the Gohelwar division of Kathiwar. The ancient name of Wala was Walabhipur. Some of the Valadras are very rich, being money-lenders on a large scale. But the majority of them are mendicants and beggars. Some of the latter class perform their tours on horseback. The Valadras are Smartas and Sakti worshippers.

23. The Valmikis.—The Valmikis are to be found in Kheda, Cambay and Idar. There are both beggars and cultivators among them.

24. The Vayadas.—The Vayadas are the spiritual preceptors of the Vayada Vanyas. The Vayada Brahmins are a very small body.

The other classes usually included in lists of Guzrati Brahmanas are either foreigners, or degraded and semi-degraded Brahmins, corresponding to the Agradānis, Mahā-Brahmanas and Barna Brahmanas of Northern India. The following are like Barna Brahmins:—

1. Abhira Brahmins—Brahmins who minister to the Abhira cowherds as priests.
2. Muchigor—Brahmins who minister to the Mochis.
3. Kunbigor—Brahmins who minister to the Kunbis.
4. Darjigors—Brahmins who minister to the darjis or tailors.
5. Gandharpa Gars—Brahmins who minister to the Gandharpas or musicians.
CHAP. III.—THE BRAHMANS OF MAHARASHTRA AND KANKAN.

The most important classes of Brahmans in Maharashtra and the Kankan are the following:—

1. Deshastha.
2. Kankanaestha.
3. White Yajurvedi.
5. Shenavi.

It was on Brahmans of the first four of these classes that the Peshwas bestowed religious gifts, and donations in acknowledgment of literary merit. The last have great secular importance.

§ 1.—The Deshastha Brahmins of Maharashtra.

The word Deshastha literally means "residents of the country," and, in Maharashtra, the name is given to the Brahmans of the country round Poona, which was the metropolis of the Maharashtra empire. Most of the Deshasthas pursue secular professions as writers, accountants, merchants, &c. However, there were, and still are, among them great Pandits in almost every branch of Sanskrit learning. As among the other classes of South Indian Brahmans, the laity among the Deshasthas are called Lvakikas (worldly men) or Grihasthas (householders). The Bhikshus or ecclesiastics are also householders, as every Brahman is required to be in his youth; but as they devote themselves entirely to the study of the Shastras, they alone are held entitled to receive religious donations, and are called Bhikshus or beggars. The secular Deshasthas have such secular
surnames as Desai, Despande, Desmukha, Kulkarni and Patil. The Bhikshus are sub-divided into several classes, according to the branch of learning which they cultivate. Those who study the Vedas are called Vaidika; those who expound the law are called Shastri; those who make astrology their speciality are called Jotishi or Joshi; the votaries of the medical science are called Vaidyas; and the reciters of the Purâns are called Purânikas. These distinctions, however, do not affect their caste status. In fact the son of a Laukika Brahman may be a Bhikshu, and a Bhikshu himself may, at any time, by accepting secular employment, cease to be of the ecclesiastical order. The usual surnames of the Bhikshus are Bhatta, Shastri and Joshi.

The Deshasthas are followers of the Rik and the Krishna Yajus. There are some Vishnuvites among them of the Madhwa sect. But the majority are Sivites. There is, however, nothing to prevent intermarriage between the Sivites and the Madhwas. There is a large colony of the Deshasthas in Mysore. There are a great many Brahmans of this class in Benares also. Pandit Govinda Shastri, of the Government Sanskrit College of Calcutta, is a Deshastha. The great Sanskrit jurists, Nilkanta and Kamalakar were Deshasthas. The celebrated Tantia Topi of the Sepoy war was a Brahman of the same class. He was born in a village called Gowala, in the district of Nasik. His proper name was Raghu Nath Rao. Tantia Topi was the name of his boyhood. The late Sir T. Madhava Rao was of the same class.

§ 2.—The Kankanastha Brahmans.

As their name indicates, the original home of the Kankanasthas is the Kankan, or the narrow strip of country extending from Broach on the north, to Ratnagiri on the south, and bounded on the west by the Arabian Sea, and on the east by the Western Ghats. The Kankanasthas are also called Chitpavana, a word which evidently
means a "purifier or curer of the soul." But on the authority of the Sahyadrikhanda of the Skanda Purāna, which seems to be the composition of a Deshastha, the other classes of Maharatta Brahmans say that Chitpavana is not a corrupted form of Chitta Pāvana, but of Chitāpāvana, which means a purifier of a funeral pyre. According to the Skanda Purāna, the Kankanasthas are so-called because the Brahminical hero and incarnation, Parushuram, created them out of a chita or funeral pyre. Leaving aside legends, the name of Chitpavan given to the Kankanastha Brahmans seems to be derived from the town of Chipulun in the Ratnagiri district, situated near the head of the Kumbharli pass, which is one of the easiest routes from the Deccan to the sea-board. The Peshwas, who very nearly succeeded in establishing Hindu supremacy in India during the last century, were Kankanastha Brahmans. Of the same class also were many of the high officials of the Mahratta empire—the Patvardhanas, the Gokales, the Rastyas, &c.

Raja Dinkar Rao, who was Prime Minister of Scindia at the time of the Sepoy war, and who was regarded as one of the greatest administrators of his time, was a Kankanastha. Mr. Justice Ranade, of the Bombay High Court, is a Brahman of the same tribe. So was the late Rao Saheb Vishwanath Narayan Mandalika, who was one of the ablest advocates of the Bombay High Court, and was also a Member of the Legislative Council of India.

As among the Deshasthas, so among the Kankani Brahmans, the majority are devoted to secular pursuits. They are the persons who generally fill "offices of every kind, including the village and perganah accountantships all over the country."* A great many of them are khotes or landholders, who enjoy valuable proprietary over the Kankan villages. Though mainly secular, the Kankanasthas do not keep themselves quite aloof

* Campbell's Ethnology of India, p. 73.
from the cultivation of letters. On the contrary, they have had among them some of the best scholars in every department of learning. One of the greatest of these in recent times was the late Pandit Bapu Deva Sastri of the Government Sanskrit College, Benares. The following is from the appreciative notice of his life in Mr. Sherring’s *Hindu Tribes and Castes*:

Bapu Deva Sastri has greatly distinguished himself as a scholar, and has, by his works, shed a lustre on the Sanskrit College, in which for many years he has been a Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy, and on the city in which he lives. The titles of some of his numerous works are as follows: On Trigonometry in Sanskrit; Translation of the Surya Siddhanta into English; On Algebra in Hindi; On Geography in Hindi; On Arithmetic in Sanskrit; Symbolical Euclid in Sanskrit.

In consideration of the great services rendered to science and education in India, the Sastri has been made an Honorary Member of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, and also of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.—Sherring’s *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I, p. 90.

Like the Deshasthas, the Kankanis are followers of the Rik and the Krishna Yajus. The Rig Vedis are of the Ashvalayana Sākha, and the Yajur Vedis of the Taittiriya Sākha. The following are sub-classes of the Kankanasthas:

1. Nirvankor.
2. Keloskar.

The Kankanis have more than three hundred surnames peculiar to their class.

§ 3.—*The Yajurvedis*.

The Yajurvedis among the Deshasthas are followers of the Black Yajus. The class of Maharatta Brahmans called Yajurvedi are followers of the White Yajus. They have two branches, namely,

1. The Kanvas.
2. The Madhyandinas.

The Kanvas are so called on account of their adopting the Kanva recension of the White Yajus. The Madhyandinas derive their name in the same manner from the Madhyandina Sākha of the White Yajus. Both the
Kanvav and the Madhyandinas follow the Shatapatha Brahma, and the Srauta Sutras of Katyana. The Madhyandinas* attach great importance to the performance of the Sandhya prayer at noon, i.e., after 11 A.M. But the Rig Vedis might perform the mid-day prayer even at 7 o'clock in the morning. The Madhyandinas cannot celebrate any Sradh except at noon, whereas the Rig Vedis can perform such a ceremony any time during the day. The Yajurvedis are to be found in every part of the Maharatta country, properly so-called, from Nasik on the north to Kolhapur on the south. They enjoy a very high position among the Brahmans of the country. The majority of them keep themselves aloof from secular pursuits, and devote themselves entirely to the study of the sacred literature and to the practice of the Vedic rites. During the reign of the Peshwas, they had perhaps the largest share of the religious gifts made by the State as well as in those made by private individuals. The families of the Guru of the Maharaja of Kolahpur, and of the titular Pratinidhi of Sattara are Yajurvedis of the Madhyandina Sākha.

§ 4.—The Karhades.

The Karhades derive their name from the town of Karhad near the junction of the Krishna and the Koina rivers, about fifteen miles to the south of Sattara. While the Deshasthas are Sivites, and the Yajurvedis are observers of the Vedic rites, the Karhades are the extreme Sāktas of the Maharasthra country. In Northern India, Sivites, Saktas, Vishnulvites, and Vedists are to be found within the same class; and a difference of cult, though giving rise to great animosity, has very seldom brought about the formation of subdivisions in any caste. But in the Deccan, which has been

* The name of the Madhyandina Sākha of the White Yajus seems to be derived from that of the Madhyandina School of Hindu astronomers according to whom the day is regarded as beginning at noon, and not at sunrise or midnight.
ruled by great Hindu kings down to recent times, the case is naturally otherwise. The Peshwas were Sivite Brahmins, and, during their ascendancy, the Vishnuites never could flourish in their country. The only cults, besides that of the Sivite, which then found a congenial soil in the country round Poona, were Sakti worship, which is only the counterpart of Saivism, and the Vedic rites which, though rendered obsolete by more effective and less wasteful forms of worship invented in later times, have still a great charm for the Hindu mind. The Sivite, the Sakti and the Vedic forms of worship have flourished side by side in the Maharashtra country, and naturally there was great bitterness between the professors of these forms of faith. Wherever there are two or more competitors for favour from the same quarter, and each tries to rise in the estimation of the common patron, at the expense of his rivals, sectarian hatred and bigotry must necessarily be rampant.

In the Sahyadri Khand of the Skanda Purâna, which bears evidences of being the production of a Desastha Brahman, the Karhades are charged with the practice of offering human sacrifices, and of even murdering Brahmins to propitiate their deities. The charge being preferred by an infallible authority, the Karhades admit its truth, though with the usual qualification that the practice has been given up by them long since. As a matter of fact, perhaps, the practice never existed on a large scale among any class of Brahmins. The Tantras recommending human sacrifice are accepted as authorities by the Brahmins of almost all the classes throughout India. Yet, in practice, the only animals that are usually sacrificed by the Sakti worshippers in Northern India are the goat and the sheep, i.e., the animals, the flesh of which the Brahmins eat. The flesh of the buffalo is eaten by some of the low castes, and sometimes buffaloes are sacrificed by the Saktas. But human sacrifice, though recommended by one set of texts, is prohibited by others, and as it must be naturally
revolting to every one excepting a few depraved fanatics, and as actual instances of it are extremely rare, if not quite unknown, in modern times, the case was apparently never very different in mediæval or ancient India. In the Mahābhārata, which is undoubtedly a very ancient work, Krishna himself is made to observe* that the slaughter of human beings for sacrificial purposes was unknown in practice. Coming down to historical times there is nothing in the early records of British rule, or in the Mahomedan chronicles to warrant the conclusion that the practice prevailed very extensively during the last seven centuries. The injunctions about it in the Tāntras were, it seems, meant only to excite awe on the minds of the common people, and to enable the priest to make the votaries more ready to offer as a substitute a goat or a sheep than they would otherwise be. The case is only that of an application of the maxim of priestly politics which the Brahmanical clerics formulate by saying that they must ask for a Kashmire shawl in order to get a bathing towel.

Whatever room there may be for comment on the religion of the Karhades, they are equal to the Kankanasthas and the Deshasthas in every other respect. The great Maharatta poet Moropant was a Karhade. So was the late Bala Gangadhar Shastri Jambhekor, who was a professor in the Elphinstone Institution.

The Karhades distinguished themselves sometimes in secular service also. Govinda Pandit, a Karhade Brahman, was sent by the Peshwa as his agent to Sāugor, and the Pandit succeeded in taking possession of the district for his master, from Chattra Sāl, in 1753. Sheo Ram Bhao was the Sir Soobah or Governor of the province of Jhansi at the time of the conquest of Northern India by the English. His descendants ruled the province as semi-independent kings, till the annexation of the State by Lord Dalhousie. The Karhade dynasty of

* See Mahābhārata, Sava Parva, Chapter XXII.
Jhansi has been rendered particularly famous by the name of the great Rani whose political genius and ability as a military commander have elicited the admiration of even English historians and generals. There is still a large colony of Karhade Brahmans in Sangor and Damoh who trace their descent from the companions-in-arms of their great clansmen who first conquered the country. There are many Karhades among the officers of the Mysore Raj, the majority of them being connected with its Revenue Survey Department.

§ 5.—The Shenavi Brahmans of the Kankan.

The Shenavis are believed to be a branch of the Sarswat Brahmans of the Panjab. They are found chiefly in the Kankan, Goa, and Bombay. There are a few among them who are of the priestly profession. But the majority of them are devoted to secular pursuits in which they are now generally far more successful than perhaps any other class of Brahmans. Like the Sarswatas, the Shenavis are in the habit of eating fish and such flesh as is not prohibited by the Shastras.

The Shenavis are not all of the same religion. There are Sankarites and Madhwa Vishnuvites among them. The late Dr. Bhauro Daji, the late Mr. Justice Telang, and the late Pandit Shankar Pandurang were all Shenavis. So is also Mr. Bhandarkar, the present Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University.
CHAP. IV.—MIDDLE CLASS AND INFERIOR BRAHMANS OF THE MAHARASHTRA.

§ 1.—Middle Class Secular Brahmans.

The following are the middle class Brahmans of the Maharashtra country:—


*Deva Ruke.*—The Deo Rukes are found chiefly in the Kankan. They are generally very poor. They are devoted mainly to agriculture. The Deshasthas will eat with them; but the Kankanasthas generally refuse to do them that honour.

*Savashe.*—The Savashes are found chiefly in the Southern Maharatta country. They engage in trade, and are a prosperous class. The name is evidently derived from the Sanskrit word Sahavasi which means an "associate." The origin of the application of this designation to them is explained as follows:—

In remote times, a certain Brahman came upon a hidden treasure; but to his amazement, the contents appeared in his eyes to be all live scorpions. Out of curiosity, he hung one of them outside his house. A little while after, a woman of inferior caste, who was passing by the house, noticed it to be gold, and upon her questioning him about it, the Brahman espoused her and, by her means, was able to enjoy the treasure. He gave a feast in honour of his acquisition of wealth. He was subsequently ousted for his *mésalliance* with the low-caste female, while those who were with him were put under a ban, and thus acquired the nickname.—Mysore Census Report, p. 235.

*Kirvantas.*—The Kirvantas are found chiefly in the Kankan. Many of them are cultivators. But some
of them are] very rich, and there are good Sanskrit scholars too among them. They are now being recognized as good Brahmanas by the Kankanasthas.

§ 2.—{Yajaka Brahmanas.}

The following classes of Maharashtra Brahmans minister to the Sudras as priests, and have consequently a very inferior position:


_Palashe._—The Palashes are found chiefly in Bombay and its neighbourhood. They act as priests, astrologers and physicians to the Prabhus, Sutars, Bandaric, Sonars, and other Sudra castes in Bombay. The high caste Maharatta Brahman say that the Palashes are no Brahmans. But as they are accepted as priests by the many Sudra castes mentioned above, they are certainly entitled to be regarded as one of the sacerdotal clans, however low their status may be.

_Abhiras._—The Abhiras are found chiefly in Kandeish. They act as priests to the cowherd caste called Abhira.

§ 3.—{Javala Brahmanas.}

The Javala Brahmans have a low status on account of their serving as cooks, and their habit of eating fish. They are found chiefly in the Kankan.

§ 4.—{Agricultural Brahmanas.}

The following classes of Maharashtra Brahmans are mainly agricultural, and have a very low status:

1. Kastas—found in Poona and Kandeish.
2. Trigulas—found on the banks of the Krishna.
3. Sopara—found chiefly in Bassin.

§ 5.—The Degraded and Outcaste Brahmanas.

The following are the classes of Brahmans that in Maharashtra are regarded more or less as outcastes:

2. The Kalanki. | 4. Randa Golaka.
5. Brahman Jai.

An account of some of these will be given in a subsequent part of this work. See p. 118, _post._
CHAP. V.—THE BRAHMANS OF KARNATA.

In English works on the history and the geography of India, the name Karnatic is usually applied to the tract of country on the east coast of the Deccan between Arcot and Madras. But the name of Karnat is properly applicable only to the tract where Kanarese is the prevailing language. It embraces almost the whole of Mysore with the British districts of North Kanara, Dharwar, and Belgaum of the Bombay Presidency. In external appearance, the Karnat Brahmans differ but little from the Deshasthas of Maharashtra.

The following classes are regarded as the indigenous Brahmans of Karnat:—

1. Babburu Kamme \{ Derive their name from the Kamme country situated to the east of modern Mysore.
2. Kannada Kamme \{ Very numerous in the Hassan division of Mysore. The great Madhavacharya, it is said, was a member of this caste.
3. Ulach Kamme ...
4. Haisaniga ...

5. Arvatta Vakkalu \{ Secular Brahmans; followers of Madhava.
6. Hale Karnataka...
8. Vaduganadu ...
9. Sirnadu ...
10. Havika ...
11. Hubu—Found chiefly in North Kanara.

Of these, the first seven classes are found chiefly in Mysore, and the last in North Kanara. The Havikas or Haigas have their principal home in North Kanara.
and the Shimog division of the Mysore territories. They claim to derive their name from the Sanskrit word Havaya, which means "oblation." Their usual occupation is the cultivation of the supari or areca-nut gardens. But there are among them many who are of the priestly order. The Hubus of North Kanara are a degraded class. A great many of them live either by the practice of astrology, or by serving as priests in the public temples. The Hale Karnatikas of Mysore are considered as a still more degraded class. Their very Brahmmanhood is not generally admitted, in spite of their having lately secured a Srimukh from the Sringeri monastery recognising them as a class of the sacerdotal caste. Their chief occupations are agriculture and Government service, as Shanbhogs or village accountants. By way of reproach they are called Maraka, which literally means slaughterer or destroyer. The following account is given of them in the Mysore Gazetteer:

"A caste claiming to be Brahmans, but not recognised as such. They worship the Hindu triad, but are chiefly Vishnuvites and wear the trident mark on their foreheads. They are most numerous in the south of the Mysore district, which contains five-sixths of the whole number. The great majority of the remainder are in Hassan district. They call themselves Hale Kannadiga or Hale Karnataka, the name Maraka being considered as one of reproach. They are said to be descendants of some disciples of Sankaracharya, and the following legend is related of the cause of their expulsion from the Brahman caste to which their ancestors belonged—

One day Sankaracharya, wishing to test his disciples, drank some tadi in their presence, and the latter thinking it could be no sin to follow their master's example indulged freely in the same beverage. Soon after, when passing a butcher's shop, Sankaracharya asked for alms; the butcher had nothing but meat to give, which the guru and his disciples ate. According to the Hindu Shastras, red hot iron alone can purify a person who has eaten flesh and drunk tadi. Sankaracharya went to a blacksmith's furnace, and begged from him some red hot iron, which he swallowed and was purified. The disciples were unable to imitate their master in the matter of the red hot iron, and besought him to forgive their presumption in having dared to imitate him in partaking of forbidden food. Sankaracharya refused to give absolution, and cursed them as unfit to associate with the six sects of Brahmans.—Mysore Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 341."
CHAP. VI.—THE BRAHMANS OF DRAVIRA.

Dravira is the name given to the southernmost part of the Indian Peninsula, including the districts of Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Arcot, Tinnevelly, Kambakonam, and Madura. This tract of country being inhabited by the Tamil-speaking tribes is roughly distinguishable from the provinces of Karnat and Andhra towards its north, the prevailing languages of which are respectively Kanarese and Telugu.

The Brahmans of Dravira are divided into two main classes according to their religion. The followers of Sankaracharya are called Smartas, and those of Ramanuja and Madhava are called Vaishnavas. All the Dravira Brahmans are strict vegetarians and teetotalers.

§ 1.—The Smarta Brahmans.

The majority of the Smarta Brahmans are Sivites, and there are very few Saktas or Vishnu worshippers among them. They are all followers of Sankaracharya, and regard the Superior of the Sankarite monastery at Sringeri as their spiritual head. Those among the Smartas who devote themselves entirely to Vedic study and to the practice of Vedic rites are called Vaidikas, and those who earn their living by secular pursuits are called Laukikas. The Vaidikas alone are entitled to religious gifts, and the Laukikas cannot lay claim to largesses for pious purposes. But in other respects the distinction is of no importance whatever, as inter-marriage is freely allowed between them.

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The usual surname of the Smartas is Ayar. The Sanskritists among them use the title of Shastri while the title of Dikshit is similarly used by those in whose family any of the great Vedic sacrifices has ever been celebrated.

The following are the most important classes of Dravira Brahmans of the Smarta order:—


Warma Brahmans.—The Warma Brahmans are very numerous in and near Tanjore. They are divided into the following classes:—


These may eat together, but there can be no inter-marriage between them. The late Sir Muttuswami Ayar, of the Madras High Court, was a Warma Des Warma of the Tanjore district. Mr. Subramhanya Ayar, who has been appointed to succeed him on the Bench of the Madras High Court, is also a Warma Des Warma. Sir Muttuswami was not only an able Judge, but a great man in every sense of the term. Upon his death, which occurred in January last, the Chief Justice said of him:—

"We are assembled here to express our very great regret at the loss we have sustained by the death of Sir T. Muttuswami Ayar. His death is undoubtedly a loss to the whole country and the Crown. A profound Hindu jurist, a man with very excellent knowledge of English law, with very great strength of mind possessing that most useful quality in a Judge, common sense; he was undoubtedly a great Judge, very unassuming in manners, he had great strength of mind and independence of character, his judgments were carefully considered, and the decisions he ultimately arrived at were, in a great majority of instances, upheld in the final Court of Appeal. His advice was often asked for by the Judges of the Court, and—I can speak from experience—was always freely given and was most valuable. He was a man who did honour to the great profession of law, an upright Judge who administered justice without distinction of race or creed, a well read scholar and a gentleman in the best and truest acceptation of the word. The High Court by his death has sustained a heavy loss, a loss which undoubtedly it can ill bear."
The Warma Brahmins paint their foreheads in two different ways. Some have transverse lines of sandal or sacred ashes; while others have a perpendicular line of sandal or Gopichandana.*

_Brihat Charana._—Among the Dravira Brahmins the Brihat Charanas are next in importance only to the Warmas. The Brihat Charanas paint their forehead with a round mark of Gopichandana in the centre, in addition to transverse lines of white sandal. Sir Sheshadri Ayar, K.C.S.I., the present Dewan of Mysore, is a Brihat Charana. So is also Mr. Sundar Ayar, Advocate, Madras High Court.

_Ashta Sahasra._—The Ashta Sahasras are, generally speaking, more handsome than the other classes of Draviri Brahmins. Like the moderate Sakti worshippers of Bengal, the Ashta Sahasras paint between their eyebrows a round mark which is either of white sandal or of a black colouring material formed by powdered charcoal.

_Sanket._—The Sankets are Dravidians, but are found also in Mysore. The Mysore Sankets cannot speak pure Tamil. There are two sub-divisions among them, namely, the Kausika Sanketis and the Bettadapara Sanketis. Their religion and their social customs are the same, but there can be no intermarriage between them.

The following remarks are made with reference to the Sanketis by Mr. Narsimmayangar in his report on the last Census of Mysore:

_The Sanketis are proverbially a hardy, intensely conservative, and industrious Brahman community. They are referred to as models for simultaneously securing the twofold object of preserving the study of the Vedas, while securing a worldly competence by cultivating their gardens, and short of actually ploughing the land, they are pre-eminently the only fraction of the Brahman brotherhood, who turn their lands to the best advantage._—Mysore Census Report, 1891, p. 236.

* A kind of calcareous clay, said to be obtainable only from a tank near Somnath, where the wives of Krishna drowned themselves after his death.
§ 2.—The Vishnuvite Brahmans of Dravira.

The Vishnuvite Brahmans of Dravira are followers of Ramanuja. They are divided into two classes, namely, the Vadagala and the Tengala. An account of these sects will be given in a subsequent part of this work.

The late Mr. Rangacharlu, who was Prime Minister of the Mysore Raj, was a Vadagala Vaishnava. Mr. Bhasyam Ayangar and Rai Bahadur Anandacharlu, who are now the leading advocates of the Madras High Court, and have lately been appointed as Members of the Legislative Council of India, are also Vadagala Vaishnavas of the Tamil country.
CHAP. VII._THE BRAHMANS OF TELINGANA.

Telangana is one of the names of that part of the Deccan where Telugu is the prevailing language. In ancient times this tract of country was included in the kingdoms then called Andhra and Kalinga. At the present time Telangana includes the eastern districts of the Nizam's dominions, in addition to the British districts of Ganjam, Vizigapatam, Godavari Krishna, Nellore, North Arcot, Bellary, Cudapa, Karnoul, and Anantpore. The Brahmins of this part of the Deccan are known by the general name of Tailangi Brahmans. They are mainly followers of the Apastamba Sākha of the Yajur Veda. There are also Rig Vedis among them. Nearly a third of them are Vishnuvites of the Ramanuja and Madhava sects, the rest being Smartas. There are very few Sakti worshippers among them even of the moderate type. Like most of the other classes of the Deccani Brahmans, the Tailangis are strict vegetarians and abstainers from spirituous liquors. The orthodox Tailangi does not smoke tobacco.

The Brahmins of Telangana are sub-divided into several distinct sections. On account of difference of cults there are among them the following three main sub-classes:


The followers of Madhava form a single caste. The Sri Vaishnavas among the Telangana Brahmans form a distinct caste called Andhra Vaishnava. They are not sub-divided as Vadgala and Tengala like their co-religionists of Dravida. The Smartas are sub-divided into two classes, namely, Niyogi and Vaidik. The Niyogis
profess to value *Yoga* or religious contemplation more than Vedic sacrifices. In practice the Niyogis devote themselves mainly to secular pursuits, while the Vaidiks constitute the priestly class. The Niyogis are considered to be eligible for priestly service. But they will never either accept a religious gift, or partake of *Shradha* food. The several divisions and sub-sections among the Tailangi Brahmans are shown in the following table:—

1. **Vaidika ...**
   1. *Kanva.*
   2. *Madhyandiva.*
   
   Originally Karnata Brahmans now naturalised in the Andhra country.

2. **Niyogi ...**
   1. *Arvelu Varu* (Lit., "the six thousand").
   2. *Telangana Niyogi* or *Telgiana.*
   5. *Yajnavalkya Niyogi.*
   
   Originally of Karnata.

2. **Ramanujites**
   1. *Andhra Vaishnavas.*

3. **Madhava—Followers of Madhava.**

*Velnadu.*—The Velnadus are the most numerous class of Tailangi Brahmans. Vallabhachari, who in the 15th century attained great success as a prophet with very little sacrifice of personal ease, and whose descendants are worshipped almost as gods still in Rajputana,
Gujrat and Bombay, was a member of this tribe. According to the Hindustani account of Ballava’s “conquests” his father was a native of Kankarkom, but his birth took place at a place named Champa near Raipore, while his parents were on their way from their native village to Benares. A full account of Ballava is given in the part of this book dealing with the Indian sects. The Velnadus are most numerous in the Godavari and Krishna districts. Colonies of the tribe are found also in every part of Mysore except Kadur.

**Venginadu.**—The Venginadus are next in importance to the Velnadu, and are found chiefly in the British districts of Godavari and Vizigapatam, formerly called the Vengi country.

**Kasalnadu.**—The Kasalnadus derive their name from Kosala, the ancient name of Oude, from whence they profess to have emigrated to the Kalinga country where they are now found.

**Murakanadu.**—Brahmans of this class are found chiefly in the tract of country to the south of the Krishna. They are pretty numerous in Mysore. There are among them both priests and men devoted to secular pursuits. The present Superior of the chief Sankarite monastery at Sringeri is a Murakanadu.

**Telaganadu.**—The Telaganadus are quite as numerous as the Velnadus. The former are found chiefly in the north-eastern part of the Nizam’s dominions.

**Yajnavalkya.**—This name is given in the Telugu country to the followers of the Kanwa Sākha of the White Yajur Veda. They are called also Pratham Sakhi as in the Maharatta country.

**Niyogis.**—The Niyogis are secular Brahmans. They derive their name from the word Yoga, which means religious contemplation, as opposed to Yaga, which means religious sacrifice. As the word Niyoga in Sanskrit means “employment,” it is more probable that the Niyogis are so-called because they accept secular employment. The Komatis and the Sudras bow to them, but
the ecclesiastical Brahmans address them with a benediction. From a secular point of view they have great importance. They are usually employed as writers and village accountants.

*Aradhya.*—The word Aradhya signifies “deserving to be worshipped.” The Aradhya do not form a separate caste, as intermarriages take place between them and the Smartas. The Aradhya of the Telugu country profess to be Brahmans, but are, in fact, semi-converted Lingaitis, and are not regarded as good Brahmans. Though following Basava in attaching great importance to Linga worship, they adhere to caste and repeat the Gayatri prayers. They act as Gurus or spiritual preceptors to the higher classes of lay Lingaitis, while the lower classes among the followers of Basava are left to the guidance of the Jangamas or the priestly Sudras of the sect.
CHAP. VIII.—THE BRAHMANS OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

As a considerable portion of the territories included in what is now called the Central Province was formerly ruled by kings of the Gond tribe, and as there is still a large Gond population in the districts round Nagpore and Jubbulpore, the tract of country inhabited by them is popularly called Gondwana, and the Brahmans settled within it receive the designation of Gond Brahmans. They are called also Jhara Brahmans from the fact of their country being still, to a very large extent, covered by forest. Like some of the Mahratta Brahmans, the Gond Brahmans are divided into distinct sections on account of the differences in the Vedas and the Sākhas which they profess. The majority of them are followers of the Yajur Veda. There are also Rig Vedis among them, but very few followers of any of the other Vedas. The Yajur Vedis are divided into various Sākhas, the Madhyandinas, Kanvas, and the Apastambis being the most numerous. There cannot be intermarriage between these. But marriage alliances are possible between the Rig Vedis and the Apastambi section of the Yajur Vedis. All the Rig Vedis are of the Ashwalayana Sākha.

All the Gond Brahmans are vegetarians and abstainers from intoxicating drink. The Yajur Vedis are chiefly Sivites. There are a few Bhagabats and moderate Saktas among them. The Bhagabats are moderate Vishnuvites, paying reverence to Siva also.
Among the Rig Vedis the majority are Bhagabats and Sivites. There are a few extreme Vishnuvites among them. There may be intermarriage between the Sivites, Bhagabats, Vaishnavas and Saktas of the same class. Intermarriage is possible also between the Bhikshus and the Laukikas.

There are very few wealthy men among the Gond Brahmans. But they have in their community many learned Sanskritists and English scholars. There is in Gondwana a class of Brahmans called Charaki. There are also colonies of the Malwi and the Narmadi.
CHAP. IX.—BRAHMANS OF TULAVA, SOUTH KANARA AND COORG.

_Tulava Brahman s._—Tulava is a small tract of country embracing only the British District of South Kanara and a part of Coorg. Udipi, the chief centre of the Madhava sect, is in Tulava, and is regarded by its members as a very holy place.

Dr. Wilson gives the following account of the Tulava Brahmans:—

"The Brahman s taking to themselves the designation of Tulavas are scattered not merely through this province but through some of the territories above the Ghats where they have nearly forgotten their original language. Mr. Stokes mentions the following local varieties of them as found in the Nagara districts:—

1. Shiwali.  
2. Panchagramadavaru.  
3. Kota.  
4. Kandavar u.

"These are all varieties," he adds, "of Tulava Brahman s, and appear to be almost aboriginal (in a certain sense). They are very numerous in the South of Nagara, Kanladorga, Koppa and Lakavall, where they hold the greatest portion of the betel-nut gardens. They are mostly of Smarta sect, and disciples of the Shringleri and its subordinate Mathas of Tirtha, Mathur, Hariharpura, Bandigadra, Mulavagal, &c. They speak Kanarese only, but their books are partly in the Grantha and partly in the Bal Bodha character. Some sign their names in the Tulava character. They are indifferently educated except a few who are either brokers or in public employ."

The Tulava Brahman s do not intermarry with the other Brahman s on the Malabar Coast. In the regulations, attributed to Sankara-charya, possessed by the Namburi Brahman s, "it is decreed that intermarriages among the Brahman s north of Parampol, forming thirty-two Gramas of Tulanad with the Brahman s of thirty-two Gramas to the south called Malayalam are forbidden." A synonym of the Tula Brahman s is _Imbran_ or rather _Tamburan_.

The Tulava Brahman s resemble the Namburs, and consider themselves as the proper lords of the country, pretending that it was

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created expressly for their use by Parashurama. They are poly-
gamists. They cohabit, too, Dr. F. Buchanan tells us, with the
daughters of the Rajas. Speaking of the Kumali Raja, a professed
Kshatriya, he says: "The eldest daughter in the female line cohabits
with a Tulava Brahman; her sons become Rajas, and her eldest
daughter continues the line of the family. Whenever she pleases,
she changes her Brahman." They prevent widow re-marriage, but
promote widow prostitution in the name of religion; and with widows
and women who have forsaken their husbands and become "Moylars"
and attached to the temples, they hold intercourse. They burn their
dead. They abstain from animal food and spirituous liquors.
The Tulava Brahmans are equally divided between the sects of
Sankaracharya and Madhavacharya.

In Mysore there are some Brahmanic colonists who
call themselves Kavarga and Shishyavarga and who are
believed to have been originally inhabitants of Tulava.
The word Kavarga literally means the first five letters
of the Sanskrit alphabet. The reason why the designa-
tion is applied to the tribe of Brahmans bearing the
name is explained as follows in the report on the last
Census of Mysore:—

The name is said to have a reproachful allusion to a legend, accord-
ing to which a brother and sister of this tribe deceitfully received a
gift by representing themselves as husband and wife at a Brahmanic-
cal ceremony. By the patriarchal law of visiting the sins of the
fathers on the children, the tribe is to this day distinguished by the
name of Kavarga (of the Ka class), Ka being the initial syllable of
the Kanarese word Kullu (= thief).—Mysore Census Report, p. 235.

In Coorg there is a priestly class called Amma
Kodaga or Kaveri Brahmans; but as they do not profess to follow any particular Veda, they are, proper-
ly speaking, no Brahmans. They are a very small
community. With regard to them, Richter says:—

The Amma Kodagas live principally in the S.-W. parts of Coorg,
and are the indigenous priesthood devoted to the worship of Amma
the Kaveri goddess. They are of a quite unobtrusive character; do
not intermarry with the other Coorga, and are, generally speaking, inferior to them in personal appearance and strength of body. Their
number is about 50, they are unlettered and devoid of Brahmanical
lore. Their diet is vegetable food only, and they abstain from
drinking liquor. Their complexion is rather fair, their eyes dark-
brown, and their hair black and straight.—Ethnological Compen-

CHAP. X.—THE BRAHMANS OF KERALA, MALABAR, COCHIN AND TRAVANCORE.

The part of the western coast of the Deccan which extends from Cannanore and the Chandra Giri river on the north to Cape Comorin on the south, and which embraces at present the British district of Malabar, and the principalities of Cochin and Travancore, is, in many respects, a homogeneous tract distinguishable from every other part of India. This strip of country was called in ancient times Kerala or Chera, and governed by its own king. The language spoken by its people is Malaylan which, though allied to the Tamil, is a quite distinct dialect. The Nairs and the Namburi Brahmans, who form the chief elements in the population of Kerala, are not to be found in considerable numbers even in the adjoining districts of Coimbatore, Trichinopoly, Madura or Tinnevelly. It is, however, the peculiar laws and customs of Kerala that distinguish it most from other parts of India. The very family type among the Nairs is so different from what is found in other countries, that it is very difficult for an outsider to form an idea of it. Among most of the nations throughout the world, each male member when he marries, becomes an unit of the society. During the lifetime of his father he may, with his wife, and in some cases with his children also, live under the parental roof. But each of the male members of the society is, in the eye of law, the centre of an independent group actual or possible. After his death, the usual rule is that his sons succeed to his property

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and his status, and every one traces his lineage in the male line, *i.e.*, in the line of his father, grandfather, great-grandfather, &c. The case among the Nairs is very different. Among them every girl is married formally when a child with a Brahman. But the titular husband can never claim her as his wife, and when she grows up she may choose any one, either of her own or of the Brahman caste, provided he is not a member of the same *tarwad* (the common residence of the children of the same maternal ancestor). A female member of a wealthy *tarwad* never leaves her maternal home, but is visited there by her husband. In the case of less wealthy *tarwads*, the women generally live with the husbands chosen by them. But in all cases the children succeed to the property and status of their mother’s *tarwad*, and not to their male ancestors.

The marriage customs of the Namburi Brahmans of Malabar are not the same as those of the Nairs; nor are they quite identical with those of the Brahmans in other parts of India. In a Namburi family, it is only the eldest brother who is ordinarily allowed to take a wife by a regular marriage. If no male children be born to the eldest, then the brother next in rank may marry in the regular way, but not otherwise. The younger brothers, who are forbidden marriage, are allowed to form connexions with Ksatriya and Nair women.

The Namburis exact greater deference from the Sudras than the Brahmans in other parts of the country. A *Nair*, who is a high caste Sudra, may approach, but must not touch, a Namburi. A *Tir*, who is a cultivator by caste, has to remain thirty-six steps off from one; a Malayaeer hillman three or four steps further. A member of the degraded Puliyar caste has to keep himself at a distance of ninety-six steps. If a Puliyar touch a Brahman, the latter must make expiation by immediate bathing, and change of his Brahmanical thread.

The Namburis are, like most of the other classes of Deccani Brahmans, strict vegetarians. Their male
members are allowed to eat with the Ksatriyas. The most striking peculiarity in a Namburi is the tuft of hair grown near the forehead, instead of the usual Brahmanical Sikha at the central part of the head. There are both Sivites and Vishnuvites among the Namburis. The former are called Chovar, the latter Panyon. The Namburi Brahmans seldom go abroad without holding a chatra or large umbrella. Their women also screen themselves with a chatra when they go out, which they do very seldom. The foreign Brahmans residing in Malabar are called Pattara. The Ambalvashis, who are the employés of the public shrines, are Namburis by descent, but degraded by their avocation.

The great Sankaracharya, whose name stands most conspicuous in the struggle for rooting out Buddhism from India, and who is regarded by Brahmans in every part of the country as an incarnation of Siva, was a Namburi.
PART V.
THE SEMI-BRAHMANICAL CASTES.

CHAP. I.—THE BHUINHAR BRAHMANS OF BEHAR AND BENARES.

There are various legends regarding the origin of this caste. The Bhuinhar Brahmans themselves claim to be true Brahmans descended from the rulers whom Parusu Ram set up in the place of the Ksatriya kings slain by him. The good Brahmans and the Ksatriyas of the country, however, look down upon them, and insinuate that they are of a mixed breed, the offspring of Brahman men and Ksatriya women. It is even said that the class was formed by the promotion of low caste men under the orders of a minister to a Raja who wanted a very large number of Brahmans to celebrate a religious ceremony, but for whom his minister could not procure the required number of true Brahmans. But this legendary theory is very strongly contradicted by the Aryan physiognomy of the Bhuinhrs who, in respect of personal appearance, are in no way inferior to the Brahmans and the Rajputs. One of the most important points of difference between the Bhuinhar Brahmans, and the majority of the ordinary Brahmans is, that while the latter are divided into only those exogamous clans called Gotra, the former have among them,
like the Rajputs, a twofold division based upon both Gotra and tribe. From this circumstance Mr. Risley* has been led to conclude that the Bhuiinhar Brahmans are an offshoot of the Rajputs, and not true Brahmans. But as there are similar tribal divisions among the Maithila Brahmans of Tirhoot and the Saraswat Brahmans of the Panjab, it might, on the same ground, be said that the Saraswats and the Maithilas are offshoots of the Rajputs.

The theory that Bhuiinhar Brahmans are an offshoot of the Rajputs, involves the utterly unfounded assumption that any of the military clans could have reason to be ashamed of their caste status. The ‘royal race’ had very good reasons to be proud of such surnames as Sinha, Roy and Thakoor, and it seems very unlikely that any of their clans could at any time be so foolish as to

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* The grounds on which Mr. Risley rests his view will appear clear from the following extract:

"An examination of the sections or exogamous groups into which the Babhans are divided appear, however, to tell strongly against the hypothesis that they are degraded Brahmans. These groups are usually the oldest and most durable element in the internal organization of a caste or tribe, and may therefore be expected to offer the clearest indications as to its origin. Now we find among the Babhans section names of two distinct types, the one territorial referring either to some very early settlement of the section, or to the birthplace of its founder, and the other eponymous, the eponym being in most cases a Vedic Rishi or inspired sage. The names of the former class correspond to or closely resemble those current among Rajputs; the names of the latter are those of the standard Brahmanical Gotras. Where the matrimonial prohibitions based on these two classes of sections conflict, as must obviously often happen where every member of the caste necessarily belongs to both sets, the authority of the territorial class overrides that of the eponymous or Brahmanical class. Suppose, for instance, that a man of the Korunch territorial section and of the Sandilya eponymous section wishes to marry a woman of the Sakanvar territorial section, the fact that she also belongs to the Sandilya eponymous section will not operate as a bar to the marriage. Whatever may be the theory of the *purolhita* of the caste, the Brahmanical Gotra is disregarded in practice. This circumstance seems to indicate that the territorial sections are the older of the two, and are probably the original sections of the caste, while the eponymous sections have been borrowed from the Brahmans in comparatively recent times. It would follow that the Babhans are an offshoot, not from the Brahmans, but from the Rajputs."—Risley's *Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I, Introduction.
club together for the purpose of assuming the Brahmanic surnames of Dobe, Tewari, Chobe and Upadhyya. On the theory that the Bhuinhar Brahmans are an offshoot of the Rajputs, the clans that now profess to be Bhuinhar Rajputs are the residue that have stuck to their original status, and have never aspired to a higher one. But on this supposition it would be difficult to find any reason for the distinction between Bhuinhar Rajputs and the ordinary Rajputs.

The clue to the exact status of the Bhuinhar Brahmans is afforded by their very name. The word literally means a landholder. In the language of the Indian feudal system, Bhum is the name given to a kind of tenure similar to the Inams and Jaigers of Mahomedan times. By a Bhum, according to the Rajputana Gazetteer, an hereditary, non-resumable and inalienable property in the soil was inseparably bound up with a revenue-free title. Bhum was given as compensation for bloodshed, in order to quell a feud, for distinguished services in the field, for protection of a border, or for the watch and ward of a village.* The tenure is very highly esteemed by Rajputs of all classes. The Maharajah of Kishengarh, the Thakoor of Fategarh, the Thakoor of Gunia, the Thakoor of Bandanwara, and the Thakoor of Tantoti are among the Bhumias of Ajmere. In Bengal the fact of the frontier districts of the east having been at one time under twelve Bhumia Kings is well known still by tradition.

The meaning of the designation Bhuinhar being as stated above, the Bhuinhar Brahmans are evidently those Brahmans who held grants of land for secular services. Whoever held a secular fief was a Bhuinhar. Where a Brahman held such a tenure he was called a Bhuinhar Brahman. Where the holder was a Ksatriya he was called a Bhuinhar Ksatriya. Bhuinhar Brahm-

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* The Assamese Bhuinhrs do not wear the sacred thread, and do not claim to be either Brahmans or Ksatriyas.
mans are sometimes called simply Bhuinhars, just as the masons, whose class name in Bengali is *Raj mistri* (royal architect), are generally called *Raj*, which means a king.

In Assam the Bhuinhars hold their lands on very favourable terms; but no exceptional indulgence is shown to the Bhuinhars of Behar or Benares by the local zemindars. As may be expected the Bhuinhars are now chiefly an agricultural class; but like the good Brahmans, they never touch the plough. They will, however, do any kind of manual work except personal service. They serve not only as soldiers, constables, orderlies and gate-keepers, but also as porters, cartmen, and cutters of wood. Many of the Hindu cartmen and porters in Calcutta are Bhuinhars. Some of them are very proud and cantankerous. The fact that the Bhuinhars readily enlist in the army and in the police may be taken to show, to some extent, what their caste profession must have been in former times.

The Bhuinhars observe all their religious ceremonies in the same manner as the good Brahmans; but as they practise secular avocations they, like the Laukika Brahmans of Southern India, are not entitled to accept religious gifts, or to minister to any one as priests. The best Brahmans officiate as priests for the Bhuinhars, and it is not considered that they are degraded by doing so.

On the view that the Bhuinhars were anciently a fighting caste, it is not at all a matter for wonder that there are among them, as among the Rajputs, many big landholders. The Rajas named below are of the Bhuinhar caste:

1. Raja of Benares.
2. Raja of Bettia in Champaran, North Behar.
3. Raja of Tikari in Gaya.
4. Raja of Hatwa in Saran, North Behar.
5. Raja of Tamakhi in Gorakpore.
6. Raja of Sheohar.
7. Raja of Maisadal in Midnapore, Bengal.
8. Raja of Pakour in Sonthal Pargunnahs, Bengal.
9. Raja of Moheshpore in Sonthal Pargunnahs, Bengal.
Like the Rajputs the Bhuinhar Brahmans form one great caste, and there are no sub-castes among them. They are divided into a large number of clans which, for purposes of marriage, are, with very few exceptions, all equal. The usual surnames of the Bhuinhar Brahmans are the same as those of the other Brahmans of Northern India. Being a fighting caste, a few of them have Rajput surnames.
CHAP. II.—THE BHATS AND THE CHARANAS.

The Bhats and the Charanas are very important castes in Rajputana and the adjoining provinces. They are the minstrels, historians and genealogists of the Rajput chiefs, and are very much feared by their constituents, as it is in their power to lower any family by distorting history. They all take the holy thread, and as their persons are considered to be sacred by all classes, they seem to have been originally Brahmans. The very name of Bhatta points also to the same conclusion, as it means a learned man, and is an honorific surname of many of the best families of Brahmanas in every part of the country. In all probability the Bhats are the caste who were usually employed by the Rajput princes in diplomatic service, while the Charanas, as their very name indicates, were the spies. At any rate this view not only explains the fact that the Bhats have a higher caste status than the Charanas, but is supported also by the custom which still prevails among the Rajputs of employing the Bhats to conduct negotiations for marriage alliances.

Sir John Malcolm gives the following account of the Bhats:—

The Bhats or Raos seldom sacrifice themselves; but as chroniclers or bards, they share power, and sometimes office with the Charanas. Among the Bhilas and lower tribes they enjoy great and exclusive influence; they give praise and fame in their songs to those who are liberal to them, while they visit those who neglect or injure them, with satires, in which they usually reproach them with spurious birth and inherent meanness. Sometimes the Bhat, if very seriously offended, fixes the figure of the person he desires to degrade on a
long pole, and appends to it a slipper as a mark of disgrace. In such cases the song of the Bhat records the infamy of the object of his revenge. This image usually travels the country till the party or his friends purchase the cessation of the ridicule and curses thus entailed. It is not deemed in these countries in the power of a prince, much less any other person, to stop a Bhat, or even punish him for such a proceeding: he is protected by the superstitious and religious awe which, when general among a people, controls even despotism.—Malcolm’s Central India, Vol. II, Chap. XIV, pp. 113-114.

The poetic castes in fact performed the functions of the tiers-état in Rajasthan, and the privilege of commenting on the actions of their Kings, which they possessed and very often abused, was very nearly unlimited. In Rajputana there are many big landholders and men of influence among the Bhats and the Charanas; but there are very few Sanskritists among them. The usual surname of the Bhats is Rao. They are divided into two classes, namely, the Brahma Bhats and the Yoga Bhats. The former are poets and minstrels who recount, in verse, the history of the great Rajput heroes, ancient and modern. The Yoga Bhats are the genealogists. The Bhats of Bengal are mere beggars, without regular constituents, and without the slightest pretension of poetic capacity. On the occasions of Pujas and Shraddhas in the houses of the rich, they present themselves uninvited, and make such a horrid uproar by shouting and singing, that the master of the house besieged by them is glad to pay something to get rid of them. If refused, they will get to the top of a tree or wall, and threaten to commit suicide by falling headlong on the ground. Being thus terrorised the ladies of the house insist upon their immediate dismissal anyhow, and it is therefore quite impossible to avoid submitting to their exactions on ceremonial occasions. With regard to the Charanas Sir John Malcolm gives the following account:

They are divided into two tribes, the Kachili who are merchants, and the Maru who are bards. These again branch out into one hundred and twenty other tribes, many of whom are the descendants in the female line of Brahmans and Rajputs. They are taught to read and write, and the class who traffic (generally in camels and horses)
are shrewd men of business; while the Maru Charanas apply their skill to the genealogy of tribes, and to the recital of numerous legends (usually in verse), celebrating the praises of former heroes, which it is their duty to chant, to gratify the pride and rouse the emulation of their descendants. The Charana's chief power is derived from an impression that it is certain ruin and destruction to shed his blood, or that of any of his family, or to be the cause of its being shed. They obtain a high rank in society, and a certain livelihood, from the superstitious belief which they are educated to inculcate, and which they teach their children to consider as their chief object in life to maintain. A Charana becomes the safeguard of travellers and security for merchants, and his bond is often preferred among the Rajputs, when rents and property are concerned, to that of the wealthiest bankers. When he trades himself, he alone is trusted and trusts among the community to which he belongs. The Charana who accompanies travellers likely to be attacked by Rajput robbers, when he sees the latter approach, warns them off by holding a dagger in his hand, and if they do not attend to him, he stabs himself in a place that is not mortal, and taking the blood from the wound, throws it at the assailants with imprecations of future woe and ruin. If this has not the desired effect, the wounds are repeated, and in extreme cases one of the Charana's relations, commonly a female child or an old woman, is made a sacrifice. The same process is adopted to enforce the payment of a debt to himself or a claim for which he has become security. It is not unusual, as the next step, to slay himself; and the catastrophe has been known to close in the voluntary death of his wives and children. The females of the Charanas are distinct from all the other population, both in dress and manners. They often reside in separate villages, and the traveller is surprised to see them come out in their long robes, and attend him for some space, chanting his welcome to their abode. The Charanas are not only treated by the Rajputs with great respect (the highest rulers of that race rising when one of this class enters or leaves an assembly), but they have more substantial marks of regard. When they engage in trade, lighter duties are collected from them than others. They receive at all feasts and marriages presents that are only limited by the ability of the parties. The evil consequences of a Charana being driven to undergo a violent death, can be alone averted by grants of land and costly gifts to surviving relations; and the Rajput chief, whose guilt is recorded (for all these sacrifices are subjects of rude poeme), as the cause of such sacred blood being shed, is fortunate when he can by any means have his repentance and generosity made part of the legend.—Malcolm's Central India, Vol. II, Chap. XIV, p. 108 et seq.

About the peregrinations of the Bhatas and the Charanas, and the periodical visits paid by them to their constituents, a graphic account is to be found in the following extract:

When the rainy season closes, and travelling becomes practicable, the bard sets off on his yearly tour from his residence in the Bhatwara of some city or town. One by one he visits each of the Rajput chiefs who are his patrons, and from whom he has received portions of land, or annual grants of money, timing his arrival, if possible,
to suit occasions of marriage or other domestic festival. After he has received the usual courtesies, he produces the 'Bahi,' a book written in his own crabbed hieroglyphics, or in those of his fathers, which contains the descent of the house; if the chief be the Tilayet or head of the family, from the founder of the tribe; if he be a Phatayo, or cadet, from the immediate ancestor of the branch, interspersed with many a verse or ballad, the dark sayings contained in which are chanted forth in musical cadence to a delighted audience, and are then orally interpreted by the bard, with many an illustrative anecdote or tale. The 'Bahi' is not, however, merely a source for the gratification of family pride, or even of love of song; it is also a record of authority by which questions of consanguinity are determined when marriage is on the tapis, and disputes relating to the division of ancestral property are decided. It is the duty of a bard at each periodical visit to register the births, marriages and deaths which have taken place in the family since his last circuit, as well as to chronicle all other events worthy of remark which have occurred to affect the fortunes of his patron; nor have we ever heard even a doubt suggested regarding the accurate, much less the honest, fulfilment of this duty by the bard.—Forbes's Itas Mala, Vol. II, pp. 263-64.
PART VI.
THE DEGRADED BRAHMANS.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

There are various classes of degraded Brahmans who now form, more or less completely, separate castes. Their social ostracism is due to one or other of the following causes:—

1. Alleged intercourse with Mahomedans at some by-gone period.
2. Ministering to the low castes as priests.
3. Being connected with the great public shrines.
4. Accepting forbidden gifts
5. Ministering as priests at a cremation.
6. Being suspected to be of spurious birth.
7. By being tillers of the soil.
8. By menial service.

CHAP. I.—THE HOSAINIS AND KUVACHANDAS.

Hosainis.—These are a class of Brahmans to be found in many parts of Western India, and especially near Ahmednagar. They have actually adopted to some extent the Mahomedan faith and its observances, though they retain some of the Brahmanic practices too, and generally intermarry only among themselves. As a class they have no importance. They are chiefly beggars.

Kuvachandas.—Found in Sind, and they generally resemble the Mussalmans in their habits.

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CHAP. II.—THE PIRALI TAGORES OF CALCUTTA.

Of the several classes degraded by alleged intercourse with Mahomedans, the Pirâlis of Bengal are the most important from many points of view. They claim to be a section of the Radriya Brahmins of the country with whom alone they intermarry, though such alliance is always very expensive to them. The good Radriya who marries into a Pirâli family is himself reduced to the rank of a Pirâli, and always demands a heavy premium as a sine qua non. With the exception of the family of Babu Debendra Nath Tagore who are Brahmos, the Pirâlis are very orthodox Hindus. The following account relating to the degradation of Purushottama, the ancestor of the clan, is given by one of their leading members, the late Honorable Prasanna Kumar Tagore, c.s.i.:

Purushottama was called Pirâli for having married the daughter of a person blemished in caste. According to the books of the Ghattaks, Janaki Ballabha and Kamdeva Roy Chowdri, inhabitants of Gurgain, in Pergana Chengutia, brought a suit against an ancestor of Sri Kanta Roy, of Jessore. An Amin, named Pirâli Khan, was deputed by the semindar for the purpose of holding an investigation into the case. There was an altercation between the Amin and some of the inhabitants of the place as to whether the smell of a thing was tantamount to half-eating it. Some time after the said Pirâli Khan invited several persons all of whom lost their caste, as he made them smell forbidden food. Janaki Ballabha and Kamdeva having sat near the Amin and been reported to have eaten the food, became Mahomedans, under the names of Jamal Khan and Kamal Khan, pursuant to the decision of the Pandits of those times. Their descendants, Arjuna Khan, Dinanath Khan, &c., live like Mahomedans up to this day in Magura and Basundia,
Pergana Chengutia, zillah Jessore. They form their connections by marriage with the Khan Chowdries of Broome, but not with any other Mahomedans. The remaining persons present on the occasion were called Pirâli. Purushottama was one of the latter. Others give a different account. They say that when Purushottama was in Jessore, on his way to bathe in the Ganges, the Chowdries of that place, who became polluted in the above mentioned way, forcibly took him to their house with a view to give him a daughter of theirs in marriage. Seeing that the bride was very beautiful, Purushottama agreed to marry her. After this marriage, Purushottama left the original seat of his family and settled in Jessore. Purushottama had a son named Balarama. Panchanana, the fifth in descent from Balarama left Jessore and came to Govindpore, the site of Fort William, where he purchased land, and built thereon a dwelling-house and a temple. His son Jairam was employed as an Amin in the settlement of the 24-Pergunnahs and discharged his duties with considerable credit. At the capture of Calcutta he is said to have lost all his property with the exception of Rs. 13,000 in cash.

Jairam's house was taken by the English for the purpose of building Fort William. He received some money and land as compensation, and removed himself to Pathuriaghata. He died in the year 1782, leaving four sons, named Ananda Ram, Nilmani, Darpa Narayan and Govinda. The eldest, Ananda Ram, was the first who received a liberal English education. His family and that of his youngest brother, who superintended the building of the Fort William, have become extinct. Nilmani was the grandfather of Dwarkanath Tagore, who occupied a foremost rank in the society of his day. See S. C. Bose's Hindu as they are, pp. 171—74.

With reference to the above, it may be observed here that the alleged enjoyment of the smell of a Mahomedan's savoury meat, cannot, by itself, explain the perpetual degradation of Purushottama, or any of the other guests of Pirâli. The sin of even voluntary and actual eating of such food is not an inexpiable one, and there is not within the four corners of the Shastras, any such utterly unreasonable and Draconian law as would visit a man with eternal degradation for involuntarily inhaling the smell of forbidden food. There are also other inherent improbabilities in the story as narrated above. Unless the Amin, and the inhabitants of the locality where he was conducting his investigations, were quite demented, there could not possibly be an occasion for any altercation between the parties as to a question of the Hindu's religion. Then, again, if the habits and prejudices of the Hindus in those times be taken into consideration, it would seem quite impossible
that Pirāli would have invited any number of them to his house, or that they would have responded to the invitation so far as to enter his dining-room. Hindus and Mahomedans very often exchange visits for ceremonial and official purposes. But even when they are on the most friendly terms, a man professing the one religion will not ask a votary of the other to sit by his table while he is at dinner. The orthodox Hindu’s prejudices are such that after sitting on the same carpet with a Mahomedan or a Christian friend, or shaking hands with such a person, he has to put off his clothes, and to bathe or sprinkle his person with the holy water of the Ganges. The Mahomedan gentleman of the country who know well of these prejudices on the part of their Hindu fellow-countrymen, therefore, never ask them to mix too familiarly, and the Hindus also keep themselves at a sufficient distance to avoid that they must regard as contaminations. The dwelling-house of every native of India, be he a Hindu or a Mahomedan, consists of two parts, namely, the zenana and the boytakhana. The zenana apartments are reserved for the ladies, and the dining-rooms for the members of the house are always within the zenana. The boytakhana is the outer part of the house where visitors are received. The Mussalmans do sometimes entertain their co-religionists in the boytakhana; but no orthodox Hindu would enter such a place while the plates are in it, or would remain there a moment after any sign of preparations for introducing any kind of cooked eatables.

From what is stated above, it would appear that the causes assigned by the Pirālis themselves for their degradation cannot satisfactorily account for their status in the Hindu caste system. From the general tenor of their story, it seems more probable that Parusshottama was an officer in the staff of the Surveyor, Pirāli, and that, as Amāns and their underlings usually do, he made himself very unpopular among his co-religionists by attempting to invade the titles to their
patrimony, so as to lead them to club together for ostracising him on the allegation that he had tasted or smelt forbidden food.

The reason why the Pirālis left their original habitat, and settled in Calcutta, is not far to seek. Purushottama who was first outcasted had evidently made his native village too hot for him. He removed to Jessore; but even at Jessore he could not have, in his degraded condition, found many friends. His descendant, Panchanana, therefore removed to Calcutta in search of employment, and a place where he could live in peace. Calcutta was then practically ruled by the East India Company, who had no reason whatever to pay any regard to any rule or decree of caste discipline. The majority of the well-to-do population of Calcutta were then of the weaver caste, with a sprinkling of Sonar Banyas and Kāyasthas. Good Brahmans visited the towns sometimes for ministering to their disciples or collecting the donations of the rich Sudras to their toles or Sanskrit schools. But those were days when the orthodox and respectable Brahmans of Bengal considered it beneath their dignity to engage in secular pursuits, and even to those who were inclined to pocket their pride for the sake of pelf, the service of the East India Company could not then have much attraction. Whatever the cause might have been, the Brahmanic population of Calcutta was not very large in its early days. When such was the state of things Panchanana settled in it. A Brahman is a Brahman though outcasted by his clansmen. The Sonar Banyas of Calcutta were themselves outcastes, and as for the Tantis and Kāyasthas, they could have neither the motive nor the power to subject the outcaste Panchanana to any kind of persecution. The Setts and the Malliks actually befriended his family, though apparently without recognizing their status as Brahmans so far as to accept their hospitality in any shape. In Prasanna Kumar Tagore’s account of his family history
it is stated that Ram Krishna Mallik exchanged turbans with his ancestor Darpa Narain. That was no doubt a sign of friendship, but not of the kind of veneration which Banyas must have for good Brahmans. It is said however that for nearly half a century after the arrival of their ancestor, Panchanana, in Calcutta, the Pirālis were recognized as good Brahman. But when they became wealthy and influential, the late Babu Durga Charan Mukerji, of Bag Bazar, formed a party for degrading them. Perhaps some of the Kāyastha magnates of Calcutta secretly supported Durga Charan in persecuting the Pirālis.

The way in which the Tagores of the last century attained their wealth is not well known. Panchanana’s son Jairam, by serving as an Amin for the survey and settlement of the villages acquired by the East India Company under the charter of Emperor Ferkhshere, apparently laid a substantial foundation. His youngest son Govinda, who superintended the building of Fort William, presumably improved the patrimony materially. Darpa Narain, the third son of Jairam and the great-grandfather of Sir Maharaja Jotindra Mohan, held for some time a high office in the service of the French East India Company. Nilmoni, the second son of Jairam and the grandfather of the celebrated Dwarka Nath Tagore, did not inherit any share of the family estate. But he was befriended by one of the Sonar Banaiya millionaires of his time, and was enabled by his friend to build a separate house for his residence on the site now occupied by the palatial mansion belonging to his descendants. Nilmoni’s second son, Ram Moni, served as a clerk in the Police Court. Dwarka Nath, the second son of Ram Moni, made himself wealthy and famous in various ways. He began his career by entering the service of the Government of Bengal in the Salt Department.

About the beginning of the present century when the estates of most of the great zamindars of Bengal were
brought to sale, for arrears of revenue, the Pirāli Tagores bought many valuable properties, and became themselves great zemindars. The total income of the several branches of the Tagore family must at present be more than £100,000. The leading members of the clan in the last generation were Dwarka Nath Tagore, Prasunna Kumar Tagore and Ramanath Tagore. Among the living celebrities of the family, Maharaja Sir Jotindra Mohun Tagore is deservedly esteemed as one of its brightest ornaments. He was a member of the Legislative Council of India for several years, and the British Government of India has conferred upon him every possible title of honour at its disposal. His brother Maharaja Sonrendra Mohan Tagore is a votary of the science of music, but at the same time has been steadily improving his estate by efficient management like his illustrious brother. Dwarka Nath's son Devendra Nath is now in "scur and yellow leaf" of life. On account of his devotion to religion he is usually called a Maharshi or Saint. His son Satyendra Nath is the first Hindu member of the Indian Civil Service, and is now employed as a District Judge in the Bombay Presidency. Babu Kali Krishna Tagore, who represents another branch, does not move much in Calcutta society; but next to Sir J. M. Tagore, he is perhaps the richest member of the family.

From a long time the Tagores have been struggling hard to be restored to caste. Ward says that Raja Krishna Chundra of Nadiya was promised one lac of rupees by a Pirāli, if he would only honour him with a visit for a few minutes, but he refused. Similar offers, though of smaller amounts, have been again and again made to the great Pandits of Nadiya, but have been similarly declined. But the Tagores are now fast rising in the scale of caste. Poor Brahmans now more or less openly accept their gifts, and sometimes even their hospitality; and Sir J. M. Tagore is on the way towards acquiring an influence on the Pandits which may one day enable him to re-establish his family completely in caste.
CHAP. III.—THE BARTA BRAHMANS.

The Brahmans that minister to the low Sudra castes and outcastes, are looked upon as degraded persons, and they generally form separate castes. The good Brahmans will not take even a drink of water from their hands, and intermarriage between them is quite out of the question. In Bengal the following classes of Sudras and outcastes have special priests:

2. Goala—Cowherds.
5. Bagdi—Aboriginal tribe of woodcutters and fishermen.

The priests of each of these classes form independent castes, without the right of intermarriage or dining together with any other section of the Brahmanic caste. With the exception of a few of the Sonar Vaniya Brahmans, these Bartas Brahms, as they are called, are mostly very poor, and utterly without any kind of social position. The priests of the Kaibartas are in some places called Vyasokta Brahmans.

§ 2.—Barna Brahmans of Mithila.

The following castes of Mithila have special Brahmans:

- Tatwa—Weaver.
- Teli—Oilman.
- Kasara—Brazier.
- Sonar—Goldsmith.
§ 3.—Barna Brahmans of Gujrat and Rajputana.

The following are regarded as Barna Brahmans in Gujrat, and have a low caste status:—

Abhir Brahmans—Priests of the cowherd caste.
Kunbi Gour—Priests of the Kunbis.
Gujar Gour—Priests of the Gujars.
Machi Gour—Priests of the Machi or fishermen.
Gandharpa Gour—Priests of the musicians.
Koli Gour—Priests of the Kolis.
Garudyas—Priests of the Chamhars and Dheds.

§ 4.—Barna Brahmans of Telingana.

The following are the names of the classes of Tailangi Brahmans that minister to the low castes:—

2. Nambi Varlu.

§ 5.—Barna Brahmans of Malabar.

1. Eledus—Priests of the Nairs.
CHAP. IV.—THE BRAHMANS CONNECTED WITH THE GREAT PUBLIC SHRINES.

Of the Brahmans who are considered as having a very low status on account of their being connected with the great public shrines, the following classes are the most important:—

1. Gayalis of Gaya.
2. Chowbays of Muttra.
3. Pukar Sevaks of Pushkar.
5. Pandas of Orissa.
6. Pandarams of Southern India.
7. Prayagwalas of Prayag or Allahabad.
8. Divas—connected with the Ballavachari shrines of Western India.
9. Moylars—connected with the Madhava temples of Tulava; said to be of spurious birth.
10. Ambalavasis—connected with the shrines in Malabar.
11. Numbi Brahmans—connected with the public shrines of Karnata.

Most of these classes are very rich, but utterly illiterate. Mere residence in a place of pilgrimage, for a few generations, tends to lower the status of a family. The Bengali Brahmans settled at Benares are called by their clansmen Kashials, and looked down upon as men whose birth is spurious, or as being in the habit of earning their livelihood by accepting forbidden gifts. The Brahmans of Southern India also look down upon their clansmen permanently residing in Benares, without any connection with their native country.*

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*The reader may have some idea of this feeling from the following passage in Mr. Wilkin's Modern Hinduism:—
A few months ago, when travelling on the East India Railway,
The Somparas connected with the shrine of Somnath seem to have a higher position than the priests of the public shrines usually have. There is a class of Brahmins in the Doab who call themselves Chowbays of Mathura, but have nothing to do with priestly work. These are very high class Brahmins. There are many learned Sanskritists and English scholars among them. Some of them hold high offices in the service of Government and also of the Native States. One of the greatest of these is Kumar Jwala Prasad, who is at present the District Judge of Azimgarh. His father, Raja Jai Kishen, rendered eminent services to the Government at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny, and is still employed as a Deputy Collector. Another member of the Chowbay caste, named Raghu Nath Das, is the Prime Minister of Kota.

I met with two Brahmins from Mysore. They are educated men; one of them was expecting to appear in the following B. A. Examination of the Madras University. When we were leaving Benares, it occurred to me to ask if they had any friends in that holy city. They said,—"No, but we soon found some Brahmins from our part of the country." I said "oh, then you were well received and hospitably entertained by them of course?" I shall never forget the look of infinite disdain with which one of them replied: "Do you think we would eat with men who live in such a city as Benares, and associate with Brahmins of this district? No, we contented ourselves whilst there with one meal a day, which we cooked for ourselves." My question appeared to them about as reasonable as if I had asked a nobleman in England if he had dined with scavenger.—Wilkin's Modern Hinduism, pp. 163 164.