

## ESSAYS ON UNTOUCHABLES

### AND UNTOUCHABILITY: SOCIAL

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#### Social

(Besides the consolidated scheme on "Untouchables or children of India's Ghetto" included in Book I in this Volume, there are several other essays by Dr. Ambedkar which deal with the subject of 'Untouchables and Untouchability'. These essays are divided into three categories viz., Social, Political and Religious. In Book II, five essays have been included under "Social".)

#### CHAPTER 1

#### CIVILISATION OR FELONY

- I. Another cross section view of India's population.
- II. Sunken classes seen through it : (a) Primitive Tribes, (b) Criminal Tribes and (c) Untouchables.
- III. Effect of Hindu Civilisation on the condition of these classes.
- IV. Difference in the problems of these classes.

The population of India is generally classified on a linguistic or on religious basis. These are the only two ways of classifying the people of India, which have been persistently in vogue for a long time. The effect is that outsiders get the impression that, what is of interest and importance to know about the peoples of India is the religions they profess or the languages they speak. Limited by this interest, they remain content with a knowledge they get about the religions and languages that are prevalent in

India. All that the outsider cares to hold in his head is that, in India there are people who are either Hindus or Mahomedans. If he is interested in religion or that there are people in India some of whom speak Marathi, some speak Gujarathi, some Bengali and some Tamil, etc.

Of the two ways of classifying people of India the religious classification is the one which is more impressive and arresting for the foreigner. He is more interested in the religions than in the languages. But even he is not aware of all the religious communities in India. He knows only of Hindus and Mahomedans. He sometimes hears of the Sikhs, very seldom of Christians although they are a growing community and never of the Buddhists who are of course non-existent so far as India of today is concerned\* [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_1](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_1).

The impression of the foreigner is that there are only Hindus and Musalmans in India and that there are none others worth bothering about. That this should be his impression is quite natural. The air is filled with the din and noise of the Hindu-Moslem conflict. How grave the conflict is, can be seen from the number of Hindu-Moslem riots that have taken place in recent years and the casualties and deaths that resulted from them.

But this struggle is a struggle for establishing an empire. There are Hindus who are agitating for establishing in India a Hindu Raj with Mahomedans as subject only. There are Mahomedans who are dreaming of Pan Islamism and of making India a part of a Muslim Empire with a choice for the Hindus between the sword and the Koran. In between these two extremists, there are sober persons who are for a state in which both Hindus and Muslims can live as equal partners. Whether the extremists will succeed or the moderates will succeed time alone can show. In the meantime the extremes in both the camps are making headlines by their blood baths. But, be that as it may, I venture to think that there are many who will not feel much interest in this struggle between the Hindus and the Mahomedans. After all it is a struggle for mastery for dominance.

It is a struggle for liberation. It is a struggle for establishing an empire of one over the other. They will be more interested in the struggles of the down trodden, of those who are fighting to obtain the title deeds to respectable humanity. In describing the old quarrel between the Whigs and Tories in England, Francis Place in describing the political policy of the Whigs said, they were out to crush the king on the one hand and the people on the other hand and establish the aristocracy of the governing class.

Those Hindus and Musalmans who are now fighting have the same policy in Indian politics. They want to establish their classes from them as the governing body. The masses whether of the Hindus or of the Musalmans are merely used for establishing the ascendancy of the classes. This struggle that is going on is really a struggle of the classes. It is not a struggle of the masses.

Those who are interested in the struggle of the masses must learn to look at the population of India from another point of view. They must cease to look at it purely from the point of view of religion. They must look at the population of India from the social and economic point of view. This does not mean that one need not care to know how religion has affected the economic and social life of the people of India. Indeed no study of the Indian people, be they Hindus or Musalmans, can give an adequate picture of their life if religion is kept out of consideration. Because religion is supreme in India as was the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages in Europe. Brycemk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\_Of\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. [Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_2](#) has described the dominance of the Church over the lives of the people in terms that are worth recording "A life in the Church, for the Church, through the

Church; a life which she blessed in mass at morning and sent to peaceful rest by the vesper hyme; a life which she supported by the constantly recurring stimulus of the sacraments, relieving it by confession, purifying it by penance, admonishing it by the presentation of visible objects for contemplation and worship, this was the life which many of the Middle Ages conceived of as the rightful life of the man; it was the actual life of many, the ideal of all"

The dominance of religion on the life of the people of India today is no whit less than the dominance of the Church over the lives of the people in the Middle Ages. It would therefore be a mistake to leave religion out of consideration. But it is equally true to say that a purely religious point of view would give only a superficial picture. What is important to know is how the masses and the classes in India live? What are the social and economic terms of their associated life? To what extent are these influenced by religion? The answer to this question is given by the condition in which we find certain classes who fall within the Hindu fold.

## II

It is a pity that Prof. Max Muller did not visit India. On seeing the contrast between theory and practice he might have explained the contrast. For the present the contrast remains a riddle.

This is so in spite of the doctrine of Bramha, asserted by the Brahmins to be residing and pervading every human being. If there is Bramha in a Brahmin so also it is in a Primitive man, in a Criminal Tribes man and so also in an Untouchable? How are these two facts to be reconciled the theory of Bramha and as against it the existence of the Primitive Tribes, the Criminal Tribes and the Untouchables?

This sunken humanity falls into three distinct categories. One such category is comprised of people who are called Primitive Tribes. Communities listed as Criminal classes form a second and separate category and the third category is the one, which covers what are called the Untouchables.

The total population of persons who fall into these three categories is by no means small. The population of the Primitive Tribes in India according to the Census of 1931 comes in round figures to 25 millions. The total population of the Criminal classes now listed as Criminal is somewhere about 41/2 millions. The total population of the Untouchables according to the Census of 1931 is 50 millions in India as a whole. The total of these classes comes to 791/2 millions. And the question is what is the position of these 791/2 million souls?

First as to the Primitive Tribes. In what state of civilization are they?

The name Primitive Tribes is expressive of the present state of people who are called by that name. They live in small-scattered huts in forests. They live on wild fruits, nuts and roots. Fishing and hunting are also resorted to for the purpose of securing food. Agriculture plays a very small part in their social economy. Food supplies being extremely precarious they lead a life of semi-starvation from which there is no escape. As to clothes they economise them to a vanishing point. They move almost in a state of complete nakedness. There is a tribe which is known as "Bonda Porajas" which means "naked Porajas". Of these people it is said that, the women wear a very narrow strip which serves as a petticoat almost identical with what is worn by the Momjak Nagas in Assam, the ends hardly meeting at the top on the left thigh. These petticoats are woven at home out of the fibre of a forest tree. Girls wear a fillet of beads and of palmyra leaf and an enormous quantity of beads and neck ornaments extremely like those worn by many Komjak women. Otherwise the women wear nothing. The women shave their heads entirely..... Of the Chenchus, a tribe residing near Farhabad in the Nizam's Dominions it is said that "their

houses are conical, rather slight in structure made of bamboos sloping to the central point and covered with a thinnish layer of thatch..... They have very little indeed in the way of material effects, the scanty clothes they wear, consisting of a langoti and a cloth in the case of men and a short bodice and a petticoat in the case of women, being practically all, besides a few cooking pots and a basket or two which perhaps sometimes contains grain. They keep cattle and goats and in this particular village do a little cultivation, elsewhere subsisting on honey and forest produce which they sell". Regarding the Morias another Primitive Tribe, it is stated the men generally wear a single cloth round the waist with a flap coming down in the front. They also have a necklace of beads and when they dance, put cock's plums and peacock's feathers in their turbans. Many girls are profusely tattooed, especially on their faces, and some of them on their legs as well. The type of tattooing is said to be according to the taste of the individual and it is done with thorns and needles. In their hair, many of them stick the feathers of jungle cocks and their heads are also adorned with combs of wood and tin and brass.

These Primitive Tribes have no prohibition against eating anything, even worms and insects and in fact there is very little meat that they will not eat, whether the animal has died a natural death or has been killed four days or more before by a tiger.

The religion of these Primitive Tribes is the worship of demons of all denominations and dead ancestors of all antiquity. Witchcraft, sorcery, animal and human sacrifice make up their religion. Without education, with no idea of Science or of the knowledge of the working of nature, steeped in ignorance and superstition, these Primitive Tribes have been living on the outskirts and in close conformity with civilisation in a savage stage which has been their lot for ages. Instead of marching along, they are where they have been all along doing nothing but marking time. The Criminal Classes at one time included such well organised confederacies of Professional Criminals as the Pindharies and the Thugs.

The Pindharies were a predatory body of armed gangsters. Their organisation was an open military organisation of freebooters who could muster 20,000 fine horse and even more. They were under the command of brigand chiefs. Chitu, one of the most powerful commanders had under his single command 10,000 horse, including 5,000 good cavalry, besides infantry and guns. The Pindharies had no military projects for employing their loose hands of irregular soldiery, which developed into bodies of professional plunderers. The Pindharies aimed at no conquests. Their object was to secure booty and cash for themselves. General loot and



rapine was their occupation. They recognised no rulers. They were subjects of none. They rendered loyalty to none. They respected none and plundered all high and low rich and poor without fear or compunction.

The 'Thugs' were a well organised body of professional assassins, who in gangs of from 10 to 200 travelled in various guises throughout India, worked themselves into the confidence of wayfarers of the wealthier class and, when a favourable opportunity occurred, strangled them by throwing a handkerchief or noose round their necks and then plundered and buried them. All this was done according to certain ancient and rigidly prescribed forms and after the performance of special religious rites, in which was the consecration of the pickaxe and the sacrifice of sugar. They were staunch worshippers of Kali, the Hindu Goddess of destruction. Assassination for gain was with them a religious duty, and was considered a holy and honourable profession. They had in fact no idea of doing wrong, and their moral feelings did not come into play. The will of the goddess by whose command and in whose honour they followed their calling was revealed to them through a very complicated system of omens. In obedience to these, they often travelled hundreds of miles in company with, or in the wake of their 1 Encyclopaedia Britannica. 11th Ed., Vol. XXVI, p. 896. Intended victims before a safe opportunity presented itself for executing their design; and when the deed was done, rites were performed in honour of that tutelary deity, and a goodly portion of the spoil was set apart for her. The Thugs had also a jargon of their own, as well as certain signs by which its members recognised each other in the remotest part of India. Even those, who from age or infirmities could no longer take an active part in the operations used to aid the cause as watchmen, spies or dressers of food. It was owing to their thorough organisation, the secrecy and security with which they went to work, but chiefly to the religious garb in which they shrouded their murders, that they could continue for centuries to practise their craft. The extraordinary fact was that Thuggee was regarded as a regular profession by the Indian Rulers both Hindu and Mahomedans. The Thugs paid taxes to the State and the State left them unmolested.

It was not until the British became rulers of the country that any attempt was made to suppress the Thugs. By 1835, 382 Thugs were hanged and 986 were transported or imprisoned for life. Even as late as 1879 the number of registered Thugs was 344 and the Thuggee and the Dacoity department of the Government of India continued to exist until 1904 when its place was taken by the Central Criminal Intelligence Department.

While these open and professional criminals have been suppressed and are no more to exact their toll and disturb the peace, there are still in India

communities whose occupation is crime and who are listed by Government as Criminal Tribes.

The Criminal Tribes live in the plains in close proximity, if not in the midst of, civilized life. Because they subsist by organised robbery and dacoity, they are for this reason proscribed by the Government of India as Criminal Tribes. Hollius in his "Criminal Tribes of the United Provinces" gives an account of their activities. They live entirely by crime. A few may be ostensibly engaged in agriculture but this is only to cover up their real activities. Their nefarious practices found most scope in dacoity or robbery by violence, but being a community organised for crime nothing came amiss to them. On deciding to commit a dacoity in any particular locality, spies would be sent out to select a suitable victim, study the general habits of the villagers and the distance from any effective aid, and enumerate the number of men and firearms. The raid usually took place at midnight. Acting on the information given by the spies, men would be posted at various points in the village and by firing off their guns, attract attention from the main gang which would attack the particular house or houses previously appointed. The gang would usually consist of 30 to 40 men. It is essential to emphasise the great part played by crime in the general life of these peoples. A boy is initiated into crime as soon as he is able to walk and talk. No doubt the motive is practical to a great extent in so far as it is always better to risk a child in petty theft, who if he were caught, would probably be cuffed, while an adult would immediately be arrested. An important part is also played by women, who, although they do riot participate in the actual raids, have many heavy responsibilities. Besides disposing of most of the stolen property, they are also expert shoplifters.

Like the Criminal Tribes the Untouchables also live in the midst of civilized Hindu Society and possess a degree of culture and morality which completely separate them from the Primitive Tribes and the Criminal Tribes. The Untouchables have the culture of the Hindu Community. They observe the religious rites of the Hindu Community. They recognise the sacred as well as the secular laws of the Hindus. They celebrate the Hindu festivities. But they derive no benefit from this. On the contrary they are segregated and shunned because their physical contact is held by the Hindus to cause pollution. There is therefore an interdict on all social intercourse with them except for unavoidable purposes. They live on the outskirts of a village and not in the midst of it. Every village has its Untouchable quarters, they are attached to the village but are not a part of the village. Segregated from the rest of the Hindu population they are

bound down to a code of behaviour, which is appropriate to a servile state. According to this code, an Untouchable may not do anything, which raise him above his appointed station in life. He should not dress in style superior to that of his status, nor should the untouchable woman adorn herself with ornaments after the fashion of the higher class Hindu women. He should not have a house better or bigger than the houses of the rest of the Hindus in the village. In any case he must not have a tiled roof over his house. An Untouchable must not sit in the presence of a Hindu and must always salute him first. An Untouchable must not wear clean clothes, must not use brass or copper pots and must not wear gold or silver ornaments. When some one dies in the family of a Hindu, an Untouchable must go miles to convey the message of the death to the relatives of the family, no matter how far away they might be living, because a Hindu in a village feels disgraced in the eyes of his relatives if he has to communicate such messages by postal communication. An Untouchable must accompany the women folk of the Hindus on their journey from their homes to their parents and *vice versa*. Their dignity requires that they should have a retinue and the Untouchable is the only available class from which such a retinue can be drawn without any cost. At every ceremony at the house of a Hindu, the Untouchables must come and do menial work. An Untouchable must not own and cultivate land and lead an independent life. For his livelihood he must depend upon stale remnants of food left over by the Hindu households and upon meat of cattle that die in the village. These remnants of food he must collect from door to door. For he must go on his begging round every evening. Similarly an Untouchable must carry the dead animals out of the village. Indeed he alone must carry them because no Hindu will agree to do scavenging. An Untouchable should not take to such services as would give him authority and power over caste Hindus. He must be humble and must not ask for more than his lot under this code. It is true that some of the Untouchables have risen above the low status prescribed by this customary code of conduct and have acquired high place, but the majority of them are still socially in the most servile position and economically in abject poverty.

Such is the condition of the 79 1/2 millions of people. The problem of these deadened, if not dead, souls is no small problem. The total population of these three classes comes to over 60% of the population of the United States but exceeds the population of the whites in the British Empire by 91 1/2 millions. It also exceeds the population of Japan by 91 1/2 millions. It exceeds the population of Italy by 37 millions. It exceeds the population of Germany by 131 1/2 millions and of France by 371 1/2



millions. It is ten times the population of Belgium and twenty times the population of Denmark. What a colossal total of sunken humanity? III

The saddening and if, one may say, annoying part of the story is that the state of these unfortunate human beings should be what it is although they are surrounded and fed by a high civilisation. But it must strike any impartial observer that there must be something very radically wrong with a civilisation, which has failed to elevate to their manhood 791/2 millions of human beings.

Civilisation as comprising and accumulated store of knowledge of man and nature, of arts and crafts, an ethical code regulating the conduct of man towards his fellows, a social code laying down the forms and conventions to be observed by individuals, a civil code prescribing the rights and duties of the rulers and the ruled and a religious creed relating the natural to the supernatural—is a rare prize. It has not been the good fortune of all races to develop it in all its fullness. Many have stood where they were at the start. Many took one or two steps and have been at a halt. Others have only revolved round and round. The primitive races of Australia and Polenasia, when they were first discovered a few generations ago, were found to have developed articulate speech and to know how to make fire. They had not advanced beyond the middle stage of savagery. The Alliapascous, a Primitive Tribe of the Hudson Bay Territory and the Indians of the valley of Columbia had not gone beyond the stage of the Bow and the Arrow. They knew nothing of pottery, domestication of animals or of the smelting of iron. The civilization of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria and even of Rome and Greece had only been a revolving civilization. Their progress and achievements are only the elaboration of the details of methods and intentions handed down by man when he was in a Barbaric state. They added nothing revolutionary to the sum total of civilization to which they were heirs. They merely did better what used to be done crudely by their predecessors. Nor have the stages of advancement followed in quick succession. That man was for long ages a savage before he made sufficient progress to be called a Barbarian admits of no doubt. Equally little in doubt is it that other long ages of Barbarism have preceded the final ascent to the lowest stage of civilization. The precise period of time covered by these successive 'ages' is of course only conjectural; but something like one hundred thousand years may perhaps be taken as a safe minimum estimate.

Civilization is indeed no easy gain. But civilization is a very vital thing, not for one generation but also for the next. The civilization of one generation, when inherited becomes the equipment of the next. This social heritage is

absolutely essential for each generation. All progress will die out if this social heritage is destroyed. As has been well put, "If the earth were struck by one of Mr. Wells' comets, and if in consequence every human being now alive were to lose all the knowledge and habits which he had acquired from preceding generations (though retaining unchanged all his own powers of invention and memory, and habituation) nine-tenths of the inhabitants would be dead in a month and 99 per cent of the remaining tenth would be dead in six months. They would have no language to express their thoughts but vague reverie. They would not read notices or drive motor cars or horses. They would wander about, led by the inarticulate cries of a few naturally dominant individuals, drowning themselves, as thirst came on, in hundreds at the riverside landing places. Men could not invent in time to preserve their lives, methods of growing food or taming animals or making fire or clothing themselves. Life would have to be begun over again from the primitive stage. Like the primitive races a generation which has lost its social heritage would have to begin life on wild fruits and worms until they had accumulated a new social heritage. After some thousands of generations they would probably possess some thing which would be recognised as language, and perhaps some art of taming animals and cultivating land. They might or might not have created what we should call a religion or a few of our simpler mechanical inventions and political expedients. They might or might not have such general ideas as law, liberty, and justice. This is the difference, which social heritage makes and the difference is no doubt vast.

It is true that civilisation is not the privilege of all and even to those who are fortunate to have it, it is a matter of slow growth marked by long and monotonous halts. But it is also true that to those who are possessed of civilisation, their civilisation may be a hindrance rather than a help. It might have gone on a wrong track, it might have based itself on false values and false premises. Such a civilisation might easily cause stagnation of the Community and the stunting of the individual. It would be better to be without civilisation than to be burdened and unshackled by such a civilisation.

It is the boast of every patriotic Hindu that the Hindu or the Vedic Civilisation is the oldest in the world. One often hears with fire some repetitions a Hindu stating with a certain degree of malicious pride that India had reached a very high degree of civilisation when other people were leading a primitive life and moving naked. One also hears a Hindu say that his civilisation has inherent strength because it has survived while all other ancient civilisation such as Egypt, Babylon, Judea, Rome and Greece have

vanished. Such a view however legitimate misses the main point. The main point is not whether the civilisation is ancient and whether it has survived.[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_3](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_3) The main point is what are the merits of a civilization? What is its worth, if it has survived, on what plain? In other words the principal question is, is this Hindu civilization, the social heritage a burden or a benefit? What does it offer by way of growth and expansion to classes and to individuals?

What is the contribution of Hindu Civilization to the knowledge of man and nature? Many patriotic Hindus like to believe that the knowledge of man and nature began with the Hindus. Granting that it is so it certainly did not advance beyond the most rudimentary stage. Can any Hindu doubt that the Hindu Philology, right or wrong, has remained where Panini and Katyayana left it? Can he deny that Philosophy right or wrong has remained where Kapila and Gautama left it? Can he doubt that literature remained where Vyasa and Valmiki left it. In Metaphysics the Hindus are said to have reached the stage of perfection. This is what Prof. Har Dayal has to say of Hindu Metaphysics.[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_4](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_4)—

"Metaphysics has been the curse of India. It has blighted her history and compassed her ruin. It has converted her great men into miserable quibblers, and led them into useless channels of inquiry and effort. It has been the dangerous will-o'-the-wisp of Indian intellect during many centuries. It has elevated sophistry to the rank of an Art, and substituted vain fancies for a knowledge. It has condemned Indians intellect to run in the same old roove for hundreds of years. It has blinded her seers and led them to mistake phantoms for realities..... Arrogant, pretentious, verbose and purblind, it has taken its cackling for an oracle and its fantastic word towers for solid piles of thought masonry....."

.....The Upanishads claim to expound 'that by knowing which every thing is known '. This mediaeval quest for 'the absolute ' is the basis of all the superior metaphysics of India. The treatises are full of absurd conceits, quaint fancies, and chaotic speculations. And we have not yet learned that they are worthless."Samadhi" or trance is regarded as the acme of spiritual progress ! How strange it is that a capacity for swooning away should be considered the mark of wisdom! It is very easy to lose consciousness if one has strong emotions and a feeble intellect. That is why ladies faint so often on the slightest provocation. But in India Samadhi is the eighth stage of Yoga, which only '*paramahans* ' can reach. These be thy Gods, O, Israel! To

look upon an abnormal psychological condition produced by artificial means as the sign of enlightenment was a folly reserved for Indian Philosophers."

In the domain of science. Arts and crafts the contribution of the Hindu Civilization is of the most primitive character. Except in some spheres such as weaving, spinning, etc., the Hindu Civilization has not evolved any technical equipment which can aid man in his struggle against nature to make a bare living that can be said to be higher than that of the brute. It is because of the complete absence of scientific and technical equipment and with all the transcendental nonsense that is being perpetrated that famines are desolating the land in all ages. Ignorance, superstition and disease which affect the mind, malaria and plague diseases which affect the body, have hung like a pall over the country throughout the ages.

In the field of Religion and Ethics the Hindus have made their greatest efforts. Of their contributions, these are the most elaborately developed. They are undoubtedly the most vital to man for the simple reason that they help to install in man the springs of thought and action. They are responsible for the outlook which man has on life. They are responsible for the attitude one holds towards his fellow man. They prescribe principles which govern conduct, mould character and implant in man that mysterious thing called conscience which acts as his sentinel and prevents him from going wrong.

It is when one comes to examine this Hindu Civilisation in the matter of its religious content, the way of life it prescribes, that one begins to doubt whether this Hindu Civilisation is at all an advantage to the generations who are fated to inherit it. What does this civilisation offer to the 25 millions of Primitive Tribes who are living on its frontiers? What does it offer to the 5 millions of Criminal Tribes who are living in the midst of that civilisation? What does it offer to the 50 millions of Untouchables who are not only living in the midst of that civilisation but are required to sustain it? What would the Primitive Tribes say of a civilisation which has made no effort to adopt them in its fold? What would the Criminal Tribes say of a civilisation which has driven them to take to criminal ways for earning their livelihood? Would it be unjust if they said that this is not Civilisation, this is infamy?

As to the Untouchables, theirs has been a fate of degradation and destitution in the past and for whom under the Hindu Civilisation there seems to be no escape in the future. Even Indians do not seem to realise the extent of degradation and destitution that is involved in this system of Untouchability. The observations of the Committee appointed by the

Government of Bombay to inquire into the grievances of the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes in 1928 are very pertinent. It said.

"There is nothing strange in the idea that an unclean person or thing causes repulsion which underlies the idea of pollution. But what is regrettable about it as applied to the (UNTOUCHABLES), is its irrationality. It stamps an individual as untouchable by the mere accident of his birth. A person born Untouchable, remains Untouchable however superior he may be in personal cleanliness to the so-called touchable, and there is no way open to him by which he can escape his fate. What is surprising in all this is that an Orthodox Hindu, notwithstanding the differences between his religious notions and mode of living and outlook in life and those of the Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians treat them as touchables. This has resulted in further aggravating the position of the (Untouchables). For this unjust discrimination on the part of the Orthodox Hindus, in some cases being influenced by the Orthodox Hindus especially in villages, even the Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians observe untouchability towards the (Untouchables) though their religions teach contrariwise. What we are concerned most to point out are the evils attributable to it in so far as Untouchability includes isolation and inferiority. But there are evils specifically attributable to untouchability as such. Pressed to its logical limit, in an Orthodox Hindu Society it would prevent the (Untouchables) from obtaining entry into a public school though it is maintained at the expense of the state, it would prevent them from entering the public services though they may be qualified for it, except for the services customarily allotted to them. It would also prevent them from taking water from the public watering places maintained out of public funds. Looked at from this point of view untouchability is not merely a social problem. It is a problem of the highest political importance and affects the fundamental question of the civic rights of the subjects of the state." This states the hardships only of the Untouchables. But untouchables are not the only people who are subjected to this life of ignominy. There are classes who are placed in a worse position. Untouchables are those who cause pollution only by a physical touch. There are people who cause pollution if they come within a certain distance. They are known as unapproachable. Again there are people who are in a worse position than the unapproachable. They cause pollution if they come within sight. They are known as unseeable. It is said of the Nayadis [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm:/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_5](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_5)—a people who fall into the category of the unapproachable," that they are the lowest caste among the Hindus— the



dogeaters. They are the most persistent in their clamour for charity, and will follow at a respectful distance, for miles together any person walking, driving or boating. If any thing is given to them, it must be laid down, and after the person offering it has proceeded a sufficient distance, the recipient comes timidly forward, and removes it."Of the same people Mr. Thurston says"The subject (i.e. the Nayadis) whom I examined and measured at Shoranur, though living only about three miles off had, by reason of the pollution which they traditionally carry with them to avoid walking over the long bridge which spans the river, and follow a circuitous route of many miles".

In the Tinnevalley District of the Madras Presidency, there is a class of unseeables called Purada Vannas. Of them it is said,"that they are not allowed to come out during day time because their sight is enough to cause pollution. These unfortunate people are 'compelled' to follow the nocturnal habits, leaving their dens after dark and scuttling home at the false dawn like the badger, hyaena, aordvark."What must be the hardships of the unapproachables and unseeables? How must they be passing their lives? If their sight or their approach even is not tolerated, what work can they obtain? What else can they do except to beg and live on dog's meat? Surely no civilisation can be guilty of greater cruelty! It is indeed a great mercy that the population of the unapproachables and of the unseeables is so small. But are 50 millions of Untouchables entitled to any civilisation? An Untouchable cannot escape his fate for he cannot pass off as a Touchable. In the village where he resides he is of course known and there is no room for impersonation while he is there. If he leaves his village and comes to a town there is a chance for him to pass off as Touchable. But he knows what would be his fate if he were discovered. The following incident, which was reported in the papers, will give some idea of the risk involved in any attempt to impersonate:

Orthodoxy Run Mad.

*Alleged Barbarious Treatment of "Untouchables": Crime of being Mahars.*

Mr. Keshavji Ranchhodji Vaghela from Ahmedabad has informed Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, President, Bahishkrit Hitkarani Sabha as follows:

One Bapoorao Laxman and his brother Kaurao have been residents of Ahmedabad during the last six years. They used to mix with some people from the Deccan belonging to Maratha caste. Kaurao's two sons, viz, Damoo and Laxman, used to take part in the Bhajan parties of the Marathas. The latter, however, recently came to know that the brothers Damoo and Laxman were Mahars by caste and in order to ascertain this, two Mahars employed in the parcel train between Surat and Ahmedabad

were specially called to identify Damoo and Laxman. After it was ascertained that Damoo and Laxman were Mahars they were called at a Bhajan party at Kalupur, Bhandari Pole, at midnight on the 11th instant. Asked as to what caste they belonged to, Damoo and Laxman replied that they were Somavanshis. This reply enraged the Marathas, who freely abused them for having defiled their persons and places. The Mahar brothers were assaulted by the Marathas. One of the brothers had a gold ring on his person. It was forcibly taken away from him and sold for Rs. 11. Out of this amount Rs. 6 was paid to the Mahar who had been called from Surat to identify the brothers. Damoo and Laxman entreated and Marathas were requested to allow them to return to their homes, but the latter refused to do so unless a fine of Rs. 500 was paid. On the Mahar brothers \*\* Bombay Chronicle 25th Feb. 1938. pleading their inability to pay such a heavy sum, one of the Marathas suggested that the Mahar brothers should be fined only Rs. 125. But then one of the Marathas opposed the proposal for fine saying that they should not be satisfied with fine, but should punish the Mahars severely for their crime of concealing their caste. Having decided upon the course, the Mahar brothers were detained and at about 9 o'clock in the morning they were subjected to barbarous indignities, their moustaches in the left side and eyebrows on the right side were shaved, their bodies besmeared with soot mixed in oil and also with dirt, garlands made of old shoes were put around their necks, and one of them was asked to hold a broom in his hand and the other to hold a placard on which it was written that the punishment was meted out to the culprits for venturing to touch high caste people. The Mahar brothers were taken in procession consisting of about 75 people, a drum being beaten in the front. A complaint has been lodged with the Police by the said two Mahar brothers. The accused in their statement have admitted that Damoo and Laxman were treated in the alleged manner, but pleaded that the complainants had willingly agreed to undergo the punishment. Obviously Damoo and Laxman were helpless when they were abused, assaulted and threatened with severe punishment and actually subjected to barbarous indignities. This case has created a great sensation among the people belonging to the so called Untouchables castes, and efforts are being made to give proper legal aid to the complainants. But the rules of this Hindu Civilisation are so meticulous in regard to untouchability as to leave no possibility for an Untouchable to pose as a Touchable. Consequently there exist rules in certain areas where Untouchables are required to bear a black thread so as to be easily identifiable and to proclaim by word of mouth that he is an Untouchable to prevent a Touchable touching him in ignorance

and thereby getting himself polluted. In the town of Dwarka (in the Bombay Presidency) which is famous as being the shrine of the great Hindu God Krishna it is a rule that every Untouchable while walking in the streets has to clap his hands and say "Post, Post" so as to proclaim the fact that he is an Untouchable and let the Touchables beware of him. The following is recorded of the Cherumans of the Madras Presidency:

"Very low is indeed the social position of these miserable beings. When a Cheruman meets a person of superior caste he must stand at a distance of thirty feet. If he comes within this prohibited distance, his approach is to cause pollution, which is removed only by bathing in water. A Cheruman cannot approach a Brahmin village or temple or tank. If he does so, purification becomes necessary. Even while using the public road, if he sees his lord and master, he has to leave the ordinary way and walk, it may be in the mud, to avoid his displeasure by accidentally polluting him. To avoid polluting the passer-by, he repeats the unpleasant sound, "0, Oh, 0" In some places i.e. Palghat, one may see a Cheruman with a dirty piece of cloth spread on the road side, and yelling in a shrill voice, "Ambrane, Ambrane, give me some pice and throw them on the cloth". His position is intolerable in the Native States of Cochin and Travancore, where the Brahman influence is in the ascendant, while in the Palghat Taluka the Cherumans cannot, even to this day enter the bazaar. In Malabar it is stated that "The man of high caste shouts occasionally as he goes along, so that the low caste man can go off the road, and allow him to pass unpolluted. And those of the lowest castes shout, as they go, to give notice of their Pollution bearing presence, and learning the command of the man of high caste, move away from the road. It is common to see people of inferior caste travelling parallel to the road, but not daring to go along it".

What a degradation for these unfortunate souls who have been turned by this Hindu Civilisation into social lepers! To be called an Untouchable is enough of a misfortune. But to require an Untouchable to proclaim by his own mouth his shame that he is an Untouchable is a cruelty to which in my opinion there is no parallel. What would an Untouchable say of this Hindu Civilisation? Would it be wrong if he said that it is felony and not civilisation?

That the condition of the Primitive Tribes, of the Criminal Tribes and of the Untouchables is the result of fundamental doctrines of Hindu Civilisation there can be no manner of doubt.

Why have there been no missions to bring these Primitive Tribes into the Hindu fold?

Why has crime become an occupation for certain tribes? Why have certain classes been treated as unfit for human association, as Untouchables?

The answer to each of these questions will have reference to some basic principle of the Hindu Civilisation.

To the first question the answer is that the caste system prevents the Hindu Religion from becoming a missionary religion and caste is a fundamental part of the Hindu Civilisation. To the second question the answer is that the system of Chaturvarna limits the opportunities which a person can have for earning an honourable living. All learned are the preserve of the Brahmins; all warlike services are the monopoly \*\*Thurston—Tribes and castes of Southern India, Vol. 5, p. 196. of the Kshatriya class; trade is open only to Vaishya, services to the Shudras. Those outside, there being nothing honourable left, have been driven to dishonourable and criminal ways of earning a livelihood. This is the result of Chaturvarna and Chaturvarna is again a fundamental part of Hindu Civilisation.

To the third question the answer is that untouchability is part of the Hindu law as contained in the Smritis which are again a fundamental part of the Hindu Civilisation.

#### IV

It is true that as for the past the state of degradation has been the common fate of all the three categories of this 791/2 millions of India's population. But it cannot be said that their future destiny will also be common to them. That is because although their condition is apparently similar, their position is essentially different.

The first thing to note is that the Primitive Tribes and the Criminal Tribes are not afflicted by this system of untouchability. To a Hindu they do not cause pollution. Indeed these Primitive and Criminal Tribes observe untouchability towards the Untouchables. The situation is full of humour when one sees members of these Primitive and Criminal Tribes feeling that they would be polluted if they would touch an Untouchable. They are poor, filthy, superstitious, ignorant, far more than the Untouchables yet they pride themselves as socially superior to the Untouchables. This of course is the result of the contagion, which they have from the Hindus. But the point to note is that the Hindu does not treat them as Untouchable. That is an advantage which they have over the Untouchables and which makes their future assured. If the Primitive Tribes have no opportunities for advancement it is because they choose to live in isolation. But once

they come out of their forest recesses and take part in civilisation. There is nothing that will stand in their way. Similarly the Criminal Tribes have their future assured. Government has established settlements where these Criminal Tribes are kept and taught useful trades. There is no doubt that in a very short time they will be completely weaned from their vicious habits.

The case of the Untouchables stands on quite a different footing altogether. Their disabilities are imposed upon them. Their isolation is really segregation which is enforced upon them. The problem of the Untouchables is different from the problem of the Primitive Tribes because in their case the evils of segregation are aggravated by the fact of untouchability and the result is that while in the case of the Primitive Tribes the problem is due to geographical isolation combined with lack of desire to avail themselves of the opportunities for betterment, in the case of the Untouchables the problem is due to positive denial of opportunities.

There does not seem to be much hope for the emancipation of the Untouchables, at any rate their emancipation is far more problematical and distant than the emancipation of the Primitive Tribes. The problem of the slaves was one of denial of political or economic rights. If the problem of the Untouchables was one of denial of political and economic rights, it could be solved by legal and constitutional methods. The denial of political and economic rights is the result of the social psychology of the Hindus. The problem for the Untouchables arises directly out of the social behaviour of the Hindus. Untouchability will vanish only when Hindus will change their mentality. The problem is how to make the Hindus unlearn their way of life. It is no small matter to make a whole nation give up its accustomed way of life. Besides the way of life the Hindus are accustomed to, is a way which is sanctified by their religion, at any rate they believe it to be so. To change their way of life is almost to change their religion.

How can this happen? Only when it is realised that what is tragedy for the Untouchables is the crime of the Hindus. How long shall the Untouchables have to wait for this revolution in the religious psychology of the Hindus? Let those who have a gift for prophecy answer. In the meantime it would be desirable to describe their condition and to state the problems which they and their friends have to face.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE HOUSE THE HINDUS HAVE BUILT

#### I



Is there any thing peculiar in the social organisation of the Hindus? An unsophisticated Hindu who is unaware of investigations conducted by scholars will say that there is nothing peculiar, abnormal or unnatural in the organisation of the society to which he belongs. This is quite natural. People who live their lives in isolation are seldom conscious of the peculiarities of their ways and manners. People have gone on from generation to generation without stopping to give themselves a name. But how does the social organisation of the Hindu strike the outsiders, non-Hindus? Did it appear to them as normal and natural?

Megasthenese who came to India as the ambassador of the Greek King Seleukos Nicator to the Court of Chandragupta Maurya some time about the year 305 B.C. did feel that the social organisation of the Hindus was of a very strange sort. Otherwise he would not have taken such particular care to describe the peculiar features of the Hindu social organisation. He has recorded:

"The population of India is divided into seven parts. The philosophers are first in rank, but form the smallest class in point of number. Their services are employed privately by persons who wish to offer sacrifices or perform other sacred rites, and also publicly by the kings at what is called the Great Synod, wherein at the beginning of the new year all the philosophers are gathered together before the King at the gates, when any philosopher who may have committed any useful suggestion to writing, or observed any means for improving the crops and the cattle, or for promoting the public interests, declares it publicly. If any one is detected giving false information thrice, the law condemns him to be silent for the rest of his life, but he who gives sound advice is exempted from paying any taxes or contributions.

"The second caste consists of the husbandmen, who form the bulk of the population, and are in disposition most mild and gentle. They are exempted from military service, and cultivate their lands undisturbed by fear. They never go to town, either to take part in its tumults, or for any other purpose. It therefore not infrequently happens that at the same time, and in the same part of the country, men maybe seen drawn up in array of battle, and fighting at risk of their lives, while other men close at hand are ploughing and digging in perfect security, having these soldiers to protect them. The whole of the land is the property of the King, and the husbandmen till it on condition of receiving one-fourth of the produce.

"The third caste consists of herdsmen and hunters, who alone are allowed to hunt, and to keep cattle, and to sell draught animals or let them out on hire. In return for clearing the land of wild beasts and fowls which devour

the seeds sown in the fields, they receive an allowance of grain from the king. They lead a wandering life and live under tents.

"The fourth class, after herdsmen and hunters, consists of those who work at trades, of those who vend wares, and of those who are employed in bodily labour. Some of these pay tribute, and render to the State certain prescribed services. But the armour-makers and shipbuilders receive wages and their victuals from the king, for whom alone they work. The general in command of the army supplies the soldiers with weapons, and the admiral of the fleet lets out ships on hire for the transport both of passengers and merchandise.

"The fifth class consists of fighting men, who when not engaged in active service, pass their time in idleness and drinking. They are maintained at the King's expense, and hence they are always ready, when occasion calls, to take the field, for they carry nothing of their own with them but their own bodies.

"The sixth class consists of the overseers, to whom is assigned the duty of watching all that goes on, and making reports secretly to the King. Some are entrusted with the inspection of the city, and others with that of the army. The former employs as their coadjutors the courtesans of the city, and the latter the courtesans of the camp. The ablest and most trustworthy men are appointed to fill these offices.

"The seventh class consists of the councillors and assessors of the king. To them belong the highest posts of government, the tribunals of justice, and the general administration of public affairs. No one is allowed to marry out of his own caste, or to exchange one profession or trade for another, or to follow more than one business. An exception is made in favour of the philosopher, who for his virtue is allowed this privilege."

Alberuni who wrote an account of his travels in India some time about 1030 A.D. must have been struck by the peculiarity of the Hindu Social Organisation. For he too has not omitted to make a note of it. He observed:

"The Hindus call their castes varna, i.e. colours, and from a genealogical point of view they call them jataka, i.e. births. These castes are from the very beginning only four.

1. The highest caste is the Brahmana, of whom the books of the Hindus tell that they were created from the head of Brahman. And a Brahman is only another name for the force called nature, and the head is the highest part of the animal body, the Brahmana are the choice part of the whole genus. Therefore the Hindus consider them as the very best mankind.

II. The next caste are the Kshatriya, who were created, as they say, from the shoulders and hands of Brahman. Their degree is not much below that of the Brahmana.

III. After them follow the Vaisya, who were created from the thigh of Brahman.

IV. The Sudra, who were created from his feet,"Between the latter two classes there is no very great distance. Much, however, as these classes differ from each other, they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings.

"After the Sudra follow the people called Antyaja, who render various kinds of services, who are not reckoned amongst any caste, but only as members of a certain craft or profession. There are eight classes of them who freely intermarry with each other, except the fuller, shoemaker and weaver, for no others would condescend to have anything to do with them. These eight guilds are the fuller, shoemaker, juggler, the basket and shield maker, the sailor, fisherman, the hunter of wild animals and of birds, and the weaver. The four castes do not live together with them in one and the same place. These guilds live near the villages and towns of the four castes, but outside them.

"The people called Hadi, Doma (Domba), Candala and Badhatau (sic) are not reckoned amongst any caste or guild. They are occupied with dirty work, like the cleansing of the villages and other services. They are considered as one sole class, and distinguished only by their occupations. In fact, they are considered like illegitimate children; for according to general opinion they descend from a Sudra father and a Brahmani mother as the children of fornication; therefore they are degraded outcaste.

"The Hindus give to every single man of the four castes characteristic names, according to their occupations and modes of life, e.g. the Brahman is in general called by this name as long as he does his work staying at home. When he is busy with the service of one fire, he is called Ishtin; if he serves three fires, he is called Agnihotrin; if he besides offers an offering to the fire, he is called Dikshita. And as it is with the Brahmana, so is it also with the other castes. Of the classes beneath the castes, the Hadi are the best spoken of, because they keep themselves free from everything unclean. Next follow the Doma, who play on the lute and sing. The still lower classes practise as a trade killing and the inflicting of judicial punishments. The worst of all are the Badhatau, who not only devour the flesh of dead animals, but even of dogs and other beasts.

"Each of the four castes, when eating together, must form a group of themselves, one group not being allowed to comprise two men of different

castes. If, further, in the group of the Brahmana there are two men who live at enmity with each other, and the seat of the one is by the side of the other, they make a barrier between the two seats by placing a board between them, or by spreading a piece of dress, or in some other way; and if there is only a line drawn between them, they are considered as separated. Since it is forbidden to eat the remains of a meal, every single man must have his own food for himself; for if any one of the party who are eating should take of the food from one and the same plate, that which remains in the plate becomes, after the first eater has taken part, to him who wants to take as the second, the remains of the meal, and such is forbidden."

Alberuni did not merely content himself with recording what struck him as peculiar in the Hindu Social organisation. He went on to say:

"Among the Hindus institutions of this kind abound. We Muslims, of course, stand entirely on the other side of the question, considering all men as equal, except in piety; and this is the greatest obstacle which prevents any approach or understanding between Hindus and Muslims."

Duarte Barbosa who was Portuguese official in the service of the Portuguese Government in India from 1500 to 1517 has left a record of his impressions of Hindu Society. This is what struck him:

"And before this kingdom of Guzerate fell into the hands of the Moors, a certain race of Heathen whom the Moors called Resbutos dwelt therein, who in those days were the knights and wardens of the land, and made war where so ever it was needful. These men kill and eat sheep and fish and all other kinds of food; in the mountains there are yet many of them, where they have great villages and obey not the king of Guzerate, but rather wage daily war against him: who, do what he may, is yet not able to prevail against them, nor will do so, for they are very fine horsemen, and good archers, and have besides divers other weapons to defend themselves withal against the Moors, on whom they make war without ceasing; yet have they no king nor lord over them.

"And in this kingdom there is another sort of Heathen whom they call Baneanes, who are great merchants and traders. They dwell among the Moors with whom they carry on all their trade. This people eat neither flesh nor fish, nor anything subject to death; they slay nothing, nor are they willing even to see the slaughter of any animal; and thus they maintain their idolatry and hold it so firmly that it is a terrible thing. For often it is so that the Moors take to them live insects or small birds, and make as though to kill them in their presence, and the Baneanes buy these and ransom them, paying much more than they are worth, so that they may save their lives

and let them go. And if the King or a Governor of the land has any man condemned to death, for any crime, which he has committed, they gather themselves together and buy him from justice, if they are willing to sell him, that he may not die. And divers Moorish mendicants as well, when they wish to obtain alms from this people, take great stones wherewith they beat upon their shoulders and bellies as though they would slay themselves before them, to hinder which they give them great alms that they may depart in peace. Others carry knives with which they slash their arms and legs, and to these too they give large alms that they may not kill themselves. Others go to their doors seeking to kill rats and snakes for them, and to them also they give much money that they may not do so. Thus they are much esteemed by the Moors!

"When these Baneanes meet with a swarm of ants on the road they shrink back and seek for some way to pass without crushing them. And in their houses they sup by daylight, for neither by night nor by day will they light a lamp, by reason of certain little flies which perish in the flame thereof; and if there is any great need of a light by night they have a lantern of varnished paper or cloth, so that no living thing may find its way in, and die in the flame. And if these men breed many lice they kill them not, but when they trouble them too much they send for certain men, also Heathen, who live among them and whom they hold to be men of a holy life; they are like hermits living with great abstinence through devotion to their gods. These men louse them, and as many lice as they catch they place on their own heads and breed them on their own flesh, by which they say they do great service to their Idol. Thus one and all they maintain with great self-restraint their law of not killing. On the other hand they are great usurers, falsifiers of weights and measures and many other goods and of coins; and great liars. These heathen are tawny men, tall and well looking, gaily attired, delicate and moderate in their food. Their diet is of milk, butter, sugar and rice, and many conserves of divers sorts. They make much use of dishes of fruit and vegetables and potherbs in their food. Where so ever they dwell they have orchards and fruit gardens and many water tanks wherein they bathe twice a day, both men and women; and they say when they have finished bathing that they are clear of as many sins as they have committed up to that hour. These Baneanes grow very long hair, as women do with us, and wear it twisted up on the head and made into a knot, and over it a turban, that they may keep it always held together; and in their hair they put flowers and other sweet scented things.

"They use to anoint themselves with white sandalwood mixed with saffron and other scents. They are very amorous people. They are clad in



long cotton and silken shirts and are shod with pointed shoes of richly wrought cordwain; some of them wear short coats of silk and brocade. They carry no arms except certain very small knives ornamented with gold and silver, and this for two reasons: First, because they are men who make but little use of weapons; and secondly, because the Moors defend them.

“Bramenes. And there is here another class of Heathen whom they call Bramenes, who are priests among them, and persons who manage and rule their houses of prayers and idol-worship, which are of great size and have great revenues; and many of them also are maintained by alms. In these houses are great numbers of wooden Idols, and others of stone and copper and in these houses or monasteries they celebrate great ceremonies in honour of these idols, entertaining them with great store of candles and oil lamps, and with bells after our fashion. These Bramenes and Heathen have in their creed many resemblance to the Holy Trinity, and hold in great honour the relation of the Triune Three, and always make their prayers to God, whom they confess and adore as the true God, Creator and maker of all things, who is three persons and one God and they say that there are many other gods who are rulers under him, in whom also they believe. These Bramenes and heathen wheresoever they find our churches enter them and make prayers and adoration to our Images, always asking for Santa Maria, like men who have some knowledge and understanding of these matters; and they honour the Church as is our manner, saying that between them and us there is little difference. These men never eat anything subject to death, nor do they slay anything. Bathing they hold to be a great ceremony and they say that by it they are saved.

“There is also in this same Kingdom of Calicut a caste of people called Bramenes who are priests among them (as are the clergy among us) of whom I have spoken in another place.

"These all speak the same tongue, nor can any be a Bramene except he be the son of a Bramene. When they are seven years of age they put over their shoulder a strip of two fingers in breadth of untanned skin with the hair on it of a certain wild beast, which they call Cryvamergam, which resembles a wild ass. Then for seven years he must not eat betel for which time he continues to wear this strap. When he is fourteen years old they make him a Bramene, and taking off their leather strap they invest him with the cord of three strands which he wears for the rest of his life as a token that he is a Bramene. And this they do with great ceremonial and rejoicings, as we do here for a cleric when he sings his first mass. Thereafter he may eat betel, but not flesh or fish. They have great honour among the Indians and as I have already said, they suffer death for no cause whatsoever, their own

headman gives them a mild chastisement. They marry once only in our manner, and only the eldest son marries, he is treated like the head of an entailed estate. The other brothers remain single all their lives. These Bramenes keep their wives well guarded, and greatly honoured, so that no other men may sleep with them; if any of them die, they do not marry again, but if a woman wrongs her husband she is slain by poison. The brothers who remain bachelors sleep with the Nayre women, they hold it to be a great honour, and as they are Bramenes no woman refuses herself to them, yet they may not sleep with any woman older than themselves. They dwell in their own houses and cities, and serve as clergy in the houses of worship, whither they go to pray at certain hours of the day, performing their rituals and idolatries.

“Some of these Bramenes serve the Kings in every manner except in arms. No man may prepare any food for the King except a Bramene or his own kin; they also serve as couriers to other countries with letters, money or merchandise, passing wherever they wish to go in safety, and none does them any ill, even when the Kings are at war. These Bramenes are learned in their idolatry, and possess many books thereof. The Kings hold them in high esteem.

“I have already spoken many times of the Nayres, and yet I have not hitherto told you what manner of men they are. You are to know that in this land of Malbar there is another caste of people, called Nayres, and among them are noble men who have no other duty than to serve in war, and they always carry their arms whither so ever they go, some swords and shields, others bows and arrows, and yet others spears. They all live with the King, and the other great Lords; nevertheless all receive stipends from the King or from the great Lords with whom they dwell. None may become a Nayre, save only he who is of Nayre lineage. They are very free from stain in their nobility. They will not touch any one of low caste, nor eat, nor drink save in the house of a Nayre.

“These men are not married, their nephews (sisters' sons) are their heirs. The Nayre women of good birth are very independent, and dispose of themselves as they please with Bramenes and Nayres, but they do not sleep with men of caste lower than their own under pain of death. When they reach the age of twelve years their mothers hold a great ceremony. When a mother perceives that her daughter has attained that age, she asks her kinsfolk and friends to make ready to honour her daughter, then she asks of the kindred and especially of one particular kinsman or great friend to marry her daughter; this he willingly promises and then he has a small jewel made, which would contain a half ducat of gold, long like a ribbon, with a

hole through the middle which comes out on the other side, string on thread of white silk. The mother then on a fixed day is present with her daughter gaily decked with many rich jewels, making great rejoicing with music and singing, and a great assembly of people. Then the Kinsman or friend comes bringing that jewel, and going through certain forms, throws it over the girl's neck. She wears it as a token all the rest of her life, and may then dispose of herself, as she will. The man departs without sleeping with her inasmuch as he is her kinsman; if he is not, he may sleep with her, but is not obliged to do so. Thenceforward the mother goes about searching and asking some young man to take her daughter's virginity; they must be Nayres and they regard it among themselves as a disgrace and a foul thing to take a woman's virginity. And when any one has once slept with her, she is fit for association with men. Then the mother again goes about enquiring among other young Nayres if they wish to support her daughter, and take her as a Mistress so that three or four Nayres agree with her to keep her, and sleep with her, each paying her so much a day; the more lovers she has the greater is her honour. Each one of them passes a day with her from midday on one day, till midday on the next day and so they continue living quietly without any disturbance nor quarrels among them. If any of them wishes to leave her, he leaves her, and takes another, and she also if she is weary of a man, she tells him to go, and he does so, or makes terms with her. Any children they may have stay with the mother who has to bring them up, for they hold them not to be the children of any man, even if they bear his likeness, and they do not consider them their children, nor are they heirs to their estates, for as I have already stated their heirs are their nephews, sons of their sisters, (which rule whosoever will consider inwardly in his mind will find that it was established with a greater and deeper meaning than the common folk think) for they say that the Kings of the Nayres instituted it in order that the Nayres should not be held back from their service by the burden and labour of rearing children.

“In this Kingdom of Malabar there is also another caste of people whom they call Biabares, Indian Merchants, natives of the land. They were there ere foreign nations had sailed to India. They deal in goods of every kind both in the seaports and inland, where so ever their trade is of most profit. They gather to themselves all the pepper and ginger from the Nayres and husbandmen, and oftentimes they buy the new crops beforehand in exchange for cotton clothes and other goods which they keep at the seaports. Afterwards they sell them again and gain much money thereby. Their privileges are such that the King of the country in which they dwell cannot execute them by legal process.

"There is in this land yet another caste of folk known as Cuiavern. They do not differ from the Nayres, yet by reason of a fault which they committed, they remain separate from them. Their business is to make pottery and bricks for roofing the houses of the Kings and idols, which are roofed with bricks instead of tiles; only these, for as I have already said, other houses are thatched with branches. They have their own sort of idolatry, and their separate idols.

"There is another Heathen caste which they call Mainatos, whose occupation is to wash clothes for the Kings, Bramenes and Nayres. By this they live, and may not take up any other.

"There is another lower caste than these which they call Caletis, who are weavers who have no other way of earning save by weaving of cotton and silk cloths, but they are low caste folk and have but little money, so that they clothe the lower races. They are apart by themselves and have their own idolatry.

"Besides the castes mentioned above, there are eleven others lower than they within whom the others do not associate, nor do they touch them under pain of death; and there are great distinctions between one and another of them, preserving them from mixture with one another. The purest of all these low, simple folk they call Tuias. Their work is mainly that of tending the palm-groves, and gathering the fruit thereof, and carrying it away for wages on their backs, for there are no beasts of burden in the land.

"There is another caste still lower than these whom they call Manen (Mancu in the printed text) who neither associate with others nor touch them, nor do the others touch them. They are washermen for the common people, and makers of sleeping mats, from which occupations all but they are barred; their sons must perforce follow the same trade; they have their own separate idolatry.

"There is another caste in this land still lower whom they call Canaquis. Their trade is making buckles and umbrellas. They learn letters for purposes of astronomy, they are great astrologers, and foretell with great truth things that are to come; there are some lords who maintain them for this cause.

"There is also another lower caste, also Heathens, called Ageres. They are masons, carpenters, smiths, metal workers and some are goldsmiths, all of whom are of a common descent, and a separate caste, and have their idols apart from other folk. They marry, and their sons inherit their property, and learn their fathers' trade.

"There is another caste still lower in this country called Mogeres, they are almost the same as the Tuias, but they do not touch one another. They work as carriers of things belonging to the Royal State when it moves from one place to another, but there are very few of them in this land; they are a separate caste; they have no marriage law; the most of them gain their living on the sea, they are sailors, and some of them fishers; they have no idols. They are as well slaves of the Nayres.

"There is another caste yet lower whom they call Monger, fishers who have no other work than fishing, yet some sail in the Moors' ships and in those of other heathens, and they are very expert seamen. This race is very rude. They are shameless thieves; they marry and their sons succeed them, their women are of loose character, they sleep with any one-so ever, and it is held no evil. They have their own idolatry.

"In this land of Malabar there is another caste of Heathen even lower than these, whom they call Betunes. Their business is salt making and rice growing, they have no other livelihood.

"They dwell in houses standing by themselves in the fields away from the roads, whither the gentlefolk do not walk. They have their own idolatry. They are slaves of the Kings and Nayres and pass their lives in poverty. The Nayres make them walk far away from them and speak to them from afar off. They hold no intercourse with any other caste.

"There is another caste of Heathen, even lower and ruder, whom they call Paneens, who are great sorcerers, and live by no other means.

"There is another caste lower and ruder than they, named Revoleens, a very poor folk, who live by carrying firewood and grass to the towns, they may touch none, nor may any touch them under pain of death. They go naked, covering only their private parts with scant and filthy rags, the more part of them indeed with leaves of certain trees. Their women wear many brass rings in their ears; and on their necks, arms and legs necklaces and bracelets of heads.

"And there is yet another caste of Heathens lower than these whom they call Poleas, who among all the rest are held to be accursed and excommunicate; they dwell in the fields and open campaigns in secret lurking places, whither folk of good caste never go save by mischance, and live in huts very strait and mean. They are tillers of rice with buffaloes and oxen. They never speak to the Nayres save from off, shouting so that they may hear them, and when they go along the roads they utter loud cries, that they may be let past, and whosoever hears them leaves the road, and stands in the wood till they have passed by: and if any one, whether man or woman, touches them his kinsfolk slay them forthwith, and in vengeance



therefore they slay Poleas until they are weary without suffering any punishment.

"Yet another caste there is even lower and baser called Pareens, who dwell in the most desert places away from all other castes. They have no intercourse with any person nor any one with them they are held to be worse than devils, and to be damned. Even to see them is to be unclean and out-caste. They eat yams and other roots of wild plants. They cover their middles with leaves, they also eat the flesh of wild beasts.

"With these end the distinctions between the castes of the Heathen, which are eighteen in all, each one separate and unable to touch others or marry with them; and besides these eighteen castes of the Heathen who are natives of Malabar, which I have now related to you, there are others of outlandish folk, merchants and traders in the land, where they possess houses and estates, living like the natives, yet with customs of their own."

These foreigners were not able to give a full and detailed picture of caste. This is understandable. For to every foreigner the private life of the Hindu is veiled and it is not possible for him to penetrate it. The social organism of India, the play of its motive forces, is moreover, regulated infinitely more by custom, varying according to locality and baffling in its complexity, than by any legal formula which can be picked out of a legal text book. But there is no doubt that caste did appear to the foreigners as the most singular and therefore the most distinguishing feature of Hindu Society. Otherwise they would not have noted its existence in the record they made of what they observed when they came to India.

Caste therefore is something special in the Hindu Social organization and marks off the Hindus from other peoples. Caste has been a growing institution. It has never been the same at all time. The shape and form of caste as it existed when Magasthenes wrote his account was very different from what the shape and form it has taken when Alberuni came and the appearance it gave to the Portuguese was different from what it was in the time of Alberuni. But to understand caste one must have more exact idea of its nature than these foreigners are able to give.

To follow the discussion of the subject of caste it is necessary to familiarise the readers with some basic conceptions, which underlie the Hindu Social organisation. The basic conception of social organisation which prevails among the Hindus starts with the rise of our classes or varnas into which Hindu society is believed to have become divided. These four classes were named: (1) Brahmins, the priestly and the educated class, (2) The Kshatriyas, the Military Class, (3) The Vaishyas, the trading class and, (4) The Shudras, the servant class. For a time these were merely

classes. After a time what were only Classes (Varnas) became Castes (Jatis) and the four castes became four thousand. In this way the modern Caste System was only the evolution of the ancient Varna System.

No doubt the caste system is an evolution of the Varna System. But one can get no idea of the caste system by a study of the Varna System. Caste must be studied apart from Varna.

## 2

An old agnostic is said to have summed up his philosophy in the following words:

"The only thing I know is that I know nothing; and I am not quite sure that I know that"

Sir Denzil Ibbetson undertaking to write about caste in the Punjab said that the words of these agnostic about his philosophy expressed very exactly his own feelings regarding caste. It is no doubt true that owing to local circumstances there does appear a certain diversity about caste matters and that it is very difficult to make any statement regarding any one of the castes absolutely true as it may be as regards one locality which will not be contradicted with equal truth as regards the same caste in some other area.

Although this may be true yet it cannot be difficult to separate the essential and fundamental features of caste from its non-essential superficial features. For easy approach to this to ascertain by asking what are the matters for which a person is liable to be excluded from caste. Mr. Bhattacharya has stated the following as causes for expulsion from caste: (1) Embracing Christianity or Islam, (2) Going to Europe or America, (3) Marrying a widow, (4) Publicly throwing the sacred thread, (5) Publicly eating beef, pork or foul, (6) Publicly eating *Kaccha* food prepared by a Mahomedan, Christian or low caste Hindu, (7) Officiating at the house of a very low caste Sudra, (8) By a female going away from home for immoral purposes and (9) By a widow becoming pregnant. This list is not exhaustive and omits the two most important causes which entail expulsion from caste. They are (10) intermarrying outside caste, (II) Interdining with persons of another caste, (12) Change of occupation. The second defect in the statement of Mr. Bhattacharya is that it does not make any distinction between essentials and (un)<sup>\*</sup>  
[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23.Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_61](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23.Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_61)essentials. Of course when a person is expelled from his caste the penalty is uniform. His friends, relatives, and fellow men refuse to partake of his hospitality. He is not invited to entertainment in their houses. He cannot obtain brides or

bridegrooms for his children. Even his married daughters cannot visit him without running the risk of being excluded from caste. His priest, his barber and washer man refuses to serve him. His fellow caste men sever their connection with him so completely that they refuse to assist him even at the funeral of a member of his household. In some cases the man excluded from caste is debarred access to public temples and to the cremation or burial ground.

These reasons for expulsion from caste indirectly show the rules and regulations of the caste. But all regulations are not fundamental. There are many which are unessential. Caste can exist even without them.

The essential and unessential can be distinguished by asking another question. When can a Hindu who has lost caste regain his caste. The Hindus have a system of *Prayaschitas* which are penances and which a man who has been expelled from caste must perform before he can be admitted to caste fellowship. With regard to these *Prayaschitas* or Penances certain points must be remembered. In the first place there are caste offences for which there is no *Prayaschita*. In the second place the *Prayaschitas* vary according to the offence. In some cases the *Prayaschita* involves a very small penalty. In other cases the penalty involved is a very severe one.

The existing of a *Prayaschita* and its absence have a significance which must be clearly understood. The absence of *Prayaschita* does not mean that any one may commit the offence with impunity. On the contrary it means that the offence is of an immeasurable magnitude and the offender once expelled is beyond reclamation. There is no reentry for him in the caste from which he is expelled. The existence of a *Prayaschita* means that the offence is compoundable. The offender can take the prescribed *Prayaschita* and obtain admission in the caste from which he is expelled.

There are two offences for which there is no penance. These are (1) change from Hindu Religion to another religion, (2) Marriage with a person of another caste or another religion. It is obvious if a man loses caste for these offences he loses it permanently.

Of the other offences the *Prayaschitas* prescribed are of the severest kind are two: (1) Interdining with a person of another caste or a non-Hindu and (2) Taking to occupations which is not the occupation of the caste. In the case of the other offences the penalty is a light one almost nominal.

The surest clue to find out what are the fundamental rules of caste and what caste consists in is furnished by the rules regarding *Prayaschitas*. Those for the infringement of which there is no *Prayaschita* constitute the very soul of caste and those for the infringement of which the *Prayaschita* is of the severest kind make up the body of caste. It may therefore be said without

any hesitation that there are four fundamental rules of caste. A caste may be defined as a social group having (a) belief in Hindu Religion and bound by certain regulations as to, (b) marriage, (c) food and (d) occupation. To this one more characteristic may be added namely a social group having a common name by which it is recognised.

In the matter of marriage the regulation lays down that the caste must be endogamous. There can be no intermarriage between members of different castes. This is the first and the most fundamental idea on which the whole fabric of the caste is built up.

In the matter of food the rule is that a person cannot take food from and dine with any person who does not belong to his caste. This means that only those who can intermarry can also interdine. Those who cannot intermarry cannot interdine. In other words caste is an endogamous unit and also a communal unit.

In the matter of occupation the regulation is that a person must follow the occupation which is the traditional occupation of his caste and if the caste has no occupation then he should follow the occupation of his father.

In the matter of status of a person it is fixed and is hereditary. It is fixed because a person's status is determined by the status of the caste to which he belongs. It is hereditary because a Hindu is stamped with the caste to which his parents belonged, a Hindu cannot change his status because he cannot change his caste. A Hindu is born in a caste and he dies a member of the caste in which he is born. A Hindu may lose his status if he loses caste. But he cannot acquire a new or a better or different status.

What is the significance of a common name for a caste? The significance of this will be clear if we ask two questions, which are very relevant, and a correct answer to each is necessary for a complete idea of this institution of caste. Social groups are either organised or unorganised. When the membership of the group and the process of joining and leaving the groups, are the subject of definite social regulations and involve certain duties and privileges in relation to other members of the group then the group is an organised group. A group is a voluntary group in which members enter with a full knowledge of what they are doing and the aims which the association is designed to fulfil. On the other hand there are groups of which an individual person becomes a member without any act of volition, and becomes subject to social regulation and traditions over which he has no control of any kind.

Now it is hardly necessary to say that caste is a highly organised social grouping. It is not a loose or a floating body. Similarly it is not necessary to say that caste is an involuntary grouping. A Hindu is born in a caste and he

dies as a member of that caste. There is no Hindu without caste, cannot escape caste and being bounded by caste from birth to death he becomes subject to social regulations and traditions of the caste over which he has no control.

The significance of a separate name for a caste lies in this, namely it makes caste an organised and an involuntary grouping. A separate and a distinctive name for a caste make caste asking to a corporation with a perpetual existence and a seal of separate entity. The significance of separate names for separate castes has not been sufficiently realised by writers on caste. In doing that they have lost sight of a most distinctive feature of caste social groups there are and there are bound to be in every society. Many social groups in many countries can be equated to various castes in India and may be regarded as their equivalent. Potters, Washermen, Intellectuals, as social groups are every where. But in other countries they have remained as unorganised and voluntary groups while in India they have become organised and involuntary i.e. they have become castes is because in other countries the social groups were not given name while in India they did. It is the name which the caste bears which gives it fixate and continuity and individuality. It is the name which defines who are its members and in most cases a person born in a caste carries the name of the caste as apart of his surname. Again it is the name which makes it easy for the caste to enforce its rules and regulations. It makes it easy in two ways. In the first place, the name of the caste forming a surname of the individual prevents the offender in passing off as a person belonging to another caste and thus escape the jurisdiction of the caste. Secondly, it helps to identify the offending individual and the caste to whose jurisdiction he is subject so that he is easily handed up and punished for any breach of the caste rules.

This is what caste means. Now as to the caste system. This involves the study of the mutual relations between different castes. Looked at as a collection of caste the caste system presents several features, which at once strike the observer. In the first place there is no inter-connection between the various castes, which form a systems each caste is separate and distinct. It is independent and sovereign in the disposal of its internal affairs and the endorsement of caste Regulations. The castes touch but they do not interpenetrate. The second feature relates to the order in which one caste stands in relation to the other castes in the system. That order is vertical and not horizontal.

In other words castes are not equal in status. Their order is based on inequality. One caste is higher or lower in relation to another. Castes form



an hierarchy in which one caste is at the top and is the highest, another at the bottom and it is the lowest and in between there are castes every one of which is at once above some caste and below some caste, The caste system is a system of gradation in which every caste except the highest and the lowest has a priority and precedence over some other caste:

How is this precedence or this superiority determined? This order of superiority and inferiority or this insubordination is determined by Rules (1) which are connected with religious rites and (2) which are connected with commonality.

Religion as a basis of Rules of precedence manifests itself in three ways. Firstly through religious ceremonies, secondly through incantations that accompany the religious ceremonies and thirdly through the position of the priest.

Beginning with the ceremonies as a source of rules of precedence it should be noted that the Hindu Scriptures prescribe sixteen religious ceremonies. Although those are Hindu ceremonies every Hindu Caste cannot by right claim to perform all the sixteen ceremonies. Few can claim the right to perform all. Some are allowed to perform certain ceremonies, some are not allowed to perform certain of the ceremonies. For instance take the ceremony of Upanayan, wearing the sacred thread. Some castes can't. Precedence follows this distinction in the matters of right to perform the ceremonies. A caste which can claim to perform all the ceremonies is higher in status than the caste which has a right to perform a few.

Turning to the Mantras it is another source for rules of precedence. According to the Hindu Religion the same ceremony can be performed in three different ways: (1) Vedokta, (2) Shastrokta and (3) Puranokta. In the Vedokta form the ceremony is performed with Mantras (incantations) from the Vedas. In the Shastrokta form the ceremony is performed with Mantras (incantations) from the Shastras. In the Puranokta form the ceremony is performed with Mantras (incantations) from the Puranas. Hindu Religious Scriptures fall into three distinct categories: (1) The Vedas which are four, (2) The Shastras which are six and (3) The Puranas which are eighteen. Although they are all respected as scriptures they do not all have the same sanctity. The Vedas have the highest sanctity. The Shastras stand next in order of sanctity and the Puranas have the lowest sanctity. The way the Mantras give rise to social precedence will be obvious if it is borne in mind that not every caste is entitled to have the ceremony performed in the Vedokta form. Three castes may well claim the right to the performance of one of the sixteen ceremonies. But it will be that one of it is entitled to perform it in the Vedokta form, another in the Shastrokta form and the

third only in the Puranokta form. Precedence goes with the kind of Mantra that a caste is entitled to use in the performance of a religious ceremony. A caste which is entitled to use Vedic Mantra is superior to a caste which is entitled to use Shastrik Mantra and a caste which is entitled to use Shastrik Mantras is higher than a caste which is entitled to use only Puranokta Mantras.

Taking the priest as third source of precedence connected with Religion Hinduism requires the instrumentality of a priest for the derivation of the full benefit from the performance of a religious ceremony. The priest appointed by the scriptures is the Brahmin. A Brahmin therefore is indispensable. But the scriptures do not require that a Brahmin shall accept the invitation of any and every Hindu irrespective of his caste to officiate at a religious ceremony. The invitation of which caste he will accept and of which he will refuse is a matter left to the wishes of the Brahmin. By long and well-established custom it is now settled at which caste he will officiate and at which caste he will not. This fact has become the basis of precedence as between castes. The caste at which a Brahmin will officiate is held as superior to a caste at whose religious functions a Brahmin will not officiate.

The second source for rules of precedence is commonality. It will be noticed that rules of marriage have not given rise to rules of precedence as rules of commonality have. The reason lies in the distinction between the rules prohibiting intermarriage and interdining. That difference is obvious. The prohibition on intermarriage is such that it can not only be respected but it can be carried out quite strictly. But the prohibition of interdining creates difficulties. It cannot be carried out quite strictly in all places and under all circumstances. Man migrates and must migrate from place to place. In every place he happens to go he may not find his castemen. He may find himself landed in the midst of strangers. Marriage is not a matter of urgency but food is. He can wait for getting himself married till he returns to the society of his castemen. But he cannot wait for his food. He must find it from somewhere and from someone. Question arises from which caste he can take food if he has to. The rule is that he will take food from a caste above his but will not take food from a caste, which is below his. There is no way of finding how it came to be decided that a Hindu can take food from one caste and not from another. By long series of precedent every Hindu knows from what caste he can take food and from what caste he cannot. This is determined chiefly by the rule followed by the Brahmin. A caste is higher or lower according as the Brahmin takes from it food or not. In this connection the Brahmin has a very elaborate set of

rules in the matter of food and water. (1) He will take only water from some and not from others. (2) A Brahmin will not take food cooked in water by any caste. (3) He will take only food cooked in oil from some castes. Again he has as a set of rules in the matter of the vessel, in which he will accept food and water. He will take food or water in an earthen vessel from some caste, only in metallic vessel from some and only in glass vessel from others. This goes to determine the level of the caste. If he takes food cooked in oil from a caste its status is higher than the caste from which he will not. If he takes water from a caste it is higher than the caste from which he will not. If he takes water in a metallic vessel that caste is higher than the caste from which he will take water in an earthen vessel and the caste from which he will take water in an earthen vessel is higher than the caste from which he will take water in a glass vessel. Glass is a substance which is called *Nirlep* (which conserves no stain) therefore a Brahmin can take water in it even from the lowest. But other metals do conserve stains. Contaminating character of the stain depends upon the status of the person who has used it. That status depends upon the Brahmin's will to accept water in that vessel.

These are some of the factors which determine the place and status of a caste in this Hindu hierarchical system of castes.

Such is caste and such is caste system. Question is, is this enough to know the Hindu Social Organisation. For a static conception of the Hindu Social Organisation an idea of the caste and the caste system is enough. One need not trouble to remember more than the facts that the Hindus are divided into castes and that the castes form a system in which all hang on a thread which runs through the system in such a way that while encircling and separating one caste from another it holds them all as though as it was a string of tennis balls hanging one above the other. But this will not be enough to understand caste as a dynamic phenomenon. To follow the workings of caste in action it is necessary to note one other feature of caste besides the caste system, namely class-caste system.

The relationship between the ideas of caste and class has been a matter of lively controversy. Some say that caste is analogous to class. Others hold that the idea of caste is analogous to class and that there is no difference between the two. Others hold that the idea of caste is fundamentally opposed to that of class. This is an aspect of the subject of caste about which more will be said hereafter. For the present it is necessary to emphasis one feature of the caste system which has not been referred to here in before. It is this. Although caste is different from and opposed to the notion of class yet the caste-system as distinguished from caste

recognises a class system which is somewhat different from the graded status referred to above. Just as the Hindus are divided into so many castes, castes are divided into different classes of castes. The Hindu is caste conscious. He is also class conscious. Whether he is caste conscious or class conscious depends upon the caste with which he comes in conflict. If the caste with which he comes in conflict is a caste within the class to which he belongs he is caste conscious. If the caste is outside the class to which he belongs he is class conscious. Any one who needs any evidence on this point may study the Non-Brahmin Movement in the Madras and Bombay Presidency. Such a study will leave no doubt that to a Hindu caste periphery is as real as class periphery and caste consciousness is as real as class-consciousness.

Caste, it is said, is an evolution of the Varna System. I will show later on that this is nonsense. Caste is a perversion of Varna, at any rate it is an evolution in the opposite direction. But while Caste has completely perverted the Varna System it has borrowed the class system from the Varna System. Indeed the Class-Caste System follows closely the class cleavages of the Varna System.

Looking at the caste system from this point of view one comes across several lines of class cleavage which run through this pyramid of castes dividing the pyramid into blocks of castes. The first line of cleavage follows the line of division noticeable in the ancient Chaturvarna system. The old system of Chaturvarna made a distinction between the first three Varnas, the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and the forth Varna namely the Shudras. The three former were classes as the Regenerate classes. The Shudra was held as the unregenerate class. This distinction was based upon the fact that the former were entitled to wear the sacred thread and study the Vedas. The Shudra was entitled to neither and that is why he was regarded as the unregenerate class. This line of cleavage is still in existence and forms the basis of the present day class division separating the castes which have grown out of the vast class of Shudras from those which have grown out of the three classes of Brahmins, the Kashatriyas and Vaishyas. This line of class cleavage is the one which is expressed by the terms High Castes and Low Castes and which are short forms for High Class Castes and Low Class Castes.

Next after this line of cleavage there runs through the pyramid a second line of class cleavage. It runs just below the Low Class Castes. It sets above all the castes born out of the four Varnas i.e. The High Castes as well as the Low Castes above the remaining Castes, which I will merely describe as the 'rest'. This line of class cleavage is again a real one and follows the well

defined distinction which was a fundamental principle of the Chaturvarna System. The Chaturvarna System as is pointed out made a distinction between the four Varnas putting the three Varnas above the fourth. But it also made an equally clear distinction between those within the Chaturvarna and those outside the Chaturvarna. It had a terminology to express this distinction. Those within the Chaturvarna high or low. Brahmins or Shudras were called *Savarna* i.e. those with the stamp of the Varna. Those outside the Chaturvarna were called *Avarna* i.e. those without the stamp of Varna. All the Castes, which have evolved out of the four Varnas, are called *Savarna Hindus*—which is rendered in English by the term caste Hindus. The 'rest' are the *Avarnas* who in present parlance spoken of by Europeans as Non-Caste Hindus i.e. those who are outside the 4 original castes or Varnas.

Much that is written about the Caste System has reference mostly to the Caste-System, among the *Savarna Hindus*. Very little is known about the *Avarna Hindus*. Who are these *Avarna Hindus*, what is their position in Hindu Society, how are they related to the *Savarna Hindus*, are questions to which no attention has so far been paid. I am sure that without considering these questions no one can get a true picture of the social structure the Hindus have built. To leave out the Class cleavage between the *Savarna Hindus* and the *Avarna Hindus* is to relate Grimm's Fairy Tale which leaves out the witches, the goblins and the ogres.

The *Avarna Hindus* comprise three divisions (1) Primitive Castes, (2) Criminal Castes and (3) The Untouchable Castes. The total population of persons comprising these three classes is by no means small. The population of the Primitive Tribes in India according to the Census of 1931 is stated to be about 25 millions. The total population of persons listed as Criminal is somewhere about 4 1/2 millions. The total population of Untouchables in 1931 was about 50 millions. The grand total of these three comes to 79 1/2 millions.

What is the relation of the *Savarna Castes* to the *Avarna Castes*? The cleavage between the *Savarna Castes* and the *Avarna Castes* is not uniform in its consequences with the result that the position created is not easy to grasp. The line of the cleavage running between the *Savarna Castes* and the *Avarna Castes* produces a relationship between the *Savarna Castes* and the two *Avarna Castes*—the Primitive and the Criminal Castes which is different from the relationship which it produces between the *Savarna Castes* and the last of the *Avarna Castes* namely the Untouchables. This line of cleavage between the *Savarna Castes* and the first two of the *Avarna Castes* is a cleavage between kindred and friends. It does not make



intercourse on respectful terms between the two impossible. The cleavage between the Savarna Castes and the Untouchables is of a different kind. It is a cleavage between two non-kindred and hostile groups. There is no possibility of friendly intercourse on respectable terms.

What is the significance of this line of cleavage? On what is it based? Although the cleavage is definite the basis of it has not been defined. But it seems that the basis of cleavage is the same as that which exists between the Dwijas and the Shudras. Like the Shudras the Avarna Castes are composed of unregenerate people. They are not twice born and have no right to wear the sacred thread. This also brings out two facts which otherwise are lost sight of. The first fact is that the difference between the Shudra Castes of the Savarna division of cast's and the Primitive and the Criminal Castes of the Avarna division is very thin. Both are touchable and both are unregenerate. The difference is one of cultural development. But although the cultural difference between the two sections is great—as great as there is between a highly cultured and the unmitigated barbarian—from the point of view of the orthodox Hindu, the difference between them is one of degree. It is to mark this difference in culture that the Hindus invented a new terminology which recognised two classes of Shudras, (1) Sat-Shudras and (2) Shudras. Calling the old body of Shudras as Sat Shudras or cultured Shudras and using the term Shudras to those comprising the Primitive Castes who had come within the pale of Hindu Civilisation. The new terminology did not mean any difference in the rights and duties of Shudras. The distinction pointed out those Shudras who were fit for associated life with the Dwijas and those who were less fitted for it.

What is the relation of Avarna Castes to one another? Do they exist as mere collection of castes or have they any class cleavages? They are certainly mere collection of Castes. There are certainly lines of class cleavages running through this block of Avarna Castes. Whether there is a line of class cleavage running between the Primitive Castes and the Criminal Castes may be a matter of some doubt. Perhaps the line is faint. But there is no doubt that there is a very definite a very broad and a very emphatic line of cleavage between the Primitive Castes and the Criminal Castes and the Untouchables. The former two have a very clear notion that they are the higher classes and the Untouchables are the lower classes within this block of Avarna Castes.

The discussion carried on so far reveals three characteristic features of Hindu Social Organisation: (1) Caste, (2) A hierarchical System of Castes and (3) A Class System cutting into the Caste System. Undoubtedly the structure is a very complicated one and it is perhaps difficult for one who

has not been woven into it to form a true mental picture of the same. Perhaps a diagrammatic presentation may be helpful. I give below one such representation which in my judgment is calculated to give the idea of this social structure of the Hindus.

A Caste Hindus : C Caste Hindus		: E	Non-Caste Hindus Avarna Castes '	G Non-caste Hindus
Savarna Castes	Savarna Castes			
Class 1	Class 11		Class III	Class IV
High Castes Dwijas— Castes evolved out of	Low Caste : Shudras-' Castes evolved		Primitive Castes Criminal Castes	Untouchables
the three Varnas.	out of the			
Brahmins,	4th Varna			
Kshatriyas and Vaishas.	namely Shudras.	1		

*This diagram is left blank in the MS.—Ed.*

This diagram presents a Class-Caste-System of the Hindus and is so drawn as to give a true and a complete picture of their social organisation. This diagram brings out several of its important features. It shows that there are two divisions of Hindus (1) Savarna Hindus and (II) Avarna Hindus. It shows that within the first division there are two classes of Castes (1) Dwijas and (2) Shudras and within the second division there are two Classes of castes (1) Primitive and Criminal Castes and (2) The Untouchable Castes. The next thing to note is that each caste is enclosed and separated from the rest a fact which is not shown in the diagram each of the four classes of Castes is grouped together and placed within a class enclosure. This enclosure segregates a class of a Caste and marks it off from another class. A class of Castes is not as organised as a Caste is. But a feeling of Class is there. The third thing to note is the nature of partitions used for the enclosures. They are of various strengths, some are

permanent, some are temporary. The partition between the Dwijas Castes and the Shudras Castes is not a partition at all. It is only a curtain. It is not a partition at all. It is intended to keep them aloof. It is not intended to cut them as under. The line of cleavage between the Shudra Castes and the first two of the Avarna Castes is a regular partition. But it is both thin and small. It can be jumped over. The partition separates but does not cause severance. But the partition between these three classes and the Untouchables is a real and irremovable partition. It is a barbed wire fence and its intention is to mark a severance. To express the same thing in a different way the first three enclosures are so placed that they are one within the other. The first partition between the Dwijas and the Shudra Castes may be removed the two become the occupants of one enclosure instead of two separate enclosures. Similarly the second partition may be removed in which case the Castes which are Dwija, Shudra, Primitive and Criminal form one whole—if not a single whole—occupying one single enclosure. But the third partition can never be removed. Because all three Classes of Castes are united on one issue namely that they shall not be *one* (*This space is left blank in the typed copy of MS. The word 'one' is introduced by us.—Ed.*) with the Untouchables as one united body of people. There is a bar sinister, which serves the Untouchables from the rest and compels them to be apart and outside.

The diagram shows the different Classes of Castes one above the other. This is done to mark the hierarchy, which is an important feature of the Caste System. I have described the two classes of the Savarna Castes as High Class Castes and Low Class Castes. But I have not described the other two classes of Avarna Castes as lower Class Castes and lowest Class Castes. In a sense this would have been correct. In general social esteem they are no doubt lower and lowest in status. But in another sense this would not be appropriate. The terminology of high, low, lower and lowest assumes that they are parts of one whole. But are the Avarna Castes and the Savarna Castes parts of one whole? They were not. The Primitive and the Criminal Castes were not in contemplation when the plan of the Varna System, the parent of the present caste system, was laid. Consequently nothing is said about their status and position in the rules of the Varna System. But that is not the case with the Untouchables. They were within the contemplation of the Varna System and the Rule of the Varna System with regard to the Untouchables is very clear and very definite. The rule as laid down by Manu the Hindu Law giver is that there are only four Varnas and that there is not to be a fifth Varna. The reformers who are friends of Mr. Gandhi in his campaign for removal of Untouchability are

endeavouring to give a new meaning to the statement of Manu. They say that Manu has been misunderstood. According to Manu there is no fifth Varna and therefore he intended to include the Untouchables into the 4th Varna namely the Shudras. But this is an obvious perversion. What Manu meant was there were originally four Varnas and four they must remain. He was not going to admit the Untouchables into the House the ancient Hindus had built by enlarging the Varna System to consist of five Varnas. That is what he meant when he said that there is not to be a fifth Varna. That he wanted the Untouchables to remain out of the Hindu social structure is clear from the name by which he describes the Untouchables. He speaks of them as Varna—Bahyas (those outside the Varna System). That is the difference between the Primitive and Criminal Castes and the Untouchables. There being no positive injunction against their admission in Hindu Society they may in course of time become members of it. At present they are linked to Hindu Society and hereafter they may become integrated into it and become part of it. But the case of the Untouchables is different. There is positive injunction against their incorporation in Hindu Society. There is no room for reform. They must remain separate and segregated without being a part of the Hindu Society. The Untouchables are not a part of the Hindu Society. And if they are a part they are a part but not of the whole. The idea showing the connection between the Hindus and the Untouchables was accurately expressed by Ainapure Shastri the leader of the orthodox Hindus at a Conference held in Bombay. He said that the Untouchables were related to the Hindus as a man is to his shoe. A man wears a shoe. In that sense it is attached to man and may be said to be a part of the man. But it is not part of the whole for two things that can be attached and detached can't be said to form parts of one whole. The analogy though is none the less accurate.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE ROCK ON WHICH IT IS BUILT

Hindu Society is a house of Castes. Hindus are not a people. They are the aggregates of groups of people formed into castes. This is its peculiarity. This is what has struck the stream of foreigners who have visited India in the course of history. Notwithstanding this there are however people who endeavour to say that there is nothing peculiar about caste. For instance Prof. Baines remarks:

"There is little in the system which is not to be found, or which has not at some time or other existed, in other countries, even of the West, though it

has there been long ago worn away by other influences. The crystallisation of certain bodies into definite orders or classes, for instance, is a common, almost a universal, trait and among them the tendency to become hereditary and as exclusive or aspiring as circumstances allow may almost be called natural". The argument may be strengthened by reference to the social organisation of Primitive peoples. In Primitive Society man is never found alone.

The commonest and therefore the most natural condition of men are to live in-groups. This social grouping has taken many forms in the course of history. The family is one such social group which is universal and which has survived. The group larger than the immediate family was the clan. In its lowest terms, the clan (which also called kin, sept or sib) was supposed to be a group of individuals related to one another either through the mother or through the father. Far distant cousins might be considered in the relationship, and were regarded as members of the group. Again, the relationship may be purely fictitious, but from the social point of view this was as real a bond as that made by common blood. The next larger division than the clan is a social grouping of the clans. When the clans are organised into two groups each group is called a moiety. When it is organised in more than two groups each is called a phratry. This dual system was not by any means world-wide in distribution and the functions which the phratry or the moiety was intended to perform are not quite definitely known. But there is no doubt that each moiety and phratry was a social grouping in which there was a feeling of brotherhood between the members of clans associated together. The tribal groups come next. There were wide differences in the nature, character and structure of tribes. Tribes may be made up of village communities with no divisions into clans or moieties. They may have clans and no moieties, or moieties and no clans; or they may have both moieties and clans. Tribal consciousness was sometimes strong or some time weak. Although in the formation of tribal groups there was neither a definite rule nor a single line of evolution, there were certain common features present namely a common dialect, common customs, a more or less definite territory and some form of Government to which the whole tribe was present. Larger than the tribe was the confederacy or union of Tribes. But this was very uncommon. A loose and informal alliance to meet some specific danger may bring about a union of tribes. It is very seldom that a definite compact is found among the primitive peoples. The famous Iroquois confederacy is one of the exceptions.

These are social groups based either upon the idea of kindred or on that of locality. There were groups among primitive peoples, where the cleavage



is along other lines. These other lines of grouping took as its basis sex, age or some other criteria. As a form of social grouping, there is nothing new or nothing peculiar in this institution of caste. A caste is like a clan and like the clan it is only a form of social grouping.

The analogy between caste and clan may be admitted although it must be strongly insisted that as to meaning and purpose, caste is antagonistic to clan. There is no clan system comparable to the caste system. There is no gradation of clans as there is no Class-Clan System to match the Class-Caste System. Indeed the clan organisation of the Primitive people is a complete antithesis of the caste organisation of the Hindus. I admit the analogy only to drive my point. To my mind the question whether the institution of caste is natural or unnatural, peculiar or common is no doubt an interesting and instructive. But it is not as important as the question I want to raise. That question is why has caste endured, remained in tact when similar social groupings which were existing in other countries have vanished with the growth of civilisation.

The Romans had a Social organisation very similar to the Hindus. When all similar institutions have vanished why has caste alone endured? Why do people obey its rules, what is the sanction for Caste?

Obedience by men to rules of society is everywhere secured by means of four sanctions. They are (1) the natural, (2) popular, (3) legal and (4) religious. Which of these supports the caste system? But before going into that question it would be desirable to describe the manner each of these sanctions operates.

The natural sanction operates through habit. When a person is habituated to act in a certain way nothing is required to force him to act in that way. He becomes automation and the regularity of the act is guaranteed as a matter of routine.

Popular sanction works through public opinion. It was the sense of approbation and disapprobation prevalent in Society in relation to certain ways and practices. A certain way becomes folkway and Acts in conformity with an established folkway, receives approbation and an Act contrary to it is regarded with disapprobation.

There is nothing special either in the natural sanction or popular sanction. They are to be found everywhere and behind everything that is social in its import. Their native force is precarious and wherever it possesses more than its ordinary efficacy it is only when they are derived from either of the other two sanctions. Legal sanction and Religious sanction are the only two sanctions, which are capable of sustaining any given institution.

There is no doubt that caste had the sanction of Hindu Law. Every Hindu Law Book has recognised Caste as a legal institution a breach of which was an offence and entailing punishment. The Law Book of Manu called Manav Dharma Shastra is the oldest and the most authoritative Law Book of the Hindus. It would be enough to quote from it texts showing that Caste was recognised by Law.

Manu, the Hindu Lawgiver gives legal recognition to the institution of the four Varnas. To lay down the law of the four Varnas seems to be the principal object of Manu's code. This is clear from the opening verses of the Code. They state that:

I.1. The great sages approached Manu, who was seated with a collected mind, and, having duly worshipped him spoke as follows:

I.2."Deign, divine one, to declare to us precisely and in due order the sacred laws of each of the (four chief) castes (varna) and of the intermediate ones."

Not only he gives it his legal sanction, he makes it incumbent upon the King to uphold the institution:

VII.35. The king has been created (to be) the protector of the castes (varna) and orders, who, all according to their rank, discharge their several duties."

VIII.24. All castes (varna) would be corrupted (by intermixture), all barriers would be broken through, and all men would rage (against each other) in consequence of mistakes with respect to punishment."

Manu makes breach of Caste a sin and prescribes three different punishments to one who has become a Patit by loss of caste.

The first punishment is punishment after death. Manu says:

"XII.60. He who has associated with outcasts, he who has approached the wives of other men, and he who has stolen the property of a Brahmana becomes Brahmarakshasa." In this life the punishment which a Patit has to undergo was twofold. One was excommunication. The nature and character of excommunication prescribed by Manu has been prescribed by him in the following terms:

"XI. 181. He who associates with an outcast, himself becomes an outcast after a year, not by sacrificing for him, teaching him, or forming a matrimonial alliance with him, but by using the same carriage or seat, or by eating with him.

"XI. 182. He who associates with any one of those outcasts, must perform, in order to atone for (such) intercourse, the penance prescribed for that (sinner).

"XI. 183. The Sapindas and Samanodakas of an outcast must offer (a libation of) water (to him, as if he were dead), outside (the village), on an inauspicious day, in the evening and in the presence of the relatives, officiating priests, and teachers.

"XI. 184. A female slave shall upset with her foot a pot filled with water, as if it were for a dead person; (his Sapindas) as well as the Samanodakas shall be impure for a day and a night.

"XI. 185. But thenceforward it shall be forbidden to converse with him, to sit with him, to give him a share of the inheritance, and to hold with him such intercourse as is usual among men.". The other was disinheritance.

"IX.201. Eunuchs and outcasts, (persons) born blind or deaf, the insane, idiots and the dumb, as well as those deficient in any organ (of action or sensation), receive no share".

"XI. 186. And (if he be the eldest) his right of primogeniture shall be withheld and the additional share, due to the eldest son, and in his stead a younger brother, excelling in virtue, shall obtain the share of the eldest".

The only way to avoid these two punishments of excommunication and disinheritance was to do penance in the prescribed form. Penance was the only remedy. Says Manu:

"XI. 187. But when he has performed his penance, they shall bathe with him in a holy pool and throw down a new pot, filled with water.

"XI. 188. But he shall throw that pot into water, enter his house and perform, as before, all the duties incumbent on a relative".

There was a distinction between a male Patit and a female Patit. Neither was exempt. The Rule applies to both, for Manu says:

"XI. 189. Let him follow the same rule in the case of female outcast; but clothes, food, and drink shall be given to them, and they shall live close to the (family) house". There can be no doubt that the legal sanction was powerful sanction. The punishment prescribed by law for breach of Caste was two folds. It involved excommunication and loss of right to inherit. How formidable these punishments were has been well described by Sir Thomas Strange in his treatise on Hindu Law. Referring to the subject he says:

"It remains to consider one case, that may be said to be, with reference to personal delinquency, *instar omnium*—occurring in every enumeration on the subject as a cause of exclusion, namely: degradation, or the case of the outcaste. Accompanied with certain ceremonies, its effect is, to exclude him from all social intercourse, to suspend in him every civil function, to disqualify him for all the offices, and all the charities of life;—he is to be deserted by his connections, who are from the moment of the sentence

attaching upon him, to desist from speaking to him, from sitting in his company, from delivering to him any inherited, or other property, and from every civil or usual attention, as inviting him on the first day of the year, or the like, so that a man under these circumstances, might as well be dead; which, indeed, the Hindu Law considers him to be, directing libations to be offered to Manes, as though he were naturally so. This system of privations, mortifying as it must be, was enforced under the ancient law, by denouncing a similar fate to any one, by whose means they were endeavoured to be eluded; but this severity was moderated at the beginning of the present age, in which it is said "the sinner alone bears his guilt", the law deeming so seriously of non-intercourse, that if one who ought to associate at meals with another, refuses to do so, without sufficient cause, he is punishable. And, in the Bombay reports, there is an instance of an action of damages, for a malicious expulsion from caste.

The analogy between degradation by the Hindu law, and excommunication, as it prevailed formerly among us, holds, not merely in the general nature and effect of the proceeding, but in the peculiar circumstance of the one and the other being two-fold. As, with us, there was the less, and the greater excommunication, so, of offences considered with reference to their occasioning exclusion from inheritance among the Hindus, they may also be regarded in a two-fold point of view.

This we learn from a case that was before the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut of Bengal, in 1814, in which the official Pundits, having been referred to, distinguished between "those which involve partial and temporary degradation, and those which are followed by loss of caste", observing that "in the former state, that of partial degradation, when the offence which occasions it is expiated, the impediment to succession is removed; but in the latter, where the degradation is complete, although the sinfulness of the offence may be removed by expiatory penance, yet the impediment to succession still remains, because a person finally excluded from his tribe must ever continue to be an outcaste".

In the case alluded to, the party in question having been guilty of a series of profligate and abandoned conduct, having been shamefully addicted to spirituous liquors, having been in the habit of associating and eating with persons of the lowest description, and most infamous character; having wantonly attacked and wounded several people at different times; having openly cohabited with a woman of the Mahomedan persuasion; and having set fire to the dwelling house of his adoptive mother, whom he had more than once attempted to destroy by other means", the Pundits declared that "of all the offences proved to have been committed by Sheannauth,

one only, namely, that of cohabiting with a Mahomedan woman, was of such a nature, as to subject him to the penalty of expulsion from his tribe irrevocably," and of this opinion was the Court.

The power to degrade is, in the first instance, with the Castes themselves, assembled for the purpose, from whose sentence, if not acquiesced in, there lay an appeal to the King's Courts. In the case that has been cited, the question arose incidentally, upon a claim of inheritance, and that case shews that the power amounts to a species of Censorship, applicable to the morals of the people, in instances to which the law, strictly speaking, would not perhaps otherwise extend. The sentences can be inflicted only for offences committed by the delinquent in his existing state; and, where the offence is of an inferior nature, to justify it, it must have been repeated. What distinguishes degradation from other causes of exclusion is, that it extends its effects to the son, who is involved in his father's forfeiture, if born subsequent to the act occasioning it. Born before, he is entitled to inherit, and takes, as though his father were dead.

Whereas, in every other instance of exclusion, the son, if not actually in the same predicament with his father, succeeds, maintaining him; the same right extending as far as the great grandson. And, with regard to the father, or delinquent himself, where the exclusion from inheriting is not for natural defects, the cause must have arisen, previous to the division, or descent of the property; if it do not occur till after, the succession is not divested by it. Hence, adultery in the wife during coverture, bars her right of inheritance; divesting it also, after it has vested; the Hindu widow resembling, in this respect, the condition of ours in most instances of copyhold dower, and holding it, like her, *Dum casta fuerit* only; according to an opinion of great respectability, that for loss of caste, unexpiated by penance, and unredeemed by atonement, it is forfeited. In general, the law of disqualification applies alike to both sexes.

"It appearing, then, that the incapacity to inherit, except in the instance of the outcaste, is personal merely; that one excluded may be said, in every case, to be entitled to be maintained; and that, in most, it is in his power, at any time, to restore himself to his rights; whatever may be thought of the wisdom of some of these provisions, it cannot be said that they are universally destitute of justice, or, in any instance, totally devoid of humanity. Nor, in comparing this part of the law with our own, ought we to forget, that the latter has made none, for preventing the absolute disinheriting of children by will.

"It will appear, in a subsequent chapter, that, on entry into either of the two religious orders, the devotee (like the professed monk with us before



the Reformation) becomes *Civiliter mortuus*; and the next heir succeeds, as though he were naturally deceased. and, as the devotee himself, abdicating secular concerns, is incapacitated from inheriting, so is the religious pretender, and the eventual Apostate. Under the former term may be included Hypocrites and Impostors, used synonymously for those who, usurping sacred marks, practise austerities with an interested design.

The remaining cause of exclusion to be noticed, is, an Incompetent marriage; that is, where the husband and wife are descended from the same Stock. Such a marriage being incongruous, the issue of it cannot inherit, excepting among Shudras. And the consequence is the same, where the marriage has not been according to the order of Class.

"The heir, or heirs, under no disability, having succeeded to the inheritance, it is next to be seen, to what charge this is liable." Has Caste also a religious sanction? The Vedas recognise Caste. The Rig Vedas recognised Caste and also explains its origin in the following passage:

"1. Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he overpassed (it) by a space of ten fingers.

2. Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever has been and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality, since (or, when) by food he expands.

3. Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existences are a quarter of him; and three fourths of him are that which is immortal sky.

4. With three-quarters Purusha mounted upwards. A quarter of him was again produced here. He was then diffused everywhere over things, which eat, and things, which do not eat.

5. From him was born Viraj, and from Viraj, Purusha. When born, he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before.

6. When the gods performed a sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and autumn its (accompanying) offering.

7. This victim, Purusha, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. With him the gods, the Sadhyas, and the rishis sacrificed.

8. From that universal sacrifice were provided curds and butter. It formed those aerial (creatures) and animals both wild and tame.

9. From that universal sacrifice sprang the *rich* and *saman verses*, the *metres*, and *yajush*.

10. From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; kine sprang from it; from it goats and sheep.

11. When (the gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was his mouth? What arms (had he)? What (two objects) are said (to have been) his thighs and feet?

12. The Brahman was his mouth; the Rajanya was his arms; the being (called) the Vaishya, he was his thighs, the Shudra sprang from his feet.

13. The moon sprang from his soul (manas), the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth and Vayu from his breath.

14. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters; in this manner (the gods) formed the worlds.

15. When the gods, performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven sticks (stuck up) for it (around the fire), and thrice seven pieces of fuel were made.

16. With sacrifice the gods performed the sacrifice. These were the earliest rites. These great powers have sought the sky, where are the former Sadhyas, gods."

The Brahmanas also recognise Caste. In the Satapatha-Brahmanas Caste is mentioned in the following terms:

"23. Brahma (here, according to the commentator, existing in the form of Agni, and representing the Brahman caste was formerly this (universe), one only. Being one, it did not develope. It energetically created an excellent form, the Kshattria, viz., those among the gods, who are powers (Kshattrani), Indra, Varuna, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mrityu, Isana. Hence nothing is superior to the Kshattria. Therefore the Brahman sits below the Kshattriya at the rajasuya-sacrifice; he confers that glory on the Kshattria (the royal power). This, the Brahma, is the source of Kshattria. Hence, although the king attains supremacy, he at the end resorts to the Brahman as his source. Whoever destroys him (the Brahman) destroys his own source. He becomes most miserable, as one who has injured a superior.

24. He did not develope. He created the Vis.—viz., those classes of gods who are designated by troops, Vasus, Rudras, Adityas, Visvedevas, Maruts.

25. He did not develope. He created the Shudra Class, Pushan. This earth is Pushan; for she nourishes all that exists.

26. He did not develope. He energetically created an excellent form, Justice (Dharma). This is the ruler (kshattria) of the ruler (kshattria), namely Justice. Hence nothing is superior to justice. Therefore the weaker seeks (to overcome) the stronger by justice, as by a king. This justice is truth. In consequence they say of a man who speaks truth, 'he speaks justice'; or of man who is uttering justice, 'he speaks truth'. For this are both of these.

27. This is the Brahma, Kshattria, Vis and Sudra. Through Agni it became Brahma among the gods, the Brahman among men, through the (divine) Kshattriya a (human) Kshattriya, through the (divine), Vaishya a (human) Vaisya, through the (divine) Sudra a (human) Sudra. Wherefore it is in Agni among the gods and in a Brahman among men, that they seek after an abode."

Taittiriya Brahmana, i. 2, 6, 7. *daiyyo vai varno brahmanh assuryyo sudrah.*"The Brahman caste is sprung from the gods; the Sudra from the Asuras."

It must be admitted that the legal and the religious sanction were both powerful engines to keep caste going. But there is no doubt that the religious sanction was the primary sanction and caste has been maintained solely by the force of Religious Sanction. This is clear from two circumstances. That the legal sanction was very seldom invoked will have to be admitted. That means that the maintenance of caste was secured by other means. Secondly this legal sanction was in use only till 1850. It was lifted or rather done away with by the Caste Disabilities Removal Act passed in that year by the British Government. Although the legal sanction is withdrawn, caste has gone on without abatement. That could not have happened if caste had not in the Religious Sanction another and more powerful sanction independent of the legal sanction.

That the Religious Sanction is the highest sanction which an institution or a belief can have to support and sustain it, is beyond question. Its power is boundless in its measure and tremendous in its curb. But it is very seldom understood how and whence this Religious Sanction gets this high-grade horsepower. To appreciate this it is necessary to note that the sourpuss of authority behind the Religious Sanction is two-fold.

In the first place what is Religious is also social. To quote Prof. Durkheim\* [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_7](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_7)

"The really religious beliefs are always common to a determined group, which makes profession of adhering to them and of practising the rites connected with them. They are not merely received individually by all the members of this group; they are something belonging to the group, and they make its unity. The individuals which compose it feel themselves united to each other by the simple fact that they have a common faith." In the second place what is Religious is Sacral. To quote Durkheim again: [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_8](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_8)

"All known religious beliefs whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic; they presuppose a classification of all the things,

real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes or, opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms- which are translated well enough by the words *profane* and *sacred* . . . . . In all the history of human thought there exist no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another. The traditional opposition of good and bad is nothing besides this; for the good and the bad are only two opposed species of the same class, namely morals, just as sickness and health are two different aspects of the same order of facts, life, while the Sacred and the profane have always and everywhere been conceived by the human mind as two distinct classes, as two worlds between there is nothing in common. Religious beliefs are the representations which express the nature of sacred things and the relations which they sustain, either with each other or with profane things (while) rites are the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these Sacred objects."

From this it will be clear that the Social, Religious and Sacral beliefs are closely knit. Religious is social though all that is social is not religious. Sacral is social though all that is social is not sacral. On the other hand the religious is both social and sacral.

One source of authority behind the religious sanction comes from the fact, that is, religion is social and the religious beliefs are social beliefs. Religious beliefs are enforced on the individual by the group in the same manner and for the same reasons which leads it to enforce its other non-religious and purely social beliefs. The object is to maintain the integrity of the group and as the integrity of the group is more closely bound up with its religious beliefs, the strictness and severity with which a group punishes the breach of a religious belief is usually greater than the degree of strictness and severity it employs for the chastisement of a person guilty of a breach of a non-religious belief. Social force has an imperative authority before which the individual is often powerless. In the matter of a religious belief the imperative authority of the social force is tempered as steel is by the feeling that it is a breach of a graver kind and gives religious sanction a far greater force than a purely social sanction has.

The Sacral source of the authority behind religious sanction comes primarily from the individual and only secondarily from the group. That is the noteworthy peculiarity of the social source of religious sanction. It prepares the individual to uphold the religious beliefs. It dispenses with the necessity of the group using its social group. That is why the sacral source of its authority makes religious sanction of such high order as to supersede all other sanctions indeed to dispense with them. That is why the Religious

sanction alone becomes sufficient to maintain the integrity of religious beliefs which even time and circumstances have proved powerless to affect. The way this happens is easy to follow. The Sacred inspires in the individual the sentiment of reverence and deference, which he certainly has not for the profane. To use the language of Durkheim,

"The simple defence inspired by men with high social functions is not different in nature from religious respect (for the sacred). It is expressed by the same movements: a man keeps at a distance from high personage; he approaches him only with precautions; in conversing with him, he used other gestures and language than that used with ordinary mortals."

The Sacred creates the sentiment of Reverence. It also creates the sentiment that it is inviolate. When a belief becomes consecrated as a sacred thing, it is forbidden to touch it, to deny it or to contest it. There is a prohibition of criticism of the Sacred. The Sacred is 'untouchable and above discussion'. When an individual is saturated with these sentiments, when these sentiments become a part of his being, he himself becomes an upholder and protector of what he is taught to regard as something sacred.

This is exactly what the Hindus have done in the matter of Caste. They have given caste a place in the Vedas. Caste has thereby become sacred because the Vedas are Sacred. It would be wrong to say that the Vedas are sacred because they are religious. The position is that they are religious because they are sacred.

It might appear that the Hindus have no name for the Veda directly expressing the feeling of sacredness, which the Hindu entertains towards the Vedas. Veda simply means knowledge. That may be so. But there can be no doubt that they regard the Vedas as sacred. Indeed the term they apply to Vedas expresses a far greater degree of reverence than the word sacred does. They call the Vedas *Shruti*, which means the word of God heard by (i.e. revealed to) man. In the primitive religion the Sacred is what man has made. In the Hindu religion the Sacred is what God has appointed it to be.

The Hindus regard the Vedas as the Sacred Book of their religion. They put the Vedas in a class by themselves. The Hindus hold [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_9](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_9) that there are cycles of creations called *Kalpas*. At the end of every cycle there is a deluge and a new cycle of creation begins. At the end of a *Kalpa*, the Vedas are destroyed in the deluge. At the beginning of every *Kalpa* they are revealed by God. Accordingly the *Vedas* were destroyed in the deluge at the end of the last *Kalpa* and that the beginning of the present *Kalpa* commencing with the



*Krita Yug*, they were revealed by God to the *Rishis*. The Vedas are regarded by the Hindus as *Nitya* (eternal) *Anadi* (beginningless) and *Apaurusheya* (not made by man), In short the Vedas are the words of God and constitute God's ordinances to man.

Even if the Vedas were not called *Shruti* they would have had the impressiveness of the 'Sacred'. Religions have been variously classified by Prof. Max Muller.[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_10](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_10) Natural as against Revealed is one way of classifying them. Individual as against National is another way. The third way of classifying them is to call them Atheistic, Deistic, Dualistic, Polytheistic, Monotheistic, Henotheistic and Animistic. True and False is also another way of classifying Religions. Bookless Religions and Religions with books are two classes into which Religion could be grouped. This probably does not exhaust the ways of classifying Religions. For there remains one more distinction to be made, namely Religions which have founders and religions which have no founders.

These distinctions have social significance except two. They are the distinctions between Natural and Revealed and that between Bookless Religion and Book Religion. They differ in their function although that difference is not often noted.

The Book religion has a definite advantage over a Bookless religion. A Book religion is a Religion with a written constitution. A Bookless Religion is a Religion without a written constitution. A book religion creates the impression that it is true which a bookless religion cannot. By comparison with a book religion, a bookless religion wears the inferiority complex of being false. In the language of Max Muller Religions with books are alone "considered as real religions, and though they may contain false doctrines, they are looked upon as a kind of aristocracy to whom much may be forgiven, while the vulgar crowd of bookless or illiterate religions are altogether out of Court".[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_11](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_11) It is easy to understand the superiority accorded to a religion with a book over a bookless religion. When 'black on white' has become synonymous with true, it may seem very natural that a religion which is written, which is something black on white is not false. The Book serves as the voucher for truth. A religion without a book has no voucher.

The social significance of a religion with a book lies in the fact that it controls the mind of the people by giving them the impression that the religion contained in the book is true. It gives Religion authority over people and induces willing obedience in them.

But however a Religion may appear to be true by reason of the fact that it is a book religion, such appearance cannot save Religion from going under, if beliefs and rites empirically erroneous have crept into it. Man may go wrong in theory but his practical instincts will seldom allow him to go after a wrong theory for a long time. Unless therefore the religious beliefs of a social group are true, practically Religion must in the long run give way.

Herein comes the social significance of the distinction between Natural Religion and Revealed Religion. A Revealed Religion has superiority over Natural Religion. Natural Religion is used by several writers to certain historical forms of religion. Something which has grown along with the growth of people as result of the interaction between the needs of the peoples and the environment in which they are placed. A natural religion is made by man. Its sanction is the sense of truth and the voice of conscience that is to be found in man. A Revealed Religion does not rest on the authority of man. It is not man-made, it is God-made. Its sanction is God who is absolute truth and absolute good. The function of Revealed Religion is to make religion sacred therefore inviolate and immune from criticism.

The Vedas have the characteristics of both. They have the advantage, which a Religion with a book has over the Bookless Religion. They have the advantage, which a Revealed Religion has over Natural Religion.

This discussion is intended to enforce the conclusion that Caste being preached by the Vedas, it automatically gets the authority of the written book and the sanctity of the divine word. As a scheme propounded by the Veda it is doubly protected. Every one must accept Caste because it is divine truth and no body must attack it as an error without being guilty of sacrilege because it is sacred.

This is the Hindu view of Caste and the average Hindu is not impressed by the modern explanation of it by Risley with his racial theory, by Senart with his occupational theory, by Nesfield with his functional theory. He knows and he believes that Caste must have been created by God, because it is mentioned in the Vedas which is *Shruti* or the word of God. It is therefore eternal and true.

That Caste is divine, that caste is sacred and that caste must therefore remain eternal has been the line of defence adopted by the Brahmins whenever they have been called out to defend 'Caste' against the criticism of its opponents. This view of Caste comes out in its luminous colours in the controversy that once raged on the subject of Caste between Brahmins on the one hand and Buddha and his followers, on the other i.e.:

“If the belief was once established, that not only the simple effusions of the Rishis, but the pointed doctrines of the Brahmanas also, emanated from a divine source [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_12](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_12) and could not therefore be attacked by human reasoning, it is clear that every opposition to the privileges which the Brahmans claimed for themselves, on the sacred authority of the Veda, became heresy; and where the doctrines of the Brahmans were the religion of the people, or rather of the king, such opposition was amenable to the hierarchical laws of the state. The Brahmans themselves cared much more to see the divine authority of the Sruti as such implicitly acknowledged, than to maintain the doctrines of the Rishis in their original simplicity and purity. In philosophical discussions, they allowed the greatest possible freedom; and, although at first three philosophical systems only were admitted as orthodox (the two Mimansas and the Nyaya), their number was soon raised to six, so as to include the Vaiseshika, Sankhya, and Yoga-schools. The most conflicting views on points of vital importance were tolerated as long as their advocates succeeded, no matter by what means, in bringing their doctrines into harmony with passages of the Veda, strained and twisted in every possible sense. If it was only admitted that besides the perception of the senses and the induction of reason, revelation also, as contained in the Veda, furnished a true basis for human knowledge, all other points seemed to be of minor importance. Philosophical minds were allowed to exhaust all possible views on the relation between the real and transcendental world, the Creator and the created, the divine and the human nature. It was not from such lucubrations that danger was likely to accrue to the caste of the Brahmans. Nor was the heresy of Buddha Sakya Muni found so much in his philosophical doctrines, many of which may be traced in the orthodox atheism of Kapila. His real crime lay in his opposition to the exclusive privileges and abuses of the Brahmans. These abuses were sanctioned by the divine authority of the Veda, and particularly of the Brahmans. In attacking the abuses, Buddha attacked the divine authority on which they were founded, and the argument was short: he is a heretic; anathema etc.

“Buddha was Kshatriya. He was of principal origin, and belonged to the nobility of the land. He was not the first of his caste who opposed the ambition of the Brahmans. Several centuries before Buddha, Visvamitra, who, like Buddha, was a member of the royal caste, had to struggle against the exclusiveness of the priests. At that early time, however, the position of the Brahmans was not yet impregnable; and Visvamitra, although a Kshatriya, succeeded in gaining for himself and his family the rights for

which he struggled, and which the Brahmans had previously withheld from all but their own caste. King Janaka of Videha again, whose story is given in the Brahmanas, refused to submit to the hierarchical pretensions of the Brahmans, and asserted his right of performing sacrifices without the intercession of priests. However great the difference may have been between the personal character of these two men and of Buddha, the first principle of their opposition was the same. All three were equally struggling against the over-winning pretensions of a selfish priesthood.

“But while Visvamitra contented himself with maintaining the rights of his tribe or family, and became reconciled as soon as he was allowed to share in the profits of the priestly power, while King Janaka expressed himself satisfied with the homage paid to him by Yajnavalkya and other Brahmans, while, in short, successive reformers as they appeared were either defeated or gained over to the cause of the Brahmans, the seeds of discontent were growing up in the minds of the people. There is a dark chapter in the history of India, the reported destruction of all the Kshatriyas by Parsurama. It marks the beginning of the hierarchical supremacy of the Brahmans. Though the Brahmans seem never to have aspired to the royal power, their caste, as far as we know the history and traditions of India, has always been in reality the ruling caste. Their ministry was courted as the only means of winning divine favour, their doctrines were admitted as infallible, their gods were worshipped as the only true gods, and their voice was powerful enough to stamp the simple strains of the Rishis, and the absurd lucubrations of the authors of the Brahmanas, with a divine authority. After this last step, however, the triumph of Brahmanism was preparing its fall. In India, less than in any other country, would people submit to a monopoly of truth; and the same millions who were patiently bearing the yoke of a political despotism threw off the fetters of an intellectual tyranny. In order to overthrow one of the oldest religions of the world, it was sufficient that one man should challenge the authority of the Brahmans, the gods of the earth (Bhudeva), and preach among the scorned and degraded creatures of God the simple truth that salvation was possible without the mediation of priests, and without a belief in books to which these very priests had given the title of revelation. This man was BUDDHA, a SAKYA MUNI. Now if we inquire how Buddha's doctrines were met by the Brahmans, it is true that here and there in their philosophical works, they have endeavoured to overthrow some of his metaphysical axioms by an appeal to reason. An attempt of this kind we have, for instance, in Vachaspati Misra's commentary on the Vedanta Sutas. In commenting on the tenets of Buddha, that”ideas like those of



being, and not being, &c., do not admit of discussion", Vachaspati observes that the very fact of speaking of these ideas, includes the possibility of their conception; nay, that to affirm they do not admit of reasoning, involves an actual reasoning on them, and proves that the mind can conceive the idea of being as different from that of not-being.

"Such, however, were not the usual weapons with which Brahmanism fought against Buddhism. The principal objection has always been, that Buddha's teaching could not be true, because it did not derive its sanction from Sruti or revelation. The Brahmans, as a caste, would readily have allowed being and not being, and the whole of Buddha's philosophy, as they did the Sankhya philosophy, which on the most important points is in open opposition to the Vedanta. But while Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya school, conformed to the Brahmanic test by openly proclaiming the authority of revelation as paramount to reasoning and experience, Buddha would not submit to this, either for his philosophical (abhidharma), or for his much more important moral and religious doctrines (vinaya). No doubt it would have been easy for him to show how some of his doctrines harmonised with passages of the Veda, as in the Veda all possible shades of the human mind have found their natural reflection. If he had done so only for some of his precepts, such, for instance, as, "Thou shall not murder", "Thou shall not drink", "Thou shall eat standing", the Brahmans would readily have passed over other doctrines, even such as came into practice after Buddha's death, like "Who longs for heaven, shall worship the holy sepulchre", "He shall pull out his hair", &c. As he refused to do so, the line of argument taken by the Brahmans was simply confined to an appeal to revelation, in disproof of the possibility of the truth of Buddha's doctrines.

"There must be something very tempting in this line of argument, for we see that in later times the Buddhists also endeavoured to claim the same divine character for their sacred writings which the Brahmans had established for the Veda. A curious instance of this is given in the following discussion, from Kumarila's *Tantra-varttika*. Here the opponent (purva-paksha) observes, that the same arguments which prove that the Veda is not the work of human authors, apply with equal force to Sakya's teaching. His authority, he says, cannot be questioned, because his precepts are clear and intelligible; and as Sakya is not the inventor, but only the teacher of these precepts, and no name of an author is given for Sakya's doctrines, the frailties inherent in human authors affect them as little as the Veda. Everything, in fact, he concludes, which has been brought forward by the Mimansakas to prove the authority of the Veda, proves in the same



way the authority of Buddha's doctrine, Upon this, the orthodox Kumarila grows very wroth, and says:"These Sakyas, Vaiseshikas, and other heretics who have been frightened out of their wits by the faithful Mimansakas, prattle away with our own words as if trying in lay hold of a shadow.

They say that their sacred works are eternal; but they are of empty minds, and only out of hatred they wish to deny that the Veda is the most ancient book. And these would-be logicians declare even, that some of their precepts (which they have stolen from us,) like that of universal benevolence, are not derived from the Veda, because most of Buddha's other sayings are altogether against the Veda. Wishing, therefore, to keep true on this point also, and seeing that no merely human precept could have any authority on moral and supernatural subjects, they try to veil their difficulty by aping our own argument for the eternal existence of the Veda. They know that the Mimansakas have proved that no sayings of men can have any authority on supernatural subjects; they know also that the authority of the Veda cannot be contradicted, because they can bring forward nothing against the proofs adduced for its divine origin, by which all supposition of a human source have been removed.

Therefore, their hearts being gnawed by their own words, which are like the smattering of children, and having themselves nothing to answer, because the deception of their illogical arguments has been destroyed, they begin to speak like a foolish suitor who came to ask for a bride, saying, 'My family is as good as your family '. In the same manner they now maintain the eternal existence of their books, aping the speeches of others. And if they are challenged and told that this is our argument, they brawl, and say that we, the Mimansakas have heard and stolen it from them. For a man who has lost all scheme, who can talk away without any sense, and tries to cheat his opponent, will never get tired, and will never be put down!"Towards the end of this harangue, Kumarila adds, what is more to the point, that the Buddhas, who ascribe to everything a merely temporary existence, have no business to talk of an eternal revelation."

From the foregoing discussion it will be seen that Caste is born in religion which has consecrated it and made it Sacred so that it can be rightly and truly said that Religion is the Rock on which the Hindus have built their social structure.

Does this not show that Caste is a very peculiar institution not to be compared with other forms of social grouping? I venture to say that any one who maintains that there is nothing strange in caste simply does not know what Caste is. I repeat that Caste is Sacred, which is its distinguishing feature. Caste is Sacred, which is what makes it abiding.

Prof. Max Muller makes some very instructive observations on the effects of Religion with Sacred books on the progress of Society. Says Max Muller:

“History, however, teaches us another lesson, namely that codes of law are apt to become a kind of fetish, requiring an implicit and unquestioning submission, that their historical or natural origin is often completely forgotten, and that the old ideas of what is right and just are almost absorbed, nay, almost annihilated, in the one idea of what is written and legal.

“The study of Eastern religions teaches us the same lesson. Sacred books often become a kind of fetish, requiring an implicit and unquestioning faith; their historical or natural origin is often completely forgotten, and the old ideas of what is true and divine are almost absorbed in the one idea of what is written and orthodox.

“And there is a third lesson which history teaches us. The sense of responsibility of every citizen for the law under which he lives is in great danger of becoming deadened, when law becomes a profession and is administered with mechanical exactness rather than with a strong human perception of what is right and what is wrong. Nor can it be denied that the responsibility of every believer for the religion under which he lives is in the same danger of becoming deadened, when religion becomes a profession, and is administered with ceremonial exactness rather than with a strong human perception of what is true and what is false.

“My object, however, is not to show the dangers which arise from sacred books, but rather to protest against the prejudice which prevails so widely against religions which have no sacred books.

“There is great difference between book-religions and bookless religions, and the difference offers, from an historical point of view, a very true ground of division. But because the book-religions have certain advantages, we must not imagine that the bookless religions are mere outcasts. They have their disadvantages, no doubt; but they have a few advantages also.

“A Blackfoot Indian, when arguing with a Christian missionary, described the difference between his own religion and that of the white man in the following words:

“There were two religions given by the Great Spirit, one in a book for the guidance of the white men who, by following its teachings, will reach the white man's heaven; the other is in the hands of the Indians, in the sky, rocks, rivers, and mountains. And the red men who listen to God in nature will hear his voice, and find at last the heaven beyond.’

“Now that religion which is in the head and in the heart, and in the sky, the rocks, the rivers and the mountains is what we call Natural Religion. It

has its roots in nature, in human nature, and in that external nature which to us is at the same time the veil and the revelation of the Divine. It is free, it grows with the growth of the human mind, and adapts itself to the requirements of every age. It does not say, 'Thou shall, but rather, 'I will'. These natural or bookless religions are not entirely without settled doctrines and established customs. They generally have some kind of priesthood to exercise authority in matters of faith, morality, and ceremonial. But there is nothing hard and unchangeable in them, nothing to fetter permanently the growth of thought. Errors when discovered, can be surrendered, a new truth, if clearly seen and vigorously defended, can be accepted. If, however, there is once a book, something black on white, the temptation is great, is almost irresistible, to invest it with a more than human authority in order to appeal to it as infallible, and as beyond the reach of human reasoning. We can well understand what the ancient poets of the Veda meant by calling their hymns God-given, or by speaking of them as what they had seen or heard, not what they had elaborated themselves. But a new generation gave a new meaning to these expressions, and ended by representing every thought and word and letter of the Veda as ' God-given,' or revealed. This was the deathblow given to the Vedic religion, for whatever cannot grow and change must die. From this danger the bookless religion are exempt.” Similar observations are made by Sir William Muir. Speaking of Islam he has given powerful expression to the dangers arising from Sacred Codes of Religion. Sir William Muir says:

“From the stiff and rigid shroud in which it is thus swathed, the religion of Mahomed cannot emerge. It has no plastic power beyond that exercised in its earliest days. Hardened now and inelastic, it can neither adapt itself, nor yet shape its votaries, nor even suffer them to shape themselves, to the varying circumstances, the wants and developments of mankind”. (Quoted by E de Bunsen in an article in the Asiatic Quarterly Review, April, 1889, Mahomed's Place in the Church, p. 287.)

Every one who is interested in the progress of humanity cannot fail to echo these sentiments regarding the social consequences of Sacred Codes of Religion. But it seems to me that a further distinction is possible within the Class of Religion with Sacred Codes. It is a pity that Prof. Max Muller did not pursue the matter further. But it is worth pursuing because it discloses a difference which is very real which marks off the Hindus as a people with a Sacred Code of Religion from other people also possessing a Sacred Code of Religion. The difference will be clear if one begins to examine the different religions to find out what are the objects which religions have sought to consecrate.

Such an examination will show that there are instances where Society has consecrated inanimate things and inculcated on the minds of its members the religious belief that they are sacred. There are cases where stones, rivers, trees are made gods and goddesses. There are instances where Society has consecrated living things and inculcated on the minds of its members the religious belief that they are sacred. There are cases of animals which have become clan totems. There are instances where Society has consecrated human beings and inculcated the religious beliefs that they are sacred. But there are no instances where a particular Social Order has been consecrated by Religion and made Sacred. The primitive world had its clan order and its tribal order. But the clan or the tribal order was only a social order and was never consecrated by religion and made sacred and inviolate. The ancient world countries like Egypt, Persia, Rome, Greece etc., each had its social order in which some were free and some were slaves, some were citizens, some were aliens, some of one race, some of another. This class order again was only a social order and was never consecrated by religion and made sacred and inviolate. The modern world has its order, in some it is Democracy, in some Fascism, in some Nazism and in some Bolshevism. But here again the order is only Social order. It is not consecrated by religion and made sacred and inviolate.

Nowhere has Society consecrated its occupations, the ways of getting a living. Economic activity has always remained outside the sanctity of religion. Hunting society was not without religion. But hunting as an occupation was not consecrated by religion and made sacred. Pastoral Society was not without religion. But pasturage was not consecrated by religion and made sacred. Farming as an occupation did not become consecrated by religion and made sacred. Feudalism with its gradations, with its Lords, villains and serfs was a purely social in character. There was nothing sacred about it.

The Hindus are the only people in the world whose Social order the relation of man to man is consecrated by religion and made sacred eternal and inviolate. The Hindus are the only people in the world whose economic order the relation of workman to workman is consecrated by religion and made sacred, eternal and inviolate.

It is not therefore enough to say that the Hindus are a people with a sacred code of Religion. So are the Zoroastrians, Israelites, Christians and Muslims. All these have sacred codes. They consecrate beliefs and rites and make them sacred. They do not prescribe, nor do they consecrate a particular form of social structure the relationship between man and man in a concrete form and make it sacred inviolate. The Hindus are singular in

this respect. This is what has given caste its abiding strength to defy the ravages of time and the onslaughts of time.

There is one other respect in which Hindus differ from other folk possessing codified religions similar to that of the Hindus. The Hindu Code of Religion is a revelation from God. That is why the Vedas are called Shruti (what is heard). So are the Codes of Religions accepted by the Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians and Muslims. Ask to whom this God's word sent to the Zoroastrian, Jews, Christians, and Muslims was revealed, who heard this word of God? The Zoroastrian will say that the word of God contained in their Religious Code was heard by Zoroaster. The Jews will say it was heard by Moses, Christians will say it was heard by Jesus and Muslims will say it was heard by Muhammad. Now ask the Hindu who heard the word of God contained in the Vedas, to whom was it revealed. The Hindu has no answer. He cannot name the person who heard this word of God. Now the Mantras contained in the Vedas have their authors mentioned in the Vedas themselves. But the Hindus will not say that these are the persons who heard the word of God, which is contained in the Vedas. This difference goes a great way to protect the sacred character of the Vedas. For the Bible as a Sacred Book can be attacked by attacking the character of Moses or Jesus. Similarly the Koran as a Sacred Book can be attacked by attacking the character of Mahomed. But the Veda cannot be attacked by attacking the character of the messenger or the founder. For the simple reason that there is none.

As I have said Religion is the Rock on which the Hindus have built their house. It will now be seen that it is not an ordinary sort of hard Rock. It is granite.

## CHAPTER 4

### TOUCHABLES V/S UNTOUCHABLES

#### I

A relationship of touchables against untouchables may cause surprise. Such a surprise will not be altogether without reason. The touchables are not one uniform body of people. They are themselves divided into innumerable castes. Each Hindu is conscious of the caste to which he belongs. Given this heterogeneity it does seem that to include all the touchable castes into one group and put them as forming a block against the untouchables is to create a division which can have no meaning. But



although this division of touchables against untouchables may require explanation, the division so far as modern India is concerned is real and substantial.

The explanation of how the touchables have now become one block and are conscious of their being different from the untouchables means nothing but recounting the mutual relationship of the four Varnas.

At the outset it must be borne in mind that those who like Mr. Gandhi accept the Chaturvarna as an ideal form of society, either do not know the history of the mutual relations of the four Varnas or are cherishing an illusion or conjuring up a vision for purposes which they are out to serve. For, the fact is that the four Varnas never formed a society based on loving brotherhood or on economic organisation based on co-operative effort. The four Varnas were animated by nothing but a spirit of animosity towards one another. There would not be the slightest exaggeration to say that the social history of the Hindus is a history not merely of class struggle but class war fought with such bitterness that even the Marxist will find it difficult to cite parallel cases to match.

It seems that the first class struggle took place between the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas on the one hand and the Shudras on the other.

In Katyayana's Srauta Sutras, it is said, that men with the exception of those whose members are defective, who have not read the Veda, eunuchs, and Shudras, have a right to sacrifice. It is Brahmanas, Rajanyas and Vaishyas (only who) according to the Veda (possess this privilege)".

We are told by Manu that (*Quotation not given in the MS.*).<sup>\*</sup> [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_13](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_13) Manu also says that (*Quotation not given in the MS.*). Compare with this the following instances and statements relating to the status of the Shudra occurring in the Vedic literature of a period earlier than Manu and even earlier than Katyayana.

Prof. Max Muller calls attention to two instances showing that Shudras were admitted to great sacrifices such as "*gavedhukacharu*". One is that of Rathakara and the other of Nishadasthapati, both Shudras.

It might however be supposed that this was a concession made to the exceptional men from the Shudras. That it was not a mere concession but a right enjoyed by the Shudras is beyond question. In the Satapatha Brahmana which is a part of the Veda, the formula for the Brahmin Priest to call the sacrificer to come and make the oblation is given. He is asked to say *ehi*, come, in the case of a Brahman; *Agahi* 'come hither', in the case of a Vaishya; *Adrava*, 'hasten hither' in the case of a Kshatriya and *Adhava*, 'run hither' in the case of a Shudra.

This passage is of very great importance. It shows that the Shudra had at one time the right to sacrifice. Otherwise a form of address for a Shudra sacrificer could not have found a place in the Vedic precept. If the Shudra had a right to sacrifice, they also must have had a right to study the Vedas.

For, according to Katyayana, only those who had the right to read the Vedas were entitled to perform the sacrifice. That the Shudras were at one time entitled to read the Vedas is a fact which is well supported by tradition which is referred to in the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharat, where the sage Bhrigu answers the question "How is Varna to be determined?" in the following terms:

"There is no difference of castes; this world, having been at first created by Brahma entirely Brahmanic, became (afterwards) separated into castes in consequence of works. 6940. Those Brahmans (lit. twice born men), who were fond of sensual pleasure, fiery, irascible, prone to violence, who had forsaken their duty, and were red-limbed, fell into the condition of Kshatriyas. Those Brahmans, who derived their livelihood from kine, who were yellow, who subsisted by agriculture, and who neglected to practise their duties, entered into the state of Vaisyas. Those Brahmans, who were addicted to mischief and falsehood, who were covetous, who lived by all kinds of works, who were black and had fallen from purity, sank into the condition of Sudras. Being separated from each other by these works, the Brahmans became divided into different castes. Duty and the rites of sacrifice have not been always forbidden to (any of) them. Such are four classes for whom the Brahmanic Sarasvati was at first designed by Brahma, but who through their cupidity fell into ignorance."

Interpreting the word "Brahmanic" Sarasvati the Commentator says:

"Sarasvati, consisting of the Veda, was formerly designed by Brahma for all the four castes; but the Shudras having through cupidity fallen into 'ignorance i.e. of darkness,' lost their right to the Veda."

After the Shudra was reduced came the turn of the Vaishya. The bitterest class war took place between the Brahmins and the Kashatriyas. The classical literature of the Hindus abounds in reference to class wars between these two Varnas. First was the conflict between the Brahmins and King Vena.

"There was formerly a Prajapati (lord of creatures), a protector of righteousness, called Anga, of the race of Atri, and resembling him in power. His son was the Prajapati Vena, who was but indifferently skilled in duty, and was born of Sunitha, the daughter of Mritya. This son of the daughter of Kala (death), owing to the taint derived from his maternal grandfather, threw his duties behind his back and lived in covetousness

under the influence of desire. This king established an irreligious system of conduct; transgressing the ordinances of the Veda, he was devoted to lawlessness. In his reign men lived without study of the sacred books and without the vashatkara, and the gods had no Soma-libations to drink at sacrifices. 'I, he declared, 'am the object, and the performer of sacrifice, and the sacrifice itself, it is to me that sacrifice should be presented, and oblations offered. ' This transgressor of the rules of duty, who arrogated to himself what was not his due, was then addressed by all the great rishis, headed by Marichi: 'We are about to consecrate ourselves for a ceremony which shall last for many years, practice not unrighteousness, o Vena; this is not the eternal rule of duty. Thou art in very deed a Prajapati of Atri's race, and thou hast engaged to protect thy subjects. ' The foolish Vena, ignorant of what was right, laughingly answered those great rishis who had so addressed him: ' Who but myself is the ordainer of duty? Or who ought I to obey? Who on earth equals me in sacred knowledge, in prowess, in austere fervour, in truth? Yet who are deluded and senseless know not that I am the source of all beings and duties. Hesitate not to believe that I, if I willed, could burn up the earth, or deluge it with water, or close up heaven and earth '. When owing to his delusion and arrogance Vena could not be governed, then the mighty rishis becoming incensed, seized the vigorous and struggling king, and rubbed his left thigh. From this thigh, so rubbed, was produced a black man, very short in stature, who, being alarmed, stood with joined hands. Seeing that he was agitated, Atri said to him 'Sit down''(nishida). He became the founder of the race of the Nishadas, and also progenitor of the Dhivaras (fisherman), who sprang from the corruption of Vena. So too were produced from him the other inhabitants of the Vindhya range, the Tukharas and Turnburas, who are prone to lawlessness. Then the mighty sages, excited and incensed, again rubbed the right hand of Vena, as men do the Arani wood, and from it arose Pritha, respondent in body, glowing like the manifested Agni."

"The son of Vena (Prithu) then, with joined hands, addressed the great rishis: ' A very slender understanding for perceiving the principles of duty has been given to me by nature; tell me truly how I must employ it. Doubt not that I shall perform whatever you shall declare to me as my duty, and its object.' Then those gods and great rishis said to him: 'Whatever duty is enjoined perform it, without hesitation, disregarding what thou may est like or dislike, looking on all creatures with an equal eye, putting far from the lust, anger, cupidity, and pride. Restrain by the strength of thin arm all those men who swerve from righteousness, having a constant regard to duty. And in thought, act, and word take upon thyself, and continually

renew, the engagement to protect the terrestrial Brahman (Veda or Brahmans?)..... And promise that thou wilt exempt the Brahmans from punishment, and preserve society from the confusion of Castes'. The son of Vena then replied to the gods, headed by the rishis: 'The great Brahmans, the chief of men, shall be revered by me'. 'So be it,' rejoined those declares of the Veda. Sukra, the depository of divine knowledge, became his purohita: the Balakhilyas and Sarasvetyas his ministers; and the venerable Garga, the great rishi, his astrologer."The second conflict took place between the Brahmins and the Kshatriya king Pururavas. A brief reference to it occurs in the Adiparva of the Mahabharat.

"Subsequently the wise Pururavas was born of 11, who, as we have heard, was both his father and his mother. Ruling over thirteen islands of the ocean, and surrounded by being who were all superhuman, himself a man of great renown, Pururavas, intoxicated by his prowess, engaged in a conflict with the Brahmans, and robbed them of their jewels, although they loudly remonstrated. Sanatkumara came from Brahma's heaven, and addressed to him an admonition, which, however, he did not regard. Being then straightway cursed by the incensed rishis, he perished, this covetous monarch, who, through pride of power, had lost his understanding. This glorious being (virat), accompanied by Urvashi, brought down for the performance of sacred rites the fires which existed in the heaven of the Gandharvas, properly distributed into three."

A third collision is reported to have occurred between the Brahmins and King Nahusha. The story is given in great details in the Udyogaparva of the Mahabharata. It is there recorded:

"After his slaughter of the demon Vrittra, Indra became alarmed at the idea of having taken the life of a Brahmin (for Vrittra was regarded as such), and hid himself in waters. In consequence of the disappearance of the king of gods, all affairs, celestial as well as terrestrial, fell into confusion. The rishis and gods then applied to Nahusha to be their king. After at first excusing himself on the plea of want of power, Nahusha at length, in compliance with their solicitations, accepted the high function. Up to the period of his elevation he had led a virtuous life, but he now became addicted to amusement and sensual pleasure; and even aspired to the possession of Indrani, Indra's wife, whom he had happened to see. The queen resorted to the Angiras Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, who engaged to protect her. Nahusha was greatly incensed on hearing of this interference; but the gods endeavoured to pacify him, and pointed out the immorality of—appropriating another person's wife. Nahusha, however, would listen to no remonstrance, and insisted that in his adulterous designs



he was no worse than Indra himself; 373. The renowned Ahalya, a rishi's wife, was formerly corrupted by Indra in her husband's lifetime; Why was he not prevented by you? 374. And many barbarous acts, and unrighteous deeds, and frauds, were perpetrated of old by Indra; Why was he not prevented by you? The gods, urged by Nahusha, then went to bring Indrani; but Vrihaspati would not give her up. At his recommendation, however, she solicited Nahusha for some delay, till she should ascertain what had become of her husband. This request was granted. The gods next applied to Vishnu on behalf of Indra; and Vishnu promised that if Indra would sacrifice to him, he should be purged from his guilt, and recovers his dominion, while Nahusha would be destroyed. Indra sacrificed accordingly: and the result is thus told; "Having divided the guilt of Brahmanicide among trees, rivers, mountains, the earth, women, and the elements, Vasava (Indra), lord of the gods, became freed from suffering and sin, and self-governed." Nahusha was by this means, shaken from his place. But (unless this is said by way of prelepsis, or there is some confusion in the narrative) he must have speedily regained his position, as we are told that Indra was again ruined, and became invisible. Indrani now went in search of her husband; and by the help of Upasruti (the goddess of night and revealer of secrets) discovered him existing in a very subtle form in the stem of a lotus growing in a lake situated in a continent within an ocean north of the Himalaya. She made known to him the wicked intention of Nahusha, and entreated him to exert his power, rescue her from danger, and resume his dominion. Indra declined any immediate interposition on the plea of Nahusha's superior strength; but suggested to his wife a device by which the usurper might be hurled from his position. She was recommended to say to Nahusha that "if he would visit her on a celestial vehicle borne by rishis, she would with pleasure submit herself to him". The question of the gods accordingly went to Nahusha, by whom she was graciously received, and made this proposal: "I desire for thee, king of the gods, a vehicle hitherto unknown, such as neither Vishnu, nor Rudra, nor the asuras, nor the rakshases employ. Let the eminent rishis, all united, bear thee, lord, in a car: this idea pleases me". Nahusha receives favourably this appeal to his vanity, and in the course of his reply thus gives utterance to his self-congratulation: "He is a personage of no mean prowess who makes the munis his bearers. I am a fervid devotee of great might, lord of the past, the future and the present. If I were angry the world would no longer stand; on me everything depends.... Wherefore, O goddess, I shall, without doubt, carry out what you propose. The seven rishis, and all the Brahman-rishis, shall carry me. Behold beautiful goddess, my majesty, and my



prosperity.”The narrative goes on:”Accordingly this wicked being, irreligious, violent, intoxicated by the force of conceit, and arbitrary in his conduct, attached to his car the rishis, who submitted to his commands, and compelled them to bear him”. Indrani then again resorts to Vrihaspati, who assures her that vengeance will soon overtake Nahusha for his presumption: and promises that he will himself perform a sacrifice with a view to the destruction of the oppressor, and the discovery of Indra's lurking place. Agni is then sent to discover and bring Indra to Vrihaspati; and the latter, on Indra's arrival, informs him of all that had occurred during his absence. While Indra with Kuvera, Yama, Soma, and Varuna, was devising means for the destruction of Nahusha, the sage Agastya came up, congratulated Indra on the fall of his rival, and proceeded to relate how it had occurred. Wearied with carrying the sinner Nahusha, the eminent divine rishis, and the spotless brahman-rishis asked that divine personage Nahusha (to solve) a difficulty;”Dost thou, a Vasava, most excellent of conquerors, regard as authoritative or not those Brahmana texts which are recited at the immolation of kine?’ ‘No’, replied Nahusha, whose understanding was enveloped in darkness. The rishis rejoined: ‘Engaged in unrighteousness, thou attainest not unto righteousness: these texts, which were formerly uttered by great rishis, are regarded by us as authoritative.’ The (proceeds Agastya) disputing with the munis, Nahusha, impelled by unrighteousness, touched me on the head with his foot. In consequence of this the king's glory was smitten and his prosperity departed. When he had instantly become agitated and oppressed with fear, I said to him, ‘ Since thou, O fool, contemnest that sacred text, always held in honour, which has been composed by former sages, and employed by brahman-rishis, and has touched my head with thy foot, and employest the Brahma—like and irresistible rishis as bearers to carry thee, therefore, shorn of thy lustre and all thy merit exhausted, sink down, sinner, degraded from heaven to earth. For then thousand years thou shalt crawl in the form of a huge serpent. When that period is completed, thou shalt again ascend to heaven ’. So fell that wicked wretch from the sovereignty of the gods.”

Next there is reference to the conflict between King Nimi and the Brahmins. The Vishnu Puran relates the story as follows:

“Nimi had requested the Brahman-rishi Vashishtha to officiate at a sacrifice, which was to last a thousand years, Vashishtha in reply pleaded a pre-engagement to Indra for five hundred years, but promised to return at the end of that period. The king made no remark, and Vashishtha went away, supposing that he had assented to this arrangement. On his return, however, the priest discovered that Nimi had retained Gautama (who was,

equally with Vashishtha a Brahman-rishi) and others to perform the sacrifice; and being incensed at the neglect to give him notice of what was intended, he cursed the king, who was then asleep, to lose his corporeal form. When Nimi awoke and learnt that he had been cursed without any previous warning, he retorted, by uttering a similar curse on Vashishtha, and then died."In consequence of this curse"(proceeds Vishnu Purana, iv. 5, 6)"the vigour of Vashishtha entered into the vigour of Mitra and Varuna. Vashishtha, however, received from them another body when their seed had fallen from them at the sight of Urvashi". Nimi's body was embalmed. At the close of the sacrifice which he had begun, the gods were willing, on the intercession of the priests, to restore him to life, but he declined the offer, and was placed by the deities, according to his desire, in the eyes of all living creatures. It is in consequence of this fact that they are always opening the shutting (Nimishas means "the twinkling of the eye")".

Manu mentions another conflict between the Brahmins and King Sumukha. But of this no details are available.

These are instances of conflict between the Brahmins and the Kshatriya Kings. From this it must not be supposed that the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas as two classes did not clash. That there were clashes between these two classes as distinguished from conflicts with kings is abundantly proved by material the historic value of which cannot be doubted. Reference may be made to three events.

First is the contest between the Vishvamitra the Kshatriya and Vashishtha the Brahmin. The issue between the two was whether a Kshatriya can claim Brahminhood. The story is told in Ramayana and is as follows:

"There was formerly, we are told, a king called Kusa, son of Prajapati, who had a son called Kushanabha, who was father of Gadhi, the father of Vishvamitra. The latter ruled the earth for many thousand years. On one occasion, when he was making a circuit of the earth, he came to Vashistha's hermitage, the pleasant abode of many saints, sages, and holy devotees, where, after at first declining he allowed himself to be hospitably entertained with his followers by the son of Brahma. Vishvamitra, however, coveting the wondrous cow, which had supplied all the dainties of the feast, first of all asked that she should be given to him in exchange for a hundred thousand common cows, adding that "she was a gem, that gems were the property of the king, and that, therefore, the cow was his by right". On this price being refused the king advances immensely in his offers, but all without effect. He then proceeds-very ungratefully and tyrannically, it must be allowed to have the cow removed by force, but she breaks away from his attendants, and rushes back to her master,

complaining that he was deserting her. He replies that he was not deserting her, but that the king was much more powerful than he. She answers, "Men do not ascribe strength to a Kshatriya: the Brahmans are stronger. The Strength of Brahmans is divine, and superior to that of Kshatriya. Thy strength is immeasurable. Vishvamitra, though of great vigour, is not more powerful than thou. Thy energy is invincible. Commission me, who have been acquired by thy Brahmanical power, and I will destroy the pride, and force, and attempt of this wicked prince". She accordingly by her bellowing creates hundreds of Pahalvas, who destroy the entire host of Vishvamitra, but are slain by him in their turn. Sakas and Yavans, of great power and valour, and well armed, were then produced, who consumed the king's soldiers, but were routed by him.

The cow then calls into existence by her bellowing, and from different parts of her body, other warriors of various tribes, who again destroyed Vishvamitra's entire army, foot soldiers, elephants, horses, chariots, and all. A hundred of the monarch's sons, armed with various weapons, then rushed in great fury on Vashishtha, but were all reduced to ashes in a moment by the blast of that sage's mouth. Vishvamitra, being thus utterly vanquished and humbled, appointed one of his son to be regent, and travelled to the Himalaya, where he betook himself to austerities, and thereby obtained a vision of Mahadeva, who at his desire revealed to him the science of arms in all its branches, and gave him celestial weapons with which, elated and full of pride, he consumed the hermitage of Vashishtha, and put its inhabitants to flight. Vashishtha then threatens Vishvamitra and uplifts his Brahmanical mace. Vishvamitra too, raises his fiery weapon and calls out to his adversary to stand. Vashishtha bids him to show his strength, and boasts that he will soon humble his pride.

He asks: "What comparison is there between a Kshatriya's might, and the great might of a Brahman? Behold, thou contemptible Kshatriya, my divine Brahmanical power. The dreadful fiery weapon uplifted by the son of Gadhi was then quenched by the rod of the Brahman, as fire is by water." Many and various other celestial missiles, as the nooses of Brahma, Kala (time), and Varuna, the discuss of Vishnu, and the trident of Siva, were hurled by Vishvamitra at his antagonist, but the son of Brahma swallowed them up in his all-devouring mace. Finally, to the intense consternation of all the gods, the warrior shot off the terrific weapon of Brahma (brahmastra): but this was equally ineffectual against the Brahmanical sage.

Vashishtha had now assumed a direful appearance: "Jets of fire mingled with smoke darted from the pores of his body; the Brahmanical mace

blazed in his hand like a smokeless mundane conflagration, or a second sceptre of Yama."Being appeased, however by the munis, who proclaimed his superiority to his rival, the sage stayed his vengeance; and Vishvamitra exclaimed with a groan:"Shame on a Kshatriya's strength: the strength of a Brahman's might alone is strength: by the single Brahmanical mace all my weapons have been destroyed."No alternative now remains, to the humiliated monarch, but either to acquiesce in this helpless inferiority, or to work out his own elevation to the Brahmanical order. He embraces the latter alternative:"Having pondered well this defeat, I shall betake myself, with composed senses and mind, to strenuous austere fervour, which shall exalt me to the rank of a Brahman".

Intensely vexed and mortified, groaning and full of hatred against his enemy, he travelled with his queen to the south, and carried his resolution into effect; and we are first of all told that three sons Havishyanda, Madhusyanda, and Dridhanetra were born to him. At the end of a thousands years Brahma appeared, and announced that he had conquered the heaven of royal sages (rajarshis); and, in consequence of his austere fervour, he was recognised as having attained that rank. Vishvamitra, however, was ashamed, grieved, and incensed at the offer of so very inadequate a reward, and exclaimed;"I have practised intense austerity, and the gods and rishis regard me only as a rajarshi. Austerities, it appears, are altogether fruitless". Notwithstanding this disappointment, he had ascended one grade, and forthwith recommenced his work of mortification.

"At this point of time his austerities were interrupted by the following occurrences: King Trisanku, one of Ikshvaku's descendants, had conceived the design of celebrating a sacrifice by virtue of which he should ascend bodily to heaven. As Vashishtha, on being summoned, declared that the thing was impossible (asakyam), Trisanku travelled to the south, where the sage's hundred sons were engaged in austerities, and applied to them to do what their father had declined. Though he addressed them with the greatest reverence and humility, and added that"the Ikshvaku regarded their family-priests as their highest resource in difficulties, and that, after their father, he himself looked to them as his tutelary deities"he received from the haughty priests the following rebuke for his presumption:"Asakyam""Fool, thou hast been refused by thy truth speaking preceptor. How is it that, disregarding his authority, thou has resorted to another school (sakha). The family priest is the highest oracle of all the Ikshvakus; and the command of those veracious personages cannot be transgressed. Vashishtha, the divine rishi, has declared that 'the thing cannot be'; and how can we undertake thy



sacrifice? Thou art foolish king; return to thy capital. The divine (Vashishtha) is competent to act as priest of the three worlds; how can we shew him disrespect?"Trisanku then gave them to understand that as his preceptor and his preceptor's sons had declined compliance with his requests, he should think of some other expedient."In consequence of his venturing to express this presumptuous intention, they condemned him by their imprecation to become a Chandala. As this curse soon took effect, and the unhappy king's form was changed into that of a degraded outcast, he resorted to Vishvamitra (who, as we have seen, was also dwelling at this period in the south), enlarging on his own virtues and piety, and bewailing his fate. Vishvamitra commiserated his condition, and promised to sacrifice on his behalf, and exalt him to heaven in the same Chandala-form to which he had been condemned by his preceptor's curse."Heaven is now as good as in thy possession, since thou hast resorted to the son of Kusika".

He then directed that preparations should be made for the sacrifice, and that all the rishis, including the family of Vashishtha, should be invited to the ceremony. The disciples of Vishvamitra, who had conveyed his message, reported the result on their return in these words : "Having heard your message, all the Brahmans are assembling in all the countries, and have arrived, excepting Mahodaya (Vashishtha). Hear what dreadful words those hundred Vashishthas, their voices quivering with rage, have uttered: 'How can the gods and rishis consume the oblation at the sacrifice of that man, especially if he be a Chandala, for whom a Kshatriya is officiating priest? How can illustrious Brahmans ascend to heaven, after eating the food of a Chandala, and being entertained by Vishvamitra?' These ruthless words all Vashisthas, together with Mahodaya, uttered, their eyes inflamed with anger. Vishvamitra, who was greatly incensed on receiving this message, by a curse doomed the sons of Vashishtha to be reduced to ashes, and reborn as degraded outcasts (mritapah) for seven hundred births, and Mahodaya to become a Nishada. Knowing that this curse had taken effect, Vishvamitra thereafter eulogizing Trisanku, proposed to the assembled rishis that the sacrifice should be celebrated. To this they assented, being actuated by fear of the terrible sage's wrath. Vishvamitra himself officiated at the sacrifice as yajakas; and the other rishis as priests (ritvijah) with other functions) performed all the ceremonies. Vishvamitra next invited the gods to partake of the oblations:"When, however, the deities did not come to receive their portions, Vishvamitra became full of wrath, and raising aloft the sacrificial ladle, thus addressed Trisanku: ' Behold, O monarch, the power of austere fervour acquired by my own efforts. I myself, by my own energy, will conduct thee to heaven. Ascend to that celestial region which is



so arduous to attain in an earthly body. I have surely earned some reward of my austerity "Trisanku ascended instantly to heaven in the sight of munis. Indra, however, ordered him to be gone, as person who, having incurred the curse of his spiritual preceptors, was unfit for the abode of the celestials; and to fall down headlong to earth. He accordingly began to descend, invoking loudly, as he fell the help of his spiritual patron. Vishvamitra, greatly incensed, called out to him to stop:"Then by the power of his divine knowledge and austere fervour created, like another Prajapati, other Seven Rishis (a constellation so called) in the southern part of the sky. Having proceeded to this quarter of the heavens, the renowned sage, in the midst of the rishis, formed another garland of stars, being overcome with fury. Exclaiming, 'I will create another Indra, or the world shall have no Indra at all,' he began, in his rage, to call gods also into being. The rishis, gods (Suras), and Asuras now became seriously alarmed and said to Vishvamitra, in a conciliatory tone, that Trisanku,"as he had been cursed by his preceptors, should not be admitted bodily into heaven, until he had undergone some lustration". The sage replied that he had given a promise to Trisanku, and appealed to the gods to permit his protege to remain bodily in heaven and the newly created stars to retain their places in perpetuity. The gods agreed that "these numerous stars should remain, but beyond the Sun's path, and that Trisanku, like an immortal, with his head downwards should shine among them, and be followed by them,"adding"that his object would be thus attained, and his renown secured, and he would be like a dweller in heaven". Thus was this great dispute adjusted by a compromise, which Vishvamitra accepted.

"This story of Trisanku, it will have been observed, differs materially from the one quoted above from the Harivarnsa; but brings out more distinctly the character of the conflict between Vashishtha and Vishvamitra.

"When all the gods and rishis had departed at the conclusion of the sacrifice, Vishvamitra said to his attendant devotees;"This has been a great interruption (to our austerities) which has occurred in the southern region: we must proceed in another direction to continue our penances". He accordingly went to a forest in the west, and began his austerities anew. Here the narrative is again interrupted by the introduction of another story, that of king Ambarisha, king of Ayodhya, who was, according to the Ramayana, the twentyeighth in descent from Ikshvaku, and the twentysecond from Trisanku. Vishvamitra is nevertheless represented as flourishing contemporaneously with both of these princes. The story relates that Ambarisha was engaged in performing a sacrifice, when Indra carried away the victim. The priest said that this ill-omened event had

occurred owing to the king's bad administration; and would call for a great expiation, unless a human victim could be produced. After a long search the royal rishi (Ambarisha) came upon the Brahman-rishi Richika, a descendant of Bhrigu, and asked him to sell one of his sons for a victim, at the price of a hundred thousand cows. Richika answered that he would not sell his eldest son; and his wife added that she would not sell the youngest: "eldest sons," she observed, "being generally the favourites of their fathers, and youngest sons of their mothers". The second son, Sunassepa, then said that in that case he regarded himself as the one who was to be sold, and desired the king to remove him. The hundred thousand cows, with the millions of gold-pieces and heaps of jewels, were paid down, and Sunassepa carried away. As they were passing through Puskara Sunassepa beheld his maternal uncle Vishvamitra who was engaged in austerities there with other rishis, threw himself into his arms, and implored his assistance, urging his orphan, friendless, and helpless state, as claims on the sage's benevolence. Vishvamitra soothed him; and pressed his own sons to offer themselves as victims in the room of Sunassepa. This proposition met with no favour from Madhushyanda and the other sons of the royal hermit, who answered with haughtiness and derision: "How is it that thou sacrifices thine own sons, and seeks to rescue those of others? We look upon this as wrong, and like the eating of one's own flesh". The sage was exceedingly wroth at this disregard of his injunction, and doomed his sons to be born in the most degraded classes, like Vasishtha's sons, and to eat dog's flesh, for a thousand years. He then said to Sunassepa: "When thou art bound with hallowed cords decked with a red garland, and anointed with unguents, and fastened to the sacrificial post of Vishnu, then address thyself to Agni, and sing these two divine verses (gathas), at the sacrifice of Ambarisha; then shall thou attain the fulfilment (of thy desire)".

Being furnished with the two gathas, Sunassepa proposed at once to king Ambarisha that they should set out for their destination. When bound at the stake to be immolated, dressed in a red garment, "he celebrated the two gods, Indra and his younger brother (Vishnu), with the excellent verses. The thousand-eyed (Indra) was pleased with the secret hymn, and bestowed long life on Sunassepa". King Ambarisha also received great benefits from this sacrifice. Vishvamitra meanwhile proceeded with his austerities, which he prolonged for a thousand years.

"At the end of this time the gods came to allot his reward; and Brahma announced that he had attained the rank of a rishi, thus apparently advancing an additional step. Dissatisfied, as it would seem, with this, the sage commenced his task of penance anew. After a length of time he

beheld the nymph (Apsara) Menka, who had come to bathe in the lake of Pushkara. She flashed on his view, unequalled in her radiant beauty, like lightning in a cloud. He was smitten by her charms, invited her to be his companion in his hermitage, and for ten years remained a slave to her witchery, to the great prejudice of his austerities. At length he became ashamed of this ignoble subjection, and full of indignation at what he believed to be a device of the gods to disturb his devotion; and, dismissing the nymph with gentle accents, he departed for the northern mountains, where he practised severe austerities for a thousand years on the banks of the Kausiki river.

The gods became alarmed at the progress he was making, and decided that he should be dignified with the appellation of great rishi (maharshi); and Brahma, giving effect to the general opinion of the deities, announced that he had conferred that rank upon him. Joining his hands and bowing his head, Visvamitra replied that he should consider himself to have indeed completely subdued his senses, if the incomparable title of Brahman-rishi were conferred upon him. Brahma informed him in answer, that he had not yet acquired the power of perfectly controlling his senses; but should make further efforts with that view.

The sage then began to put himself through a yet more rigorous course of austerities, standing with his arms erect, without support, feeding on air, in summer exposed to five fires (i.e. one on each of four sides, and the sun overhead), in the rainy season remaining unsheltered from the wet, and in winter lying on a watery couch night and day. This he continued for a thousand years. At last Indra and the other deities became greatly distressed at the idea of the merit he was storing up, and the power which he was thereby acquiring; and the chief of the celestials desired the nymph Rambha to go and bewitch him by her blandishments.

She expressed great reluctance to expose herself to the wrath of the formidable muni, but obeyed the repeated injunction of Indra, who promised that he and Kandarpa (the god of love) should stand by her, and assumed her most attractive aspect with the view of overcoming the sage's impassability. He, however, suspected this design, and becoming greatly incensed, he dommed the nymph by a curse to be turned into stone and to continue in that state for a thousand years. The curse took effect, and Kandarpa and Indra slunk away. In this way, though he resisted the allurements of sensual love, he lost the whole fruit of his austerities by yielding to anger; and had to begin his work over again. He resolved to check his irascibility, to remain silent, not even to breathe for hundreds of

years; to dry up his body; and to fast and stop his breath till he had obtained the coveted character of a Brahman.

He then left the Himalaya and travelled to the east, where he underwent a dreadful exercise, unequalled in the whole history of austerities, maintaining silence, according to a vow, for a thousand years. At the end of this time he had attained to perfection, and although thwarted by many obstacles, he remained unmoved by anger. On the expiration of this course of austerity, he prepared some food to eat; which Indra, coming in the form of a Brahman, begged that he would give him. Visvarnitra did so, and though he had none left for himself, and was obliged to remain fasting, he said nothing to the Brahman, on account of his vow of silence. As he continued to suspend his breath, smoke issued from his head, to the great consternation and distress of the three worlds. The gods, rishis, etc., then addressed Brahma: "The great muni Visvamitra has been allured and provoked in various ways, but still advances in his sanctity. If his wish is not conceded, he will destroy the three worlds by the force of his austerity. All the regions of the universe are confounded, no light anywhere shines; all the oceans are tossed, and the mountains crumble, the earth quakes, and the wind blows confusedly. We cannot, O Brahma, guarantee that mankind shall not become atheistic.... Before the great and glorious sage of fiery form resolves to destroy (everything) let him be propitiated." The gods, headed by Brahma, then addressed Visvamitra: "Hail Brahman rishi, we are gratified by thy austerities; O Kausika, thou hast, through their intensity, attained to Brahmanhood. I, O Brahman, associated with the Maruts, confer on thee long life. May every blessing attend thee; depart wherever thou wilt.' The sage, delighted, made his obeisance to the gods, and said : ' If I have obtained Brahmanhood, and long life, then let the mystic monosyllable (omkara) and the sacrificial formula (vashatkara) and the Vedas recognise me in that capacity. And let Vasishtha, the son of Brahma, the most eminent of those who are skilled in the Kshattria-veda, and the Brahma-veda (the knowledge of the Kshatriya and the Brahmanical disciplines), address me similarly.'..... Accordingly Vasishtha, being propitiated by the gods, became reconciled to Visvamitra, and recognised his claim to all the prerogatives of a Brahman rishi. . . . Visvamitra, too, having attained the Brahmanical rank, paid all honour to Vasishtha." The second event has reference to the slaughter of the Brahmins by the Kshatriyas. It is related in the Adiparva of the Mahabharat from which the following account is taken:

There was a king named Kritvirya, by whose liberality the Bhrigus, learned in the Vedas, who officiated as his priests, had been greatly



enriched with corn and money. After he had gone to heaven, his descendants were in want of money, and came to beg for a supply from the Bhrigus, of whose wealth they were aware. Some of the latter hid their money under ground, others bestowed it on Brahmans, being afraid of the Kshatriyas, while others again gave these last what they wanted. It happened, however, that a Kshatriya, while digging the ground, discovered some money buried in the house of a Bhrigu. The Kshatriyas then assembled and saw this treasure, and, being incensed, slew in consequence all the Bhrigus, whom they regarded with contempt, down to the children in the womb. The widows, however, fled to the Himalaya mountains. One of them concealed her unborn child in her thigh. The Kshatriyas, hearing of its existence from a Brahmani informant, sought to kill it; but it issued forth from its mother's thigh with lustre, and blinded the persecutors. After wandering about bewildered among the mountains for a time, they humbly supplicated the mother of the child for the restoration of their sight; but she referred them to her wonderful infant Aurva into whom the whole Veda, with its veda Vyas had entered, as the person who (in requisition of the slaughter of his relatives) had robbed them of their eyesight, and who alone could restore it.

They accordingly had recourse to him, and their eyesight was restored. Aurva, however, meditated the destruction of all living creatures, in revenge for the slaughter of the Bhrigus, and entered on a course of austerities which alarmed both gods, asuras, and men; but his progenitors (Pitris) themselves appeared, and sought to turn him from his purpose by saying that they had no desire to be revenged on the Kshatriyas : "It was not from weakness that the devout Bhrigus overlooked the massacre perpetrated by the murderous Kshatriyas. When we became distressed by old age, we ourselves desired to be slaughtered by them. The money which was buried by some one in a Bhrigu's house was placed there for the purpose of exciting hatred, by those who wished to provoke the Kshatriyas. For what had we, who were desiring heaven, to do with money?" They added that they hit upon this device because they did not wish to be guilty of suicide, and concluded by calling upon Aurva to restrain his wrath; and abstain from the sin he was meditating: "Destroy not the Kshatriyas, O son, nor the seven worlds. Suppress thy kindled anger which nullifies the power of austere-fervour." Aurva, however, replies that he cannot allow his threat to remain un-executed. His anger, unless wreaked upon some other object, will, he says, consume himself. And he argues on grounds of justice, expediency, and duty, against the clemency, which his progenitors recommend. He is, however, persuaded by the Pitris



to throw the fire of his anger into the sea, where they say it will find exercise in assailing the watery element, and in this way his threat will be fulfilled."

The third event has reference to the slaughter of the Kshatriyas by the Brahmins. This story is told in several places in the Mahabharata.

"The magnificent and mighty Kartavirya, possessing a thousand arms, was lord of this whole world, living in Mahishmati. This Haihaya of unquestioned valour ruled over the whole sea-girt earth, with its oceans and continents". He obtained boons from the muni Dattatreya, a thousand arms whenever he should go into battle power to make the conquest of the whole earth, a disposition to rule it with justice and the promise of instruction from the virtuous in the event of his going astray." Then ascending his chariot glorious as the resplendent sun, he exclaimed in the intoxication of his prowess, 'Who is like me in fortitude, courage, fame, heroism, energy, and vigour?' At the end of this speech a bodiless voice in the sky addressed him: 'Thou knowest not, O fool, that a Brahman is better than a Kshatriya. It is with the help of the Brahman that the Kshatriya rules his subjects.' Arjuna answers: 'If I am pleased, I can create, or, if displeased, annihilate, living beings; and no Brahman is superior to me in act, thought or word.'

The first proposition is that the Brahmans are superior; the second that the Kshatriyas are superior; both of these thou hast stated with their grounds, but there is a difference between them (in point of force). The Brahmans are dependent on the Kshatriyas and not the Kshatriyas are beaten up by the Brahmans, who wait upon them, and only make the Vedas a pretence. Justice, the protection of the people, has its seat in the Kshatriyas. From them the Brahmans derived their livelihood; how then can the latter be superior? I always keep in subjection to myself those Brahmans, the chief of all beings, who subsist on alms, and who have a high opinion of them selves. For truth was spoken by that female the Gayatri in the sky. I shall subdue all those unruly Brahmans clad in hides.

No one in the three worlds, god or man can hurl me from my royal authority; wherefore I am superior to any Brahman. Now shall I turn the world in which Brahmans have the upper hand into a place where Kshatriyas shall have the upper hand; for no one dares to encounter my force in battle.' Hearing this speech of Arjuna, the female roving in the night became alarmed. Then Vayu hovering in the air, said to Arjuna: 'Abandon this sinful disposition, and do obeisance to the Brahmans. If thou shalt do them wrong, thy kingdom shall be convulsed. They will subdue thee: those powerful men will humble thee, and expel thee from

thy country." The king asks him, 'Who art thou?' Vayu replies, 'I am Vayu, the messenger of the gods, and tell thee what is for thy benefit.' Arjuna rejoins, 'Oh, thou displayest today a great warmth of devotion to the Brahmans. But say that a Brahman is like (any other) earth-born creature.'

This king came into conflict with Parasuram the son of a Brahman sage Jamadagni. The history of this conflict is as follows:

"There lived a king of Kanyakubja, called Gadhi, who had a daughter named Satyavati. The marriage of this princess to the rishi Richika, and the birth of Jamadagni, are then told in nearly the same way as above narrated. Jamadagni and Satyavati had five sons, the youngest of whom was the redoubtable Parasuram. By his father's command he kills his mother (who, by the indulgence of impure desire, had fallen from her previous sanctity), after the four elder sons had refused this matricidal offence, and had in consequence been deprived of reason by their father's curse. At Parasuram's desire, however, his mother is restored by his father to life, and his brothers to reason; and he himself is absolved from all the guilt of murder; and obtains the boon of invincibility and long life from his father. His history now begins to be connected with that of king Arjuna (or Kartavirya). The latter had come to Jamadagni's hermitage, and had been respectfully received by his wife; but he had requited this honour by carrying away by force the calf of the sage's sacrificial cow, and breaking down his lofty trees. On being informed of this violence, Parasurama was filled with indignation, attacked Arjuna, cut off his thousand arms, and slew him. Arjuna's sons, in return, slew the peaceful sage Jamadagni, in the absence of Parasurama."

"Rama, after performing, on his return, his father's funeral obsequies, vowed to destroy the whole Kshatriya race; and executed his threat by killing first Arjuna's sons and their followers. Twenty one times did he sweep away all the Kshatriyas from the earth, and formed five lakes of blood in Samantapanchaka; in which he satiated the manes of the Bhrigus, and beheld face to face (his grand-father), Richika, who addressed himself to Rama. The latter gratified Indra by offering to him a grand sacrifice, and gave the earth to the officiating priests. He bestowed also a golden altar, ten fathoms long and nine high, on the mighty Kasyapa. This, by his permission, the Brahmans divided among themselves, deriving thence the name of Khandavavanas. Having given away the earth to Kasyapa, Parasurama himself dwells on the mountain Mahendra. Thus did enmity arise between him and Kshatriyas, and thus was the earth conquered by Rama of boundless might." The Kshatriyas who were slain by Parasuram are described in the Dronaparvan of the Mahabharat as of various

provinces, viz., Kasmiras, Darads, Kuntis, Kshudrakas, Malavas, Angas, Vangas, Kalingas, Videhas, Tamraliptakas, Marttikavatas, Sivils and other Rajanyas.

The means by which the Kshatriya race was restored is also told as part of this story of annihilation of the Kshatriyas by the Brahmins. It is said:

“Having one and twenty times swept away all the Kshatriyas from the earth, the son of Jamadagni engaged in austerities on Mahendra the most excellent of mountains. After he had cleared the world of Kshatriyas, their widows came to the Brahmins, praying for offspring. The religious Brahmins, free from any impulse of lust, cohabited at the proper seasons with these women, who in consequence became pregnant, and brought forth valiant Kshatriya boys and girls, to continue the Kshatriya stock. Thus was the Kshatriya race virtuously begotten by Brahmins on Kshatriya women, and became multiplied and long-lived. Thence there arose four castes inferior to the Brahmins.”

## CHAPTER 5

### THE CURSE OF CASTE

As I have said in the first Essay<sup>\*</sup> [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_14](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability_Social.htm - _msocom_14) there cannot be a caste in the single number. Caste can exist only in the plural number. Caste to be real can exist only by disintegrating a group. The genius of caste is to divide and to disintegrate. It is also the curse of caste. Few, however, realise how great is this curse of caste. It is therefore necessary to illustrate the vastness of this curse by reference to the disintegration brought about by caste. It is impossible to deal with each caste to show the evolution of its disintegration. One must content him self with presenting the caste history of one caste. I take the case of the Brahmins who have been the originators and upholders of caste to show how they themselves have been overwhelmed by what I call the curse of caste. The Brahmins of India are divided into two distinct fraternities. One fraternity is called the Dravidas and the other fraternity is called the Gaudas.

It must not, however, be supposed that the Dravidas and Gaudas are single homogeneous unit. They are divided and sub-divided in units so numerous that it is difficult to imagine their numbers unless one has actual lists of their sub-divisions before his eye. In the following pages an attempt

is made to give the list of castes and sub-castes into which each sub-division of the fraternity is divided.

## I

### THE DRAVIDA BRAHMINS

The fraternity of Dravidas consists of five sub-divisions who are collectively styled the Panch Dravidas. The five sub-divisions are called:

- (1) The Maharashtrians
- (2) The Andhras
- (3) The Dravidians (proper)
- (4) The Karnatakas
- (5) The Gurjaras

We may next proceed to note the castes and sub-castes into which each of these sub-divisions of the Panch Dravidas have disintegrated.

#### 1. THE MAHARASHTRA BRAHMINS

The Maharashtra Brahmins have among them the following castes and sub-castes:

- (1) The Deshasthas, (2) The Konkanasthas, (3) The Karhadas, (4) The Kanvas, (5) The Madhyandinas, (6) The Padhyas, (7) The Devarukhas, (8) The Palashas, (9) The Kirvantas, (10) The Targulas, (11) The Javalas, (12) The Abhiras, (13) The Savashas, (14) Kastas, (15) The Kunda Golakas, (16) The Randa Golakas, (17) The Brahmana-Jais, (18) The Soparas, (19) The Khistis, (20) The Huseinis, (21) The Kalankis, (22) The Maitrayaniyas, (23) The Varadis-Madhyandin-Yaj'ur-Vedi, (24) The Varadis-Madhyandin-Rig Vedi, (25) The Jhade. The Shenvis are further divided into nine sub-castes called (26) Narvankar, (27) Keloskar, (28) Bardeshkar, (29) Kudaldeshkar, (30) Pednekar, (31) Bhalavelekar, (32) Kushasthali, (33) Khadape and (34) Khajule.

#### 2. THE ANDHRA BRAHMINS

The following is the list of castes and sub-castes which make up the Andhra Brahmins—

- (1) The Varnasalus, (2) The Kamarukubi, (3) The Karanakamulu, (4) The Madhyandians, (5) The Tailangas, (6) The Murakanadus, (7) The Aradhyas, (8) The Yajnavalkyas, (9) The Kasaranadu, (10) The Velandus, (11) The

Venginadus, (12) The Vedinadus, (13) The Samavedis, (14) The Ramanujis, (15) The Madhavacharis, (16) The Niyogis.

### 3. THE TAMIL BRAHMINS

They consist of the following castes— (1) The Rig-Vedis, (2) The Krishna Yajur-Vedis, (3) The Shukia Yajur-Vedis—Madhyandinas, (4) The Shukla Yajur-Vedis-Kanvas, (5) The Sama Vedis, (6) The Atharva, (9) The Vaishnavas, (10) The Vira Vaishnavas, (11) The Shri-Vaishnavas, (12) The Bhagvatas, (13) The Shaktas.

### 4. THE KARNATIK BRAHMINS

They include the following castes—

(1) The Rig Vedis, (2) The Krishna Yajur-Vedis, (3) The Shukia Yajur-Vedis Madhyandinas, (4) The Shukla Yajur-Vedis Kanvas, (5) The Sama Vedis, (6) The Kume Brahmins and (7) The Nagara Brahmins.

### 5. THE GURJARA BRAHMINS

The list of castes which compose the Gurjara Brahmins is as follows : 1. The Andichya Brahmins. They are divided into the following sub-castes:

(1) Siddhpura Andichya, (2) Sihor Andichya, (3) Tolkiya Andhichya, (4) Kunbigor, (5) Inochigor, (6) Darjigor, (7) Grandhrapagor, (8) Koligor, (9) Marwadi Andichya, (10) Kachhi Andichya, (11) Vagdiya Andichya. II. The Nagar Brahmins. The following are the sub-castes of the Nagar Brahmins:

(12) The Vadanagar Brahmins, (13) The Vishalnagar Brahmins, (14) The Sathodra Brahmins, (15) The Prashnoras, (16) The Krishnoras, (17) The Chitrodas, (18) The Baradas. There are also three other divisions among the Nagar Brahmins. They are called—

(19) Gujarathi Nagars, (20) Sorathi Nagars and (21) Nagars of other Towns.

III. The Girnar Brahmins. They are divided among the following castes: (22) The Junagadhya Girnars, (23) The Chorvada Girnars, (24) The Ajakiyas.

IV. The Mevadas Brahmins. They are distributed among the following castes:



(25) The Bhata Mevadas, (26) The Trivadi Mevadas, (27) The Charosi Mevadas.

V. The Deshavala Brahmins. They have one sub-caste which is called:

(46) The Deshavala Brahman Surati. VI. The Rayakavala Brahmins. They are divided into two subcastes :

(47) The Navas (new ones) and (48) The Mothas (old ones).

VII. The Khedvala Brahmins. They are divided into five subcastes :

(49) The Khedvala Bajas, (50) The Khedvala Bhitaras, (51) The Khedva Bajas, (52) The Khedva Bhitaras.

VIII. The Modha Brahmins. They are divided into eleven subcastes :

(53) The Trivedi Modhas, (54) The Chaturvedi Modhas, (55) The Agihans Modhas, (56) The Tripal Modhas, (57) The Khijadiya Sanvana Modhas, (58) The Ekadashdhra Modhas, (59) The Tandulotha Modhas, (60) The Utanjaliya Modhas, (61) The Jethimal Modhas, (62) The Chaturvedi Dhinoja Modhas, (63) The Dhinoja Modhas.

IX. The Shrimali Brahmins. The Shrimali Brahmins are divided into the following castes:

(64) The Marwadi Shrimali, (65) The Mevadi Shrimali, (66) The Kachhi Shrimali, (67) The Kathiavadi Shrimali, (68) The Gujarathi Shrimali. The Gujarathi Shrimali are further sub-divided into

(69) Ahamadabadi Shrimali, (70) Surati Shrimali, (71) Ghoghari Shrimali and (72) The Khambhati Shrimali. The Khambhati Shrimali are again sub-divided into—

(73) Yajurvedi Khambhati Shrimali, (74) Samavedi Khambhati Shrimali.

X. The Chovisha Brahmins. They are divided into two subcastes : (75) Mota (Great ones), (76) Lahana (small ones).

XI. The Sarasvata Brahmins. They are divided into two subcastes : (77) Sorathiya Sarasvata, (78) Sindhava Sarasvata.

XII. The following is the list of castes of Gujaratha Brahmins which have not developed sub-castes:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| (79) The Sachora Brahmins,     | (80) The Udambara Brahmins,            |
| (81) The Narsipara Brahmins,   | (82) The Valadra Brahmins,             |
| (83) The Pangora Brahmins,     | (84) The Nandodra Brahmins,            |
| (85) The Vayada Brahmins,      | (86) The Tamil (or Dradvida) Brahmins, |
| (87) The Rodhavalu Brahmins,   | (88) The Padmivala Brahmins,           |
| (89) The Gomativala Brahmins,  | (90) The Itavala Brahmins,             |
| (91) The Medhatavala Brahmins, | (92) The Gayavala Brahmins,            |
| (93) The Agastyavala Brahmins, | (94) The Pretavala Brahmins,           |
| (95) The Unevala Brahmins,     | (96) The Rajavala Brahmins,            |

- (97) The Kanojiya Brahmins, (98) The Sarvariya Brahmins,  
 (99) The Kanoliya Brahmins, (100) The Kharkheliya Brahmins,  
 (101) The Parvaliya Brahmins, (102) The Sorathiya Brahmins,  
 (103) The Tangamadiya Brahmins, (104) The Sanodiya Brahmins,  
 (105) The Motala Brahmins, (106) The Jhalora Brahmins,  
 (107) The Rayapula Brahmins, (108) The Kapila Brahmins,  
 (109) The Akshayamangala Brahmins, (110) The Gugli Brahmins,  
 (111) The Napala Brahmins, (112) The Anavala Brahmins,  
 (113) The Valmika Brahmins, (114) The Kalinga Brahmins,  
 (115) The Tailanga Brahmins, (116) The Bhargava Brahmins,  
 (117) The Malavi, (118) The Banduan Brahmins,  
 (119) The Bharathana Brahmins, (120) The Pushkarana Brahmins,  
 (121) The Khadayata Brahmins, (122) The Maru Brahmins,  
 (123) The Dahima Brahmins, (124) The Chovisa Brahmins,  
 (125) The Jambu Brahmins, (126) The Maratha Brahmins,  
 (127) The Dadhicha Brahmins, (128) The Lalata Brahmins,  
 (129) The Valuta Brahmins, (130) The Borshidha Brahmins,  
 (131) The Golavala Brahmins, (132) The Prayagvala Brahmins,  
 (133) The Nayakvala Brahmins, (134) The Utkala Brahmins,  
 (135) The Pallivala Brahmins, (136) The Mathura Brahmins,  
 (137) The Maithila Brahmins, (138) The Kulabha Brahmins,  
 (139) The Bedua Brahmins, (140) The Ravavala Brahmins,  
 (141) The Dashahara Brahmins, (142) The Karnatika Brahmins,  
 (143) The Talajiya Brahmins, (144) The Parashariya Brahmins,  
 (145) The Abhira Brahmins, (146) The Kundu Brahmins,  
 (147) The Hirayajiya Brahmins, (148) The Mastava Brahmins,  
 (149) The Sthitisha Brahmins, (150) The Predatvala Brahmins,  
 (151) The Rampura Brahmins, (152) The Jila Brahmins,  
 (153) The Tilotya Brahmins, (154) The Durmala Brahmins,  
 (155) The Kodva Brahmins, (156) The Hanushuna Brahmins,  
 (157) The Shevada Brahmins, (158) The Titraga Brahmins,  
 (159) The Basuladas Brahmins, (160) The Magmarya Brahmins,  
 (161) The Rayathala Brahmins, (162) The Chapila Brahmins,  
 (163) The Baradas Brahmins, (164) The Bhukaniya Brahmins,  
 (165) The Garoda Brahmins, (166) The Taporana Brahmins. II

## THE GAUDA BRAHMINS

Like the Dravida Brahmins the Gauda Brahmins also consist of a fraternity of five different groups of Brahmins. These five groups are known as:

- (1) The Sarasvata Brahmins, (2) The Kanyakubja Brahmins,
- (3) The Gauda Brahmins, (4) The Utkala Brahmins,
- (5) The Maithila Brahmins.

An inquiry into the internal structure of each of these five groups of Panch Gaudas reveals the same condition as is found in the case of the five groups, which form the fraternity of Panch Dravidas. The only question is whether the internal divisions and sub-divisions are fewer or larger than are found among the Panch Dravidas. For this purpose it is better to take each group separately.

## THE SARASVATA BRAHMINS

The Sarasvata Brahmins fall into three territorial sections:

- (1) The Sarasvatas of the Punjab, (2) The Sarasvatas of Kashmir and (3) The Sarasvatas of Sindh.

### 1. THE SARASVATAS OF PUNJAB

There are three sub-sections of the Sarasvatas of the Punjab:

(A) Sarasvatas of the districts of Lahore, Arnritsar, Batala, Gurdaspur, Jalandar, Multan, Jhang and Shahpur. They are again divided into High Caste and Low Caste.

## HIGH CASTES

- (1) Navale, (2) Chuni, (3) Ravade, (4) Sarvaliye, (5) Pandit,
- (6) Tikhe, (7) Jhingan, (8) Kumadiye, (9) Jetle, (10) Mohle or Mole,
- (11) Tikhe-A'nde, (12) Jhingan-Pingan, (13) jetli-Petli,
- (14) Kumadiye-Lumadiye, (15) Mohle-Bohle, (16) Bage,
- (17) Kapuriye, (18) Bhaturiye, (19) Maliye, (20) Kaliye,
- (21) Sanda, (22) Pathak, (23) Kural, (24) Bharadwaji,
- (25) Joshi, (26) Shori, (27) Tiwadi, (28) Marud, (29) Datta,
- (30) Mujhal, (31) Chhibar, (32) Bali, (33) Mohana, (34) Lava,
- (35) Vaidya, (36) Prabhakar, (37) Shame-Potre, (38) Bhoja-Potre,
- (39.) Singhe-Potre, (40) Vatte-Potre, (41) Dhannan-Potre,

(42) Dravade, (43) Gaindhar, (44) Takht Laladi, (45) Shama Dasi, (46) Setpal (or Shetpal), (47) Pushrat, (48) Bharadvaji, (49) Katpale, (50) Ghotke, (51) Pukarne.

## LOWER CLASSES

(52) Diddi, (53) Shridhara, (54) Vinayaka, (55) Majju, (56) Khindariye, (57) Harad, (58) Prabhakar, (59) Vasudeva, (60) Parashara, (61) Mohana, (62) Panjan, (63) Tivara, (64) Kapala, (65) Bharkhari, (66) Sodhi, (67) Kaijar, (68) Sangad, (69) Bharadvaji, (70) Nage, (71) Makavar, (72) Vashishtha, (73) Dangaval, (74) Jalap, (75) Tripane, (76) Bharathe, (77) Bansale, (78) Gangahar, (79) Jotashi, (80) Rikhi (or Rishi), (81) Mandar, (82) Brahmi, (83) Tejpal, (84) Pal, (85) Rupal, (86) Lakhanpal, (87) Ratanpal, (88) Shetpal, (89) Bhinde, (90) Dhami, (91) Chanan, (92) Randeha, (93) Bhuta, (94) Rati, (95) Kundi, (96) Hasadhir, (97) Punj, (98) Sandhi, (99) Bahoye, (100) Virad, (101) Kaland, (102) Suran, (103) Sudan, (104) Ojhe, (105) Bramha-Sukul, (106) Hariye, (107) Gajesu, (108) Bhanot, (109) Tinuni, (110) Jalli, (111) Tole, (112) Jalap, (113) Chitchot, (114) Padhe or Pandhe, (115) Marud, (116) Laladiye, (117) Tote, (118) Kusarit, (119) Ramtal, (120) Kapale, (121) Masodare, (122) Ratniye, (123) Chandan, (124) Churavan, (125) Mandahar, (126) Madhare, (127) Lakarphar, (128) Kund, (129) Kardam, (130) Dhande, (131) Sahajpal, (132) Pabhi, (133) Rati, (134) Jaitke, (135) Daidriye, (136) Bhatore, (137) Kali, (138) Jalpot, (139) Maitra, (140) Sankhatre, (141) Ludra, (142) Vyasa, (143) Paitu, (144) Kirar, (145) Puje, (146) Isar, (147) Latta, (148) Dhami, (149) Kalhan, (150) Madarkhamb, (151) Bedesar, (152) Salvahan, (153) Dhande, (154) Marud, (155) Bature, (156) Joti, (157) Soyari, (158) Tejpal, (159) Kuralpal, (160) Kalas, (161) Jalap, (162) Tinmani, (163) Tanganivate, (164) Jalpot, (165) Pattu, (166) Jasrava, (167) Jayachand, (168) Sanwal, (169) Agnihotri, (170) Agraphakka, (171) Ruthade, (172) Bhaji, (173) Kuchhi, (174) Saili, (175) Bhambi, (176) Medu, (177) Mehad, (178) Yarnye, (179) Sangar, (180) Sang, (181) Nehar, (182) Chakpaliye, (183) Bijraye, (184) Narad, (185) Kutwal, (186) Kotpal, (187) Nabh, (188) Nad, (189) Parenje, (190) Kheti, (191) A'ri, (192) Chavhe, (193) Bibde,

(194) Bandu, (195) Machhu, (196) Sundar, (197) Karadage, (198) Chhibbe, (199) Sadhi, (200) Tallan, (201) Karddam, (202) Jhaman, (203) Rangade, (204) Bhog, (205) Pande, (206) Gande, (207) Pante, (208) Gandhe, (209) Dhinde, (210) Tagale, (211) Dagale, (212) Lahad, (213) Tad, (214) Kayi, (215) Ludh, (216) Gandar, (217) Mahe, (218) Saili, (219) Bhagi, (220) Pande, (221) Pipar, (222) Jathee.

(B) Sarasvata Brahamins of Kangada and the adjacent Hill Country. These too are divided into High Class and Low Class.

## **HIGH CASTES**

(1) Osdi, (2) Pandit Kashmiri, (3) Sotri, (4) Vedve, (5) Naga, (6) Dikshit, (7) Misri Kashmiri, (8) Madihatu, (9) Panchkarn, (10) Raine, (11) Kurudu, (12) A'Chariye.

## **LOWER CLASSES**

(13) Chithu, (14) Panyalu, (15) Dumbu, (16) Dehaidu, (17) Rukhe, (18) Pambar, (19) Gutre, (20) Dyabhudu, (21) Make, (22) Prot (Purohita) Jadtotrotiye, (23) Visht Prot, (24) Padhe Saroj, (25) Padhe Khajure, (26) Padhe Mahite, (27) Khajure, (28) Chhutwan, (29) Bhanwal, (30) Rambe, (31) Mangrudiye, (32) Khurvadh, (33) Galvadh, (34) Dangmar, (35) Chalivale.

(C) Sarasvata Brahmins of Dattarpur, Hoshyarpur and the adjacent Country.

These are also divided into High Class and Low Class.

## **1. HIGH CASTES**

(1) Dogre, (2) Sarmayi, (3) Dube, (4) Lakhanapal, (5) Padhe Dholbalvaiya, (6) Padhe Ghohasniye, (7) Padhe Dadiye, (8) Padhe Khindadiya, (9) Khajurive.

## **II. LOWER CLASSES**

(10) Kapahatiye, (11) Bharadhiyal, (12) Chaprohiye, (13) Makade,



(14) Kutallidiye, (15) Sarad, (16) Dagadu, (17) Vantade, (18) Muchle, (19) Sammol, (20) Dhose, (21) Bhatol, (22) Rajohad, (23) Thanik, (24) Panyal, (25) Chibbe, (26) Madote, (27) Misar, (28) Chhakotar, (29) Jalreiye, (30) Lahad, (31) Sel, (32) Bhasul, (33) Pandit, (34) Changhial, (35) Lath, (36) Sand, (37) Lai, (38) Gadottare, (39) Chirnal, (40) Badhie, (41) Shridhar, (42) Patdu, (43) Juwal, (44) Maite, (45) Kakliye, (46) Tak, (47) Jhol, (48) Bhadoe, (49) Tandik, (50) Jhummutiyar, (51) A'l, (52) Mirat, (53) Mukati, (54) Dalchallie, (55) Bhatohaye, (56) Tyahaye, (57) Bhatare.

## 2. THE SARASVATAS OF KASHMIR

There are two sub-sections of the Sarasvatas of Kashmir. (A) Sarasvata Brahmanas of Jammu, Jasrota and the neighbouring Hill Country.

They are divided into three classes. High, Middle and Low.

### 1. HIGH CASTES

(1) Amgotre, (2) Thappe, (3) Dube, (4) Sapoliye Padhe, (5) Badiyal, (6) Kesar, (7) Nadh, (8) Khajure Prahote, (9) Jamval Pandit, (10) Vaidya, (11) Lava, (12) Chibar, (13) aliye, (14) Mohan, (15) Bambhaval.

### II. MIDDLE CASTES

(16) Raine, (17) Satotre, (18) Katotre, (19) Lalotre, (20) Bhangotre, (21) Samnotre, (22) Kashmiri Pandit, (23) Pandhotre, (24) Vilhanoch, (25) Badu, (26) Kernaye Pandit, (27) Danal Padhe, (28) Mahite, (29) Sudhraliye, (30) Bhatiad, (31) Puroch, (32) Adhotre, (33) Mishra, (34) Parashara, (35) Bavagotre, (36) Mansotre, (37) Sudathiye.

### III. LOWER CLASSES

(38) Sudan, (39) Sukhe, (40) Bhure, (41) Chandan, (42) Jalotre, (43) Nabhotre, (44) Khadotre, (45) Sagdol, (46) Bhuriye, (47) Baganachhal, (48) Rajuliye, (49) Sangde, (50) Munde, (51) Surnachal, (52) Ladhanjan, (53) Jakhotre, (54) Lakanpal, (55) Gauda Purohita, (56) Shashgotre, (57) Khanotre, (58) Garoch, (59) Marotre, (60) Upadhe, (61) Khindhahiye Padhe,

(62) Kalandari, (63) Jarad, (64) Udihal, (65) Ghode,  
 (66) Basnotre, (67) Barat, (68) Chargat, (69) Lavanthe,  
 (70) Bharangol, (71) Jaranghal, (72) Guhaliye, (73) Dhariancha,  
 (74) Pindhad, (75) Rajuniye, (76) Badakulive, (77) Sirkhandiye,  
 (78) Kirpad, (79) Balli, (80) Salurn, (81) Ratanpal, (82) Banotre,  
 (83) Yantradhari, (84) Dadorich, (85) Bhaloch, (86) Chhachhiale,  
 (87) Jhangotre, (88) Magdol, (89) Phaunphan, (90) Saroch,  
 (91) Gudde, (92) Kirle, (93) Mansotre, (94) Thammotre,  
 (95) Thanmath, (96) Bramiye, (97) Kundan, (98) Gokuliye Gosain,  
 (99) Chakotre, (100) Rod, (101) Bargotre, (102) Kavde,  
 (103) Magdiyalie, (104) Mathar, (105) Mahijiye, (106) Thakure Purohita,  
 (107) Galhal, (108) Cham, (109) Rod, (110) Labhotre, (111) Redathiye,  
 (112) Patal, (113) Kamaniye, (114) Gandhargal, (115) Prithvipal,  
 (116) Madhotre, (117) Kambo, (118) Sarmayi, (119) Bachhal,  
 (120) Makhotre, (121) Jad, (122) Batialiye, (123) Kudidab,  
 (124) Jambe, (125) Karanathiye, (126) Suthade, (127) Sigad,  
 (128) Garadiye, (129) Machhar, (130) Baghotre, (131) Sainhasan,  
 (132) Utriyal, (133) Suhandiye, (134) Jhindhad, (135) Battal,  
 (136) Bhainkhare, (137) Bisgotre, (138) Jhalu, (139) Dabb,  
 (140) Bhuta, (141) Kathialu, (142) Paladhu, (143) Paladhu,  
 (144) Jakhotre, (145) Pange, (146) Solhe, (147) Suguniye,  
 (148) Sanhoch, (149) Duhal, (150) Bando, (151) Kanungo,  
 (152) Jhavdu, (153) Jhaphacu, (154) Kaliye, (155) Khaphankho.

## (B) THE SARASVATAS OF KASHMIR

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The following is a list of Kashmiri Brahmins.

(1) Kaul, (2) Rajdan, (3) Guriti, (4) Jitish, (5) Dar, (6) Trakari,  
 (7) Mujhi, (8) Munshi, (9) Butal, (10) Javi, (11) Bajai, (12) Rei,  
 (13) Hundo, (14) Dipti, (15) Chhichvali, (16) Rugi, (17) Kall,  
 (18) Sum, (19) Hanji, (20) Hastivali, (21) Mutu, (22) Tikku,  
 (23) Gais, (24) Gadi, (25) Brari, (26) Ganj, (27) Vangan,  
 (28) Vagana, (29) Bhut, (30) Bhairava, (31) Madan, (32) Dina,  
 (33) Shargal, (34) Hakchar, (35) Hak, (36) Kukar, (37) Chhatari,  
 (38) Saunpuri, (39) Matti, (40) Khush, (41) Shakdar,  
 (42) Vaishnava, (43) Kotar, (44) Kak, (45) Kachari, (46) Tote,  
 (47) Saraph, (48) Gurah, (49) Thanthar, (50) Khar, (51) Thaur,  
 (52) Teng, (53) Saiyad, (54) Trupuraya, (55) Muthi, (56) Saphai,

(57) Bhan, (58) Vanya, (59) Garial, (60) Thapal, (61) Nauri, (62) Masaldan, (63) Mushran, (64) Turki, (65) Photedar, (66) Kharu, (67) Karbangi, (68) Bhath, (69) Kichilu, (70) Chhan, (71) Mukdam, (72) Khapari, (73) Bulaki, (74) Kar, (75) Jelali, (76) Saphayu, (77) Batphali, (78) Hukhi, (79) Kukpari, (80) Kali, (81) Jari, (82) Ganj, (83) Kim, (84) Mundi, (85) Jangal, (86) Jati, (87) Rakhyas, (88) Bakayi, (89) Geri, (90) Gari, (91) Kali, (92) Panji, (93) Bangi, (94) Sahib, (95) Belab, (96) Rayi, (97) Galikarap, (98) Chan, (99) Kababi, (100) Yachh, (101) Jalpuri, (102) Navashahari, (103) Kisi, (104) Dhusi, (105) Garnkhar, (106) Tholal, (107) Pista, (108) Badam, (109) Trachhal, (110) Nadir, (111) Lidarigari, (112) Pyal, (113) Kabi, (114) Chhatri, (115) Vanti, (116) Vatlilu, (117) Khari, (118) Vas, (119) Lati, (120) Sabanj, (121) Dandi, (122) Raval, (123) Misari, (124) Sibbi, (125) Singari, (126) Mirje, (127) Mal, (128) Variki, (129) Jan, (130) Lutari, (131) Parim, (132) Hali, (133) Nakaib, (134) Main, (135) Ambaradar, (136) Ukhal, (137) Kanth, (138) Bali, (139) Jangali, (140) Duli, (141) Parava, (142) Harkar, (143) Gagar, (144) Pandit, (145) Jari, (146) Langi, (147) Mukki, (148) Bihi, (149) Padaur, (150) Pade, (151) Jand, (152) Teng, (153) Tund, (154) Drabi, (155) Dral, (156) Phambbi, (157) Sajavul, (158) Bakhshi, (159) Ugra, (160) Nichvi, (161) Pathan, (162) Vichari, (163) Unth, (164) Kuchari, (165) Shal, (166) Babi, (167) Makhani, (168) Labari, (169) Khanya, (170) Khanyakati, (171) Shah, (172) Pir, (173) Khurdi, (174) Khunki, (175) Kalposh, (176) Pishan, (177) Bishan, (178) Bul, (179) Choki, (180) Chak, (181) Rai, (182) Priti, (183) Pati, (184) Kichili, (185) Kahi, (186) Jiji, (187) Kilmak, (188) Salman, (189) Kadalbaju, (190) Kandahari, (191) Bali, (192) Manati, (193) Bankhan, (194) Hakim, (195) Garib, (196) Mandal, (197) Manjaha, (198) Shair, (199) Nun, (200) Teli, (201) Khalasi, (202) Chandra, (203) Gadir, (204) Jarabi, (205) Sihari, (206) Kalvit, (207) Nagari, (208) Mungvuch, (209) Khaibari, (210) Kulli, (211) Kabi, (212) Khosa, (213) Durani, (214) Tuli, (215) Garib, (216) Gadi, (217) Jati, (218) Rakhsas, (219) Harkar, (220) Grad, (221) Vagari, etc. etc.

### 3. THE SARASVATAS OF SINDH

The Sarasvatas of Sindh are sub-divided as follows:

- (1) Shikarpuris, (2) Barovis, (3) Ravanjahis, (4) Shetpalas  
(5) Kuvachandas, and (6) Pokharana.

## 11. THE KANYAKUBJA BRAHMINS

The Kanuakubjas take their name from the town Kanoj which was the capital of the Empire. They are also called Kanoujas. There are two denominations of the Kanyakubja Brahamins. One is called the *Sarvariya*s and the other is called the *Kanyakubja*s. The Sarvariya got their name from the ancient river Saryu to the east of which they are principally found. They are a provincial offset from the Kanaujas, with whom they do not now intermarry. The sub-divisions among the Sarvariya are generally the same as those found among the Kanaujas. It is therefore enough to detail the sub-divisions among the Kanaujas. There are ten divisions of the Kanyakubja Brahmins:

- (1) The Mishra, (2) The Shuklas, (3) The Tivaris, (4) The Dubes,  
(5) The Pathaks. (6) The Pande, (7) The Upadhya, (8) The Chaubes,  
(9) The Dikshitas, (10) The Vajapeyis.

Each of these sub-divisions has many sub-divisions. They are mentioned below:

### 1. THE MISHRAS

The Mishras consist of the following sections:

- (1) The Madhbani, (2) The Champaran, (3) The Patlal or Patlayala,  
(4) The Ratanvala, (5) The Bandol, (6) The Matol or Matevala,  
(7) The Katariya of the same Veda, (8) The Nagariya of the Vatsa Gotra,  
(9) The Payasi of the Vatsa Gotra, (10) The Gana,  
(11) The Teunta or the Tevanta, (12) The Marjani, (13) The Gurha,  
(14) The Markara, (15) The Jignya, (16) The Parayana, (17) The Pepara,  
(18) The Aterva or Atharva, (19) The Hathepara, (20) The Suganti,  
(21) The Kheta, (22) The Grambasi, (23) The Birha, (24) The Kausi,  
(25) The Kevati, (26) The Raisi, (27) The Bhahajiya, (28) The Belva,  
(29) The Ustraina, (30) The Kodiya, (31) The Tavakpuri, (32) The Jimalpuri,  
(33) The Shringarpuri, (34) The Sitapuri, (35) The Putavha,  
(36) The Sirajpuri, (37) The Bhampuri, (38) The Terka,  
(39) The Dudhagaumi, (40) The Ratnapuri, (41) The Sunhanla.

## 2. THE SHUKLAS

The Shukias consist of the following sections:

- (1) The Khakhayijkhor named from two villages,
- (2) The Marnkhor named from two villages, (3) The Tipthi,
- (4) The Bhedi, (5) The Bakaruva, (6) The Kanjahi, (7) The Khandail,
- (8) The Bela, (9) The Change the Avasthi, (10) The Tevarasi Parbhakar,
- (11) The Mehuliyar, (12) The Kharbahiya, (13) The Chanda,
- (14) The Grga, (15) The Gautami, (16) The Parasa, (17) The Tara,
- (18) The Barikhpuri, (19) The Karyava, (20) The Ajmadgadhyia,
- (21) The Pichaura, (22) The Masauvas, (23) The Sonthianva,
- (24) The Aukin, (25) The Bir, (26) The Gopinath.

## 3. THE TIVARIS

The Tivaris consist of the following sections:

- (1) The Lonakhar, (2) The Lonapar, (3) The Munjauna, (4) The Mangraich,
- (5) The Jhunadiya, (6) The Sohgauna, (7) The Tara, (8) The Gorakhpuriya,
- (9) The Daurava, (10) Pendi, (11) The Sirjam, (12) The Dhatura,
- (13) The Panauli, (14) The Nadauli or Tандаuli, (15) The Burhiyabari,
- (16) The Gurauli, (17) The Jogiya, (18) The Dikshita, (19) The Sonaura,
- (20) The Agori, (21) The Bhargava, (22) The Bakiya, (23) The Kukurgariya,
- (24) The Dama, (25) The Gopala, (26) The Govardhana, (27) The Tuke,
- (28) The Chattu, (29) The Shivali, (30) The Shakharaj, (31) The Umari,
- (32) The Manoha, (33) The Shivarajpur, (34) The Mandhna,
- (35) The Sape, (36) The Mandan Tirvedi, (37) The Lahari Tirvedi,
- (38) The Jethi Tirvedi.

## 4. THE DUBES

The Dube's consist of the following sections:

- (1) The Kanchani, (2) The Singhva, (3) The Belava, (4) The Parava,
- (5) The Karaiya, (6) The Bargainya, (7) The Panchani, (8) The Lathiahi,
- (9) The Gurdvan, (10) The Methiber, (11) The Barhampuriya,
- (12) The Singilava, (13) The Kuchala, (14) The Munjalva, (15) The Paliya,
- (16) The Dhegava, (17) The Sisra, (18) The Sinani, (19) The Kudavarye,
- (20) The Kataiya, (21) The Panva.

## 5. THE PATHAKS

The following are the sections composing of the Pathakas:



- (1) 'The Sonaura, (2) 'The Ambatara, (3) 'The Patakhavaliya,  
(4) 'The Dhigavach, (5) 'The Bhadari.

## 6. THE PANDES

The Pande's are divided into the following sections:

- (1) 'The Tirphala or Triphala, (2) 'The Jorava, (3) 'The Matainya,  
(4) 'The Toraya, (5) 'The Nakchauri, (6) 'The Parsiha, (7) 'The Sahankol,  
(8) 'The Barhadiya, (9) 'The Gegas, (10) 'The Khoriya, (11) 'The Pichaura,  
(12) 'The Pichaura Payasi, (13) 'The Jutiya or Jatya, (14) 'The Itar or Intar,  
(15) 'The Beshtaul or Beshtavala, (16) 'The Charpand, (17) 'The Sila,  
(18) 'The Adhuri, (19) 'The Madariya, (20) 'The Majgaum,  
(21) 'The Dilipapar, (22) 'The Payhatya, (23) 'The Nagav, (24) 'The Talava,  
(25) 'The Jambu.

## 7. THE UPADHYAS

There are five sections among the Upadhyas:

- (1) 'The Harainya or Hiranya, (2) 'The Devarainya, (3) 'The Khoriya,  
(4) 'The Jaithiya, (5) 'The Dahendra, (6) 'The Gorat, (7) 'The Ranisarap,  
(8) 'The Nizamabad, (9) 'The Dudholiya, (10) 'The Basgava.

## 8. THE CHAUBES

The principal sub-divisions of the Chaube's are:

- (1) 'The Nayapuras, (2) 'The Rargadis, (3) 'The Chaukhar, (4) 'The Katayas,  
(5) 'The Rampuras, (6) 'The Paliyas, (7) 'The Hardaspuras, (8) 'The Tibaiyas,  
(9) 'The Jamaduvras, (10) 'The Gargeya.

## 9. THE DIKSHITAS

The Dikshitas have the following sub-divisions:

- (1) 'The Devagaum, (2) 'The Kakari, (3) 'The Nevarshiya, (4) 'The Anter,  
(5) 'The Sukanta, (6) 'The Chaudhari, (7) 'The Jujatvatiyas.

## 10. THE VAJAPEYIS

The Vajapeyi's consist of the following sub-divisions:

(1) 'The Unche, or the High, (2) 'The Niche or the Low. Besides the divisions and sub-divisions of the Kanyakubjas mentioned above there are Kanyakubjas who are regarded as inferior and therefore isolated from the main divisions and sub-divisions. Among them are the following:

- (1) 'The Samdariya, (2) 'The Tirguvati, (3) 'The Bhaurha, (4) 'The Kabisa,  
(5) 'The Kevati, (6) 'The Chandravala, (7) 'The Kusumbhiya,  
(8) 'The Bisohya, (9) 'The Kanhali, (10) 'The Khajuvai, (11) 'The Kisirman,

(12) The Paihtiya, (13) The Masonad, (14) The Bijara, (15) The Ansnaura.

### III. THE GAUDA BRAHMINS

The Gauda Brahmins derive their name from the Province and (now ruined) city of Gauda, for long the capital of Bihar and Bengal (the seat of the *Angas* and *Vangas* or *Bangas*). The subdivisions among the Gauda Brahmins are very considerable in number. The most conspicuous of them are the following:

- (1) The Gaudas or Kevala Gaudas, (2) Adi-Gaudas,
- (3) Shukiavala Adi-Gaudas, (4) Ojhas, (5) Sanadhya Gauda,
- (6) Chingalas, (7) Khandevalas, (8) Daymias, (9) Shri-Gaudas,
- (10) Tamboli Gaudas, (11) Adi-Shri Gaudas, (12) Gurjar Gaudas,
- (13) Tek Bara Gaudas, (14) Chamar Gaudas, (15) Hariyana Gaudas,
- (16) Kirtanya Gaudas, (17) Sukul Gaudas.

### IV. THE UTKAL BRAHMINS

Utkal is the ancient name of Orissa and Utkal Brahmins means Brahmins of Orissa. They are divided into:

- (1) The Shashani Brahmins, (2) The Shrotriya Brahmins,
- (3) The Panda Brahmins, (4) The Ghatiya Brahmins,
- (5) The Mahasthana Brahmins, (6) The Kalinga Brahmins.

The *Shashani* Brahmins have the following sub-divisions.

- (1) The Savanta, (2) The Mishra, (3) The Nanda, (4) The Pate,
- (5) The Kara, (6) The Acharya, (7) The Satapasti, (8) The Bedi,
- (9) The Senapati, (10) The Parnagrahi, (11) The Nishank,
- (12) The Rainipati.

The *Shrotriya Brahmins* have the four following sub-divisions:

- (1) Shrotriyas, (2) Sonarbani, (3) Teli, (4) Agrabaksha.

### V. THE MAITHILYA BRAHMINS

The Maithilya Brahmins derive their designation from Mithila, an ancient division of India and which includes a great portion of the modern districts of Tirhut, Saran, Purnea and also parts of the adjacent tracts of Nepal. The following are the sub-divisions of the Maithilya Brahmins:

- (1) The Ojhas, (2) The Thakurs, (3) The Mishras, (4) The Puras,
- (5) The Shrotriyas, (6) The Bhuiharas.

Of these the Mishras have the following sub-sections:

- (1) 'The Chandharis, (2) The Rayas, (3) The Parihastas, (4) The Khanas, (5) The Kumaras.

### III

## OTHER BRAHMINS

The Panch Dravidas is a generic name for Brahmins living below the Vindhya and the Panch Gaudas is a generic name for Brahmins living above the Vindhya. In other words, Panch Gauda is a name for Northern Brahmins and Panch Dravidas, a name for Southern Brahmins. What is, however, to be noted is that the five divisions of Brahmins composing the Northern Fraternity and Southern Fraternity of Brahmins do not exhaust all the divisions of Brahmins living in Northern or Southern India. To complete the subject it is necessary not only to refer to them but also to record their sub-divisions.

## OTHER BRAHMINS OF SOUTH INDIA

In this category fall the following:

- (1) (1) The Konkani Brahmins  
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- (2) (2) The Hubu [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_17](#)
- (3) (3) The Gaukarna [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_18](#)
- (4) (4) The Havika [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_19](#)
- (5) (5) The Tulva [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_20](#)
- (6) (6) The Amma Kodaga  
[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing\\_Of\\_Babasaheb.chm::/23. Essay on Untouchables and Untouchability\\_Social.htm - \\_msocom\\_21](#)

### (7) (7) The Nambudri

The Nambudri Brahmins are the principal group of Brahmins living in Malabar. Besides the Nambudris there are also other sections of Brahmins. They are:

- (1) The Pottis, (2) The Muttadus, (3) The Fledus, (4) The Ramnad-writ Parasahas, (5) The Pattaras, (6) The Ambalvasis.

**OTHER RAJPUTA BRAHMINS**

The Varieties of Rajputa Brahmins not mentioned in the list of Gurjar Brahmins are:

- (1) The Shrimalis Brahmins, (2) The Sachoda Brahmins,
- (3) The Pallivalar Brahmins, (4) The Nandanas Brahmins,
- (5) The Pushakars Brahmins, (6) The Pokhar Sevakas Brahmins,
- (7) The Medatvala, (8) The Parikha Brahmins, (9) The Lavanas Brahmins,
- (10) The Dakotas Brahmins, (II) The Garudiyas Brahmins,
- (12) The Acharjas, (13) The Bura Brahmins, (14) The Kapidas,
- (15) The Dahimas, (16) The Khandelvalas, (17) The Divas,
- (18) The Sikavadas, (19) The Chamatvalas, (20) The Marus,
- (21) The Shrivantas, (22) The Abhiras, (23) The Bhartanas,
- (24) The Sanacadas, (25) The Vagadis, (26) The Mewadas,
- (27) The Rajgurus, (28) The Bhats, (29) The Charanas.