, and these are taken by Chamárs and Chuhrás. From 2,000 to 3,000 persons assemble at each fair.

At Hánsi, a fair known as the Mírán Sáhib ka mela or the Neza ka mela, is held inside the town, just below the fort, on the second Thursday in Chet. It lasts for one day. The popular tradition is that the fair is held to commemorate the death of one Bu Ali, a disciple of Kutb Munawar-ud-din, after he had caused a downpour of rain on the town when it was suffering from drought. He died on the second Thursday in Chet. The fair was originally held near the tomb of Bu Ali outside the Barsi Gate of the town, but subsequently for greater security was transferred to its present locality, where Saiyad Niamat-ullah, whose tomb is inside the fort, used to practise with the spear (neza) and this has given its present name to the fair. Visitors come to it from considerable distances, and some 6,000 or 7,000 persons in all assemble.

From the 11th to the 12th Shábán, a religious gathering is held at Hánsi in front of the tomb of the four Kutbs, outside the enclosure, in memory of the death of Kutb Jamál-ud-din. Some 1,500 people assemble.

A fair in honour of Guga is also held outside the Kutb Gate on Bhádon Badi 9. It lasts one day and some 1,500 persons assemble.

There is a temple to Mahádeo at Kirmára in Tahsil Fatehabad. The tradition is that the village was originally the residence of a demon *Rakshas*, Kirmar, who used to go to Benares daily to worship Mahádeo. The god in order to save him this unnecessary trouble promised that the divine toe should miraculously appear at Kirmára; it did so, and Kirmar continued his worship locally. Finally, Bhím Sain, Pandáva, with the assistance of the goddess Devi, killed the demon for an outrage on his mother. Formerly there was no temple here, but in 1824 A. D., one Hari Singh of Patiála built one to Mahádeo, the site being chosen probably in consequence of the local traditions connected with Mahádeo (Shibji).

The temple is supposed to be erected on the spot, where the god's toe appeared to the demon. A fair is held at the temple about a mile distant from the village on the Sheorátri, Phágan Badi 13 or 14. The offerings consist of Ganges water, *gur*, money, &c., and are taken by the Gosáins, who live at the temple. Re. 1 is offered in the name of each of the neighbouring villages. Some 4,000 or 5,000 persons assemble, many coming from long distances.

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Religions.
Fairs, fasts, holy places and shrines.

A fair in honour of Devi Sítala is held at her shrine near Kalána in the Budhláda Iláka on Chet Badi 8. Some 1,500 persons assemble and the offerings are taken by Chuhrás.

Two fairs are held in the year at Bichhuwâna in the Budhláda Iláka before the tomb or *samádh* of Bhai Náman Singh, a Sikh saint. Offerings are made and the Granth is worshipped. The first fair is held on the Namáni day, Jeth 11th, and the second on the day of the Lorhi, Máh 1st. On the first occasion 400 men assemble and on the second 4,000.

At Kagdâna in the Sirsa tahsíl there is a temple to Rámdeo. Fairs in his honour are held there on Máh Sudi 10 and Bhádon Sudi 10. At the first there is an attendance of 4,000 and at the second 300 or 400. There is a similar fair on the 10th Máh Sudi at Karanganwáli in the same tahsíl.

SECTION C.—SOCIAL LIFE.

The villages in different parts of the district differ widely in appearance and in the air of comfort and prosperity which they wear. The best are undoubtedly the Jat villages of Hánsi, Bhiwáni and parts of Hissár and Fatahabad. They consist of collections of substantial and roomy enclosures containing good mud houses. A large number of them have many masonry brick houses and one or more handsome and lofty brick built *chaupále* (*báhai paras*) or rest-houses. The *pakka haveli* (or mansion) of the prosperous local Bania is to be seen in many of them. On the outskirts of the village site are the mud huts or hovels of the village menials Chamárs, and such like. The village, as a general rule, has one or at the most two entrances (*phatsa*), and there is generally no passage right through it; in many cases it is divided into *pands* or wards between which there are no internal means of communication. Outside the village will be found one or more temples of Shiva or Krishna. Near the *dhádi* will be at least one large and deep tank (*johar*) on the bank of which will often be seen a handsome *ghát* and a *pakka* well provided with reservoir (*kund*) for bathing and watering cattle. Near the tank is often found the hut (*deruh*) of a *fakir* who is regarded as a guardian of the tank. The tank is generally surrounded by a thick fringe of large trees, chiefly *nim*, *siras*, *pipal*, *bar* and *kikar*.

Scattered round the village are the thorn enclosures (*gitwara* or *bára*) in which the stacks (*bitaura*) of *opla* (cow-dung) are stored for fuel. The cattle are sometimes but very rarely pound in them at night. Round the tank is a wide patch of open kallarish soil which is jealously preserved as a watershed for the tank; often it is covered with trees which are carefully preserved and form a *bani* or plantation.

The above is the type of the prosperous Jat village in the eastern, central and south-eastern parts of the district. Towards the west and south-west the type deteriorates slightly not so much as regards the buildings as the surroundings of the village.

The trees round the *dhádi* are less numerous, the tanks not so large, nor in consequence of the greater proximity of light sandy soil so deep. At the same time we miss the large and handsome *chaupále* and the masonry houses become less common.

The houses in the Mussalmán villages are generally far inferior to those in Jat villages, and the surroundings, such as trees and tanks, distinctly so. They generally have, especially in the centre and southern half of the district, a more or less pretentious masonry mosque with its three domes and minarets.

The Mussalmán Pachhádá villages in the north of Tahsil Fatahabad and along the course of the Ghaggar present a still greater contrast to those of the Jats. The houses are far poorer,

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often nothing more than thatched mud hovels and the villages are far smaller in size, less neat and less compactly arranged.

Few trees are planted round the village site, and what there are are of natural growth. The thorn enclosures and *ophi* stacks of the Jat village are absent, and the mosque itself is only a mud house, a little more respectable than the rest with an open platform of mud in front and distinguished from other buildings by its three mud pinnacles. Such villages do not generally boast of any *chaupál* or rest-house.

The Sikh villages of Sirsa resemble more or less the Jat villages of the southern part of the district, but are probably inferior to them so far as appearance of prosperity is concerned. As a rule, owing to the dry nature of the climate, the villages are clean. Many of those, however, near the canal are filthy in the extreme, and the zamíndár's attempts at sanitation are of the feeblest.

Water-supply.

The question of water-supply is one of pressing importance in most parts of the district. Except in the immediate neighbourhood of the canal and the Ghaggar the water-level in the wells is at a depth varying from over 100 to 60 or 70 feet, and well water is only drunk when the tanks or *johars* are dried up. The proper repair and excavation of the village tanks is a matter to which much attention is given. Many, if not most, villages have been built on low-lying sites (*dábar*) in which the rain water from the surrounding higher lands naturally collects. As the village increases in size and more mud bricks are required the tank deepens, and some of the miscellaneous common income of the village, generally the proceeds of the sale of the right to work *shora* (saltpetre), and of dried fallen trees is devoted to repairing and enlarging the tank, or a rate is levied by the villages among themselves for this purpose. So long as the tank water holds out men and cattle drink from it and both bathe in it promiscuously, but some of the better villages reserve one tank or partition off a part of a tank for drinking and bathing purposes, and no cattle are allowed to enter it or drink from it.

When the tanks dry up, which often happens long before the rains, the only resource left is the water in the wells which are in many parts few and far between, and in many of those which do exist the water is bitter and undrinkable. The majority of the wells used for drinking purposes are on the banks of the village *johars* and the filtration of the tank water has the effect of keeping the well water sweet. In Sirsa an aperture (*bamba* or *mori*) is left in the side of the well cylinder which communicates with the tank; when the latter is full, its water is let into the well, and this helps to keep the well water sweet. A full account of the water-supply in the Sirsa villages will be found in paragraph 122 of Mr. Wilson's Settlement Report.

Water-supply.

The water of the tank and wells is almost universally open to use by the whole of the village population of whatever caste or creed. Well water is seldom drunk anywhere while water, however filthy, is available in tanks; when the latter are exhausted, men are appointed to draw water for the village and they received fees called *pi*. The scale of fees varies, in some villages it is 2 annas per *mattka* or water jar and 3 annas per head of cattle is charged per month; in other villages 1 anna per horse, 1 anna per buffalo and 6 pics per other head of cattle per mensem is charged.

Houses.

The houses in various parts of the district differ very considerably in the style of architecture employed and the standard of comfort attained. The best are certainly those in the rich and prosperous Jat villages of Hánsi and along the eastern border of the district generally, and also in some of the central portions.

They consist of a covered gateway with side rooms (*paoli* or *deorhi*) which opens on to the lane (*gál* or *gali*); within this entrance is an open square or yard called variously *ángan*, *sahan* or *bisála*, at the rear of this or on either side is a verandah called *dalán* or *bichála*, and behind this again are the inner rooms for sleeping and living called *kotha* or *sufa*. The above is perhaps a fairly accurate description of the standard plan of a Jat house, but the variations are innumerable. Frequently two or three minor enclosures will be found inside the main enclosure and subdivided therefrom by walls (*bhints*). Within the enclosures are the *chulás* or hearths at which the bread is baked, and each distinct confocal group living within one enclosure has a separate *chula*. The *arha* or oven in which the daily porridge or *dulia* is cooked and the milk warmed is generally outside the *paoli* or entrance and built against the outer wall of the house in the *gali* or lane.

The household cattle are generally penned at night either in the *ángan* or in the *paoli*. Fodder is often stacked in the flat mud roofs. In some Jat villages the prosperous landowner has converted his mud residence into a substantial brick *haveli*, while in most such villages there will be at least one or two zamíndár's houses with *pukka* gateways and fronts (*munh*).

The houses in Rájpút villages, both Hindu and Mussalmán, are built on much the same general plan as in the case of Jats, but, as a rule, they are less neat, and in many cases a far greater number of families live together in one enclosure than in the case of Jats.

In some cases the household will consist of a large enclosure subdivided into minor ones which contain one or more *chulás*, the outward and visible sign of a separate and distinct confocal group. Such groups are generally related more or less closely, but in some cases the family tenants and kamíns are also allowed to live in the household enclosure.

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The type of house common in the Bágar shows a standard of comfort distinctly inferior to that prevailing on the eastern portion of the district. As a general rule the soil is not adapted for the construction of mud roofs as it is too light to withstand the rain, the roofs are in consequence made of the thatch of *bájra* (*karbi*), the walls being mud. Such a house is called *chapper* or *kúdi*, and several of them will be found arranged round the *ángan* or enclosure, which, if the inmates are fairly prosperous, will be provided with a mud *paoli* or entrance thatched with straw. Another still poorer class of Bagri dwelling is the *jhompri* which consists of a circular hut, the sides of which are made by interweaving the branches of various bushes and putting on a thatch of *bájra* straw. In the better and more prosperous Bagri villages the type of house is similar to that in Jat villages, but is inferior in construction and point of comfort.

The lowest type of house to be found in the district is that which is prevalent in the Pachhádu villages on the Ghaggar tract. The villages in that part are very small and the houses far more scattered than in the larger villages to the south. The typical Pachádu's house consists of a one-roomed mud hut called *kudi* or *kotha*, standing in the middle of a thorn enclosure called *ángan* or *sath*. There is generally a smaller inner enclosure for the cattle called *báhra*; the *ángan* also contains a thatch supported by poles called *chán*, which is used for living in by day and for sleeping in in the hot weather. The class of dwelling-house found in the Pachhádu villages to the south of the Ghaggar tract approximates more closely to the type prevalent elsewhere in the district as described above.

Furniture.

The furniture of the average Jat householder consists of some *chárpais* or bedsteads (*khát* or *manji*), stools (*pídhás*) to sit on, the *charkha* or spinning wheel for his woman, a *kothi* or mud receptacle in the shape of a bin for his grain, a large wooden mortar made out of the trunk of a tree and called *ukhal* with the pestle or *músal* used for husking rice on festive occasions. The *chakki* or hand-mill is used for grinding the grain used daily. In most houses the *chinka* will be seen suspended from the roof; food left over from the evening meal is kept upon it so as to be out of reach of the village dogs.

An important part of the household furniture is the greater or less array of domestic vessels (*bhánda*) of various kinds. The principal perhaps are the *thálí* or large flat dish of brass or *kánsi* used for eating from; the *katora* or drinking vessel, also the *biala* or *belua*, a smaller form of drinking vessel; the *lotah* of brass used for carrying water; the *tokni* or large brass vessel with narrow funnel-like mouth in which water or milk is kept; the *ghara* or *matka*, a large earthen vessel in which water is carried from the well on the women's heads; the *handia*, an earthen vessel of much the same shape as the above in which the *dalia* is cooked and milk warmed. The *tawa* is a flat iron plate upon which the *roti* or bread is baked on the *chula* or hearth. In many villages huge iron caldrons called *karáhis* are to be

found; they are used when culinary operations are required on a large scale as at weddings or funeral feasts (*káj*).

Furniture.

The above description applies to the furniture of an ordinary Jat house in the south, central or eastern portions of the district, but that of an average Pachadá's dwelling is probably less plentiful especially as regards the brass vessels.

The Pachadás call their corn bin *barola* or *baroli* according to their greater or smaller size; while among the Bagris they are known as *khoti* or *khotliya*.

Clothes.

There is a considerable amount of diversity in the clothes worn by different tribes of the agricultural classes. The ordinary Hindu zamíndár's apparel consists of a *dhoti* or loin cloth, a *mirzai* or jacket fastened with strings in front, and a *pagri* or turban. The richer class of zamíndár substitutes the *kurti* or vest and the *angarkha* or long coat for the *mirzai*. The usual wrap is the *chádar*, and in the cold weather a thick blanket called *lohi* or a *razai* or a cotton quilt called *dohar* is substituted. The *khes* is another wrap and is often used for carrying grain or *pala*. On occasions of festivity a *kurta*, a coloured *chádar* and a *sáfa* or finer sort of *pagri* are worn. In place of the *chádar* the Bishnois often wear the *pattu* which is generally handsomely embroidered and worked. For the *dhoti* the Mussalmán generally substitutes the *tahmat* or *lungi*, a loin cloth worn like a kilt and not tied between the legs as in the case of the Hindu *dhoti*. His *chádar* is often of a blue colour and is then called *lungi*.

The characteristic garment of the true Sikhs is the *kachh* a short drawers, but many of them have adopted the Hindu *dhoti* or the Mussalmán *tahmat*. As a wrap they generally wear the *khes* which is made of cotton.

The Hindu women of the villages wear a *ghágra* or skirt of cotton; in some parts this is called *lahinga*. Married females wear a boddice called *angya* or *choli*, while those who are unmarried wear the *kurti*, and the wrap of cotton worn over the head is called *orhna* or *dopatta*.

In the cold weather the Bishnoi women substitute a woollen petticoat called *dhabla* for the *ghagra* and a woollen wrap called *lánkár*. The latter is often handsomely worked.

The Sikh women wear the drawers (*pajáma* or *suthan*) and over this a short skirt or *ghagra*. In place of the *angya* they wear the *kurti*. For the *dopatta* they often substitute an ornamented wrap called *phulkári*.

The majority of the Mussalmán women wear the *suthan* or *pajámás* in place of the *ghagra*, and the *kurti* in place of the *angya*. The Pachada women, however, wear the *ghagra*.

Jewels.

Jewels (*gena*) are common among the women folk of the wealthier agricultural tribes such as Jats and especially Bishnois. If men wear jewels they comprise no more than a

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bracelet and a pendant round the neck. The following list gives the names, description and value of the ornaments worn by women in the district:—

List of ornaments worn by women of Hissár District.

Name of Ornaments.	Description.	Estimated cost in made of	
		Gold.	Silver.
	Head Ornaments.	Rs.	Rs.
Bor	A round hollow ornament of the size of a betel-nut worn on the front of the forehead where the hair is parted.	10	1
Kanda	A small flowery boss, shaped like a turtle shell, worn braided into the temple hair.	220	35
Chak	A circular thin plate with a hook worn on the top of the head.	40	8
Choti phúl	A round semi-spherical stamped boss worn on the top of the head.	...	4
Phulkán	A small pair of Chotí phúls, one worn behind either ear on the hairs.	...	2
Tagá	Is a chain with a plate, the plate is tied with a thread to the hair and the chain is left hanging.	...	2
Chota	A boss, worn on the top of the head	...	16
	Forehead Ornaments.		
Bandi	A fringed trinket, pendant on both sides of the face by means of a chain.	80	6
More bindi	Just the same as bindi, only that the central part rests upon a rude imitation of the figure of a peacock: (worn by Mahájans).	300	...
Sánkli	A chain	100	...
Bhowarla	A crescent-shaped ornament	100	...
Sarsari	A plaited chain running from ear to ear ...	150	8
Tika	A crescent-shaped ornament (pendant), set with jewels and fringed with pointed golden leaves or pearls.	80	2
Jhumar	A tassel-shaped ornament (pendant), with seven or eleven chains, all hanging from a chain just below it, each chain bearing a bead on its end.	160	...
Bingna	Small tinsel forehead ornament	...	2
	Ear Ornaments.		
Bálí (dandi)	A set of rings, about 12 or 14 in number, worn all round the edge of the ear, each about one inch in diameter.	100	7
Jhumka	A tassel like ornament, shaped like a marigold flower, hung on to a bálí in both the ears.	75	6
Bála	A large thin ring with pearls perforated (worn by men); and the heavy one, a fringed ear-ring is worn by women.	40	2
Pati	A tassel like frame work, made with five chains and little balls, worn either hung to a bálí or strung to it.	200	13
Murki	A smaller ear-ring of the bálí shape, worn in the ear.	4	0-8

List of ornaments worn by women of Hissár District—continued.

Name of Ornaments.	Description.	Estimated cost if made of	
		Gold.	Silver.
	Ear Ornaments.—*concld.*	Rs.	Rs.
Bujli or bachia ...	A huge stamped round stud having a round nail beneath, worn in the ear.	...	1
Karn-phúl	A round stamped ornament, but cut in curves round the edge, has a nail beneath like a bujli and is worn with the bujli.	...	2
	Nose Ornaments.		
Nath	A large nose ring, one side of the ring being ornamented with a bolt of jewels and gold spangles or a few pearls; a pendant (*lat-kan*) is hung to it. The ring is about three inches in diameter, made either solid, hollow, or like a sword.	60	...
Laung	A small nose stud, let into the flesh of the nostril on one side, with a pearl or turquois on it.	2	...
Bulak	A pendant, in the shape of a spoon, worn in the nose (or a leaf-shaped pendant nose ornament worn by both girls and married women, but never by widows).	12	...
Koili Laung	Just the same as *laung* but its handle (nail) is a hollow tube through which nose string (sedk) is passed.	2	...
Machhli	A ring with fringes carved into the likeness of a fish.	15	...
	Necklaces and Neck Ornaments.		
Toda	A plaited ornament comprising three beads ...	150	...
Takhti hál	A spherical plate cut into curves, worn plaited into a ring.	200	...
Gal-pata	A collar or necklace of a great number of chains.	200	...
Mála	A plain necklace of gold beads perforated, often alternated with corals.	100	7
Pach-lari	A set of five chains with 100 beads	150	...
Satlara	A set of seven chains with beads	200	...
Tilri	A set of three chains with 90 beads	150	...
Zanjeri	A linked chain	200	...
Kathla	Made of a set of chains with a single jewelled pendant (*jugni*) hanging from it.	200	...
Hár	A net-work of chains with star shaped spangles on it, the chains run ring into a plate on each side of the neck linked with a chain over the neck.	500	25
Champakali	A necklet consisting of a string of twisted silk, on the edge of which a number (40) of long narrow tapering and pointed beads, like the doca seed are fixed.	60	7
Kantha	As above but beads are round bored through this fits close to the neck.	150	...
Jap Mála	A sort of a rosary of beads	...	7
Hamiyal	A chain of twisted silk, from which suspend various coins, flat square and rectangular hollow plates.	...	25

Chapter III. C. Social Life. Jewels.

List of ornaments worn by women of Hisár District—continued.

Name of Ornaments.	Description.	Estimated cost if made of	
		Gold.	Silver.
	NECKLACES AND NECK ORNAMENTS—*contd.*	Rs.	Rs.
Hasli	A stamped ring or collar of silver, thick in the middle and thin at either end like a serpent's tail.	...	20
Chauki...	The same as Hamáyal, bearing a few flat hollow plates.	...	10
	ARM ORNAMENTS.		
Bázu	A square plate with a stamped stud within worn by a twisted thread on the upper part of the arm.	180	7
Bálá	Two flat plates worn like a bázu	70	3
Bázúband	A broad belt like ornament having 18 rectangular plates, generally mounted on silk and tied on the upper arm.	160	10
Nawagga	A series of nine rectangular studs set with stones, mounted on a twisted thread.	150	10
Tád	A broad silver ring worn on the upper arm...	...	25
Tadia	A round ring of silver, either solid or hollow—without ends.	...	25
Jaushan	A series of octangular hollow tubes (studs) shaped like a *mung* pod, tied by a twisted silk thread.	...	9
Attar dán	Just the same as bázu, having two plates on either side, mounted on a twisted silk thread (a useless fitted with vases for holding *attar* or perfume essences).	80	4
	BRACELET.		
Nauguri	A chain of a few beads larger than a grain, mounted on a twisted thread.	100	60
Kangan	A plate of metal (ring) with jingling balls ...	150	10
Kara	A bracelet of stiff metal worn bent round the arm, the ends are often stamped.	300	15
Bandi	Is a kara but the edges are serrated	130	8
Pauchi...	Worn on the wrist, the same as *nauguri*—a series of strings of shells or small gold elongated beads.	100	6
Khanjari	An impressed hollow, broad ring made of two parts, each joined with *sharpe*.	100	6
Pachhái	A wristlet	...	10
Kangni	A broad kara ornamented with silver studs ...	...	40
Gajra	A flexible bracelet made of round studs mounted on a silk thread.	150	5
Chura	A series of 12 or 14 flat impressed bangles, bent round; half of the series worn on each arm.	...	30
Chhan	A noisy form of *churi* with small tinkling balls.	...	25
Jut	A long silver sleeve or tube worn on both arms like a lot of *churies* fastened together	...	25
Sallara	A series of chains fastened together, worn like the *gajra*.	200	10

List of ornaments worn by women of Hisár District—concluded.

Name of Ornaments.	Description.	Estimated cost if made of	
		Gold.	Silver.
	FINGER RINGS.	Rs.	Rs.
Arsi ... — ...	A small cup of little depth, fitted with a looking glass, having a thin ring beneath, worn on the thumb.	40	2
Chhalla ... —	A thin round ring, plain or stamped	5	0-4
Angúthi	A ring set with one or more stones	10	0-8
Hath phúl	A flowery ornament worn with chains on the outer part of the hand.	100	5
Tagri ... — ...	A chain with a hook on both ends worn all round the waist.	...	10
	ANKLETS.		
Kari ... ... —	A fine sort of *kara*, worn on the ankles ...	...	20
Jhanj ... — ...	A large hollow bored ring with beads introduced into the hollow, which rattles when the wearer walks.	...	12
Tore ... — ...	A chain of links interwoven together with broad clasps, worn on both the ankles.	...	15
Pauch	Is a *tora*, with pendants of silver, which clink together when the wearer walks.	—	40
Churi	Large stamped *karas*, four or six, often fringed with pendants.	...	30
Rauk ... — —	A large solid ring curved according to the natural form of foot.	...	10
Santilra	A sort of *tora* of intermingled chains ...	...	40
Chhadkari	A smooth *kara* like *jhánj*	...	20
Langar	A ring	—	10
	TOE ORNAMENTS.		
Chhalla	The same as finger *chhalla* but somewhat larger than that.	...	0-8
Zanjir	An interlinked chain, worn across the toes ...	...	4
Bichhwa	A *chhalla* fringed with tinkling balls	...	6

Before going to his work in the fields in the early morning (*kalewár*, *lassiwela* and *chhárela*) the peasant has a slight breakfast on the remains of the meal of the previous night and drinks *lassi* or butter-milk. *Rabri* is frequently eaten at this time, especially among the Bagris. It is made by mixing *bájra* flour with water and whey or butter-milk (*lassi*). This is put in the sun until it ferments. Some salt and more *lassi* is then added and the whole put over a smouldering fire till morning when it is eaten with *lassi*.

Divisions of time, daily life, work and food.

The first substantial meal of the day is taken at about 10 A.M. (*kalewár*), or if the peasant has taken his early breakfast with him into the fields and ate it there somewhat late

Chapter III. C. Social Life.

Divisions of time, daily life, work and food.

not till midday. This meal consists of scones (*roti*) with *dál* and any green stuff (*tarkári* or *ság*), such as the green leaves of *sarson*, which may be available. *Lassi*, or failing that, water is drunk. The scones or round flat cakes are made of *bájra* or *jowár* when in season and when they fail of gram.

In the western part of the district among the Bagrís the grain preferred is *bájra* and *moth* mixed, or if the peasant is well off *bájra* alone. The people of Hariána prefer *jowár*, while those of the Náli make their *roti* of *bhejar*, gram and barley mixed, if procurable, as is generally the case in that part. Wheat is of course beyond the means of most zamíndárs, and as a fact they would not eat it if it were not as they prefer *bájra* and *jowár*. When the *bájra* and *jowár* crop fails, gram is generally utilized for food.

The midday meal is carried to the men at work in the fields either by the women or by a servant (*chakiára*). Where the women of the household are kept in *pardah* the ploughman has to return home for it. After this meal work is begun again and continued till after midday when a rest is taken.

In some parts, as among the Pachádás, any thing left over from the morning meal is eaten in the afternoon about 3 P.M. At sunset the peasant returns from the field and the principal meal of the day is then taken. It consists mainly of a porridge called *kichri* or *dalia* according as more or less fine in quality. *Kichri* is made of *bájra* and *múng*, or one of them mixed with *moth* or *chawla*. *Jowár* is also sometimes used. The gram is prepared by removing the husks by pounding in the *ukhal*. *Dalia* is a porridge made of *jowár* or *bájra*, and is generally eaten in the evening by the average zamíndár; the more wealthy, however, eat *kichri*. For *dalia* the gram is ground in the *chakki* in the usual way. The usual drink at this meal is water.

In the hot weather after this meal the zamíndár will go out to the village *chaupál* and there meet his friends. The whole village goes to rest early, and everything is generally quiet by 9 or 10 P.M.

The above is a sketch of the daily life of the Hissár peasant in seasons when there is field work on hand. At other times the Bagri Jat and the Bishnoi will go off with their camels to carry for hire or to do a little speculation in grain on their own account. They will go to the Náli tract and buy grain, probably gram and barley or gram, and carry it southwards or into the Bikánir territory where they may expect to realize some profit by its sale.

The Deswáli Jat and the Rájpút comparatively seldom leave their villages in this way, and in the seasons wherein there is no agricultural work to be done they are, so far as the *bárání* tract is concerned, comparatively idle for considerable periods together.

Divisions of time, daily life, work and food.

The life of the village housewife, when not in *pardah*, is, on the whole, a hard one. She goes to the village well with the *ghara* on her head and draws water twice in the day, she cooks the morning meal, and when the men are at work in the fields carries it out to them there; at the seasons for weeding and harvesting she does a considerable share of this work, and after going home has to cook the evening meal. In addition to this she has to collect the cow-dung from the fields and make it into *opla*, which is the almost universal fuel of the district and to spin the cotton (*rui*) into threads. The life of the Jat and Bagri women is one of practically unremitting toil.

Divisions of the day.

The names given to the divisions of the day vary considerably in different parts of the district.

Shortly before sunrise ...	Baghpati, pilabadal, lohipati, parbhát (Bagri), bangvela (Pachhádi), imratvela (Sikh).
Sunrise.—Sunrise to 10 A.M.	Dinnikale, ugmana (Bagar), kalewar, vadivela, lassivela (Sikh).
Midday	Dopahar, rotivela.
Noon to 2 P.M.	Dindhale.
Late afternoon to sunset ...	Hándiwár (Jat), paslára (Bagri), peshivela (Pachhádi), taorivela (Sikh).
Sunset.—7 P.M. to 8 P.M. ...	Jhimanwar (Jat) = food time.
2 P.M. about	Sota, sotavela (Sikh).
Midnight	Adhirát.
Midnight to 2 P.M.	Paharka tarka or rátdhale.

Amusements.

There are a fairly large number of children's games known in the district. The commonest are perhaps *gend*, which is practically the English hockey and *kabbaddi* which much resembles prisoners' base. In the latter game the two parties are drawn up opposite one another in line; a member of one rushes across and touches one of the other and endeavours to get back without taking breath, if he can do this the person touched is dead, if however, he is caught, and detained till he is compelled to take breath he himself is counted dead.

Danda litti is a game much resembling the English tipcat. The stick is called *danda* and the small piece of wood pointed at both ends which is struck with the *danda* is called *litti*. A hole called *gutta* is dug. If the striker misses hitting, the *latti* or the *litti* is caught by one of the other players, the striker has to carry one of them to the *gutta* on his back.

Munakidri is a game much resembling that known in England as Tom Tiddler's ground.

Bijobandri is practically the English hopskotch, divisions are marked out on the ground, one is called *bijobandri* and the furthest *samudra* or the ocean. A brick is placed inside the latter and the object is to kick it into the other divisions

Chapter III. C. Social Life. Amusements.

while hopping. The brick must not rest on a dividing line nor go into *bi'obandri*.

Chil jhappatta.—In this game a boy holds one end of a rope and another taking the other end wheels round and round at the full extremity of his tether, meanwhile attempting to catch the other players.

Sonchi is a Sikh game. One player attempts to strike the other with the open palm on the breast without being caught and detained by the latter. If he can succeed in doing this three times running, he is considered to have won. *Dhándhokra, luk chhip*, and *ánkh machauli* are all forms of hide and seek.

Games are practically confined to the children. Their elders have few forms of amusement; indeed their life is one of great monotony, broken at intervals greater or less according to prevailing scarcity or plenty by a marriage. Sometimes a wandering band of Nats or acrobats will pay a visit to the village, and will give a performance for which they are remunerated from the village *malba*.

Customs connected with birth. Hindús.

Those three important epochs of life, birth, marriage and death are marked both among Hindús and Mussalmáns by an extraordinary array of complicated ceremonies. Among Hindús those at birth are as follows:—

As the expected time of birth approaches the Dhái, who is generally a female Dhanak or Chuhra, comes to the house accompanied by some of the women of the village. If the new born infant is a boy, a *thálí* or brass dish is beaten to apprise the neighbours of the fortunate event, if a girl is born no such announcement is made.

The Dhái is presented with money and some clothes, and moreover takes away some jewels which the members of the family place in the *tikri* or potsherd in which the Dhái washes the new born babe. These jewels the Dhái returns on the tenth day after the birth and receives in lieu a further fee. At the birth of a girl the Dhái gets nothing. A Hindu mother is impure for ten days after her confinement. This period is called *sútak*. The mother and child live apart in a separate building during this time and are visited and waited on by women only, one of whom sleeps in the building. A cake (*gosa*) of cow-dung (*opla*) is kept burning in front of the door of the building and is called *agni-ka-pahra*, being supposed to be efficacious in preventing the approach of evil influences near the new born babe.

The future destiny of the infant is fixed on the night before the sixth day after birth, and on it the women of the village come and sing, and the family keeps watch all night (*ráti jága*). An impecunious person is often known as *chhatti-ka-bukha*, i.e., one who went hungry on his sixth.

On the morning of the sixth day the family send sweetened porridge (*dalía*) round to their friends in the village; the floor of the house is *leeped* and the mother (*sachá*) is brought out with the infant and set down upon a *pírá* or stool. The Náin bathes her and gets some grain for this.

On the night before the tenth day (*dasúthan*) the women of the family and the Náin *leep* the whole of the house, both *sújá* and *ángan*, clothes are washed, all earthen vessels which have been used are broken and new ones procured, and all metal vessels are washed and scoured. On the tenth day the Brahman comes to the house and lights the *hom* or sacred fire in which the wood of the *jánd* and the *dhák*, *til*, barley and sugar (*khánd*) are burned. By way of purification the Brahman sprinkles the whole of the house with Ganges water (*ganga jal*) mixed with cow's urin (*gao mutr*), cow-dung, milk and *ghi*, and he puts a little of the mixture on the hands of each member of the family.

The Brahman and the relatives of the family are then feasted and the women of the village come and sing, receiving for this some uncooked *bájra* moistened in water and mixed with sugar. The father of the infant presents a *tiyál* or suit of clothes consisting of a *ghagra* or skirt, an *angya* or boddice, and a *dopatta* or shawl to his wife's mother and sister, to his brother's wives, and to his own sister (*nanad*). The latter relative also washes the mother's nipple (*chuchi dhálái*) for which she gets some jewels or a cow.

On the same day the various village menials bring the new born infant toys typical of their respective callings, thus the Khátí's wife will bring a miniature bedstead and will get Re. 1; she comes only in the case of a first-born son and not at all in the case of a girl. The Kumhár brings a small earthen vessel and gets some grain. The Lohár's wife brings a *panjni* or small iron ring for the foot, and for it receives a garment and some sweetened *bajra*. The Dhúm comes and recites the genealogy and the Chamár brings a leathern *tágri* and ties it round the boy's waist. The Nái puts some *dúbh* grass on the head of the infant's father or grandfather and the Brahman does the same, each receiving a fee.

The child is generally named on the tenth day. The father makes enquiries of the Brahman, who, after consulting his *patra* or almanac, gives the father four names, beginning with the same letter to choose from. No such precautions are taken in regard to a girl's name, which the parents fix themselves. The Brahman receives 4 annas for the ceremonies of purification and naming in the case of a boy and 2 annas in the case of a girl. The *sútak* ended by the rite of *hom* is the only ceremonial observance in the case of the birth of a girl. About a month after the birth, as soon as the mother can go out, the ceremony of *jatua pujan* is performed. The mother bathes and placing a

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Customs connected with birth. Hindús.

vessel of water and a cup (*katora*) containing sweetened *bájra* on her head, she goes to the village tank accompanied by the women and children of the village. She places the *bájra* on the *ghát* of the tank and does obeisance to it, after which she distributes it with some sugar to the children and then returns home.

The above is a fairly accurate outline of the birth ceremonies as practised by Hindu Jats. In the case of other Hindu tribes they are practically the same with unimportant differences, except in the case of the Bishnois. With them the period of *sútak* extends to thirty days, and during that period the mother lives apart with the child and may not go near fire, nor touch a cow. At the end of that period she is purified by the ceremony called *chinta dena*, in which water is sprinkled, the *hom* or sacred fire burnt, and *mantras* read, and at the same time the child receives *pahul* or baptism, and is received into the Bishnoi faith. This rite consists mainly in putting a few drops of *charan* or consecrated water into the child's mouth.

Musalmáns.

The birth ceremonies in the case of Musalmáns differ somewhat. No formal announcement of the birth is made, but the village Kázi is summoned and repeats the *azán* in the infant's ear. There is no *sútak*. On the sixth day the mother is bathed, and on the tenth (*dasúthan*) sweetened rice is cooked and the relatives fed. The mother is also bathed on the twentieth and thirtieth day. On or after the fortieth day the infant's hair is shaved and the Nái who performs the operation is supposed to receive a weight of silver equal to the weight of the hair. As a fact he generally receives one or two rupees. The mother is bathed and the family fed on this day. As in the case of Hindús the menials bring offerings, but on the fortieth day. The Lohár gets Re. 1 for his *panjni*; the Kháti the same sum for a toy-cart; the Chamár brings the child a leather necklace and the mother a pair of shoes, and also gets Re. 1. The name is given on the fortieth day by the women of the family. The first name found on opening the Korán haphazard is taken sometimes. People who are well off perform the *akika* when the child is one year old; it consists in sacrificing two goats in case of a boy and one in case of a girl. Circumcision (*khatna*) is performed by the Nái when the boy is between the age of 5 and 12. The Nái receives Re. 1-4-0 for the operation.

Customs connected with betrothal and marriage. Hindús.

The ceremonies connected with betrothal and marriage are marked with even great detail and elaboration than in the case of those connected with birth and death. Among Hindu Jats, both Doswálís and Bagrís, they are much as follows:—Betrothal (*náta*) is performed by the ceremony of (*sagái*) when the bride and bridegroom are still of tender age. The affair is at first informally arranged by the parents, and if matters are satisfactory, they then proceed to the formal betrothal. In this the bride's father sends his family Nái with Re. 1 and a cocoanut (*nárial*) to the house of the boy bridegroom (*dulha* or *nosha*). The latter in the presence of his relatives is seated on a *patra*

Customs connected with betrothal and marriage. Hindús.

or low stool, and receives Re. 1 and the *náryal* from the Nái who also makes a *tika* on his forehead and puts sweetmeats into his mouth, and some are also distributed to the spectators The betrothal is then completed. The Nái is feasted, and after receiving Rs. 2-4-0 in cash and a *khes* or wrap, departs.

In cases where the bride is sold by her parents, the betrothal is complete when the price is fixed and a part of it paid.

Marriage preliminaries.

After the betrothal is complete, the *sáea* or *lagan*, *i. e.*, an auspicious date for the wedding is fixed by the Brahman or *purohit* of the bride's family some five or six weeks before the marriage. The Nái is then again sent by the bride's father to the boy's father with a *tewa* or letter written on paper stained yellow, which announces to him the date or *lagan* fixed for the wedding. With the *tewa* the Nái takes Re. 1 and a cocoanut, and also a *tiyál* or suit of clothes for the bridegroom's mother. On the evening of the Nái's arrival the boy's relatives are all collected, and the rupee and cocoanut (*náryal*) are presented to the boy, the *tewa* to his father, and the *tiyál* to his mother. For several days before the marriage procession (*barát* or *jaset*) starts from the boy's village, he is feasted by his relatives in the village at their houses in turn, and on these occasions he receives the *bán*, *i. e.*, his body is rubbed over by the Nái with a mixture (*batna*) of flour, turmeric and oil. The boy receives five, seven or nine *bána*, and the girl receives two less in her own house. The number of *bána* to be given is communicated in the *tewa* announcing the date of the marriage. The day upon which the first *bán* is given is called *haldidhat*. The guests who are to accompany the *barát* are invited by receiving small quantities of rice, coloured yellow with turmeric. These guests assemble at the boy's village before the *barát* starts, and just before the start pay each their *neondha* (*neota*) or contribution to the expenses of the marriage.

Neota.

The system of *neondha* or *neota* is a curious one; it will be understood by an example. *A* invites *B* to the marriage of his son, *B* presents a *neota* of Rs. 5, if subsequently *B* has a marriage he will invite *A*, who will pay perhaps Rs. 7 *neota* to *B*; the excess Rs. 2 is called *badhau*, and *B* will have to pay at least this amount of *neota* to *A* on the next occasion of a marriage in *A's* family. The account can be closed by either party on any occasion paying no more than the exact amount of the excess due from him. A very large sum offered as *neota* will be sometimes refused, in the fear that it will be difficult or impossible to repay it. Only those are invited as guests to the wedding who owe this *neota*.

The boy's maternal uncle (*mámu*) presents the *bhát* before the procession starts; it consists of clothes and jewels for the boy's mother and is a free gift. He also presents clothes to the other relatives of the boy. The Brahman or

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Sunnár ties the *kangan* or bracelet on the boy's wrist and marshalled by the Nái the procession starts. At this point among the Jats the bridegroom's sister seizes his stirrup or the nose string of his camel as if to stop him and she receives a small present as an inducement to let him proceed. *Thápas* or handmarks of red *geru* are put on the wall of the house of both bride and bridegroom on the first day on which the *báns* are given, also on the bride's house the day before the *barát* reaches her village, and on the boy's *angan* the day before it returns.

Nuts.

On approaching the bride's village shortly before sunset the *barát* halts in the *gora* and the village Nái comes out to meet it with a vessel of water; he is followed by the Dhának with a smouldering *gosa* or cake of cow-dung, and both get a small fee from the bridegroom's father. Among the Deswáli Jats the bride's father with his relatives then comes out to meet the *barát* and presents the boy's father with some *laddús* or sweetmeats, Re. 1 and a cocoanut, while his Brahman puts a *tika* on the bridegroom's forehead and a *sera* or cap on his head. *Hakk gwár* or *gora* (a fee of Re. 1) is often paid to the headman of the village.

Among the Bagris the girl's father and his relatives only come as far as the village *chaunk*, the *barát* advances and meets them there, and the presentation of the cocoanut, &c., takes place there. When all this has been satisfactorily accomplished, the *barát* advances to the bride's house for the ceremony of *dhukáo*. The bridegroom dismounts and among Deswáli Jats there is a mimic scuffle, in which the boys of the village attempt to mount his horse. The bridegroom with a branch of the *ber* or *jharberi* then strikes the *toran*, a small wooden frame made by the Kháti for Re. 1, and suspended over the bride's door; her father seizes the *jharberi* branch and pulls it into the house. The bride's mother and sister then measure (*mápna*) the bridegroom with a cloth and the former performs the ceremony of *árata* by waving a dish containing a lamp and other articles round his head. The bride's mother and sister are presented with Re. 1-4-0 each, and the bridegroom and his friends then return to the *jandalwása*, or place in the village set apart for the members of the marriage procession. The above ceremonies take place about sunset or a little after. After this the bride's mother and her other female relatives take rice to the *jandalwása* for the members of the *barát*.

The marriage ceremony.

The actual marriage ceremony (*phera*) always takes place after nightfall at the bride's house, in the *angan* of which a *mánda* or canopy is erected. The Brahman *purohits* or family priests of both parties are present. The bridegroom and his friends and relatives proceed to the bride's house. The latter is brought in, dressed either in clothes previously sent by the bridegroom's father from the *jandalwása* or in those presented as a *bhát* by her maternal uncle. The bride and bridegroom sit

down, she on a *pira* or high stool on his right hand, and he on a *patra* or low stool. The Brahman makes a *chaunk* and lights the *hom* or sacred fire. *Mantras* or sacred texts are read, and the boy's right hand is put into that of the girl on which some *manda* has been rubbed.

The marriage ceremony.

The girl's Brahman then calls upon the girl's father to perform the *kanyádán*. The latter then puts two *paisa* into the boy's hand and the girl's Brahman pours water on them; the father then says that he gives his daughter as a virgin (*kanya*) to the bridegroom who accepts in a form of words called *súsat*. The girl's Brahman then knots her *orhna* to the boy's *dopatta*, and the *phera* or binding ceremony then takes place. The girl and boy both circle slowly four times round the fire, keeping their right sides towards it. Among the Deswáli Jats the girl leads in the first three *phera*, and the boy in the last; the Bagris reverse this, with them the boy leads in the first three and the girl in the last. After the fourth *phera* the boy and girl sit down, their positions however being changed, the bridegroom now sitting on the girl's right.

While the *pherás* are going on the Brahmans of both parties recite their respective genealogies, and that of the girl calls upon the girl's father to do *gáoddn*, upon which the latter presents the Brahman with a young calf or cow, and the girl's relatives give similar presents to the boy's father (*samdhi*). The girl's Brahman receives Rs. 6 or 7 for his share in the ceremonies. The bride is then given some *laddús* and goes into the inner apartments. The boy's *sera* is received by his mother-in-law who gets Re. 1, and he then returns to the *janadsdsa* leaving his *dopatta* still knotted to the *orhna* at the bride's house.

After ceremonies.

The day succeeding the phera ceremony is called *bandhár* or *budhár*, the bridegroom with the *barát* is fed both morning and evening at the expense of the bride's father and the same is the case on the next day when the *bida* or formal departure of the *barát* takes place. On that day the bridegroom's father proceeds to the bride's house and presents the *bari* or present of clothes, jewels, &c. In the evening the *barát* assembles at the bride's house and the bride's father brings the *dán*, which consists of a bedstead or *charpai*, under which are placed all the brass household vessels which the bride is to take with her. The boy's father gives the Kamins some fees, and the *neota* is collected from the bride's guests just as was done previously in the boy's village. The actual departure of the *barát* takes place next morning. As the procession moves off the girl's mother puts a red hand mark (*thapa*) of *gerú* on the back of the boy's father.

The village Náin and the bride's brother accompany her to the bridegroom's village. On approaching the latter the bride and bridegroom with the Náin stay outside and the rest of the

Chapter III. C Social Life.

procession enters the village. The women of the village then come out singing. A vessel of water is placed on the girl's head and they proceed to the bridegroom's house. At the door the bridegroom's mother measures both bride and bridegroom with a cloth and with the *bilona* or (churning stick) and sprinkles some water out of the vessel on the girl's head, the rest she throws away. The boy's sister then bars the door (*báharrukái*) and receives a small present in order to induce her to open it. Inside the house seven *thalis* or dishes are placed on the ground in a row, the bridegroom walks along and pushes them on either side with his foot. The bride then has to pick them up and put them inside one another without allowing them to make any sound by knocking together.

After ceremonies.

The game of *kangan khelna* then takes place; the bride unties the bridegroom's *kangan* or bracelet and the bridegroom does the same for her. These are put into a *parát*, a flat dish containing water or *lassi*, into which also a ring (*chhalla*) has been put. The bride and bridegroom then make snatches into the dish, she with two hands and he with one, in order to get out the ring, whichever of them catches the ring first is supposed to win. The bride is then taken off to worship the village deities, such as the Bhumia and the Sitala, &c. On her return the ceremony of *munhdikhái* is performed. The bride receives small presents from her relatives as inducement to remove her *orhna* and show her face. Next day *gathundala* takes place. In this the bride is received into the bridegroom's clan or *got* by eating out of the same dish as the bridegroom's sister and his brother's wives.

The following day the bride returns with her brother and the Nain to her village where she stays till *muklawa* takes place some time, perhaps several years, afterwards.

Muklawa.

The *muklawa* ceremony is performed after the bride has reached puberty, and an odd number of years after the actual marriage. After the *muklawa* the bride finally settles in the bridegroom's house and they live as man and wife. The above is an outline of the marriage ceremonies as practised among Jats, and with minor and unimportant differences it applies generally in the case of other Hindu tribes, except Bishnois.

Marriage ceremonies among Bishnois.

Among them the proposal for a betrothal comes from the bridegroom's relations and not from those of the bride as in the case of other Hindús. If matters are satisfactory, the deputation returns and fetches the bridegroom's relations. They proceed again to the bride's house and present Re. 1 and a cocoanut, which the bride accepts and the betrothal is complete. When the date or *lagan* has been fixed, in place of the *tewa* or *pili chitthi* a yellow string (*dhora*) with a number of knots on it, corresponding to the date fixed for the marriage, is sent by the bride's relative to those of the bridegroom.

Marriage ceremonies among Bishnois.

After the arrival of the *barát* at the bride's village the *dhukáo* takes place as in the case of other Hindús. Instead of the *torán* a rope is suspended over the door of the bride's house.

The marriage is performed at night. No *phers* are performed; the binding ceremony is the *piri badal*, or exchange of stools by the bride and bridegroom, who also take each other's hands (*hathlewa*).

Mussalmáns.

The marriage ceremony among Mussalmán Rájpúts differs somewhat from that in vogue among Hindús, although it is easy to see that they were one and the same, and that the Mussalmán ceremony is the Hindu one changed to make it fit in with the Mussalmán creed.

As in the case of Hindús, after preliminary arrangements between the two fathers, the bride's father sends his Nái to the bridegroom's father, the Nái presents the bridegroom with Re. 1 and clothes and distributes sugar. A *thálí* or dish is placed on the ground into which the bystanders put money, and out of this the Nái takes Re. 1 as a *neg* or fee. The boy's father gives him Re. 1 also and a *thán* or piece of cloth. The ceremony is called *ropna*, and the betrothal is then complete. The next ceremony is the *siadára*. This consists in the boy's father going with his Nái to the bride's house, taking with him a *kasli* and a garment for the latter and also a *kansli*. The bride's father in his turn presents the bridegroom's father with a *pagri* and a *chádar* or *thán*.

When the girl is sold, the betrothal (*ropna*) consists merely in an offer, and an acceptance of the girl for a price, together with part payment of the latter, amounting to at least Rs. 20.

When the date of the marriage is fixed the Nái is sent by the bride's father with a yellow letter announcing the date, and in the case of a sale he is instructed to deliver this letter only on payment of the balance of the price. In an ordinary marriage the Nái takes Re. 1 and a *reza*, a kind of garment, with him for the bridegroom. The Nái gets Rs. 2-4-0 and a garment as *neg* fee on this occasion.

The *bán* ceremony is performed, and *nendha* (*neota*) collected as in the case of Hindús. The *barát* or *janet* on reaching the boy's village goes straight to the *jandalwáss* and does not halt in the *gora*. At the former place they are met by the bride's people with their Nái, who gives the members of the *barát sharbat* to drink (*serba*). Re. 1 and a *reza* (garment) is given to the bridegroom, and the latter's father distributes Rs. 4 among the Kamins. The *barát* must reach the village shortly before sunset. After sunset the bridegroom and his friends go to the girl's house. The *nikkáh*, or Mussalmán marriage service is then read first to the girl who is in the inner apartment and then to

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the boy bridegroom who is outside. The *ijáb kabul* or acceptance of the contract of marriage then takes place. The ceremonies on the day of *bida* are much the same as in the case of Hindús. As among Hindús the bridegroom's sister tries to bar the house door when the *barát* returns to his village and has to be appeased by a present.

Among Ranghars, *i. e.*, Mussalmán Rájpúts, the girl stays for good in the bridegroom's family after marriage, and no separate *mukláwa* takes place; when, however, six months or a year after the *phere* she goes to see her parents, they give her some presents which they call *mukláwa*. It is evidently a relic of the Hindu ceremony.

Among Mussalmán Gujars the betrothal seems to be more of the nature of a bargain in which the bride is sold for a price. The bridegroom's father sends a male relative, or a female of the bride's village to arrange matters with the bride's father. Formerly the messenger used to present Rs. 2 to the girl's father and used to receive a garment from him. Now the custom is for the messenger to give Rs. 21 to the bride's father and to receive some clothes in return. The Nái apparently takes no part in the betrothal. When the date of the wedding has been fixed, which is always a Thursday, the Nái is sent with a string in which are tied as many knots as Thursdays will intervene between the date of despatch and the wedding. The rest of the ceremonies are much the same as in the case of Ranghars.

The marriage customs in vogue in the Sirsa Tahsíl will be found fully described in para. 119 of Mr. Wilson's Settlement Report of Sirsa; they are much the same as those found in other parts of the Hissár District.

Customs connected with death. Hindús.

Among Hindu Jats and Hindús generally there are no special ceremonies observed in the case of the death of a child under seven years age; it is simply buried.

On the approach of death in the case of older persons *panni* or *dáb* grass is spread on the ground and the dying person is placed on this. This rite is called *bhon*. The period of *patak* or ceremonial impurity of the house and its inmates begins from the moment of death. After death, gold, *munga*, Ganges water and *tulsi* leaves are placed in the deceased's mouth. The Chamárs only put a silver ring. The corpse is washed and clothed in new unwashed clothes, *i. e.*, a *pagri*, *dhoti* and *chádar*. The clothes in which the deceased died are given to the Dhának. A bier (*arthi*) is made of bamboos and it should contain at least one stick of the *dhák* wood. This is strewn with grass and cotton tufts and the body is then placed on it. A lamp is lighted which is kept burning in the house till the twelfth day after death. The friends place a pile of wood in front of the door and carry each a stick to the burning ground (*chalia*). The bier is carried by four men with the feet foremost. One of the bearers is the son. As

Customs connected with death Hindús.

the procession leaves the house a *pind* or ball of flour is placed at the house door. Another *pind* is deposited at the village gate as the procession passes, and another on the road where the bearers of the bier change places. At the *challa* the pyre is prepared and the body placed in it. The son or chief mourner who performs the ceremonies (*kiria karm*) sets fire to the pyre with a torch of *pula* grass. He at the same time sprinkles water out of an earthen vessel round the pyre and then places the empty vessel, mouth downward, at the head of the pyre, and a third *pind* with a *paisa* on it is placed inside this vessel. When the pyre is alight, the chief mourner with a long stick knocks a hole in the skull (*kapal*) of the deceased and calls on the latter by name in a loud voice. Brahmans appear to put a lamp on the vessel at the head of the corpse. The mourners bathe and then return home. The Nái hangs a branch of *nim* over the door of the deceased's house and visitors take a leaf and chew it. On the third day after the funeral the *phul* or remains, consisting of the nails and large bones, are collected and taken to the Ganges by some male member of the family. In the neighbourhood of Tosham the remains are thrown into the Suraj Kund, a tank on the Tosham hill, and this no doubt points to the fact that in ancient times the spot was especially sacred.

On return from the Ganges the bearer of the remains goes straight to the *challa* where he sprinkles the pyre with Ganges water. Meanwhile the funeral ceremonies have been going on at the deceased's house. A Paudit performs a *katha*, that is reads the Shástras during the period that the *patak* lasts. On the eleventh day after death the Achúraj is fed at the tank or well by the deceased's relatives, but is not allowed to come into the village. He receives some clothes and money and sometimes a cow and a *chárpai*. On the night preceding the twelfth day a fire of thorns is lighted in the *angan*, and on the twelfth day *pátak* ends and the house becomes pure. On that day the Gujaráti Brahman comes to the house and is fed and receives fees (*dashna*) and clothes. On the thirteenth day the Gaur Brahman comes and is feasted, sometimes at the village temple. The ceremony of *gúoteran* also takes place. A small trench is dug on the ground of the *angan* of the house, this is filled with a mixture of Ganges water, milk, *ghi*, cow's urine, and cow dung, some of which is sprinkled about the house. The trench represents the Ganges. A cow is then produced, the Gaur Brahman takes hold of its head and pulls it over the trench, while the giver, a relative of the deceased, holds the cow by the tail. The Brahman finally carries the animal off. This concludes the funeral ceremonies.

Musalmáns.

Among Musalmáns, on the approach of death the Kázi is called and repeats the *yásin* in the ear of the dying person, while the bystanders repeat the *kalima*. After death the body is placed with its face towards Makka, and the body is washed by the Kázi and cotton is put in the ears and nostrils. The body is then dressed in a *tahwat* and a *kafan* or shroud and laid out on the bier (*janása*) wrapped in a *chádar* with another *chádar* over all.

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The *janáza* is then carried off by four men with the head foremost. At a distance of forty yards from the grave the *janáza* is put down and prayers are read, and a Korán (previously purchased from him) is given to the Kázi for the benefit of the deceased's soul. This is called *hadia*. The body is then taken to the grave and placed in a recess at the bottom of the excavation on its side with the face towards Makka, the grave itself being dug north and south. The aperture of the recess is so closed with earthen vessels that when the grave is filled with earth none shall fall on the body. Gram and money are distributed to the Fakirs and *kalimas* are read. The *chádars*, which have been put on the body by friends, are given to the Kázi. The procession then returns and seventy paces from the grave it stops, and the *daríád* is said for the benefit of the soul of the deceased.

During the three days after death the relatives and friends of the deceased engage in saying the *kalima*, and for each *kalima* put on a heap a grain of gram. Twenty-five seers of gram are thus collected and on the morning of the third day (*tíjá*) these are parched or else made into *bakli* and taken to the Masjid and there distributed to beggars, while the *kalimas* which have been read are formally offered for the good of the deceased's soul. During the three days the deceased's family do not eat at their own house but at those of their friends. On the tenth day (*dasoán*) food is given to Fakirs and prayers said for the benefit of the deceased's soul, and this is repeated on the *bisván* or twentieth day after death. The last ceremony is the *chaliswán* on the Thursday nearest the fortieth day after death. On this day relatives and guests from all parts assemble at the deceased's house and give an account of the number of prayers which they have said for the benefit of the deceased, these are then formally offered by all for that purpose and a feast takes place.

Bishnois.

Instead of burning their dead the Bishnois bury them in ground on which cows are wont to stand, and the place generally selected is the cattle yard or some times even the actual entrance (*deori*) of the house.

Meaning of ceremonies.

The above is a perhaps too detailed account of the ceremonial observances in force at the present time. The interest of the subject is an excuse for its length.

The most striking point about these ceremonies, especially those relating to marriage, are their number and minuteness, and the fact that almost every one has to be carried out by someone standing in a definite relation to the person principally concerned. The meaning of many of the ceremonies is now perhaps irrecoverably lost, but a careful study of them would beyond doubt throw much light on the tribal and social affinities of different sections of the population.

The marriage ceremony bears distinct traces of having grown out of a primitive system of marriage by capture, and

Meaning of ceremonies.

some customs connected therewith, which have only lately been given up, point even more clearly to this. When the *barát* halted on the outskirts of the bride's village, a mimic battle with *kankar* pebbles used formerly to take place between the members of the procession and the village boys. The meeting of the bride's father and the bridegroom's father in the *gora* or in the village *chaunk* looks like the vestige of a *panchâyat* in which the village comes to terms with an attacking force. The red hand-mark put on the bridegroom's father as the *barát* leaves the village is certainly a token of the forcible abduction of the bride, and the ceremonies at the bridegroom's village after the return of the *barát* were evidently originally meant to indicate that the bride was henceforth bound to render services to her captor.

Character and disposition.

From an economic point of view the agricultural population of Hissár cannot be said to be badly off. So far as the eastern and central portions of the district are concerned it would perhaps be nearer the truth to say that prosperity is the general rule. Towards the west, on the light sandy soil of the Bagar, the conditions of life are certainly harder, but even here it would be difficult to say that poverty was prevalent. The standard of living among the Bagrís is certainly lower than it is among the Jats to the east, but its requirements are not inadequately met by their surroundings. The Jat, whether Bagri or Deswali, is, as a rule, well conducted and peaceably disposed, crimes of violence are rare, and those that are perpetrated are generally the result of a sudden quarrel and committed without premeditation. Cattle thefts, which is common among other tribes, is rare among the Jats. The Jat is of course unsurpassed in the pursuit of agriculture, and his chief desire is to be let alone in the enjoyment of the fruits of his toilsome industry. He is loyal and contented, but an over-refined system of jurisprudence and the artful wiles of the native pleader are daily teaching him to become more and more litigious and quarrelsome. In fact this remark applies to most, if not all, the agricultural classes of the district.

Jats.

Rájpúts.

The Rájpút, Hindu and Mussalmán, on the whole compare unfavourably with the Hindu Jat. They are for the most part thriftless, extravagant and improvident. Pride in their real or fancied superiority of descent precludes them from healthy manual toil in the field and shuts their women up in a more or less strict *pardáh*. Cattle lifting is the hereditary pursuit of many Ranghars or Mussalmán Rájpúts, and is regarded as at the most a very venial offence among them. Though more than indifferent as tillers of the soil, many of them make good cavalry soldiers.

Pachhádás.

The Pachhâda or Rath of the Ghaggar valley and the tract adjacent thereto is, perhaps, on the whole, the most inferior specimen of the agriculturist to be found in the district. He is a miserable farmer, more extravagant and improvident than the

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Ranghar, and far more addicted to crime, especially cattle theft. Among other tribes the Pachhádá is known as Rath or hard-hearted.

Pachhádá.

The Bishnois

The Bishnoi is a class of Hindu agriculturist who has acquired for himself a distinct place in the ethnology of the district. He is an admirable cultivator, shrewd, intelligent, thrifty and prudent, keen in the pursuit of his own wealth and advancement, and not very scrupulous in the methods which he employs to attain it. The tribe or caste is probably the most quarrelsome and litigious in the district, and it is rare to find a Bishnoi village in which there are not deadly internal feuds. The Bishnoi, though a strong proprietor, is a most troublesome tenant. The caste is, as a whole, the most prosperous in the district, not excepting even the Jat.

Sikhs

The Sikh Jats of Sirsa are by no means unworthy members of a fine nation. They are thrifty, industrious and intelligent, and though apt to be violent when their passions are aroused, withal generally orderly and quiet. They are especially addicted to opium eating, a practice which prevails also more or less all along the western border of the district.

Bágri Jats.

The Bágri Jat is probably behind all the other tribes in intelligence, and there is a certain coarseness about his manner which seems to mark his intellectual inferiority to most of the other tribes of the district, a result no doubt of the hard conditions of life in his native sand-hills in Rájputána. He makes up for his want of intellect however by thrift and industry.

Moral character.

Indulgence in spirits and drunkenness is practically unknown, but opium is consumed in fairly large quantities by Sikhs and Hindu Rájpúts. The Bishnois are not allowed by their religion to either eat opium, smoke tobacco or to drink spirits, and excess in these matters is very rare in the district as a whole. The sexual and moral relations in the villages are far purer than one would expect, looking to the obscenity of the language sometimes used.

Education in the strict sense of the word is very backward, though the agriculturist is not slow to learn what are his rights or how far our law will support him in an attack on those of his neighbour.

Tables Nos. XV, XVI, XVII and XXXV give statistics as to criminal trials, police enquiries, convicts in jail, and excise statistics.

Language.

Table No. VIII shows the numbers who speak each of the principal languages of the district for each tahsil and for the district as a whole.

The figures in the margin give the distribution of every 10,000 of the population by language. The figures for Tahsíl Sirsa are shown separately.

Proportion per 10,000 of total population.

	District.	Sirsa.
Hindustáni	4,004	529
Bágri.	2,509	4,355
Punjabi	2,775	5,647
All Indian languages	9,996	9,991
Non-Indian languages	4	9

The languages or rather dialects of the district, as tabulated in the Census returns, may be properly placed into three broad classes: the Hindi (Hindustáni) dialect or dialects, the Bágri, and the Punjabi.

Hindustáni includes Urdú, which is of course nowhere a rural dialect, but confined to the more educated classes in towns, and it is needless to dwell on its characteristics here.

Hindi.

The Hindi, in which is comprised a large portion of the dialects of the district, may be taken to mean the common speech of the peasantry of the South Eastern Punjab, the original standard type of which is, or perhaps rather was, the Brij dialect of Mathra. It is of course not the case that the Hindi of the district conforms entirely to that standard, but it does so sufficiently to be differentiated thereby from the neighbouring Bágri and Punjabi dialects.

The most important characteristics of the rural Hindi are perhaps too well known too require detailed treatment here.

The boundaries of the tract in which a more or less pure Hindi is spoken in this district may probably be defined as follows, *viz.*, all that portion of the district south of a line drawn from Fatahabad to Tohána and east of a line through Fatahabad, Hissár and Kairu. This includes considerably more than half the area of the four southern tahsíls of the district.

Across the northern boundary of this tract, we come to Punjábi-speaking Pachhádás of the Náli tract and to the north-west of Fatahabad lies the Sirsa tahsíl in which pure Hindi is practically unknown.

Bágri and Hindi.

Across the western boundary of the Hindi-speaking tract we come to what may be regarded as debateable ground between Hindi and Bágri. There is no hard-and-fast line at which Hindi ends and Bágri begins. The change takes the form of an even broader pronunciation of the vowels than in Hindi and then a gradual change in the vocabulary, but within the limits of Tahsíls Fatahabad, Hissár and Bhiwáni the change is so slight that it is doubtful whether it can be said that true Bágri is spoken anywhere in these tahsíls. A considerable part of the debateable tract is held by Bágri immigrants, and the effect of the immigration has been to introduce a decided Hindi element into their Bágri rather than the reverse.

Bágri and Hindi.

True Bágri as distinguished from Hindi is probably spoken in the south-west of the Sirsa tahsil.

The original or standard type of Bágri, the language of the Bágar, appears to be the dialect of Márwár or Jodhpur which is prevalent through Western Rájputána. It is sometimes said to be a dialect of Hindi, and this is true if Hindi is taken to mean the language of Northern India; in the sense, however, in which Hindi has been used above, the fact is not so much that Bágri is a dialect of Hindi as that Hindi and Bágri are sister dialects which fade away into each other at their point of junction. The principal difference between them is that Bágri is considerably broader in the pronunciation of its vowels than is Hindi. A full discussion of Bágri and its peculiarities will be found in para. 100 of Mr. Wilson's Settlement Report of Sirsa.

Punjábi.

On crossing the northern boundary of the tract defined above we first meet with Punjábi among the Pachhádás of the Ghaggar valley; the same language is found all the way down the length of the valley into the Sirsa tahsil and nearly to the point where it crosses the Bikánir border. In the portion of the Sirsa tahsil south of the Ghaggar valley, Bágri is the ordinary speech which changes to Punjábi on the north of the Ghaggar. Thus the Punjábi-speaking tract embraces the valley of the Ghaggar and the portion of the district to the north of it.

In Tahsil Fatahabad Punjábi, as spoken by the Pachhádás, and the Hindi are brought into contact, while in Sirsa this same form of Punjábi and the true Bágri meet each other. The Punjábi of the district may be divided into two dialects: Punjábi properly so called, the natural tongue of the Sikh Jat and the speech of the Mussalmán Pachhádá from the west which embraces the dialects entered in Table X as Pachhádi or Rathi. Rath (ruthless) is only another name for Pachhádá and Pachhádi and Rathi are identical.

Both the real Punjábi and the Pachhádi are characterised by the shortness of the vowels; but Pachhádi is distinguished from true Punjábi by the still greater prevalence of nasal sounds and by a slight admixture of Hindi and Bágri words. The true Punjábi is spoken by the Sikh Jats in the Sirsa tahsil north of the Ghaggar, in Budhlada and by the colonies of Patiála Sikh Jats found here and there along the Ghaggar in the Fatahabad tahsil. Pachhádi is, however, the common form of speech on the Ghaggar along the whole of its course in this district, and is found in villages at considerable distances to the south of that stream.

Thus within the limits of the Hissár district the Punjábi of the north, the Hindi of the south-east, and the Bágri (Marwári) of the west meet and intermingle in different degrees. Of the

three, Bágri and Hindi are the nearest allied, and most probably be considered not so much as different languages as different dialects of the speech of that portion of Northern India which lies to the south of the course of the Ghaggar. Punjábi must be considered a distinct language, and it intermingles with Hindi or Bágri through its dialect Pachhádi much less than do either Hindi or Bágri with each other. Punjábi.

Table XIII gives statistics for education as ascertained at the Census of 1891 for each religion and for the total population of the district. Education.

	Education.	Rural.	Total.
Male	Under instruction ...	28	29
	Can read and write	380	420
Female	Under instruction ...	0·4	1·01
	Can read and write	2	7

The figures in the margin show the number educated among every 10,000 of the population of each sex according to the census returns of 1891.

Statistics regarding the attendance at Government and Aided Schools will be found in Table XXXVII.

The distribution of the scholars at these schools by religion and the occupation of their fathers as it stood in 1890-91 is as shown in the margin. The above figures show that education has made but little progress in this district, and looking to its comparatively recent colonization and its still more recent development, perhaps nothing else can be expected. There is, however, a considerable difference in the exent to which education has permeated various castes and religions.

Detail.	Boys.	Girls.
European and Eurasian	...	...
Native Christians	4	...
Hindús	1,488	...
Mussalmáns	320	...
Sikhs	42	...
Others	1	...
Agriculturists	619	
Non-agriculturists	1,304	

Education by religious.

The Jains are far superior to all other religions in the matter of education. Nearly 40 per cent. can read and write, and nearly 8 per cent. are under instruction. This of course is no doubt due to the fact that the majority of the Jains are banyas who are fully alive to the advantages of education. The Hindús generally are more educated than Sikhs and the latter more so than Mussalmáns.

Chapter III. C. Social Life

Education by religions.

The table in the margin gives the percentages of persons literate and learning by religions.

	Learning.	Literate.
Jain	7·99	39·10
Hindú	0·73	6·72
Mussalmán	0·43	1·92
Sikh	0·39	2·18

The percentage among Hindús is depressed, owing to the fact that they include a majority of the agriculturists of the district.

The persons returned as literate among the Hindús include a considerable number of semi-literate persons, such as the village *banya* whose education is little more than nominal, and consists in little more than being able to write up his *bahis* or account-books with difficulty in the Mahajani or Lande character and to read the entries with equal difficulty. To read anything written by another is often too severe a test for his education. Most of these *banyas* have of course never had any regular instruction in their youth, but have picked up a smattering in the course of their daily business.

Mussalmáns.

Education among the Mussalmáns as far as it goes is probably of a higher character than that among the Hindús. Mussalmán *maktabs* or village Kurán schools are few as compared with the Hindi Schools kept by the Pandits, and Mussalmáns thus have to resort for education to the Government schools. Figures also would seem to show that Mussalmán boys are kept longer at school than those of Hindús.

By castes.

As regards caste the Kayeths appear to be more generally educated than the members of other castes, as over 50 per cent. of their numbers are literate. In the case of *banyas* the percentage is 35 and in that of Khatris 31. Among Mussalmáns, the principal educated caste are the Saiyads, of whom more than 10 per cent. are literate.

A knowledge of English is proportionally most extensive among Kayeths and in a much less degree among Khatris. Among other castes it is insignificant.

Means of education.

In regard to the sources of education Census statistics would seem to show that some 65 per cent. of those under instruction are being educated in Government schools and the balance are under private instruction. There are at present 5 Middle Schools in the District, 3 Anglo-Vernacular, *viz.*, those at Sirsa, Hissár and Bhiwáni, and 2 purely Vernacular at Hánsi and Barwála. There are also in all 45 Vernacular Primary Schools. The above are certainly sufficient to meet the present demand for education in the district. Indigenous educational instructions are very few and there are none in receipt of grants-in-aid from Government. What there are are Mussalmán *máktabs* presided over by the village mosque attendant. He teaches the village boys passages out of the Korán by rote,

as part of his customary duties, for which he receives a fixed amount of grain per plough at harvest time and customary fees at weddings and such like.

Means of education.

A Nágri School taught by a rural Pandit is sometimes met with at which the boys are taught to write in the Mahajani character. Education is thus at a low ebb; the classes which desire it and value it do so not for itself but for the prospects which it opens up, more especially that of Government employment. One very appreciable hindrance to education is due to the inability of the intelligent Zamindár, whose son has passed through the Primary Village School, to send him away to the nearest Middle School, which is generally at a long distance, and the customary scholarship of Rs. 2 per mensem gives but little help.

Female education is practically unknown and there is not a single Government female School in the District.

Poverty and wealth of people.

It is impossible to form any satisfactory estimate of the wealth of the commercial and industrial classes. The figures on the margin show the working of the income-tax for the years 1886-87 to 1890-91 (both inclusive) and Table XXXIV A gives statistics for the income-tax for each year from its imposition.

Assessment.		1886-87.	1887-88.	1888-89.	1889-90.	1890-91.
Class I ...	Number taxed ...	14	13	16	22	17
	Amount of tax ...	291	264	330	454	352
Class II ...	Number taxed ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Amount of tax ...	...	...	...	...	...
Class III ...	Number taxed ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Amount of tax ...	...	...	...	...	...
Class IV ...	Number taxed ...	972	1,283	1,510	1,511	1,517
	Amount of tax ...	20,101	25,700	27,963	30,553	31,021
Class V ...	Number taxed ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Amount of tax ...	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	Number taxed ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Amount of tax ...	...	...	...	...	...

Towns.

Several of the leading commercial houses in Bhiwáni and Sirsa are very wealthy and have trade connections in other parts of India, and the commercial classes generally are well off. The agriculturists and the artisans in the towns are, however, generally poor, and the expenses attending a town life fall on them somewhat heavily.

Villages.

The rural agriculturists cannot on the whole be said to be other than well off, and where this is not the case, the reason is to be found generally in the character of the people themselves. The Jats of the eastern portions of the district are able to

Chapter III. C. Social Life. Villages

maintain a very fairly high standard of comfort and to withstand the effects of bad seasons without any very serious difficulty. The Jats of the Bágar and the western portions of the district generally have not and could not maintain so high a standard of comfort, but they have what are for them the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life. Migratory instincts still survive in the Bágri, and in seasons of scarcity he finds no difficulty in leaving his village and moving for a time to places where conditions are more favourable, or he will start with his camel and carry for hire or himself import grain and sell at a profit. The Bágri in short, unlike the eastern Jat, is far from dependent on his crops alone, and is versatile in resources for making both ends meet in times of scarcity.

The Rájpút, Mussalmán and Hindu, and the Pachháda are, as a rule, far inferior to the Jats in point of worldly circumstances, a fact due mostly to their idleness and want of thrift. Though land-owners, they are miserable cultivators and a large part of their land is, as a fact, held by tenants who can do more with it than they could themselves. The tenants generally pay fixed cash rents, and thus the Rájpút's income is secure, but he does not derive such benefit from a good harvest as does the self-cultivating Jat. Rájpúts are very largely in the hands of the *banya* and seldom make any real effort to clear themselves of debt. After a good harvest a Jat will clear off most if not the whole of the *banya's* debt incurred in the previous bad seasons, a Rájpút, as noted above, is not in a position to do this.

In years of scarcity the Rájpút's credit with the *banya* is far lower than that of the Jat, and he can only get loans of grain, &c., at exorbitant interest. Tenants form an important part of the agricultural population of the district; they are on the whole prosperous, many of them far more so than the land-owning tribes, and they can afford to pay fairly high rents to keep possession of their land in seasons when there are few or no crops.

On the whole the agricultural classes are in very fairly comfortable circumstances in spite of the adverse agricultural conditions under which they live, and this is due, no doubt in a large measure, to the absence at present of any excessive or even immoderate pressure of population on the soil.

SECTION D.—TRIBES AND CASTES.

Statistics.

Table IX gives the figures for the principal castes and tribes of the district by sex and religion; while Table IX A. shows the numbers of the less important tribes and castes. There are no statistics available showing the local distribution of castes and tribes.

Local distribution of tribes and castes

The following table, however, taken from the final Report of the recent Settlement shows the distribution of proprietary right throughout the District among different tribes.

Chapter III. D.

Tribes and Castes.

Local distribution of tribes and castes.

OWNERSHIP BY CASTES.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Hindu Jat.			Brahmin Rahila.			Rajput.		
TAHSIL.	Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.	
		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.
Bhiwani	34·9	42·1	57·0	0·9	3,517·3	3,517·3	8·7	21·5	14·7
Hansi	57·3	25·2	17·3	10·2	228·3	1,703	7·5	18·9	10·6
Hissar	26·0	30·9	23·1	13·0	600·1	1,361·2	1·2	21·4	18·1
Fatehabad	33·5	35·9	25·0	11·8	63·1	177·0	0·2	16	11·9
Sirsa	28·4	60·2	137·2	3·7	1,451·2	230·2	0·7	340·0	131·2
District Total ...	38·0	40·0	45·0	6·0	725·4	1,000·6	2·3	29·1	19·4

OWNERSHIP BY CASTE.

	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Pachhada.			Pathan.			Rangar.		
TAHSIL.	Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.	
		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.
Bhiwani	...	...	...	...	...	...	0·9	41·5	25·6
Hansi	...	...	...	1·6	333·3	666·	...	...	...
Hissar	...	...	...	1·	130·	113·6	2·4	29·3	19·3
Fatehabad	15·	27·	10·	4·2	60·	72·	2·3	120·	61·
Sirsa	...	...	...	4·1	82·2	33·1	0·9	66·3	28·10
District Total ...	3·6	28·8	14·2	2·9	95·1	66·0	1·5	37·2	17·9

OWNERSHIP BY CASTES.

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mahajan.			Hindu Rajput.			Musalman Rajput.		
Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.	
	Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.
7·0	22'	13·3	27'	30·4	28'	11·4	31·7	21·9
4·3	17·3	16·2	2·5	40·1	30·1	0·3	29·1	18·9
0·9	37·5	30·3	0·6	78·8	14·3	0·9	60·3	29·9
1·0	132·2	17·5	2·8	112'	87'	7'	44·0	29·1
8·2	47·2	21·8	2·3	40·3	23·3	10·6	32·4	8·0
7·6	70·1	20·8	6·6	33·0	21·6	10·8	41·7	26·3

OWNERSHIP BY CASTES.

30	29	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
Baniá.			Others.			Jat Sikh.			Total.		
Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.		Percentage of whole area.	Average cultivated area.	
	Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.		Per holding.	Per owner.
...	...	...	10·9	21·3	10·3	...	...	...	100	31·4	40·4
0·4	200'	200'	7·1	11·0	8·0	...	...	...	100	28·4	17·7
4·3	30·1	44·5	10·1	13·4	11·3	...	...	...	100	21·6	24'
1·1	114·4	89·3	12·3	21·4	10·7	3·2	20·0	17·9	100	29·0	27·5
...	91'	37·3	11·7	29·0	40·7	22·3	153·6	75·0	100	207·3	97·4
0·9	47·9	42·3	12·2	23·0	14·2	7·9	57·9	33·8	100	45·7	29·9