A Sociological Study of the Indian Caste System

George H. Singh

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A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE INDIAN CASTE SYSTEM.

A Thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts

Presented

by

George Hamilton Singh.

Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana.

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Nineteen hundred and twenty-seven.
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G.H.E.
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CHAPTER I.

Section 1.

Introduction.

However, people in America are aware that much of what is happening about the Indian could not. Some may not want to discuss it, in their own interests. However, against these trends, the American vision of India, p. 306, which was the central part of their own group, seems to stand in the opposite direction. It leads us to consider the following proposition: the American vision of India is an important part of the American vision of the world, which is not always clear.

A style of free government for the people of that country, their own civilization, however, in that alleged unjust slavery, is a great shot on Indian civilization.
Section 1. Introduction.

Whenever people in America and elsewhere outside of India hear anything about the Indian caste system, they show a great contempt, even to disgust, in their attitude towards this ancient institution which has been instrumental, to a very large degree in moulding the destinies of India up to this day. To a casual observer this institution is but "a monster custom" (Low, B., Vision of India, p. 260) which saps the character of people leaving them degenerate in their own group and degraded in the modern world. He condemns it from every angle, scorns and abhors those who follow it, and often is very intolerant. Politicians and statesmen, reformers and educators, travellers and journalists, demos and even scholars are imbued with undue prejudice against it; consequently so often one hears their biased arguments advanced against India whenever there is any talk of free-government for the people of that country. Their vehement criticism, however, is not altogether unjustifiable. Undoubtedly it is a great blot on Indian civilization, but we forget the "how" and "why" of this institution. There is a tendency in human beings to judge everything in the light of their present day knowledge so that the motives which might have been good in the conception of this system at the time it was advocated are now entirely neglected. Many people believe that it was instituted by the Brāhmans which is but partially
true. If one observes any organism (1) evolving its own habit and adjusting itself to new situations and environments one becomes aware that dozens of external and internal factors influence the organism as a whole. Human history throws light on problems of this kind. In Rome and England there were classes and castes in the medieval times when they refused to fuse. They exist in various countries in this age. We have, therefore, to seek some other avenue of approach to this stupendous problem which confronts us.

Those who know very little about it, or have a superficial knowledge of this institution, do not seem to approach the problem with an unbiased mind. They show a degree of superiority in their attitude and express their opinionated statements in rather nebulous expressions giving rise to pseudo-scientific literature. That it is a bad institution and should be eradicated altogether constitutes their principal argument against it. To consider a thing bad because someone thinks it bad is poor judgement. If one says that dancing is bad and must be stopped because it is bad he has proved nothing and advanced no arguments to substantiate his belief in its unwholesomeness. And it is natural that some of us think in terms unanalyzed and uncriticized. All men are guilty of such illogical thought processes at one time or another.

No country has been able to solve its caste problems. America is in the same grip. One has to admit, however, that

1. It is not a comparison of biological organism with society as Spencer thought. It is used only to illustrate the point.
the caste system of India is different than that of social classes of America but the 'time' element in the final judgement of the whole situation should be taken into consideration. It is very encouraging to find that the Indians themselves are more critical than their foreign critics. Those who labour under certain handicaps are in a better position to judge and feel their own burdens and pains. Nevertheless this institution marches on with time and keeps abreast of modern civilization. It is an impossibility to uproot an institution which has its roots down deep into the very life of a people. It is no wonder that progressives expounding their theories create confusion in Hindu Society, and reformers putting an axe to this tree ignite mass indignation of India. Not only the masses of people are troubled but the so called "radicals" who have "but skimmed the surface of the western civilization" feel uneasy about it. It is a great undertaking to attempt to break away from it. It resists external influences because of its very nature. This ossification and stratification of Indian society, sanctioned by religious theories are not circumstances which yield to endeavours to convert them into a state of fluidity without resistance. Years, decades, and centuries will pass before it is ever accomplished.

To a serious student of the Indian caste system there lies a great wealth of material in the field for research. If he is collecting data and arranging it; if he is trying to seek
knowledge with an unbiased mind; if he is rejecting a priori reasonings as much as possible; and if he is not allowing himself to become a prophet by observing only a few things, he is doing a great service to true social investigation. The rational method is found neither in justifying any existing institution of old, nor, in taking an extreme position and rejecting its value altogether. If he is candid he will admit a middle ground and work from that standpoint. There should be attached no illusions as to the method of his procedure. If he studies the things as they actually are, and tries to find out how they have come to be as they are; and then integrate his own theories as to how they ought to be; he is treading the right trail. Most people make the mistake of aligning their thought with that of those extremists who either find all justification in the existence of such institutions and defend their views at the expense of truth; or with that of those who take the opposite point of view. This three fold method--analysis of present conditions; study of the historical development; and with this one's own conception of the problem theoretically considered--offers a precision and also a diversity of data most satisfactory to one engaged in the investigation of social phenomena.

The subject has been divided under two main headings; viz., historical and socio-ecological. It is impossible to have an adequate and clear conception of the function of the caste
system in the modern Hindu society without a thorough knowledge of its origin. One word should be added: it is better to use the plural form of "Origin" because this abstraction in its singular form will have no meaning whatsoever. There is no such thing as "Origin of caste system". It should be studied as "Origins of caste system."

A rise in the mind of the investigator certain questions and he seeks to answer them with the material at hand. Was there any class consciousness before the well-known Institutes of Manu came into force among the people? What could be the possible explanations of such a feeling if there was one? What were the motives of those who instituted it? Was there and could there have been any rational justification for men to enforce such rules and regulations which would determine their conduct, personal status, and destiny? Was there any need of it at that state of Hindu civilization? What would have been the result if it had not been instituted? "Was it only a niceous sin and an unpardonable effrontary?"

Could they have seen the future of such a division? What were its probable effects upon the people of India about 100 A.D.-300 A. D.? (Manu lived somewhere between these centuries). Did it in any way prove beneficial to the Hindu society in the medieval times when the Mohammadans were pouring from the north-west into India, and trying to convert the Hindus? How does it function in India in our own time? Is it a hinderance;
if so, how? Should it exist; if so, why? What are its chief characteristics? How does it resist the Western contact? What could be the future of India if it were to persist; or, if it were not to? What are its effects on the people of India; on the world? These are few of the many questions which arise in the mind of him who tries to study this complex organization. It is truly a venture for, surely, any person studying it will not find it a simplified situation.

To understand, therefore, the Indian caste system in its sociological aspects, it is imperative that one has as thorough a knowledge of its origins as he can. There are grave dangers of misrepresentation. Lack of appreciation begets antagonism. So complex a system it is that one is liable to be lost in its winding lagoons and entrapped in its relentless and rigid tangle without any hope of freeing himself from its intricacies. It is a great problem which needs to be sympathetically studied. In our human experience we have keys to the solution of problems, and in societal evolution, we may rest assured, that human society could reorient many of its mistakes and thus evolve a better society than ever before.

The usage of the term "solution" in this paragraph should not be interpreted as if the writer meant that problems could be solved with an assurance that they would never be reoriented. There could never exist a perfect social organization but one must work toward some ideal which though he never reachest it, at least enjoys its compensation. The Indian caste system is
also one of those persistent social problems which needs correction.

Numerous treatises and books have been written on this very subject, and in the end it has proved to be a baffling and thankless venture; yet to strive against difficulties is the highest human felicity. Many theories have been advocated and advanced as to its probable "origin", (Nesfield), or "origins", (Ketkar),--we have both kinds of scholars--but no one has been able to revolutionize previous theories and base his own on a more solid ground than his predecessors or contemporaries. At times it seems like a chain which has its ends in infinity; but to traverse the path of this chain is to catch different vistas which throw light upon the problem. In so doing one sees different phases of the same problem, and are encouraged in the task of supplying more clues for further investigation.

Some people hold that it was borrowed from Persia (Spiegel's study of the Persians shows a parallelism with the Hindu system which Risley seems to accept), some insist that it was based primarily on function (Nesfield), some assure us that it rose out of racial antagonism (Risley and Chirol), while the Hindu pundits declare that Bhrama himself created different castes. From all the available data which the students of caste system have at their disposal, it is evident that there is an element of truth in all of these theories, including
even that of the pundits; but no one has the whole truth. There are many contradictions and in the discussion of various theories they will be pointed out. Can there by a synthesis is a question which arises in one's mind? If one is able to reconcile and synthesize some of these conflicting and divergent theories into one theory which could answer his natural questions he should be gratified and more hopeful. For the present it is impossible to reach this goal; however, the future may bring better results.

The main source of information as to its "origin" is Manu's writings; whereas, sources of its "origins" based upon ethnological, anthropological, ecological and philosophical data are findings which the European scholars have been able to collect. Is there any possibility of reconciling and interpreting the present day theories with Manu's doctrine of "Karma", "Dharma", and "Transmigration of Soul" associated with the creation of men from various organs of Brahma? Risley, Ketkar, Nesfield, Senart and Spiegel; Wilson, Bhattacharya, Cotton, Campbell and DuBois have drawn their main source of information from ancient writings and have tried to reconcile their theories with Manu's law. They have, of course, not succeeded. Their failure, however, need not discourage students, but stimulate them to investigate and explore this dense jungle of doubtful success. It affords an opportunity to study the whole problem and fathom deep into the heart of this highly
organized and complex situation, in the spirit and faith of a true scholar.

Studying the Indian caste system as it functions in India at the present time, it must be borne in mind that alone and by itself it can not survive. It has a religious sanction; and religion is the life of the Indian people, no matter how crude and absurd it may be. One can make use of religious prejudices of the Indian people for improvement or detriment. It is very discouraging to see the masses of India kept in ignorance by these pseudo-religious demands.

In this dissertation special attention has been given to two important phases of life; viz., religious and political. It is absolutely impossible in this age of Indian unrest and transition, to leave them out of discussion, for it is caste which is one of the most powerful agencies in the political and social reforms which hinders India's progress. At the same time there is a tendency to form political groups around a mild form of caste consciousness propelled and furated by economic interest for the benefit of the group concerned. Still further; there is a communal strife between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. The former are trying to control the whole of the political arena and the later are groaning under a new burden. Indian politics have become economics. The time has come, however, when intelligent and educated classes of people will cooperate whether they be Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians,
Parsis or of any religion, and respond to the need of their country rather than their personal gain. The idea of individual amelioration will lose its value and the conception of the rise for social betterment will take its place. Group interest will dominate individual gain. The Indian nation—in the making now—will be thought of as one social group, and communal interests of various classes will be moderated. It is interesting to watch this new social-consciousness—a sense of unity. Is that not one proof that caste which is a boon companion of the Hindus, Mohammedans and even Christians, is giving way to a more rational and better understanding of human beings? "True it is", says Huckel, "that we have classes so called in America—the moneyed class, the servant class, but no real caste, since these can transfer by circumstances or education from one class to another. But in India, the caste system is rigid and unchangeable. It is a barrier to all progress; it quenches ambition; it is an unreasonable and unrighteous system, giving such handicap from the accident of birth."(1)

That the Indian caste system is "a barrier to all progress"—though an extreme statement—is true in the main. The time has come, however, when former ideas and hoary traditions are being cast aside, willingly or unwillingly by three hundred and twenty millions of people of that great subcontinent in

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N.B. Huckel does not say anything about the Negroes in America.
order to respond to the need of their country, to take part in the hearty co-operation, with an attitude of determination, and courage to adopt a better, nobler, integrated and workable machinery devoid of religious sanctions and priestly stupidity.
CHAPTER I.

Section 2.
Chapter 1, Section 2.

In Hindu literature there is no term as "Caste" and the only term appearing in India which resembles it is "Varna", meaning colour. It is of foreign origin. The derivation of this term "caste" is from Latin "Castus" which means pure. It was frequently used by the Spaniards and the Portuguese in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The Portuguese were the first people who used this term, signifying that the then Indian institution which kept people socially distinct was primarily based upon purity. Its application is found in the fifteenth century when Vasco de Gama and other people touched the Indian shore. In the modern sense it was not used until the seventeenth century. (1) According to the Spanish usage it was spelled "Casta" which denoted race or lineage. The current spelling is the French "Caste" which appears in the "academies". When there were intermarriages between the Spaniards and the American Indians or the Negroes, the new generation composed of the progeny was called by the term "Casta". (2) It is interesting to note that this term which was vaguely understood was considered peculiar to India, and one finds Tennyson (3) and the others using it for hereditary classes of Europe which corresponded

1. Examples in the above sense are: "The Common Brahman have 82 castes or tribes", Lord Banian 1630 A.D.
2. Their (of the Nabathenes) caste is wittye in winning of substance. Frade Facious II,1,118. Faun and Ulloos Voyages to S. America (1772),1,1, iv. 27.
3. Her manners had not that repose which stumps the caste of Vere de Vere (Tennyson's Lady Clare Vere).
with the four main classes of the Indian people. Even biologists have used this term classifying various insects which have social distinctions. (1) The growing science of antology does not hesitate, in this day, to make use of it. Thus one feels that it is a very vague and ambiguous term which does not convey any definite meaning.

"Varna" is a Sanskrit word which means colour. It is used frequently by the Aryans of the Vedic times and was particularly used by Manu in his book from which is drawn the material for investigation. Four distinct colours are recognized in Manu's Institutes, viz., white, red, brown, and black. One notices in the Laws of Manu how Brahma (the creator) divided these various colours and determined what the function of each "varna" was to be. The idea of colour differentiation gave rise to various philosophical theories. The Brahmans were originally classified as very fair people whose duty it was to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. The use of intoxicated beverages and animals as food were prohibited these people on the ground that such ingredients retarded mental activity. Here one finds the formation of distinct class-consciousness. Going a bit further, the second class was recognized as warriors who fought for their territory and defended the people. Because of their special function they were allowed to make use of wine

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and meat. Similarly Manu distinguished the remaining two classes. The third class engaged in agriculture and trade; the last engaged in menial services. According to the same classification different treatment was given to the people in each of the various phases of human activity. Treatment of "varna" in the law courts; penalties connected with intermarriage of the two different "varnas" functioned according to their social status. In short, it is only in the book of Manu that colour distinction is emphasized. It must not be construed that colour and colour only was the criterion of judgement in earlier times and that the caste system arose out of such colour prejudices. Risley and Chirol are supporting that view. To quote Chirol, "The Sanskrit word "varna" means both caste and colour, and it may well be that in remote ages caste was little more than a colour-bar erected by the Aryan new comers who were then a small minority in India to protect their own race from being swamped by the earlier races already in possession of the country while their superior organization and their higher civilization were reducing them to subjection."(1)

Special attention will be given to Chirol's and Risley's views in the discussion of various theories in the next chapter. Let it suffice at this point to say that the theory of these authors as to class-consciousness based upon Manu's classification by colour, or inferred from sources previous to

Manu's writings, is only partially true. It is worth while to examine some of the definitions that various scholars have given, Risley, Senart and Ketkar stand foremost.

Risley defines caste as a collection of families, or groups of families bearing a common name which usually denotes or is associated with a specific occupation, claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same calling. Such are regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community. He goes on further to say, "The name generally denotes or is associated with a specific occupation. A caste is almost invariably endogamous in the sense that a member of the large circle denoted by the common name may not marry outside that circle, but within the circle there are usually a number of smaller circles each of which is also endogamous. Thus it is not enough to say that a Brahman at the present day cannot marry any woman who is not a Brahman, his wife must not only be a Brahman, she must also belong to the same endogamous division of the Brahman caste." (1)

Risley's definition includes all essentials of a caste and analyzes the situation as it exists at the present time, but there are two main objections to it (2), viz., the definition is too cumbersome and unusually long, and that his

1. Risley, Sir H., The People of India, p. 68.
2. Ketkar's criticism of Risley's definition is probably just. (Ketkar, History of Caste in India, Vol. 1, p. 14)
emphasis on endogamous marriages within their own circle is rather a too precise restriction. The practice reveals that members of the smaller circles may or may not marry among themselves; i.e., the members of two different families (sub-castes) of the main head-family marry each other. Risley's usage of the term "circle" corresponds with the usage of the term "family"; however, his is a fairly accurate definition.

It is interesting to note that Risley himself regarded his definition as "rigid", at least it is as compared with Senart's idea. Ketkar contends that Senart has differentiated between "varna" and "caste" in his book Les castes dans l' Inde, after reminding his readers that no statement that can be made on the subject of caste can be considered as absolutely true, that the apparent relation of the facts admit of numerous shades of distinction and that only the most general characteristics cover the whole of the subject proceeds to describe caste as,

"A close corporation, in theory at any rate rigorously hereditary; including a chief and a council; meeting on occasion in assemblies of more or less plenary authority, and joining in the celebration of certain festivals; bound together by a common occupation; observing certain common usages which relate more particularly to marriage, to food and to questions of ceremonial pollution; and ruling its members by the exercise of a jurisdiction the extent of which varies but which succeeds, by the sanction of certain penalties, and above all, by the power of final and
revocable exclusion from the group in making the authority of the community effectively felt. 

On the whole, this is an admirable summary of caste, though one should hardly think it a good definition. There are two flaws in it: (1) All castes do not have councils as Ketkar points out, and, (2), there is not so much of rigidity as "caste corporation" conveys.

Ketkar's definition is more satisfactory than the other two just mentioned. According to him caste must have two characteristics: (1) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born; (2) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group. Each one of such groups has a special name by which it is called. Several of such small aggregates are grouped together under a common name, while these larger groups are but sub-divisions of groups still larger which have independent names.

There might be some objection to his contention that membership is confined to those who are born of members. This social law operates at the present time, but it was not so rigid as Ketkar contends in Ancient India. There are historical facts to prove that a person of one caste could go into another caste in the days of Manu and previous to it. (2) If it is true that all people who were called Brahmins originally had no class-

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consciousness, as the author contends throughout his book, then one fails to see how membership was confined to those born of members. Manu points out that "Yavanas" (Greeks) fused in the Hindu society and identified themselves with at least one of the three classes of warriors, agriculturists and Shudras.

As far as the present day Hindu society is concerned it is true that the membership is confined to those born of members, and that people do not intermarry; but some other difficulties arise when one defines it. Taking for granted that membership is confined only to those born in the same caste, and that they do not intermarry, the question arises as to why is it that caste and sub-castes are formed every day? If people were to observe the two above mentioned principles of Indian gradation of society on which it revolves, there need not be so many divisions as are found at the present time. If excommunication is the penalty which must be enforced in case there is any breach of those inflexible and unchangeable laws, why is it that any newly-formed caste should observe the same kind of conduct? At the same time two distinct elements are confused with each other. If one defines it in the light of all available facts of the ancient times, then it could not be accepted that the membership was confined to only the members born in a certain class, and that they never intermarried. The facts are that they intermarried and even changed their
classes. (1) Moreover, were one to define it by studying the present day Hindu Society, it is very evident that both of those laws operate with the preciseness of a watch.

Exact definition and explanation of any social phenomenon or behaviour of human beings is in itself an impossibility. Flaws could be detected which are not in absolute harmony with social laws of conduct. It does not mean, however, that social laws do not function. Quite often the contrary is true. The more rigid the law is the more easily it is broken, with the result that new classes may come into being; and paradoxically the more rigid will it ever become when people find out that social laws are broken. The strength of any law is in direct proportion to the weakness of its observers. To explain it further: "(1) If a caste can give water to a Brahman or touch him, that caste is pretty good.

"(2) If a caste can give water to a Brahman lady or touch without polluting her, that caste is better still.

"(3) A caste from whom a Brahman widow may accept water, or one whose members she can touch without being polluted, is the best of all.

The harder the rules of ceremonial purity, the more easily they are broken. The more extravagant the notions of

1. Manu x, 43, 44. Assimilation went on between the Greeks and the Hindus. Whenever Hindus and foreigners came into contact, if the foreigners accepted the religious ideas of Hindus the foreigners probably found no difficulty in entering Hindu society. If the Hindu religion was not adopted by the foreigners they were treated as "Melechcha" (untouchables). Ketkar, S. History of Caste, Vol. I, p. 69.
purity are, the more easily is the purity defiled. The castes are good in proportion to the hardness of the ceremonial rules of purity of the people they can touch without polluting them. The ceremonial rules of purity of a Brahanan lady are harder than those of men, and of widows harder than the ordinary women; and castes could be graded accordingly. "(1)

To sum up, the Indian caste system revolves around three principles; namely, (1) idea of purity, (2) confined membership, and (3) endogamy. The further growth which at once becomes basic is that the status of various people is well defined and unless class status is at stake there will appear no real sign of its disintegration.

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Origin of Caste System.

To speak bluntly, and make no pretence of an impartial view, the idea of caste is, in the main, an Indian invention. The idea of an inborn difference in social status is in all other known societies dependent to some extent on class, wealth, or education. There is no ancient Indian literature which throws considerable light upon this problem. The sacred Scriptures of the Hindus were written between 1000 B.C. and 400 B.C., and therefore the class-consciousness among people at that time. The people of ancient India must have been divided into groups, some superior, some inferior, according to the conditions of the soil, the trade, and the occupation. But in the latter part of the 18th century, Sir William Jones, and the 19th century, the rigid system of the Hindu stratum of society. This system is the growth of social structure, described by Oliver Filley in his admirable book, "The People of India."
Chapter II. Section 1. Origin of Caste System.

Earlier Sources of the Origin of Caste System. It is very unfortunate that reliable data are not available for the study of the Indian caste system. There are three chief sources from which material for investigation could be gathered as to the probable origin of the Indian caste. They are (1) from Vedic and Semi-Vedic literature, (2) The Institutes of Manu, (3) and literature of other countries such as China and Greece. A fourth possible avenue of approach is the oral tradition. To rely upon or even to assume that there is truth in oral traditions on a subject like this—to believe that these traditions were handed down from father to son without changing the central thought or modifying the ideas to fit new conditions is an error.

To spend time solving and deducing some assumptions from oral traditions, and relating the probable origin of this institution with other social phenomena is not very desirable. Fortunately there is some ancient Indian literature which throws considerable light upon this problem. The sacred Scriptures of the Hindus which were written between 1000 B.C. – 400 B.C. indicate that there was class-consciousness among people at that time. The emphasis in these books centers round the duties which were assigned to people of the Vedic time, but it does not emphasize the rigidity of the Hindu stratification of society. Truly it was an after growth of social structure. Risley in his admirable book (1) draws

an analogy to show the present ossification in illuminating terms when he says, "At the risk of driving patent analogy too hard, we may perhaps venture to compare the social gradations of the Indian caste system to a series of geological deposits. The successive strata in each series occupy a definite position, determined by the manner of their formation and the varying customs in the one way may be said to represent the fossil in the other." The rigidity and fixity of this "social-gradation" as that of "geological deposits" did not exist in the Vedic time. Cases are known when there were intermarriages and people could rise from a lower to a higher society. (1) Some scholars think that such cases were not known in those times. (2) It, probably, is an error because the period of stratification was not completed during that period. If records are authentic there is no reason why they should not be interpreted as such. The process of selection was going on and was becoming more and more ossified as religious sanction was given to actions and conduct, and personal status of human beings.

Leaving this period of formation one comes to about 200 A. D. when Manu came on the scene. Assuming that Brahmans had already conquered other people and were using them as tools to further their interest and giving a divine interpretation to all activities of life, we find Manu who gave a further and permanent advance to the growing power of the Brahmans. It is

1. Manu (vii, 42) See Also, Ch 1, p. 13.
possible that the Brahmans of that time were suffering the encroachment of a militaristic type of people who were reducing them in number and snatching away their rights. (1) Whatever might be the case it is certain that Manu became a leader of the movement which was to have a permanent part in Hindu society.

The main source of information concerning the origin of caste system as ancient India conceived it is found in "Manava Dharma-sashtra", Laws of Manu. From an academic point of view it is of interest to know something about the man who was instrumental in introducing a system, sanctioned by religious principles and philosophic interpretations, which has moulded the destiny of India. The modern critics have judged Manu very unfairly and have tried to prove many things asserting that he was moved by personal greed for popularity and knew what the result of such an institution would be in the future, but in order to uphold the superiority of the Brahmans he formulated laws giving them a religious colour in order to accomplish his ends. (2) It is an error, for the motives which instigated Manu were very different, and, moreover, are they not judging him according to modern standards and "mores".

1. Even before this period the Brahmans suffered persecution. Rama and his brother Lakhshmana were asked to help the Brahmans against demons. It is possible that Rama never lived but legends of this kind would lead one to infer that the Brahmans had to encounter difficulties and sought help from the ruling classes.

2. Wilson, J., The Indian Caste System.
Because of these charges of the critics of the Indian caste system, it is worth while to learn something about this man who is still honoured in India, and respected all over the world by quite a few scholars. (1)

When Manu lived is not known, but modern scholars have sought to place him somewhere between 200 B. C. and 200 A. D. R. Pishel places the laws of Manu in the second or third century. (2) Ketkar arrives independently by placing him somewhere between 227 A. D. and 320 A. D. (3) This period is of great importance because it would throw light on the question: "What was the condition of the people at the time when the laws of Manu were introduced?" (4)

Nearly all historians of India have agreed that Manu lived in Nagdha (Bengal) and was born of Brahman parents. There are numerous reasons to believe that he lived in Nagdha. (5) In his book he mentions castes and classes of people peculiar to that region and he seems to be very well acquainted with the geography and the people of that part of the country. His emphasis on the land of the Kurus and the Pandavas and Madhya-Desh, the country between the Himalyas and the Vindhya; to show the superiority of that country (5); and his contempt for Southern India which he calls the country where only distressed

1. Abhenanda, (The Indian People), Max Muller, Buller, etc.
4. Smith, Sirkar, Allen, Ketkar and others.
5. Joas XIX. (Ketkar, p. 70).
Shudras can live (11,17-24) all show us that he was an inhabitant of the Northern India. The doctrine propounded by him that the Brahmans can claim special prerogatives which the lower classes cannot; that Brahmans born in any part of the country, though he lives anywhere in the land of the Aryas, should be looked up to; and that all people should learn right conduct from them, is of some importance. This doctrine is of special value in determining the location of the man.

Manu was a person of no mean ability. He was a scholar and a philosopher. It is very evident and clear from his writings that he was well versed in the Vedic literature. Often does he use the Vedic language, quotes from the Vedas and the Puranas and bases the justification of his own views and precepts in accordance with the Vedic conception and its sanction. Astronomy and medicine are not foreign to his knowledge. He tells us how to select a wife (1), and proceeds to give us gratuitous advice as to when to approach her. The explanations of these instructions are in medical and astronomical reasons.

He was not only an educated man but also a person of good intentions. He had a great regard for traditions; and some passages which are found in his book should not lead us to judge him to be harsh, cruel, and selfish. In spite of the fact that he formulated some very strict precepts one finds that he has

1. Astronomical theories in present day India.

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shown great sympathy for other people. He was kind hearted (1),
paying more regard to virtues than to forms (2), loving
moderation, and trying to be fair to other castes. (3) Beside
being a scholar and a man of good intention, he was rather
progressive. His views might be labelled as static and unpro-
gressive, but that is because he is judged according to modern
standards. A radical of today will surely be considered a
conservative tomorrow as present day conservatives were once
radicals in their time. Certain rules were valid before Manu,
but he either contradicts them or explains them in a novel manner
which ensures great freedom of thought without destroying the
structure. (4) He was of course, not an iconoclast and in that
sense he might well be termed a cautious-liberal, and a man
coming out of some eclectic institution.

Having learnt something about Manu we would proceed to
find out the state of the Indian society at that time, and draw
our independent inferences as to the origin of caste in India.

1. See his treatment of theft, adultery, and treatment of other
castes by the Brahmanas.
2. He says, "Neither the study of the Veda, nor liberality, nor
any (self-imposed) restraint, ever bring reward to a man whose
heart is contaminated by sensuality.
3. We do not have to go very far to confine the view that he was
very moderate in those times, but only need compare his views
on the question of moral delinquency and rape with those of
Yashishtha. It is very significant that Manu is advocating
death only in the one extreme case of adultery, whereas
Yashishtha prescribes it in almost every imaginable situation.
Comparison of views regarding disposition of treasure-trove
also corroborates our view. Netkar thinks that perhaps in the
advocacy of moderation Buddhism had influenced him, or, that
the age may have become more human through the teaching of
Buddha, and our author (Manu) might have unconsciously caught
the spirit of the age. He condemns, for example, the slaughter
of animals, and advises abstinence from meat of any kind. Even
in the matter of sacrifice, he regards slaughter as unnecessary.
4. Manu (ix, 64-70).
Before we go into detail it is of utmost importance that we know something about terms which our author uses in his "Manva Dharmasashstra". Unless we have a clear conception of various words we are liable to read something into them which was never intended. (1)

The usage of three terms, viz., "Varna", "Jati", and "Arya" is important. "Varna" means colour in Sanskrit literature, but it is very doubtful whether Manu used it in the sense the European scholars have employed it. (2) With the employment of the term "Varna", Manu used another term which he calls "Jati". It is but the form of existence determined by birth. Ancient India took it for granted that all "Jatis" belonged to one of the four "Varnas". Yet it was so used that it might designate hundreds of "Jatis" which might fall under one "Varna". It was also a very comprehensive term. According to Manu, horse was a "Jati", Shudra was a "Jati", and Brahman was a "Jati". Thus the whole "Varna" may be a "Jati", and various "Jatis" may form a "Varna". However, Manu recognizes only four Varnas and very emphatically says that there is no fifth varna.(3)

Throughout his book he differentiates between "Arya-Varna", and "Shudra-Varna". Some of us think of Arya in terms which convey an impression that those people who migrated into

1. Mistake of the European Scholars.
2. The European Scholars. Risley, Chirol, Huckel and others have attempted to prove that in Ancient Indis colour prejudice did exist which gave rise to the enactment of rigid social laws.
3. Manu (x,4).
India in pre-historic and historic times from the north-west were called the Aryans, and that the "Aryas" were those Indo-European invaders; (1) but from the ancient documents it is rather apparent that Manu never used the term "Arya" in the sense current at the present time.

However, there is a great confusion in our thinking as to whether Manu had a different idea than our modern conception or not. It is probable that his sharp distinction between people of different "Varnas" had a meaning closely related to our modern view, but it was only for a short period ante-dating the concrete beginnings of civilization in India. It is altogether possible that the descendents of the immigrants had forgotten their ancestry and thought themselves to be "Autochthonous and men of noble qualities and culture."(2)

1. The Westerners give it a meaning which was entirely foreign to India during the Vedic period. The term "Arya" as Ketkar points out (p.79) was not used in the sense of "race". It is very probable that ethnologists have committed some mistake here.

2. Ketkar's condemnation of the European scholarship needs our serious attention. He is emphatically of the opinion that our present day ethnologists and scholars have done a great harm to India. I agree with him in that people in India think it to be a land which has Aryans (Indo-Europeans) in the north and Dravadians in the south. Who these Dravadians were is not our intent to know more about. Let it suffice to say they are considered as those people who were driven down to the south of India when the Aryans came. There is a very strong class-consciousness, or, one might better say, race-consciousness in India. Undoubtedly there are men and women in South India which have come from "a fine race and have produced men and women of whom anyone in the world may well be proud, and the proudest races need not be ashamed of alliance with them", but that is altogether a different thing. We do not believe that all people in the south of India are Dravadians.
The term "Arya" had more of an ethical than ethnic significance. There are two reasons to support this view:

1. Arya was used designating "an honourable man" (viii,395). His contrast with "Melechchhas" is interesting. He thinks that the "Melechchhas" were barbarians whose country was other than the country of the Aryas and who spoke languages different from those which Arya spoke, (ii,22,23; x,45); and 2, Aryans whose conduct was improper lost their status and were not considered as Arya.

Some scholars think that this term "Arya" was used for Dravadians also. Their contention is that the Dravadian princes who held their own against the invaders were called such. This is probably an erroneous view. It is possible that Manu called some Dravadian princes "Aryas" thinking that they were rulers by virtue of their superior gifts. It is just possible that some of these Dravadian princes were former invaders. The Aryans came not only once, but wave after wave of them poured into India. Is it not possible then, that some Aryans themselves became Dravidian leaders and Manu recognized

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Millions of Aryans are there. They have also intermingled. There is no such thing as "Solid Dravidian South", but we cannot escape the fact that there is quite a difference between them and those who live in the north. We might contend that ecological factors determine various group adjustments; but are they the criterion of our judgment? I am of the opinion that Risley's general classification is more scientific and better than Nethker's contention that it is "A half-developed and hybrid ethnology". However, we have to admit that such theories have separated the Indians more than anything else, and that the stratification of society is more rigidly observed than before.
than as such? In this case it would embrace both the ethnic and ethical idea.

It is interesting to note that Manu recognized not only four castes as is generally accepted, but five besides. The "Varna" order clearly defines: "To the Brahman, the Supreme Being, assigned the duties of reading the Veda and teaching it, of sacrificing, of assisting others to sacrifice, of giving alms and of receiving gifts. To defend the people, to give alms, to sacrifice, to read the Vedas, to shun the allurement of sexual gratification, are in a few words the duties of a Kshatriyas.
To keep herds of cattle, to bestow largesses, to sacrifice, to carry on trade, to lend at interest, are the duties of a Vaishya. One principal duty the Supreme Being assigned to a Shudra, namely, to serve the before mentioned classes without depreciating their worth." (1)

The remaining five classes were as follows:--

I. Castes which were supposed to be produced by mixture with pure and mixed caste.

II. Caste which have lost their status on account of neglect of sacred rites.

III. Castes due to the exclusion of persons from the community.

1. This is the "Varna" order. Manu recognizes only four "Varnas" already discussed. The Vedic theory of the origin of four "Varnas" runs that Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra were born of Parusha from his mouth (white), arms (red), thigh (pale) and feet (black). Manu has repeated the same story. It must not be construed that colour prejudice was very strong during the Vedic period as some authors such as Risley, Oman, Chirol, etc., contend. (Manu, i,67-97).
IV. Slaves and their descendants.

V. People excluded from the community of the four "varnas", as well as their descendants.

Manu was not the inventor of various irrational theories which are prevalent among the Indian people up to this day. It is possible that he was influenced by doctrines of such nature from some other teacher. It may also have happened that he recorded oral traditions. To draw any hasty conclusion deciding that Manu was the person who introduced this error is wholly unjust. This phenomenon of inventing new stories and theories has not disappeared in India. Manu never tries to explain how the different "Jatis" originated. There is no doubt that the process of blood amalgamation was going on at this period. There are documents to show that the Hindus intermarried with the Greeks of yore whom they called "Yavanas". It is very probable that new "Jatis" were formed in succession. Manu records this social phenomenon. Ketkar observes, "The castes which adopted purer conduct and performed austerities raised their status in the eyes of the world, while the castes neglecting those elevating ceremonies and austerities fell". The Hindus also of the period believed that the world was made up of various "jatis" and everyone of those "jatis" belonged to one or the other of the four "varnas". They did not think that the system of the four "varnas" was peculiar to their own land.

The discussion is incomplete without noticing the justification of the Indian caste system at that time. The Hindus
have believed from time immemorial in the doctrine of Dharma (Nature) "transmigration", and "Karma" (Action). Let us look into a few quotations from Manu: "God has assigned a proper duty to each "Varna" to prevent social dissolution. (1,87). That "Dharma" for every individual was determined by his origin, because the nature of every person was originally determined, was the under-lying idea.

"But to whatever course of action the Lord at first appointed each (kind of beings) that alone, it has spontaneously adopted in each succeeding generation."

"Whatever he assigned to each at the first creation, noxiousness or harmlessness, gentleness or ferocity, virtue or sin, truth or falsehood, that clung (afterwards) spontaneously to it." (1, 28-29).

Manu was averse to the commingling of various "Varnas" and he seems to have knowledge of a legend of a remote period when confusion of castes took place. (ix,67). In order to have a stable and a graded society he thought it prudent to emphasize such doctrines. According to the Dharma writers, people could not change their original nature. Manu says that a Shudra cannot be of noble quality; servitude is his nature. If there be any doubt regarding the "varna" of any individual it would at once be revealed by his nature or by actions which are due to his nature. (x,87).

Closely related with the Dharma doctrine is Karma theory. "By Karma (action) is caused the various conditions
of men, the highest, the middle, and the lowest", explains Shridhar. "In consequence of many sinful acts committed by one's body, voice or mind, that individual in the next birth will become a bird, or a beast, or a low caste person respectively. There are three "gunas" (qualities); "Satva"(goodness) "Rajas" (activity), and "Tamas" (darkness). When one of these three qualities predominates, the body becomes distinguished by that quality. The study of Vedas, austerity, knowledge and purity, etc., are marks of the quality of goodness. Delighting in adventure, want of firmness, indulgences in sexual pleasures are all marks of the quality of activity. Cruelty, covetousness, evil life, etc., are marks of dark quality. Through each of these qualities man obtains various transmigrations. It is preponderance of various qualities that determine the truth of man as a Brahman or a Shudra.

Thus it is clear how these various theories justify such a division of society. Functions of various classes are well defined accordingly.

It is very true, as some one has remarked that "purity is the pivot on which the entire system turns". The theory of purity justifies such a division. One author remarks, "Rank, social position, economic condition have no direct effect on the gradation from the stand point of caste. They are simply aids to establish the status. Caste in India is strong and rigid because the ideas of the people regarding purity and pollution are rigid."(1)

CHAPTER II.

Section 2.

Modern Theories.
Chapter 11, Section 2. Modern Theories.

Risley, Sir Valentine.

Having discussed briefly Manu's theory of the origin of caste we turn our attention to the modern theorists who claim to have found the key to this problem. The Indian theory is treated by all of them to a certain extent not because they thought there was anything worth while in their investigation, but that "it can hardly be left out of account merely because it has no foundation in fact". Deploiring the Indian mind, for "it merely reflects the idiosyncrasies of the Indian intellect", "its feeble grasp of questions of fact", "its subtle manipulations of impossible theories", "its strength lies in other lines of mental activity in a region of transcendental speculation which does not lead to the making of history"; we are introduced to Risley's theory, or, might better say theories, for he combines two views into one which supports Spiegel's classification of classes as he found them in Persia. Risley starts from the assumption that there was much in common between the Persians and the Indians. If the view, as set forth by some writers, that the Aryans came into India from Persia could be substantiated Risley's position would be greatly strengthened. Risley remarks, "it is possible that the Brahmanical theory of caste may be nothing more than a modified version of the division of Society into four classes--priests, warriors, cultivators and artisans--which appears in
the Sacredotal literature of Ancient Persia". (1)

Risley asserts that the resemblance between the Indian theory and that of the Iranians justifies us in concluding that India borrowed it from Persia. (2) For him the differences in categories are trifling, and admit of being accounted for by the fact that India has, what Persia had not, a large aboriginal population differing from the Indo-Aryans in respect of religion, usages, physical types, and more especially in the conspicuous attribute of colour. Further, he maintains that the distinction between the twice-born and the "Shudras", and through the prominence given to the element of colour, "Varna", the Indian system rests upon a basis of racial antagonism of which there is no trace in Persia or Egypt. (3) If this theory of castes originating out of racial antagonism is valid there need not be four distinct classes in the beginning. The cleavage is between the aboriginal tribes who were black and the Aryans who were white. How do we account for the fact that the second and the third class of the Hindu society come from the Aryan

2. "There is no probability in the view of Senart or Risley (Imperial Gazetteer of India, i, 338-348), that the names of the old classes were later superimposed artificially on a system of castes that were different from them in origin. We cannot say that the castes existed before the classes, and that the classes were borrowed by India from Iran, as Risley maintains, ignoring the early Brahman evidence for the four "Varnas" and treating the transfer as late". A.A. MacDonald, A.B. Keith, "A Vedic Index of Names and Subjects (1912, ii, 270).
3. Risley, p. 262.
Risley himself maintains that the Aryans comprised the upper three classes. Taking for granted that the origin was "colour distinction", it is hard to reconcile it with Spiegel's classification. MacDonald's and Keith's criticism is just when they say that Risley and Senart ignored early Brahman evidence for the four Varnas. (2)

In 1926 there are outstanding leaders who support Risley's views. In America authors like Stoddard, Grant, Wiggam, and in England men like Sir Valentine Chirol and Birdwood, tell us that colour and colour alone is the only "instinctive" basis for various conflicts. They find it rather impossible to say anything but "instinctive" repulsion. Whatever ideas we have of "behaviour" and "instinct" need not be discussed at the present. Oman says, "The Sanskrit word for caste is "Varna", meaning colour, and this gives us an important clue to the solution of the problem, for it shows clearly that the Hindu caste system arose primarily out of the contact of races strongly differentiated by colour." (6)

Risley has taken great care to reconcile his "colour theory" and "Persian classification", but we might raise a

1. Anthropologists and ethnologists confirm our views.
2. See footnote p. 35.
5. Wiggam--Fruit of the Family Tree.
7. Birdwood, George--S.V.A.
8. Oman, J.C.--Brahman Theists and Muslims of India.
pertinent question, "Why is it that the people in Persia and Egypt intermarried with each other irrespective of their function and in India it was forbidden even among those who were Aryan themselves?" Was colour, then, the only criterion of judgment? "Amongst the Hindus", observes Oman, "jus connubii, of each caste is very rigid, and any breach of it is a most serious offence. Two rules which hold good generally throughout the caste system are: that marriages may be contracted only between members of the same caste, but that such alliances may not be made within one family", or as M. Senart puts it, "La loi de la caste.... est une loi d'endogamme par rapport a la caste, d'exogamme par rapport a la famille. Dans ces termes vagues, elle est absolve". (1)

The only answer given to this inquiry is that the Persians practised hypergamy instead. There is one more question which arises in our minds. Why is it that colour has no significance in our Indian society now? Where has "instinctive repulsion" gone? Is it not rather a social phenomenon than merely "colour prejudice" justified by our "ethnologists who have a hobby to draw sharp lines of demarcation on instinctive basis?"

Hesfield. Admitting that there is a great element of truth in inductive method, and especially when comparing the foregoing theory with paleological data which exist in Europe,

1. (Les Castes Dans l'Inde, p. 27.)
we come to another theory which is rather interesting. Nesfield
(1) starts with an assumption that there is an essential unity
of the Indian race and proposes a different theory to the utmost
disgust of some who say "inspired by the systematic philosophy
of Comte". (2) Assuming that there is an essential unity of
the Indian race, "that there is physiological resemblance"
that for the last three thousand years at least no real
difference of blood has existed between the Aryans and the
Dravidians, he proceeds to explain the status of various castes.
He divides the Indian society into seven classes as follows:

I. Casteless tribes. III. Artisan castes.
II. Castes connected with land-- A. Preceding metallurgy.
   A. Allied to hunting state. B. Coeval with metallurgy.
   B. Allied to fishing state. IV. Trading castes.
   C. Allied to pastoral state. V. Serving castes.
   D. Agricultural. VI. Priestly castes.
   E. Landlords and warriors. VII. Religious orders.

This classification is based solely on occupation.
Nesfield arrives at his conclusion that "function, and function
only, as I think, was the foundation upon which the whole caste
system of India was built up". The gradation of the Inian
Society on this functional basis is determined by the principle
that, "each caste or group of castes represents one or the
other of those progressive stages of culture which have marked
the industrial development of mankind, not only in India, but
in every other country in the world wherein some advance has

1. Brief view of the Caste System of the North West Provinces and
2. Risley, H. The People of India, p. 265.
been made from primeval savagery to the arts and industries of civilized life. The rank of any caste as high or low depends upon whether the industry represented by the caste belongs to an advanced or backward stage of culture; and thus the natural history of human industries affords the chief clue to the gradations as well as the formation of Indian caste."

Various questions throng our minds when we study the "functional theory". Ketkar, Huxley and others who do not seem to recognize radical differences between peoples living chiefly in the north and the south would welcome this theory; but it is rather impossible for anthropologists and ethnologists like Risley, and a few others to accept it. Risley observes, "that a theory which includes in the same categories the Dom and the Teli, the Banjara and the Khatri, the Bhangi and the Kayasth must, in the race for acceptance, lose a good deal of ground at the start."(1) That there is neither ethnic nor physiological semblance between people of the north and the south is the criticism of Nesfield's theory. There is a great difference. Even to imagine that there is essential unity of the Indian race is wholly wrong. What principle should be then, used to classify various races? Should it be skin colour, or hair section, or facial and nasal indices, or physiological systems? There is no general agreement. Ketkar tells of Professor Wilcox's (2) view

1. Risley, Sir F. The People of India, p. 267.
as follows: in biology the species are classified with reference to the relative permanence of different characteristics; the same principle may be applied in ethnology. Mankind also should be classified with reference to the degree of permanence of various physical characteristics. Whether the above stated principle has revolutionized the ethnological approach to various problems or not cannot be judged. The general criticism of Neafiefield might be valid but we are in an era when ecological studies of human society will throw light on problems of such nature in a way which would not only revolutionize previous theories but probably discard their assumptions altogether. Oman observes in "The Brahman, Theists and Muslims of India" that assuming as a permanent fact that the climatic conditions, temperature, sunshine, moisture, soil and elevation above sea level of various portions of the earth's surface will always present marked differences, it will no doubt, be granted that any tribe or body of men established for a long period of time in any particular locality would develop, in response to their environments such special morphological and psychological characteristics as would differentiate them from the races or types of men evolved elsewhere under dissimilar climatic conditions. "It is undeniable", says Edmund Perrier, "that draught, humidity, a stronger or weaker wind action, heat, light and even electricity can modify either temporarily or permanently the individual characters of living beings, be they animals or plants." Boas found that the different types of immigrants in the United States
of America, whatever their origin, rapidly blended into a common type; even the shape of the head, long or round, was changed, and soon approached a uniform mean. This was due to the evident influence of the environment, temperature, light and food. Sample says, "Climate undoubtedly modifies many physiological processes in individuals and peoples, affects their immunity from certain classes of diseases and their susceptibility to others, influences their temperament, their energy and their capacity for sustained or for merely intermittent effort, and therefore helps to determine their efficiency as economic and political agents."(1)

Now if it were certain that physiological and psychological differences could be explained merely on the basis of environmental influences on human beings then Nesfield’s theory will answer most of the question. The answer to present enquiry that function and function only determined the Indian social gradations in the beginning might be seriously questioned.

Ibbetson’s Theory. Leaving "the theory of functions", we come to a third theory advanced by Sir Denzil Ibbetson. It is not so simple as Nesfield’s, but broad enough to include various points entirely left out by the others. In Ibbetson’s own words we read, "Thus, if my theory be correct, we have the following steps in the process by which caste has been evolved in the Panjab: 1. The tribal division common to all primitive societies; 2. The

1. Mukerjee, The Regional Sociology, p. 84.
guides based upon hereditary occupation common to the middle life of all communities; 3. The exaltation of the priestly office to a degree unexampled in other countries; 4. The exaltation of the Levitical blood by a special insistence upon the necessarily hereditary nature of occupation; 5. The preservation and support of this principle by the elaboration from the theories of the Hindu creed or cosmogony of a purely artificial set of rules, regulating marriage and intermarriage, declaring certain occupations and foods to be impure and polluting, and prescribing the conditions and degree of social intercourse permitted between the several castes. Add to this the pride of social rank and the pride of blood which are natural to man, and which alone could reconcile a nation to restrictions at once irksome from a domestic and burdensome from a material point of view; and it is hardly to be wondered at that caste should have assumed the rigidity which distinguishes it in India. (1)

There are two objections to this theory: 1. Jbbonson attaches undue importance to Brahmanical influence; and 2. the emphasis laid on the community of occupation is excessive. To assume that a strict code of ethics, dominating all classes, could be a modern invention is a rather weak argument. Moreover, "the tendency towards incessant fission and dislocation would be much less marked" if occupation was really the original

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binding principle of caste. The essential feature, however, in the scheme is the idea of kinship, "which is certainly the oldest and probably the most enduring factor in the caste system, and which seems to have supplied the frame work and the motive principle of the more modern restrictions based upon ceremonial usage and community of occupation."

M. Senart. After examining theories advanced by Risley, Ibbetson and Mesfield, we come to M. Senart's solution to our problem. He examines various societies of the world and finds certain characteristics and institutions common to all of them. For instance he points out a close relationship between three series of groups--'gens, curia, (tribe at Rome); family, φαρμακεία, φυλή in Greece; and family Gotra, caste in India. In the department of marriage, for example, the Athenian νυφος and the Roman 'gens' present striking resemblance; to the Indian "gotra."(1)

Risley contends that this resemblance which M. Senart perceives is not valid and asks how it was that out of this common stock of usage there were developed institutions so antagonistic in their nature as the castes of India and the nations of Europe? To what causes is it due that among the Aryans of the West all the minor groups have been absorbed in the wider circle of national unity; while the Indian Aryans have nothing to show in the way of social organizations but a bewildering multitude of castes and sub-castes? M. Senart holds that caste is the normal development

of ancient Aryan institution, which assumed this form in the struggle to adopt themselves to the conditions with which they came into contact in India. To sum up this theory, then, one observes the following groups: contact with the aborigines; encouraging pride of blood; the idea of ceremonial purity, leading to the employment of the indigenous races in occupations involving manual labour, while the higher pursuits were reserved for the Aryans, the influence of the doctrine of metempsychosis, which assigns to every man a definite status determined by the inexorable law of "Karma"; the absence of any political power to draw the scattered groupsholder; and the authority which the Brahananical system gradually acquired."

From this theory could be inferred that social evolution is a gradual and complex process; that many factors work together to produce final results; and that the attempt to reduce them to a single formula carries with it its own refutation.

It must be observed that all of these theories have an element of truth in them. It is, of course, impossible to reconcile all of them, but another theory can be formulated from them. It is that the original inhabitants of India were very dark in colour and they were conquered by the Aryans. Most of them became servile classes. The Aryans indulged in sexual relations

Risley, The People of India, p. 267.
with aboriginal women and a new progeny was produced. Fairer women were again selected and the Aryans enforced endogamy. It must not be construed that the Aryans came only once. There were successive waves of the Aryans who perhaps subdued the mixed Aryans, and assimilated them to a great extent. It is assumed throughout that in the earlier invasions the Aryans came either without women or with very few women. The pride of blood and the fair complexion became to be recognized as essential. Nesfield's "functional theory" could be introduced at this stage. The subtle process of selection was going on and the rigidity of class-consciousness was increasing. Some stories might have been invented to give colour to the superiority of the Aryans. Such stories helped in such a social gradation. Various explanations must have been advanced as to why they were superior. Leisure class people--conquerors--began to speculate and propounded theories of transmigration and Karma. These results were not achieved all at once. It was a gradual social process.

M. Senart has pointed out that the whole caste system with its scale of social merits and demerits and its endless gradations of status, is, in a remarkable accord with the philosophic doctrine of "transmigration" and "Karma".

Having discussed these various theories we still say with Risley that the origin of caste is from the nature of the case an insoluble problem. "We can only frame more or less plausible conjectures, derived from the analogy of observed facts". The particular conjecture now put forward is based, firstly, upon
the correspondence that can be traced between certain caste
gradations and certain variations of physical type; secondly, on
the development of mixed races from stocks of different colour,
and thirdly, on the influence of fiction.
Chapter III, Section 1.

A Sociological Survey of Indian Society.

and the meaning of their lives. It would be interesting to find out if there is any change in the attitudes of the modern Hindu. The Hankins report, before the Vedic texts were discovered, the surface it does seem that former attitudes have entirely changed, but on examining it a bit critically one readily sees that the fundamental attitudes and traditional patterns have been altered or very slightly modified. There is sometimes a tendency to justify our own situation, but really conditions have changed slightly, externally, by reason of the conditions that have stood the test for over thirty centuries, remaining constantly in existence. Let us consider the three main principles of the Hindu society, even from the point of view: Would it not be possible for each with integrity?
Chapter III, Section 1. A Sociological Survey of Indian Society.

Hindus. Before the Mohammedans came and forcibly converted some Hindus to their religion the Hindu society irrespective of the functions of its members; their status, religious beliefs and station in life was considered more of a homogeneous group in the sense that all of them were content with their life and without grumbling accepted what privileges and opportunities they were accorded. The fundamental principles of conduct and life were followed with austerity and precision. They took it for granted that Brahma had ordained everything for them. The doctrine of metempsychosis was all sufficient to explain their status and the meaning of their earthly life. It would be interesting to find out if there is any change in the attitudes of our modern Hindus and those who lived before the Mohammedan invasions. On the surface it does seem that former attitudes have entirely changed, but on examining it a bit critically one readily sees that the fundamental attitudes and traditional patterns remain unchanged or very slightly modified. There is enough data to justify our assumptions. The whole social structure has repeatedly defied external encroachment of the non-Hindus and have stood the test for over thirty centuries. Keeping constantly in mind the three (1) basic principles of the Hindu society round which it revolves, would it not be advisable for usto study it in its entirety?

1. "Confined membership", "purity", "endogamy".
It is rather difficult for the Western mind to understand the religious beliefs and social customs of the Hindu society which govern and mould the life of the Hindus. It is, therefore, important that we dwell at the outset on the essential and abiding principles of the system on which it rests.

The total population of India, according to the 1921 census report (1), is 318,942,480. In round numbers we shall say that it is 320 millions. Out of these 320 millions of people, 230 millions are the Hindus who move, live and have their being in the Hindu system of the Indian people. (2) As a religious system Hinduism is unique in the world in that it does not require the worship of any one or particular deities. All people within its fold are absolutely free to worship as they please and whom they please. It recognizes unity in diaphragm. It is neither bigoted nor encumbered by creeds and dogmas which are the chief characteristics of all other religions. It had always been fluid and universal in its appeal. It deifies the worship of nature and humours in the worship of trees, stones and every imaginable thing in this universe. It recognizes divinity in every man or woman, and "the whole force of which is directed towards aiding

1. The Indian Year Book, Census 1921.
2. I am differentiating the Hindus from the Indians on the basis that all Indians are not Hindus. It applies only to those Indians who follow the Hindu religion. We must not confuse these nomenclatures. For instance in anthropology it is neither language, nor religion, but similarity of physical characteristics of the Indian people lumped together as Hindus.
humanity to realize its own true divine nature". (1) It takes pride in its millions of gods and goddesses endowed with extreme characteristics of love and hatred, compassion and ugliness of spirit; and never forcing any man to worship them. It popularizes its worship by creating myths and giving them a religious colour and strives to meet the needs of all people. It is famous for its hero-worship. These heroes ascend to the heaven as men and descend to the earth as gods. It provides, to borrow Sir Lyall's simile, "A Jacob's ladder between heaven and earth. The men are seen ascending until they become gods; they descend again as embodiments of divinities". (2) It raises no barriers for men. It is limitless in its speculation. "It lends itself to the most divergent school of thought", observes Chirol, "Sometimes verging on pure theism and sometimes drifting into absolute atheism, but more often revolving into universal pantheism". (3) The Hindus have developed, because of this freedom of thought, certain subtle characteristics which have become their sacred heritage; they are ecstacy and mysticism. In metaphysical subtlety the Hindu mind has soared into infinity and is incomparable on the face of this world. It could be said with ample justification without encroaching the domain of critics that human intellect has reached its acme in speculative philosophy.

Intertwined with the religious system is its caste system as the determining factor of the Hindu society. Its probable

3. Ibid, p. 15.
origin has already been discussed in preceding pages. It recognizes four main castes with the Brahmans at its pinnacle. To minister to the spiritual needs of the people, to sacrifice offerings, to meditate and teach the sacred writings constituted the function of the Vedic Brahmans which has been preserved up to this very day though the Brahmans do not engage exclusively in religious office for their sustenance. The Brahmans continue to mould Hindu beliefs, and "it is not surprising that in building up a unique social structure on the basis of caste he should have been able to secure for himself a position of unchallenged supremacy at its very pinnacle". (1)

From the Vedic times they have segregated themselves in every possible way, forming into a distinct group and thus governing the whole social and religious system. In India, religious function has become their exclusive and permanent prerogative. The second highest at the top of this social system were called "Kshatriyas". They fought for the land and ruled it. Thus fighting, governing, giving protection to the Brahmans and reading the Vedas was their lot. Their Vedic glory has waned in our modern India because of the advent of the Mohammedans and especially of the European powers. They are not the same as they used to be when they were at liberty to wield autocratic authority without any restraint. The proudest Rajput prince of Udaipur feels in his innermost heart that his authority has been snatched away and that he has become a mere puppet in

Chirol, Sir V. India (1926), p. 18.
the hands of the British. The foreigners pull the strings, and he resents this buffoonery. It is humiliating to him when he hears what his ancestors did. He is not independent though he is humourously called "Lord of the Hindus." The Brahmans coined it for him. One never finds any softness under his royal umbrellas but the continuance of past memories and their rigid observance only throw an illuminating light on our subject. We can see what has happened. The Rajputs are, as they were, under the direct guidance of the Brahmans who moulded their belief in their superiority next only to the Brahmans. Whenever any Rajput defies the power of a Brahman, the latter, by his seductive manners and charming disposition mixed with a clever political and religious dissimulation, brings the haughty warrior to his feet. The third caste feeds people. Business, agriculture and lending money constitutes their main function. And at the bottom of the scale are the Shudras.(1) Below the Shudras are the "untouchables" on this social ladder. The "Varna" theory of caste which is accepted by the masses of people has already been discussed. There is no doubt that the supremacy of the Brahmans is fully established and maintained at any cost. "When a Brahman springs to light he is born above the world, the chief of all creatures assigned to guard the treasury of duties, religious and civil. Whatever exists in the world is all, in effect though not

1. Only four main castes are recognized but the fourth one is generally composed of two separate ones. All Shudras are not "untouchables". It is more proper to say that instead of four the early Hindus recognized five castes.
in form, the wealth of the Brahman since the Brahman is entitled to it all by his primogeniture and eminence in birth. No matter how unethical and degrading some of these notions are, there is one thing which one cannot afford to miss: that the Brahman have a great hold on the Hindu society of today. Chipl rightley says, "Even today side by side with English judges, there are Brahman judges sitting in the high courts who still cling to the laws of Manu in their private life though from the bench they administer our own very different laws and often with profound learning and a strict sense of justice". (1)

The caste system grew more and more complex as it drew people of all classes into its expanding fold. The four great castes retained their importance ever since Manu's time, but thousands of castes and sub-castes evolved by "a sort of fissiparous process, with always some new line of cleavage between them, but all within the same old frame work". Visualizing the present day Hindu society one finds that it is composed of over 2,372 castes and sub-castes. According to the 1901 census there were about 2,300 castes. It shows an increase of seventy-eight castes within the last two census decades. (2) Either the census commissioner(2) did not know that there were more castes to be included or they never existed when he was classifying them. It is more probable, however, that Risley did not overlook them, but some of these 75 castes were formed between the period of

1. Chipl, Sir V., India, p. 16.
2. Sir H. Risley was census commissioner in 1901 and his classification is used in 1911.
1901-1921. This phenomenon of class formation has not disappeared in India. (1) All these castes observe the three fundamental social laws of caste with utmost care. It has been pointed out in Chapter II that there are functional or occupational classes, the tribal or racial classes, the sectarian or religious castes and mixed classes whose members, whether they or their parents, once failed to abide with caste laws. All these castes and sub-castes are endogamous (2) and any person who violates it is at once socially ostracized and religiously excommunicated.

Dr. Tagore sums up the condition of Hindu society in the following words: "Therefore in her caste regulations India recognized differences but not the mutability which is the law of life. In

1. I have myself witnessed the formation of sub-castes which after a short time, if the membership remained stationary, merged into its original parent group by undergoing purification ceremony. Some Anglicized Hindus broke caste rules and were consequently excommunicated. If I remember well there were about fifty men in all. Some of them were able to persuade their wives who joined them later and the membership increased to about sixty. They formed a distinct group and called themselves "reformists". It must be noted that all of them did not belong to the same caste prior to the formation of this caste. They allowed all people to join their group save "untouchables". The Brahmanas protested against their caste rules and petitioned the native prince that that group should be disbanded, as its main purpose was to destroy the caste system. The prince complied with their requests and interviewed the leaders of this new caste. After the interview orders were issued forbidding all the citizens to associate with them. Burial grounds, wells, menial services, etc. were forbidden. At the same time the Brahmanas suggested to these men that everything would be all right again if they would observe caste rules and join their respective castes after ceremonial purification. After a period of over two years the Brahmanas finally succeeded and the members joined their groups.

2. This system is not very rigid. Many times sub-castes coming from the same bigger group inter-marry without violating the social law of endogamy.
trying to avoid collisions she set up boundaries of immovable walls, thus giving her numerous races the negative benefit of peace and order but not the positive opportunity of expansion and movement. She accepted nature where it produced diversity but ignored it where it uses that diversity for its world game of infinite permutations and combinations. She treated life in all truth where it is manifold, but insulted it where it is ever moving. Therefore life departed from her social system and in its place she is worshipping with all ceremony the magnificent cage of countless compartments that she has manufactured."(1)

Of all these groups the functional or the occupational group is the most numerous.

It must not be overlooked that there are 50 millions of people in Hindu society who are either on the fringe of the whole system or beyond its pale. They are the so called "untouchables". To come into physical contact with them, or within reach of the shadows that their bodies may project defiles a high caste Hindu. "Man, in this connection, is degraded below the beasts. Such people are denied the advantages of social sympathy and industrial aid. They are denied all influence for good, arising out of free intercourse with their neighbours. The full and free use of hospitals, of public inns, public conveyances, wells and even temples, is withheld from them. They are even refused the opportunities of earning a living. Menial service even is denied them,

as they cannot touch the food or enter the houses of the higher castes."

If the twice-born (2) thinks that he has been polluted either by an outcaste's touch, or, his shadow, it becomes indispensable to take a bath, change clothes and sometimes sprinkle the sacred water of the Ganges. (3) An orthodox Hindu is very careful about matters of ceremonial purity. Even today in Udaipur (4) the sweeper has to stick a rooster's feather in his turban to let people know that he is a sweeper. As he walks the city streets he is warning people to avoid his touch. All the Hindus and the non-Hindus know what the feather in a men's turban means. No man will give him water to drink and shopkeepers will not let him stand near shop-boards lest their shadows pollute everything in the shops. Frequently the most indecent and vulgar language is used when the twice-born addresses this miserable

2. The three upper classes are called "twice-born".
3. All over India legends have grown round certain wells, springs and rivulets, emphasizing the fact that the water of the Ganges in some mysterious way, flows into them. Even in places thousands of miles away from the Ganges, the Brahmans will invent stories and myths regarding the "all pervading Ganges". Wherever people are unable to procure the water of the Ganges the Brahmans will be ready to procure it for them if the people would stand some expense connected with the whole ceremony. The result is that the Ganges flows everywhere in India. If some orthodox Hindu were to live in America, I would not be surprised if their Ganges had found its way, somehow or other, into this country.
4. This is the name of the city from which I come. I am recording all that I have witnessed myself in that Rajput capital. For the benefit of those who go there it would be wise to keep in mind that feathers should not be used in hate. Common people will think that you were of the sweeper caste if they found out that you had feathers.
specimen of Hindu society. The sweeper, on the other hand, showers compliments on these "twice-born" for their kind treatment and proper language. There is a forced smile on his wrinkled face which tells terrible tales of social persecution and demonstrates how domination destroys every thing noble and worth while in a man's personality. He dare not contradict what the upper class people say. This unnatural and inhuman treatment is accorded to him year out and year in. He resents it, he is tired of all this and does not know what to do. Is it any wonder then that their initiatives and aspirations die as soon as they are born? It is their "karma"; it is their heritage; they must bear patiently. At the time of the birth of any man he is endowed with certain unalterable values, and they must be preserved at all costs. This is the vain yet glorious assumption of the caste system. It emphasizes completeness but becomes futureless. These untouchables are a blot to the Hindu religion and the civilization which evolved such rigid social customs and paralyzed the hopes of men. These poor people are forced to live away from people. They are completely segregated in filthy and sickening places because of the idea that they do not deserve anything in this world which would bring comfort to them. The Brahmans even have laid injunctions as to what kind of food they must eat and what they should wear. They are forbidden the use of "Ghee"--clarified butter--for their personal needs, but it is all right to let a Brahman use it for them, which act would ensure a
better future birth. The use of silk is forbidden and under no circumstances should they ever own or use gold.\(^1\)

There are other laws which govern life within the caste. Those laws which regulate marriage are most immutable. Upon marriage depends the continuity of the Hindu family essential to the salvation of the living in the present, dead in the past, and of the oncoming generations. Hypergamy is practised in certain localities which is even more demoralizing than endogamy. The bridegroom becomes the most important and coveted person. The parents are always in search of husbands for their daughters. These daughter-families, in most cases, become objects of attraction. The financial burden to provide husbands for their girls drains all that they ever saved. The result is that the majority of them die in abject poverty. The wealthier classes and the higher castes monopolize youth and beauty. They are often seen with two or three wives. It was because of this system of hypergamy that the Rajputs killed their daughters. The "Suttee" system arose out of this social pattern which required all the wives to remain faithful to their dead husbands. It was advocated not only on religious and social grounds but had become an economic necessity before the dawn of the nineteenth century.

1. This account is true only of those sweepers who live in native states ruled by the Rajput princes. My personal observation in Udaipur—the chief Rajput house in India—has led me to the belief that the native states are far worse than the British governed provinces where these "untouchables" do not seem to have such a hard time.
Thanks be to the humane sense of British justice which abolished this system. (1)

Apart from marriage laws all castes have their local social laws which prescribe for them what things they should eat, with whom they should entertain ordinary intercourse, how they must dress, what religious ceremonies they should perform, and finally, "The manner in which both their bodies and their property must be disposed of after death". Breach on the part of any individual becomes a grave matter for the members of his group. The village council assembles under a tree, or any convenient place, and the predicament is verbally announced excommunicating the offender for some time. It is not very comforting to be excommunicated and socially ostracized for it means the loss of status and confiscation of his property. The village barber will not shave, the washerman will refuse to take his washing, and no man will ever entertain an idea of marrying with him. The ceremony of excommunication, as prescribed in the Institutes of Manu, "is a solemn and imposing proceeding, meant to symbolize the living death of the outcast. According to the lawgiver, the condemned man's relatives and connections should assemble on the evening of an "unlucky day" and offer, as if to his manes, a libation of water, a priest and the culprit's "Guru" (spiritual guide) being present. As at a Hindu funeral, a pot of water should be solemnly

1. This system was abolished by Lord William Bentick in 1829. It was very common among the Rajputs of Rajputana and some classes living in the Ganges valley.
broken, not, however, by the nearest kin, but by a slave girl. After this act the assembly should disperse, each individual present at the ceremony being regarded as impure for one day"(1)

When he is excluded from caste:

"1. His friends, relatives, and fellow-townsmen refuse to partake of his hospitality.

"2. He is not invited to entertainments in their houses.

"3. He cannot obtain brides or bridegrooms for his children.

"4. Even his own married daughters cannot visit him without running the risk of being excluded from caste.

"5. His priest, and even his barber and washerman, refuse to serve him.

"6. His fellow-castemen sever their connection with him so completely that they refuse to assist him even at the funeral of a member of his household.

"7. In some cases the man excluded from caste is debarred access to the public temples."(1)

"Where the rules are so explicit", adds the same writer, "it follows, of course, that means are duly provided, as indeed we have already seen, by which the offender against caste rules may expiate his errors or misfortunes and so recover his caste-status. These means are the performance of prescribed religious rites, and purificatory ceremonies, the feasting of Brahmans and bestowing suitable presents on them, and last, but not least, banqueting

1. Oman,J.C., Brahmans, Theists and Muslims of India, p.46,47.
the members of his own caste!(1) In India there is a phrase which goes as, "Hukka, pani bend karna". This is generally used at the end of the excommunication ceremony. The "Hukka" is an emblem of bond and unity within the caste, and "pani" always goes with it. To use the same "Hukka"—smoking pipe—and share "pani"—the water—means that all members are inseparable. Very rightly Mr. Ali observes, "This phrase—Hukka pani bend karna—is fraught with more terror to the villager than all the proclamations issued by the Honourable High Courts.(2) These councils which enforce social and religious laws are called "panchayat".(3)

As far as occupation is concerned the caste law is very lax indeed. "Today a man can take to any occupation without changing his caste", says Shridhar, "The only exceptions are that nobody would like to take to the occupation of shoe-maker or scavenger; and no man who is not born a Brahman would be accepted as a priest in the community".(4) The Brahmins may pursue humble avocations within the range of Hindu law. Building

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1. Oman, J.C., Brahman, Theists and Muslins of India, p.46,47. It must be of some interest to note that the Brahmins always impose such enforcements upon the illiterates and the poor. If a person happened to be rich and influential he is not, as a rule, bothered by such things. A Bengali millionaire once said, 'Caste was in his iron chest', the meaning of which was that money has the power of restoring caste.

2. Hukka— the Indian water pipe; pani— water. These terms are used denoting "smoke". Yusuf Ali, Life and Labour in India, p.319.

3. "Panchayat"— village council. A group of five elders who act as judges for the community in passing sentence upon the offender. When the discussion is going on all members of the community will take active part in it.

houses, driving machines, drawing water from the wells, gardening, agriculture, etc., are a few of the many occupations in which they engage without losing their class superiority. It is important to note that no matter what they do their class assumption of an arrogant superiority complex manifests itself without reserve. They might work as college gate-keepers but the thing which surprises all is that the non-Brahman professors and students bow before them. Such is the Brahmanical charm and its influence.

The whole system is bound up with the doctrine of "Karma" action (1) which presupposes that a man has to pass through innumerable cycles of births pre-determined by his actions which he cannot escape. It determines the fate of every Hindu and stamps him once for all as a permanent part of this social machinery. The reason why men are born in different castes rests on the actions of their previous existence. The man has to be content with his lot. The main duty after he is born is to abide with and maintain with utmost loyalty the traditions of the Hindu society. That it is the only true way of conduct is emphasized all the time. It becomes his "Dharma" sacred law and duty.(2)

1. The Indian solution of the great riddle of the origin of suffering and the diversity of human conditions is to be found in the word "Karma", which, through the theosophists, has become familiar to European ears. Hindus believe that souls have been transmigrating from the beginning; they practically hold that the well being or the suffering of everybody is only the result of former acts (karma). This solution of the great riddle is not altogether satisfactory as we get no answer concerning the 'very beginning'; but it is a happy one, eminently moral, and to a large extent a true one. The doctrine of "karma", i.e. acts and their retribution, is of great antiquity in India. It gradually broke away from Vedic naturalism, mysticism and piety. (Encyclopedia of Religion & Ethics, Vol.7, p.573).

2. "Dharma" sacred law and duty, justice, religious merit. This
This doctrine of righteousness consists in nothing so much as in maintaining inviolate the social order established in Hinduism. To fulfill and abide with this right conduct is to earn for him possibly a higher level of caste when he is reborn. No wonder men in India sought to find some way or ways to free themselves from this endless cycle of rebirths. The Yoga philosophy (1) and Buddhism (2) were attempts to free men from this dread of cyclical rebirths—never ending. Renunciation of this world and absolute chastity became watchwords of these religious systems.

The greatest economical and social problems of India are due to the hold which these theories have upon the Hindu mind. "Karma" and "Dharma" are bound with each other and are inseparable. Though the Hindus are taught that "Karma"—actions while living—determines the future existence of the person who dies and nothing could alter his status, the family of the deceased is also asked to feed the Brahmans which act could affect

is one of the most comprehensive and important terms in the whole range of Sanskrit literature. Indian commentators have explained it as denoting an act which produces the quality of the soul called "Apurva", the cause of heavenly bliss and of final liberation. In ordinary usage, however, it has a far wider meaning than this, and may denote established practice or custom of any caste or community. (Ency. Rel. & Ethics, Vol. 4, p. 702).

1. Yoga. The characteristics of the Yoga philosophy, apart from points of less importance are, 1, the rejection of the atheistic views of the Sankhya, and 2, the treatment of the doctrine of absorption as the most effectual means for the attainment of the knowledge that secures emancipation. The technical detail of the theory of absorption forms the proper contents of the Yoga system, and has given to it its own name: for Yoga signified originally 'yoking', then 'diversion of the senses from the external world and concentration of thought within.' (Ency. Rel. & Ethics, Vol. 12, p. 231.)

2. Buddhism. Gautama, the Buddha, was the founder of this religion. He was born in or about 560 B.C. This religion started from India and attacked the caste system.
the dead man’s existence. In other words, to feed the Brahmins becomes a necessity, for it is held that the merit of such a feast is that it changes even the "Karma" of the dead person and promises better life at the time of his rebirth in this world. It is far better to be born a cow than a dog. (1)

All religious ceremonies must be performed by some male descendant. Hence the prevalence of early marriage in India for fear the head of the family may die without leaving any male child. This notion lowers the status of Hindu women. Their chief function in this world is to bear children. Everything else is secondary. Examining statistics one is surprised to find that the majority of the Indian girls get married under twenty. Many of them are married in their early teens and some even before that time. Early marriages are consummated as a religious duty lest the Hindu dies without leaving any son to keep the family torch burning. To these early marriages combined

1. In India the cow is a sacred animal. According to the Hindu thought the soul of the deceased person might take on any animal's form. Here is a little incident which illustrates my point: A goat finding that the shop keeper was not in the shop entered it and began to eat grain. The man, when he returned, saw the goat in his shop. He beat him. A Sadhu--an ascetic--happened to pass that way. When he saw the man beating the goat he stopped and laughed. The man asked why he was laughing, to which the Sadhu replied, that the goat which he was beating was his [shop keeper's] father, and that it entered the shop because it belonged to his son; and added, "I am laughing at your action. You have forgotten that your father came into this world in the form of a goat".
with an utter ignorance of maternal and infant hygiene, there is an appalling death rate in India. "Worse still is the lot of a sonless widow" observes Chirol. "Her head is shaved; she can no longer wear jewels which, however paltry, are the most cherished possessions of every Hindu woman; she has to put on the dishonoured widows' garb; she is doomed to perpetual widowhood". To be a sonless wife is bad but to be a sonless widow is worse. And all these things are due to "Purva". The following table shows the proportion of widows in the Hindu Society.

Proportion of widows in the female population per 1,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>India 1921</th>
<th>England &amp; Wales 1911</th>
<th>India 1921</th>
<th>England &amp; Wales 1911</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>175.0</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>146.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>325.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45-65</td>
<td>619.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>854.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large number of widows is due partly to the early age of marriage, partly to the disparity in the ages of the husband and wives, but chiefly to the social regulations against the remarriage of widows. The higher castes forbid it altogether and as the custom is held to be a mark of social respectability, many of the more ambitious of the lower castes have adopted it with a view that such a system would give them precedence in the Hindu society. (1)

1. The Indian Year Book 1926, p. 23. It says that there are no widows under twenty in England and Wales. It seems that that is a mistake.
In spite of the fact that all these things are found in India the Hindus are capable of very deep affection. The joint family system and its beautiful continuity of life is admirable. This is the chief reason why the Hindus never had poor-houses and orphanages. The Hindus are very strongly attached to their wives and genuinely devoted to the welfare of their relatives. The women are kept in seclusion but they are treated with utmost courtesy and love. To have a continuous chain of sons and grandsons in the family is in itself the consummation of all hopes and aspirations. The Hindus are "---a kindly people, with more highly developed family affections than ourselves". (1) The same "Karma" doctrine is used to explain the reason of this happiness. "For the same Brahmanical authority presides over the Hindu family and over the Hindu caste system and gives to both the incomparable tenacity and organic rigidity to which Hinduism owes its enduring power as the permanent social as well as religious force in India? (2)

That the Brahmins have a great power to regulate social laws could be explained by a vivid incident which occurred in Calcutta. Chirol tells us in full how the Brahmins enflamed the minds of the Hindus against the "Marwaris"--Hindu business men--who adulterated "Chee"--clarified butter--with objectionable ingredients which rendered it unfit for cooking purposes and

1. Low, Sidney, A Vision of India, p. 266.
2. Chirol, Sir V., India, p. 28.
sacrificial ceremonies. "There was great excitement amongst all classes, but amongst the Brahmins above all there was consterna-
tion and wrath. They had been betrayed in the use of "ghae" rendered by adulteration "impure" for sacrificial and ritual purposes, and, however inadvertently, they had committed a dire
offence against the gods which must jeopardize their own "karma". Go to wash away their sin they assembled in their thousands on
the river bank to go through the bathing ceremonies of purifi-
cation. It was one of those spectacular demonstrations by which the Brahmins have always known how to stir the imagination of
the masses." (1) It is interesting to note that Calcutta is
considered to be a progressive city and the Europeans might be
led to assert that Hinduism is disintegrating there, but the
incident cited indicates the opposite. Be it also noted that
this thing happened at a period when the Indian political
agitation was at its height and when all Hindus were considered
as brothers. Even other religionists had become brothers of the
Hindus. But this time political issue became quite unimportant
when the Hindus knew that their caste was at stake. The then
political ferment subsided and the Brahmins sent their representa-
tives to wait upon the governor to press for immediate action.
The "Marwaris" were found guilty of such conduct. "A committee
consisting of three different 'Panchayats' or councils, belonging
to three different castes, one of them the Brahmins, was

1. Chirol, Sir V., India, p. 27.
constituted and dealt with the principal charges, inflicting heavy fines, up to a lakh of rupees, and long terms of caste-excommunication on the chief offenders. The process was accepted as satisfactory, the ceremonies of purification were brought to a close and the Brahmins returned to their homes with all the prestige of their exalted caste strikingly vindicated and enhanced." (1) Very rightly, says Chirol, that it was the one great force that preserved the framework of society through endless political vicissitudes, that it produced a general uniformity of beliefs and customs amongst the innumerable peoples of a great continent shut off from the rest of the world but having their own different languages and racial characteristics.

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1. Chirol, Sir V., India, p. 28.
Section 2. Sadhuism.

Sadhuism is a social anomaly in India. To any student of Indian society and especially to an ordinary person from outside the Indian caste system, it is hard to believe that the Shudras are treated alike. One cannot accept this because of its tremendous influence and importance. Even in this day and age, we have heard and read about these curious people of India who torture their bodies, sit motionless under trance, and common people pay homage to them. When Mark Twain visited India, he saw Sadhus and became fascinated by them. He wrote articles about these strange characters, and this book and public articles entitled "Indian Socio-Economic System". The missionaries have played a great part in popularizing these Sadhus.

This retiring Sadhu who has renounced everything in life: food, clothing, and all forms of attachment, is not an ordinary person. He is a saint, a religious leader, and a community leader. He is not just a religious person, but also a social and political leader. He is the link between the orient and the western world. The unique culture and social patterns are in sharp contrast to the social and religious ideas of the west. The Sadhu is an essential partner in this life.
Section 2. Sadhus.

Sadhuism in its social aspect is of great importance to any student of Indian society and especially to a student of the Indian caste system. It is here that the Brahmans and the Shudras are treated alike. One cannot afford to exclude it because of its tremendous influence and hold on the Indian people.

From the time of the Greek historian Megasthenes, down to our own day, we have heard so much about these curious people of India who torture their bodies, sit motionless under trees, and common people pay homage to them. When Mark Twain visited India these Sadhus became targets of his wit and good humoured sarcasm. Every year hundreds of tourists level their cameras at these fantastic characters, come back to the West and publish articles entitled "Hindu Eccentricities". The missionary has played a great part in popularizing these Sadhus.

This retiring Sadhu who has renounced everything in this world meditating on "nothingness", torturing his body, fasting till he is nothing more than a skeleton, wearing saffron coloured garments or nothing at all to cover his nudity, naturally is an object of amusement to the tourist; but to us he is more than a fantastic person. He affords us an indication that the social and religious ideals of the occident and the orient differ; that the oriental attitude and native patterns are in marked contrast to those of the West. There is then, an essential psychological difference.
Sadhuism came with Hinduism. It is as old as the Indian civilization. It arose primarily out of the selfish desire of national gain to satisfy the vanities and senses of men; but changed into absolute renunciation of things material. It was at first the discipline of austerity. It changed into asceticism. The former is materialistic and secular, whereas, the latter is moral and religious. The highest Hindu realization is renunciation which is the step towards union with God; and to be in absolute harmony with God and His nature "soul" becomes more important than the physical body where it is supposed to reside. This is the way to merge into "Absolutism". Hence, fasting carried to the point of extreme emaciation, silence frequently continued for months, exposure of bodies to extreme heat and cold, eating of bitter herbs to kill sensuality, the maintenance of a fixed posture, thereby rendering limbs useless, are some practices of these ascetics. "It is not possible to form an exhaustive catalogue of the practices of these austere ascetics", says Farquhar.(1)

The ascetic thought of India holds the human body in serious contempt as the following quotation taken from one of the sacred books of the Hindus show: "In this evil-smelling substantial body, shuffled together out of bones, skin, sinews, marrow, flesh, seed, blood, mucus, tears, eye-gum, dung, urine, gall, and phlegm, how can we enjoy pleasure"(2) Thus various philosophies

2. Ibid. Quoted on page 261.
erose with these Sadhus which influenced the Hindu society to a great extent.

The very spirit of India is embodied in the Sadhu. Stories to discredit these Sadhus are current all over India but they have not shaken the faith of the masses of people in them. These Sadhus might seem as "droll fellows and sorry simpletons" but "as long as the world lasts, men will look back with wonder upon the ascetics of India. Their quiet surrender of every earthly privilege and pleasure, and their strong endurance of many forms of suffering will be an inspiration to all generations of thinking Indians."(1)

In its religious aspect it has maintained a very high ideal amongst the common people, a sense of the righteous claims of the poor upon the charity of the more wealthy members of the community. It has achieved another great thing in that it has favored a spirit of tolerance. This fact cannot escape the notice of the most superficial observer. On its intellectual side it has paralyzed inductive reasoning. It soars in metaphysical heaven of pure speculation. It shows contempt to the study of nature since true knowledge and power over phenomenon could be acquired only by contemplation and austerities. Socially it has always recognized absolute equality of all Hindus. It has shown that spirit and practiced it. It has been inimical to the rigid

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caste system. No wonder the Brahmanas have fought from the very beginning against "Sadhuism" under the mask of false philosophies and absurd prophesics, but this democratic hold of "Sadhuism" has proved to be too strong for the opposition of the Brahmanas. "That the Sadhu as such should enjoy popular consideration has undoubtedly been at all times a very sore trial for the proud Brahman, and especially hateful to him when it was a low caste "Shudra who, in virtue of being an ascetic, received the respect and homage of the people. But, the Brahmanical opposition, however strong, has proved unavailing, and the right of the "Shudra" to the privilege of "Sadhuism" and ascetic practices, at any rate during the present age, has been authoritatively, if reluctantly, admitted in the Ramayana". (1)

That untold social and economic problems have come with "Sadhuism" should not be overlooked. It must be noted that these very "Sadhus" who renounce everything in this world and seek to merge in the ocean of "Infinite Spirit" have, on the other hand, used this weapon to inflict harm on the masses of people in India. Theft, intoxication, robbery, adultery and vices of all natures seem to find a warm place in "Sadhuism". The masses of people who live in ignorance and considering them holy, endowed with supernatural power, try to satisfy their wants, but these "Sadhus" are never satisfied. The women sell their bodies and homes for some favour—usually that a son be born--; the children are scared

of them because these "Sadhus" kidnap them, men are attacked and robbed in unfrequented places, and the economic drain of the people is pathetic, but they flourish even then. All of them, of course, are not bad but most of these Indian saints practice things which are detrimental to India. They are, then, India's political, social and economic problem. It is encouraging that in our day they are giving up their practices and embracing the normal life. The modern tide of industrialism is telling on them. Education is another great factor which is discouraging asceticism and thus reducing the number to a considerable extent. That most of these "Sadhus" should be subject to trial and should be discouraged in practising "such Sadhusm" which creates problems for India is a necessity. The Indian leaders are playing a very important part in stopping men from embracing "Sadhusm". Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Besant and the late Mr. Gokhle have influenced the thinking men to a considerable degree. Sadhusm is disintegrating. India does not need these millions of people begging and meditating, exhorting homage and rolling in popularity, but it needs men who can spend five or six years of life in educating people and thus prove that self-renunciation means self-sacrifice for the service of fellow-men.

It is inevitable that the new forces which are moulding India would check this "renunciation of the world" by men. The difference between "Sadhusm" and "Industrialism" has already been pointed out, but it will be of some interest to quote Oman, in passing, "But whatever may be the merits or demerits of these
two systems, they are essentially antagonistic, since the economic ideal of life, being frankly worldly and severely practical, excludes imagination, emotionalism and dreamy sentiment-alism, and consequently religion also, except of the philanthro-phical or pharisaical type". (1)

The main point is that "Sadhuism" and the Indian caste system are antagonistic. In case "Sadhuism" fails in India and nothing takes its place when the caste system remains unchanged, then it will be a great social catastrophe. Education and industrial forces of the west; the modern life and a new conception of national unity, however, will effect the caste system and modify it to an extent where the "Shudra" and "the Brahman" will occupy the same place in Hindu society. Would India willingly live a life of simplicity, ease, quiet,uneventful days, "steeped in dreamy speculation and indulging in wild imaginings" when this mechanical age advances in India? Would it be a social progress?

CHAPTER III. Continued

Section 3.

Attitude of One Caste Toward the Other.

The Brahmins have dominated the Indian people and have maintained their hold with remarkable tact and courage, always associated with religious ideas which appeal most to the Hindus. However, in India, there are numerous sects which differ in religious rites, and each sect believes its own religion superior to the other. A caste teaches that its members are superior to the others and that the other people are inferior. This belief is based on the conviction that the superior person has certain characteristics and general behavior that make him different from the rest of the other people. For instance, the lower castes are considered to be the beneficiaries of the spiritual characteristics of the Brahmin caste. Ordinary people are considered to be inferior to Brahmins, and it is natural in human society to be interested in Indians that the caste of relationships exists between two different groups.

"In order for the world,

First, kshatriya, Brahman first,

which may be translated into English:
Chapter III, Section 3. Attitude of One Caste Toward the Others.

Whenever any class consciousness is in the process of formation or is formed, it manifests its spirit by assuming its own superiority and ridiculing the other people in one way or the other. If class consciousness is the outcome of an inferiority complex it satisfies itself by resenting, and by coining proverbs and sayings with the underlying idea of discrediting the superior people. Thus fiction, conversation, attitudes and general behaviour throw light on the subject of how one particular community with its own social laws meets the needs of the other people. How do people conduct business and what are some of the outstanding characteristics of any people in their ordinary intercourse with others? Formation of various classes, high or low, rich or poor, lord or serf; is natural in human society, but one is interested in finding out what kind of relationship exists between two different groups.

The Brahmins have dominated the Indian people and have maintained their hold with remarkable tact and courage, always associated with religious ideas which appeal most to the Hindus. However, in India, there has sprung up quite a wealth of sayings which offers an important clue to the social attitudes of people. Of the Brahmins it is said:

"Is dunya men tin kasei,
Riso, khatmal, Brahman bhai",

which may be rendered thus in English:
"Blood-suckers three on earth there be, the bug, the Brahman and the flea". (1)

Someone of the lower classes has defined the Brahman as "a thing with a string round his neck". (A profane hit on the sacred thread which all Brahmins wear). "A Brahman expects gifts from people of all classes and is usually a very greedy fellow". Another saying illustrates the same point as, "Ask a Brahman for alms"--and tauntingly adds--"Bread from a stone". "If you dine with a Brahman you go away hungry". A few more proverbs will add weight to the general attitude of the Indian people towards him: "A Brahman's servant is worked like an oil-presser's bullock and gets nothing but stale bread". (A Brahman will pay less for more work). "When four Brahmins meet they dine of sweets or starve". (Caste scruples and ceremonial observance). "It is poison to a Brahman to dine at home". "A Brahman's guest; a prostitute's wedding". (Allusion to the usage of unmerited and unearned income, i.e. everything gotten by means of fraud and illegal methods). "A Brahman's cow eats little, but gives much milk". Some one was disgusted with the Brahmins when he said, "Oh God, let me not be born a Brahman, who is always begging, and is never satisfied". Perhaps some Mohammeden coined the following saying, "The absent-minded Brahman ate beef and said, 'By God, never again'".

Some of these sayings quoted above show that the lower classed Brahman and the lower classes are to be blamed for the wrong attitude of the general populace towards the Brahman caste and no doubt in the Brahmin class itself.

1. All these sayings have been taken from Risley's, People of India, Appendix 1.
classes (1) are not very kindly disposed towards the Brahmins who assume their inherited superiority over other people and wield great influence in every phase of the Hindu life. For some, these sayings may have only an academic interest but they are more than that. They reflect the people's attitude towards their superiors who have robbed them of happiness. It is interesting to note that a great number of sayings cluster round one thought: "Creed of a Brahman". It is true that the Brahmins are misers and expect other people to feed them. The lower classes express their resentment in one way or the other against the Brahmins, but find themselves completely powerless to overthrow a system which has religious significance to them. The fear of rebirth in some worse form checks their feeling for any drastic measure. Of the second class it is said: "The wall may give way; the Rajput will stand fast". "It is ill-dealing with a Rajput; sometimes you get double value, sometimes nothing at all". "Let him alone when he is full; do not meddle with him when he is empty". "A Ranger (Mohammedan Rajput) is bearable either in his grave or in his house". "Ganaip for the Banya (3rd class), for the Rajput a gona (chivalry), secta for a Brahman, and music for a ghost". "A Rajput starves himself but keeps a Bhat (family bard) to sing his exploits at his door (Rajput pride)". "The marriages of Rajputs are full of pomp and splendour, but meals are to be had only from heaven".

1. It includes not only the Shudras but the 2nd and the 3rd classes also.
That the general attitude of the Indians towards the Rajputs is that of respect there could be no doubt. Because they rule the land and protect people from outsiders; because they are by divine right princes, no matter what their income is; they are regarded with awe and fear. Awe because of his social status and fear because one can never tell when they destroy those who defy their power. Flattering phrases are coined by the Brahmans and bards. These sayings give them an undue prestige over others. Common people regard them exactly in the same way as goes the sayings. In this group of sayings one thing is evident—as a matter of fact sayings related to any group—that the formulation of attitudes depends, to a large degree, upon the function of these people.

The third class of people are called the "Vaishyas". Their duty is to transact business and engage in agriculture. Of them it is said: "A friendly Banya, a chaste courtesan!" (proverb of the impossible). "A Banya has credit; a thief has none". (Banya is also a thief in the sense that he cheats people). "A well-known Banya prospers; a well-known thief gets hanged". "Four thieves robbed eighty-four Banyas". (Illustration of cowardice and disunion). "The mouse found a rag and set up as a cloth merchant". "A Banya's five seer weight". (Typical illustration of fraud; one seer equals two pounds). "The jat's wife—a separate caste of agriculturists—soaked her yard (to make it heavy), but the Banya's weights were light". "A crow, a kirar
(a sub-caste of the Banyas), and a dog, trust them not even when asleep". "Here comes the grain dealer with a basket in his hand and a rosary round his neck". (Combination of fraud and religion—the rosary signified that a person is religious but under that disguise the Banya cheats). "The Banya bought up rotten grain and sold it dear; the beam of his scale broke and his weights were worn thin". "He flourished and the Jat perished: first died the weavers, then the oil man: a rupee was worth eight annas (there are 16 annas in a rupee, it is an Indian coin which is worth about 33 cents) millet sold at the price of pistachio nuts, and wheat at the price of raisins: the cart lay idle for the bullocks were dead; and the bride went to her husband without the accustomed rites. (This is a picture of famine. All people and animals are suffering but the Banya is profiting and flourishing. He has food to sell, and he sells it at a very high cost.). The greed and fraud of the Banyas who constitute the third class is proverbial. His cowardice is beyond description. His business ability mixed with lies bought for him these sayings which are very common in India. They reflect the character of the Banyas and the contempt of the other people towards them.

Speaking of the fourth class: "Everyone has his clothes washed, but the "dhobi" (washerman) is always unclean". "A dhobi'a dog; neither at home nor at the washing place". "A washerman's donkey (proverb of overwork)".

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It has been pointed out (Ch.3p.51) that all Shudras are not untouchables. The washerman is one of them. These sayings characterize people's attitude towards the "dhobis". It is interesting to note that no sweeper (an untouchable) will ever accept food from a washerman's hand. The Scavenger thinks that he (dhobi) is as much unclean as he himself, or more unclean.

"The Dom (Scavenger) is the lord of death". "A Dom his father, and a Dom his mother, yet he boasts of his noble birth". (After conversion to Islam or Christianity). "When a "Dhed" dies the world is the cleaner". (animal undertaker). "To eat like a Dhed" (to eat unlawful food; these people eat dead animals such as cows, camels and buffaloes). "Every village has its hamlet of Pariahs" (aggregation outside the village limit). "The Nahar (village menial) is dead; he no longer defiles". "The Nahar's child has bones for playthings. (Animals that die in village are removed, skinned and often eaten by these men).

The Hindus are scrupulous about food. The majority of them are vegetarians and those who make use of meat never eat a dead animal. To eat dead and deceased animals is repulsive to the Hindus. As these outcastes eat such unlawful meat they are despised. These proverbs throw light on "food attitudes".

"Let the Chamar (cobbler) run away with the Nahar's mother". (Allusion to loose morals). "What is an aunt to a 'mang' or a niece to a 'phil'?" (Neither has any morals). "Trust not a
mang; he will say anything".

Marriage ties and morals of these low-caste people are very loose; hence these proverbs.

Thus it is clear that the upper classes have coined sayings about the "Shudras" whom they despise. The "Karma" theory is used to explain their present station in life and are taught that they had inherited all bad qualities when they were born. The result is that most of them believe in these sayings. It is their "Karma"--action--and they must suffer for their past actions. They must be segregated from the rest of the people.

They occupy quarters which are in most cases outside the city limit. The proverb cited above that every village has its hamlet of Pariahs illustrates very clearly how they are segregated.

Undoubtedly there are some very unwholesome elements found among them but who is to be blamed? Are they responsible for their present status in life? Was not only the accident of birth (1) defined their place in Hindu society? When people

1. Sumner, W., in What Social Classes Owe to Each Other, takes an extreme view and tries to prove that "accident of birth" is a fallacious argument in support of the poor. Studying the Indian caste system one wonders how much was Sumner justified in concluding that the inherent qualities alone are responsible for success in life? In the case of India, inherent qualities do not play the chief role which would determine a man's position in life. Everything ends with birth. It is his "Karma."
emphasize that they are there because they lack certain inherent qualities they forget that in India social pressure and birth determine what a man ought to be. It is not that they are potentially incapable but caste regulations dams their course of choice and cripples the very foundation of personality. As soon as these men and women become Christians they enjoy unlimited freedom; they are no longer untouchables; and, thus develop characteristics which compete with any man of any status and caste.
CHAPTER III. Section 4. 

The Influence of Caste on Non-Hindus.

Thus the social and religious instincts of our gods have a permanent influence upon the other, no matter how different they are, in a natural social alliance. The clash between the hostile religious systems is too strong to be controlled by a change in action. Rather, a single system of former various tendencies under certain conditions gives rise to occasional instability, in an effort being about a complete adaptation of the one to the other, losing its own distinctive name but leaving upon human thought such a fusion that it is brought about by the formation within the same social consciousness, not only by theory but to a remarkable degree they have followed the paths laid down by their prophet, and have rightly earned the title of being addressed as 'the most piously faithful' on this earth.

With all external signs of civilization, both religious and social alike, the only little doubts in view. The history of Islam is full of facts sufficiently significant constructed between the lowly and the rich, the blacks and the whites, the slaves and the kings. During the early Islamic history, the matrimonial bond
Chapter III, Section 4 (A) A Digressional Study—The influence of caste on non-Hindus.

That the social and religious ideals of one group have a permanent influence upon the other; no matter how different they are, is a natural social phenomena. The clash between two hostile religious systems brings about either compromise or a change in values. There flows, however, a steady current of former values underneath their whole structure which gives rise to occasional hostility. It may also bring about a complete adaptation of the one to the other, losing its own distinctiveness but leaving upon the conserving system its permanent imprint. Such a fusion creates temporary confusion in society when it makes new adjustments to the newly created situations brought about by alien values.

Mohammedans: There is no religious body in this world which takes a more uncompromising attitude toward caste formation within its fold than the Mohammedans. Not only in theory but to a remarkable degree they have followed the precepts laid down by their prophet, and have rightly earned the title of being addressed as "the most democratic society on the earth with an ultimate view of spiritual unity". Racial differences and social status have very little value to them. The history of Islam is full of facts concerning marriages contracted between the lowly and the rich, the blacks and the whites, the slaves and the kings. During the early Islamic history the matrimonial taboo
never existed amongst "the faithful". A common joke in the streets of Delhi that the empire of Delhi was founded by a slave indicates that the Mohammedan slaves became kings and married the daughters of their masters. (1) At first sight, it seems that the Indian Mohammedans are free from caste system, but a closer study reveals that the Hindu influence has permeated the entire Mohammedan thought and that they observe social laws which have been borrowed directly or indirectly from the Hindus. In India there are about 70 million Mohammedans divided into three main classes, and these classes sub-divided into dozens of groupings which have raised social barriers, based entirely on occupation, could very easily be differentiated one from the other. To a considerable degree they have imitated the Hindu caste regulations regarding marriage, purity and membership. Most of the Indian Mohammedans, at one time or other, were Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam between the eleventh and the seventeenth centuries. This was the period of the Mohammedan domination. The process of forced proselytization was systematically introduced as early as the middle of the seventh century when the Arab followers of Mohammed had over-run Persia, conquered Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and having "planted the standard of the crescent in a few years after Mohammed's death on the banks of the Oxus, they proceeded to turn their arms against the countries watered by the Indus". (2) The first invasion was in

1. Steel, E.A., History of India Through the Ages, p. 105. The slave dynasty ruled at Delhi from 1206 A.D. to 1288 A.D. Kutab-ud-din was the first slave king who built that famous pillar called (Kutab-i-Minar) about eleven miles from Delhi.
2. Trotter, L.J., History of India, p. 47.
Indian Mohammedans, 39

664 A.D., which was repelled successfully by the Hindus. The second was in 711 A.D., but again the Rajputs of Udaipur drove out the Arabs and "by the middle of the eighth century not a trace of Arab rule was to be found in India". (1) Successful raids of the Mohammedans were made, however, after 997 A.D. from the north-west with a strong desire to plunder India and convert the Hindus to Islam. The Punjab and Kashmir suffered most. These provinces were rapidly converted to Mohammedanism. It is very significant that the Mohammedans pre-dominate the Hindus in the north-west of India in our own day.

Coming, then, from the Hindu fold and still living with their Hindu brothers it is not to be wondered that they have successfully retained the Hindu social laws after conversion, and have imitated them. The Islamic precepts emphasized one brotherhood and one integrated social class; but, as the time went on the converted Hindus established among themselves boundaries which differentiated one group from the other. It was, in the beginning, based upon occupation regardless of birth. It must be noted that during this period the infusion of the foreign blood did not justify the newly converted Mohammedans to base their class differentiation purely on hereditary principles. It was not very long that these occupational divisions were given a definite hereditary stamp. Gradually the Hindu idea of confined membership, endogamy and ceremonial purity became a part of the

1. Trotter, I. J. History of India, p. 47.
Indian Mohammedans. Thus, there are classes among the Mohammedans which do not intermarry and in some cases even refuse to eat together. They are willing to accept the water and food from the Brahmins but throw it away if touched by those who form the lower strata of Mohammedan society. These parallelistic tendencies operate between the Hindus and the Mohammedans, indicating that forced values lose their intrinsic value to a great extent.

Regarding Nakhawilahs, Sir R. Burton writes: "They are numerous and warlike, yet they are despised by the towns-people, because they openly profess heresy, and are moreover of humble degree. They have their own priests and instructors, although subject to the orthodox Fazi; marry in their own sect, are confined to low offices, such as slaughtering animals, sweeping and gardening, and are not allowed to enter the haram during life, or to be carried to it after death. Their corpses are taken down an outer street called Darb-al-Janezah--Road of Miers--to their own cemetery near Al Bakiya". Burton adds in a footnote, that this sect believes "in a transmigration of the soul, which gradually purified, is at least 'erbed' into a perfect star. They are scrupulous of caste, and will not allow a Jew or a Frank to touch a piece of their furniture". (1) Though this sect inhabits Arabia it is supposed that probably the Nakhawilahs are of Indian origin because of their belief in metempsychosis. The Indian Mohammedan gives Kismet the same value which the Hindus give to Karma. The reason why one happens to be born in

a certain class is because of his pre-destined fate. Amongst the
Indian Mohammedans there are three main classes, viz., Ashraf--
noble; Ajlaf--base; and Arzal--meaning lowest. "The former section",
writes Mr. Gait, "is made up of all undoubted descendants of
foreigners and converts from the higher classes of the Hindus".

The rest of the community falls under the second class but in
certain sections there is the third lowest caste which corresponds
to the Hindu Shudras. About this caste Gait says, "It consists of
the very lowest classes, such as the Malakhor, Dalbegi, Abdal,
and Badiya, with whom no other Mohammedan would associate, and who
are forbidden to enter the mosque or to use the public burial
ground". (1)

The Mohammedans belonging to the Ashraf class would not
permit their daughters to marry anyone below their class. This
is a very strong argument in support of the view that the idea of
strict endogamy of the Hindus has been either retained or borrowed
by the Indian Mohammedans.

"Indian converts to Mohammedanism", observes Oman, "and
their descendants forming the lower section of the community
have fallen quite naturally into endogenous groups, governed, as
regards social life, after the manner of the regular Hindu castes"(2)
The Mohammedan creed of brotherhood and social equality forced
upon the Hindus converted to Mohammedanism had little effect upon
the three higher classes of the Hindus which composed this new

society; but, it also attracted hundreds of lower class people to its expanding fold who associated with Mohammedanism the idea of enjoying social and religious equality and were finally disappointed by finding themselves forming a distinct group in Islam at the foot of the Mohammedan social ladder.

For a thousand years now, India has seen the Hindus and the Mohammedans, sometimes as bitterly hostile enemies, more generally as somewhat uneasy neighbours, but never as a homogeneous social unit. Early efforts of the Mohammedan conquerors, and especially of the Moguls (1), to promote reconciliation between the Hindus and the Mohammedans utterly failed. Even inter-marriages between the Hindus and the Mohammedans resulted, not in bringing these two different groups together, but in a revived effort on the part of the Rajput princes (2) to stamp out the Mohammedan authority and thus save their national pride by refusing to give their daughters to the Mohammedans.

1. Akbar, the Mogul Emperor, (1556-1605) tried to reconcile the Hindus to the Mohammedans. Some Rajput princes gave their daughters in marriage to the Mogul family which became a grave matter for other princes.

2. The House of Udaipur never gave its daughter to any Mohammedan. Up to this day it is given precedence over all other Rajput princes because "when Hindu prejudice was thus violated by every prince in Rajputana, the Rana renounced all alliance with those who were thus degraded". A little incident will illustrate the point: Raja Man--prince of Jaipur whose sister was married in the Mogul house--was returning from the conquest of Sholapur to Hindustan, when he invited himself to an interview with Partab Singh (Princ of Udaipur), then at Komulmir, who advanced to the Uda Sagar (a lake near Udaipur) to receive him. On the mound which embanks this lake, a feast was prepared for the prince of Amber (Jaipur). The board was spread, the Raja summoned, and prince Amr appointed to wait upon him; but no Rana appeared, (Rana is the hereditary
As the religious views and social ideals of the Mohammedans are avowedly antagonistic to those of the Hindus, the clash between these different values has given rise to a rich growth of proverbs coined by the Brahmanical genius and Maulvi's repartee. The following proverbs will throw an interesting light on the general attitude of the Hindus towards their neighbours.

(title of the Udaipur prince) for whose absence apologies alleging headache were urged by his son, with the request that Raja Man would waive all ceremony, receive his welcome, and commence his repast. The prince in a tone at once dignified and respectful, replied: "Tell the Rana I can divine the cause of his headache, but the error is irreparable, and if he refuses to put a "Khana" (food) before me, who will? Further subterfuge was useless. The Rana appeared and expressed his regret; but added: "I cannot eat with a Rajput who has given his daughter to a Toork, and who has probably eaten with him." (Attitude toward social values of caste: violation of marriage laws and ceremonial purity). Raja Man was wise to have raked this disgrace. He left the feast untouched, save for the few grains of rice he offered to Andeja, the god of food, observing as he withdrew, "It was for the preservation of your honour that we sacrificed our own, and gave our sisters and daughters to the Toork; but abide in peril, if such be your resolve, for this country shall not hold you", and, mounting his horse, he turned to the Rana and said: "If I do not humble your pride, my name is not Man," to which Partab replied, "he should always be happy to meet him"; while someone, in less dignified terms, desired he would not forget to bring his "phupha" (uncle) Akbar. The ground was deemed unclean where the feast had been spread: it was broken up and purified with water of the Ganges, and the chiefs who had witnessed the humiliation of one they deemed an apostate, bathed and changed their vestments. Every act was reported to the emperor (Akbar, the great) who was exasperated at the insult thus offered to himself; and the incident hastened the first of those sanguinary battles which have immortalized the name of Partab Singh'. (Rod's Annals of Rajasthan(mover). C. H. Payne, p. 68.)
The Hindus with the exception of the Rajputs and the Shudras are vegetarians. The Mohammedans are meat eaters; consequently they are thought of as:

"The country that has no crows has no Mussalmen".
(The Mohammedans throw away bones which crows having taken hold of peck at as they perch in trees. Presence of crows means that bones and flesh could easily be had in that city).

"A hundred Hitani (a Muslim sect) ate a hundred sheep". (Allusion to the great quantity of meat used by them).

"The Pathan (Mohammedan tribes of North-west frontier) is hungry as soon as his hands are dry". (When he has washed his hands after eating). All people wash their hands after eating.

Proverbs depicting the general characteristics of the Mohammedans of various sects:

"What does a beef-eater know of decent language". (All Hindus abstain from beef. The cow is sacred to them).

"If girls are sold for a 'pice' (one-sixth of a cent, Indian coin) a piece don't take a Mussalmani. (The Hindus spend great sums of money on girls when marrying them; the Mohammedans do not, hence, they are despised).

"Even a Gazi (Mohammedan judge) will drink spirits if he gets it for nothing". (The Muslims are forbidden by their religion to use liquor).

"The Pathan (Mohammedans living in Pathuchistan) who steals gains paradise for his ancestors even unto seven generations".

"You may know the Chushti by his squint". (These people
are distrustful of other people, and usually look sideways which has some meaning to them).

illustrate: "The Mullah (Mohammedan priest) preferred to be drowned rather than give his hand. (Proverb of avarice).

Dosti hints: "A Pathan's enmity is like a dung-fire". (These people believe in "Vendetta").

In praise: "A Saint one moment; a devil the next; that is the Pathan". "The Pathan and his son took a short cut and fell over the cliff". (Impatience).

"Hold up a rupee (Indian coin: about 33¢) and you may look at any Mohmand whether man or woman". (Venality).

"A Khatak is like a hen; if you seize him slowly he sits down, if suddenly, he clucks".

gratitude: "A Mussalman takes back the dina he has given". (Allusion to the practice of resuming dowry when a married daughter dies. The Hindus will never do it.)

the Hindi: "A Dom (Hindu scavenger converted to Mohammedanism) his father; a Dom his grand-father; yet he talks of his noble birth".

to the loc: "Sir Sahib is indeed of high family with his smooth cheeks and his empty stomach".

During the Mohammedan rule Mohammedan judges were appointed everywhere to decide cases. They were given preference over the Hindus. The Hindus resented their domination, and in order to ridicule them they coined sayings which are prevalent to this day.
"The fowl killed by the Gazi (judge) is lawful meat". "The Gazi's bitch may give pups anywhere". The following saying illustrates the attitude of the Hindus towards them. "When the Gazi's bitch died the whole town was at the funeral; when the Gazi himself died not a soul followed his coffin". It means, if people are forced to respect those whom they despise that respect is no respect.

"Though a Gazi become a saint he will still have a strain of the devil".

"To trust a Gazi is to court misfortune".

"The will of God, but the act of a Gazi".

"You get nothing from a Gazi save by force or fraud.

"A Turk, a parrot, and a hare; these three are never grateful". "The sons of a slave-girl are a faithless brood".

"The true Mussalmans lie buried in their graves and their faith lies buried in their books". (Religious conflict and contempt of the Hindus. For a Hindu there are no true Mohammedans). "Since when has the Bibi (Muslim wife) become a Brahma?" (Allusion to the looseness of the marriage tie among Mohammedans).

The continual communal strife between the Hindus and the Mohammedans based upon religious values which are essentially antagonistic, has complicated Indian problems. That the attitude of the Hindus to regard the Mohammedans their inferior finds its justification in deep-rooted prejudices which arose out of the first conflict of two alien cultures, and preserved to this day.
Chapter III, Section 4, (N).

Christianity, like Mohammedanism, chiefly relying upon open proselytism and at times even forcible conversion, is also an integrating force which under favourable conditions welds converted masses of the Hindus into larger cohesive aggregates. Though survival of the pre-conversion values can very readily be detected amongst the Indian Christians, yet Christianity has melted and fused a whole series of classes in a more or less homogeneous social unit which in Hinduism is an impossibility. The reduction of the internal brought over structure to one uniform pattern, the disappearance of social strata, the crushing out of recognition the former values are some characteristics of Indian Christian Society. The adaptation of the Christians to a uniform pattern could be explained partly in the light of the fact that the majority of them have come from the lower classes of the Hindus who are antagonistic to any class formation within their group, and partly because of the grasp of the Christian brotherhood conception where human personality finds an absolute freedom.

The converts to Christianity, especially the recent converts, are drawn "almost entirely from the classes of Hindus which are lowest in the social scale. These people have little to lose by forsaking the creed of their fore-fathers. As long as they remain Hindus they are daily and hourly made to feel that they are of commoner clay than their neighbours. Any attempts which they may make to educate themselves or their children are actively discouraged by the classes above them; caste restrictions prevent
them from quitting the toilsome, uncertain and undignified means of subsistence to which custom has condemned them, and also prevents them from taking to a handicraft or trade: they are subdued and repressed on all public occasions: are refused admission even to the temples of their gods: and can hope for no more hopeful partner of their joys and sorrows than the unkept and unhandy maiden of the "parecheri" with her very primitive notions of comfort and cleanliness". (1)

That Christianity is doing something for the lowest grade of Hindus there could be no doubt, but it is not drawing converts from the higher classes. "As for the educated Hindu, observes Low, "When he has tasted of the springs of western enlightenment and emancipated himself from the tenets of his fathers, he commonly becomes an agnostic or a rationalist, usually retaining just enough orthodoxy, in matters of ceremonial, to avoid shocking opinion. Christianity offers him few temptations. He can get all the latitude he needs without leaving his own community." (2)

There is a tendency, however, among the higher class converts to segregate themselves from their Christian brothers (3).

1. Low, C., A Vision of India, p. 272 (Quoted from the report of the Madras census officer). Majority of the Christians live in South of India.
3. In Udaipur--the stronghold of Hindu orthodoxy--the missionary converted two sweeper families. They came into the church for baptism. The Christians objected to their being allowed to enter the church. In that station there are now two parties, one favouring eating with them and the other objects. All educated Christians refuse to mix with them.
Very frequently the Hindu conceptions of ceremonial purity and matrimony are retained. Having observed the retention of the Hindu caste values in the Indian church Rev. Goreh, one of the most learned of the Indian Christians, remarked that Christianity with caste would be no Christianity at all. Bishop Whithead evidently was conscious of such tendencies when he wrote, "unless, therefore, we can eradicate caste within the church and fight vigorously against caste without the church, it is impossible ever, in any true sense, to establish the Christian church in India at all. And there is no better way to strike a fatal blow at this caste feeling than by turning to the outcasts and gathering them by their thousands and tens of thousands into the church."(1)

Quan rightly observes that so deeply is caste feeling rooted amongst the Indian people that not only do Hindus respect the caste system, but, as explained already, Hindus converted to Islam also, to some extent, surrender themselves to its potent hereditary influence, and often, too, Christianized Indians cannot quite emancipate themselves from its thraldom. Further, the same author cites the following case which is very illuminating:

The native Christian headmaster of a mission school was asked in a court of justice what his religion was. He replied: "Brahman Christian".

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1. Bishop Whithead, Indian Problems, p. 73.
The European judge, not recognizing such a sect asked
for more information.

The headmaster then reiterated his former statement
that he was a "Brahman Christian" adding with some warmth: I cannot
call myself simply a Christian when that Choorah (Sweeper) there
is also a Christian. I am a Brahman Christian, Sir", and he said
this by way of asserting his claim to racial superiority, not
desiring that it should be forgotten because he had adopted a
new creed.(1)

That the Indian Christian society is fast becoming a
distinct social unit which would never allow its members to marry
any non-Christian goes without saying. The greater danger lies,
however, in that the Christian denominational missions might
segregate their members and thus create social units hostile
towards each other. If the Christian community does not recognize
certain subtle forces which are moulding its character it is quite
possible that it would become a vertically-stratified society.(2)

1. Oman, J.C., Brahman, Theists and Muslims of India, p.76.
2. By "vertically-stratified Society" is meant that no group is
inferior to the other but refuse to fuse. There are no social
gradations in that society. To illustrate the point:
Presbyterian Indians and Methodist Indians will stand on the
same level as far as social status is concerned but will refuse
to marry with each other.
CHAPTER IV.

The Indian State System and Western Contact.

In some civilized nation, the Greek influence is so apparent in India which inflamed the Indian mind. It is contended that no Greek influence was considerable over a period of time, though a few Greek letters and its social system are still apparent in Indian society.

1. From early times. Indian contact with Greece and Asia Minor. The contact and how it influenced the Indian system has been reached by research and discovery, as the Greek influence was greatly influenced by the Greek alphabet. The influence of Greek culture has had a considerable impact on Indian society.
Chapter IV. The Indian Caste System and Western Contact.

Prior to the Western contact (1) the Hindus rigidly observed the three fundamental social laws which underlie the entire caste system; namely, that every member should observe rules which govern ceremonial purity; that the members under no circumstance marry outside their group; and that the membership should be confined only to those who are born of members and included all members so born.

So long as India's contact with the outside world did not affect the social and religious institutions of the Hindus everything went on well. Alien cultures such as those of the Greeks and Huns were absorbed in Hinduism and lost their character. In some ways these cultures gave a new character to the Indian civilization which when stumped as genuinely Indian soothed Indian antagonism towards the foreigners. The Greeks who had conquered the Punjab in 323 B.C. were driven out as soon as Alexander the Great left India. The Greeks had begun to transplant their culture in India which enflamed the Indian mind. It is contended that the Greek influence was considerable during that period and that it modified Indian institutions. There is no doubt that it had some influence upon Indian medicine and Buddhism, but on Hinduism and its social structure it had either a very slight or superficial

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1. From early times Indians traded with Greece and Asia Minor, but this contact did not influence Indian institutions. There were two reasons: 1, the contact was not intimate; 2, lack of transportation facilities hindered the Indians in reaching the interior of India, and moreover, a few traders could not have influenced to any great degree. By "Western Contact" is meant not this early contact but the modern; especially the English.
CHAPTER V.

Is Caste Disintegrating?
Chapter V. Is Caste Disintegrating?

The orthodox views regarding ceremonial purity are disintegrating. A few years ago the temporary touch of a European, he is an untouchable, was experienced by the Brahman. Professor Sir M. Williams, recording his experience of travel in India, said, "I may mention in illustration, that I often wondered, when in India, why certain great pundits proposed calling on me early in the morning till I found out accidentally that by coming before bathing they were able afterwards to purify themselves by religious ablutions from the contamination incurred in shaking hands and talking with me". (1) In modern India these things are disappearing fast—faster than one can realize.

In fashionable quarters and educational centers interdining has become quite common. The Hindus—even Brahmans—have taken to meat and it is not an uncommon experience in India to see them eating out of European dishes cooked by Mohammedan cooks. Organizations are springing up everywhere to advocate interdining. "The Aryan Brotherhood has made an interesting effort against caste. It gives public dinners to which members of all castes are deliberately invited. Names of those attending are printed in the papers. Compromising with the revolt against old laws, the priesthood have been quite willing to ignore a quiet breaking of caste rules, but such defiance has been an open challenge." (2)

Ever since the time of Menu devout Hindus, who in ordinary circumstances would observe with utmost carefulness caste scruples, have pocketed them in times of danger or starvation, and have satisfied their hunger. "In modern times, and especially since the introduction of railways, this comfortable doctrine has been developed and elaborated by Brahmanical casuistry". (1) But "ceremonial purity" is non-essential to caste. Disintegration of food laws--interdining and interdrinking--are but superficial factors. The real heart of the caste system lies in Intermarriage. The Hindu society has "manufactured countless compartments within itself" and no two castes could ever marry with each other. "Both rules--eating and marriage--are, of course, inherent in the system. But they do not stand upon the same footing, and the penalties attached to their violation differ widely. A marriage, or even a "liaison", with a member of another caste "ipso facto" involves final and irremediable excommunication. A slip in the matter of food can within limits be expiated by penance" (2)..... "The idea that any properly constituted Hindu should wish to marry outside his caste would seem to them too preposterous to be worth discussing.....As long as the people of India think thus, so long will caste endure, whatever philanthropists say" (3)

It is not out of place to mention where the Europeans stand in the eyes of the Indians as regards marriage. Every now and then one hears that because of colour prejudice the

2. Ibid, p. 279.
English and the Indians did not fuse. It is far from the truth. No Hindu, not even many classes of the Shudras, will ever consent to give his daughter to any European.

The following extract from a paper conducted by Indians will throw light on the subject:

"The Hindu or Mohammedan father is not yet born who would consent to bestow his daughter upon even the son of an English peer, who, in spite of an uninterrupted descent from Norman brigand, is only a "Melchha" (untouchable) or a "Faffir" (infidel). (1)

It is neither 'instinctive repulsion' as some would have us believe it nor colour prejudice which checks the fusion of two groups, but it is the social system (2) The practice of endogamy has become a passion with the Indians. The non-Hindus are also influenced with this idea.

Thus the idea that the caste system is disintegrating is wrong.

We are justified, however, in inferring that the present laxity of ceremonial purity and remarriage of widows are factors which indicate that social attitudes towards intermarriage would disintegrate.

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1. Quoted in Oman, J.C., Brahman, Theists and Muslims of India, p. 44.
2. The number of Anglo-Indians at the present time is only 120,000. The western contact dates back to over 400 years but this insignificant number of the Anglo-Indians is indicative of the fact that the Orientals and Occidentals did not fuse.
CONCLUSION.

In the previous chapters an effort is made to study the Indian caste system in its historical and socio-ecological aspects. The first two chapters are devoted in tracing its history and attempting to discover forces which moulded its character. We reached the conclusion that it arose primarily out of the clash between the early immigrants and the native population; that it was based not only on colour differentiation but function as well.

The third and the fourth chapters deal with conditions as they are found in our own day. In the third chapter we have surveyed the Hindu society and the hold which caste has on it. Indications of caste as seen in proverbs and a digressional study of its influence upon the non-Hindus have been pointed out. The fourth chapter embodies in it ecological factors; such as, mobility, segregation, transportation, industrialization, selection and competition; and sociological factors, such as, education, games, clubs, religious reforms, Christian Missions and political movements; all of which are giving the Indian caste system a new character. It is also shown that one of the three principles of caste—ceremonial purity, confined membership, and endogamy—is fast disintegrating, i.e. ceremonial purity is losing its hold upon the people. As mobility increases and industrialization develops, the idea of ceremonial purity will eventually disappear.
The last chapter summarizes whether the caste system is disintegrating, and the conclusion reached is that it is a false notion that is disintegrating. The heart of caste is not ceremonial purity but intermarriage; and as long as the Indians do not intermarry the caste system will never disintegrate.

At a conference of Hindus in Bombay, presided over by the high caste rajah of one of the richest native states, one of the speakers gave an eloquent and comprehensive summary of the evils of caste. He said: "Caste has produced disunion and discord. It has made honest manual labour contemptible and retarded progress. It has brought on physical degeneracy by confining marriage within narrow circles. It has suppressed individuality and independence of character, and, while affording the opportunity of culture to the few, it has caused the degradation of the masses. The social system and the whole tone of religious thought with its philosophy of fatalism is against the individualistic self-assertion necessary to success in the struggle for existence. It is opposed to co-operation for civic ideals, and it promotes indifference to life." (1)

Nevertheless in the words of Lajpat Rai the caste system of the Hindus has been their curse as well as their salvation. While it has been the principal cause of their social and political downfall, it has saved them from complete disruption and from total annihilation as a social and national organism.

1. Fisher, Fred, B., India's Silent Revolution, p. 75.
It has saved them from absorption into other religo-social systems that attained more or less ascendency in India, in the different periods of the history of that country. (1)

1. Lajpat Rai, Arya Samaj, p. 137.
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