

CHAPTER III.

PEOPLE.

In the early decades of British administration the present district of Champaran was included in and administered along with the present district of Saran from Chuprah, the headquarters of the district, and was known as Sarkar Saran. Champaran was separated and received the status of a district with headquarters at Motihari (previously commonly described as Moteeharee) in 1866.

An experimental census was done in the Lower Provinces of Bengal by H. Beverly and his report was published from Alipore Jail Press, Calcutta in 1870. This experimental census for Champaran was conducted at two places only, namely, Motihari and Bettiah and recorded a population of 1,735 and 7,248, respectively.

The first regular census was taken in 1872. The statistics below show the population of the Champaran district as recorded at the different census years from 1872 :—

Year.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Variation.	Percentage variation.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1872	7,37,529	7,03,286	14,40,815	..	..
1881	8,70,627	8,50,981	17,21,608	+2,80,793	+19.5
1891	9,36,135	9,23,330	18,59,465	+1,37,857	+8.0
1901	8,85,607	9,04,856	17,90,463	—69,002	—3.7
1911	9,42,012	9,66,373	19,08,385	+1,17,922	+6.6
1921	9,68,478	9,72,363	19,40,841	+32,456	+1.7
1931	10,80,956	10,64,731	21,45,687	+2,04,846	+10.6
1941	12,13,074	11,84,495	23,97,569	+2,51,862	+11.7
1951	12,67,406	12,47,937	25,15,343	+1,17,774	+4.9

The first census of 1872 was extremely unpopular. It was thought that the census was a preliminary to a poll-tax, and that Government wanted to send out a part of the ever-growing population to work in the Government gardens at Mauritius. It was also given out that Government wanted to select some men and train them as soldiers in Calcutta as there was every possibility of the Russians invading India.

The census of 1881 showed an increase of 19.5 per cent. This large increase by itself cannot be said to be natural. But it has to be remembered that the census of 1872 could not have been very

efficiently carried out because of popular apathy. Besides improved methods of enumeration and a slightly more popular response, the increase was also partly due to immigration from the adjoining districts to the sparsely populated thanas in the north. At the next census an increase of 8 per cent was recorded. This increase was partially due to the recording of a large number of persons who were born elsewhere but were residing in Champaran at the time of the census. The number of such persons had reached a very high total of 2,48,511.

Census of 1901.—A fall of 3.7 per cent was recorded in the census of 1901. This loss of population was partially due to the ravages of famine and disease within the district in the preceding decade. There was a famine in 1897 which had been preceded by several lean years. Dhaka thana in the district was the worst sufferer. Practically the whole of Bettiah subdivision, excepting a narrow strip on the banks of Gandak river, was in the grip of this famine. There was a reduced birth rate due to the low vitality of the people and an excess of deaths over births by 1,057 as recorded in the census. The famine and disease that were ravaging the district naturally kept away the immigrants. The number of immigrants recorded in 1901 was only 1,06,781 as against 2,48,511 recorded in the census of 1891.

The loss of population was spread over all the thanas of the district, excepting Adapur which has an exceptionally fertile soil and yielded a good crop even in 1896-97 when there was a famine. The incidence of decrease of population was largest in Motihari and Govindganj thanas.

Census of 1911.—The census of 1911 recorded an increase of 1,17,922 persons or 6.6 per cent. This increase took place in spite of a heavy incidence of emigration and a continued shrinkage in immigration.

The increase in population recorded in the census of 1911 was spread all over the district, excepting at Madhuban thana where there was a slight fall in the population. In 1901 Madhuban was most densely populated but it had suffered from the floods in 1906 and 1910. The rack-renting was also taken as a cause for the depletion in the population of this thana. As the figures in this thana showed an increase in the number of females as against decrease in the number of males there appears to have been a heavy incidence of emigration from this thana.

The rate of increase in the other thanas of Sadar subdivision was fairly uniform, i.e., between 4.13 per cent to 6.73 per cent, excepting Dhaka thana where the increase was nearly by 11 per cent. This was partially due to the area being fertile and also because it had suffered less from the flood. In Bettiah subdivision the thanas of Bettiah and Bagaha recorded an increase of 5.38 per cent and 5.93 per cent, respectively. Shikarpur thana recorded the highest rate of

increase in the district, i.e., nearly 13 per cent. Reclamation of waste land steadily progressed in this thana and attracted immigrants.

Census of 1921.—The census of 1921 recorded an increase of only 1.70 per cent. The decline in population was chiefly due to the outbreak of a severe epidemic of influenza from 1918 to 1920. Cholera and plague had also visited the district in 1915–1917. Plague was particularly virulent in the Sadar subdivision of the district.

It may be mentioned here that except Saran and Champaran districts the other districts of Tirhut Division recorded a decline in the population in the census of 1921.

The figures of population for the censuses of 1911 and 1921 with percentage variation are quoted below :—

Population.

	1911.	1921.	Variation.	Percentage variation.
Saran	22,89,420	23,39,953	+50,523	+2.21
Champaran	19,08,385	19,40,841	+32,456	+1.70
Muzaffarpur	28,45,514	27,54,945	—90,569	—3.18
Darbhanga	29,29,682	29,13,529	—16,153	—0.55

In Champaran the rate of increase of population in Sadar subdivision was 2.01 per cent as against 5.85 per cent recorded at the previous census. The corresponding figures for Bettiah subdivision were 1.28 per cent and 7.60 per cent, respectively. Almost all the thanas of both the subdivisions showed a slight increase, excepting the thanas of Kesaria, Madhuban and Shikarpur. Shikarpur thana in Bettiah subdivision appears to have sustained a heavy loss and recorded a decline of 3 per cent as against an increase of nearly 13 per cent in the previous census. This area being nearer the Terai area of Nepal suffered more from diseases.

Census of 1931.—In this census an increase of population by 10.6 per cent was recorded. This rate was at par with the rates of increase in respect of the other three districts of Tirhut Division, namely Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga (6.26 per cent, 6.75 per cent and 8.67 per cent, respectively). The increase in population in Champaran district was fairly spread over both the subdivisions. The highest percentage of increase was recorded in Motihari thana and the lowest in Madhuban thana, the figures being 13.37 and 7.52, respectively. The increase in Madhuban thana was rather substantial considering the fact that at the previous three censuses, viz., 1901, 1911 and 1921, it had recorded an actual decline. The population of the district could have been more but for a heavy emigration, the figure was in excess of 17,500 in comparison to the immigration figure.

Census of 1941.—The rate of increase in population recorded in the census of 1941 was 11.74 per cent and there was an increase of 5,38,104 persons. The rate of increase was second to Saran district in Tirhut Division and was more or less in keeping with the corresponding rates in the districts of Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga at 15.04, 10.32 and 9.14, respectively.

The rate of increase at Madhuban thana of Sadar subdivision was 7.83 per cent as against 7.52 per cent in the previous census. The rate of increase at Bagaha thana in the Bettiah subdivision was 7.75 per cent as against 9.18 per cent in the previous census year. Motihari thana of Sadar subdivision, however, recorded an increase of 16.69 per cent. No particular reasons could be indicated for this high incidence.

Census of 1951.—The census of 1951 recorded an increase of 4.9 per cent. The rate of increase is much too low than the rates in the previous census years. The rates of increase in the three other districts of Tirhut Division, namely, Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, were 10.3, 8.5 and 9.0, respectively, as against 15.04, 10.32 and 9.19 respectively, in the previous census year. This decline in the rate of increase appears to be due to malnutrition in war time scarcity, epidemics and emigration. Deaths from epidemics alone from 1942 to 1951 were 51,153 as against the total deaths of 4,59,921 during the same period. The decrease in the rate was more pronounced in Sadar subdivision than in Bettiah subdivision. Shikarpur and Adapur thanas recorded a steep decline in the rate of increase.

MALES AND FEMALES.

The table below shows the male and female population for all the districts of Tirhut Division :—

Year.	Saran.		Muzaffarpur.		Darbhanga.		Champanan.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1881	10,90,309	12,04,692	12,66,943	13,17,717	12,94,329	13,36,167	8,70,627	8,50,981
1891	11,32,606	13,31,955	13,06,584	14,07,593	13,70,985	14,30,970	9,36,185	9,23,380
1901	10,95,282	13,13,814	13,19,110	14,37,020	14,16,474	14,96,137	8,85,607	9,04,856
1911	10,64,272	12,25,158	13,60,200	14,85,314	14,12,669	15,17,013	9,42,012	9,68,373
1921	11,32,355	12,07,598	13,24,991	14,29,954	14,20,719	14,92,810	9,68,478	9,72,363
1931	12,20,203	12,66,534	14,43,847	14,97,178	15,70,959	15,95,135	10,80,956	10,64,731
1941	13,74,154	14,86,383	15,84,279	16,60,372	16,98,060	17,59,010	12,13,074	11,84,495
1951	15,01,253	16,53,891	17,30,750	17,89,989	18,44,201	19,25,333	12,67,406	12,47,937

The figures for males and females for the district of Champaran show a peculiar trend. In the census years of 1881 and 1891 the male population had exceeded the female population but in the three succeeding censuses (1901, 1911 and 1921) the female population was found to have exceeded the male population. Again in the next three censuses, i.e., 1931, 1941 and 1951 the male population has exceeded the female population. Champaran district is the only district in Tirhut Division which has this peculiar trend as in all the other districts of the division the female population has always exceeded the male population in the different census years.

The trend of male and female population might suggest periodical heavy emigration. But the fact remains just the reverse and the census figures indicate more immigration to the district than emigration from the district, at least during the census years when the female population exceeded the male population. Another peculiarity is observed in respect of immigration and emigration; at the census of 1901 the number of male immigrants had exceeded that of the female immigrants by a small margin while at the censuses of 1911 and 1921 this was reverse. In respect of the emigration the trend was just opposite to the trend of immigration. The relevant statistics for the years 1901–1921 are given below :—

Year.	Immigrants.		Emigrants.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
1901 ..	55,047	51,734	16,442	19,634
1911 ..	42,012	53,506	29,409	18,423
1921 ..	30,242	40,170	25,101	21,361

If the above figures are to be accepted as correct we find that there was more of female immigrants to the district and more of male emigrants from the district at the censuses of 1911 and 1921 which may be one of the causes for the excess of female population over male population during these two censuses. However, the excess of male population recorded in 1931, 1941 and 1951 cannot be accounted for easily as at the census of 1931 the number of female immigrants had exceeded the number of male immigrants and a similar trend is noticeable at the census of 1951 also. As regards the census of 1941 no comment is possible as in that census no detailed table of migration was compiled due to war time emergency. The census of 1951 had recorded a larger number of female emigrants than male emigrants. But that does not give any help as the number of immigrants was greater than emigrants within the State and the number of female immigrants exceeded the number of male immigrants.

Movement of Population.—In the District Gazetteer of Champaran published in 1907 O'Malley has finally analysed the trend of migration. His observations are quoted below *in extenso* to give a connected description of immigration and emigration :—

“Perhaps the most prominent feature during the last twenty years has been the extent to which immigration has gone on. In 1881 no less than 1,93,659 persons were residing in the district who were born elsewhere, and this great army of immigrants had increased to 2,48,511 in 1891, including 83,241 immigrants from Saran, 58,076 from Muzaffarpur, 52,241 from the United Provinces, and 34,626 from Nepal. The census of 1901 shows that the tide of immigration has begun to ebb. The number of immigrants was found to be only 1,06,781 and it would appear therefore that the ranks of those enumerated in 1891 have not been swelled by the arrival of newcomers, and that many of those who were then in the district must since have returned to their former homes. Even so, however, no less than 50.6 per thousand of the present population are immigrants and this is the highest proportion in the whole of Bihar.

“The volume of emigration is far smaller, the number of natives of Champaran enumerated elsewhere in 1901 being only 36,077. Champaran is, indeed the only Bihar district, except Purnea, where the immigrants out number those who have left the district. The people have ample land at home, and there is little emigration except to the contiguous districts. The bulk of the immigrants also come from the adjoining districts, especially from Gorakhpur in the United Provinces, from Saran and also, though to a less extent, from Muzaffarpur. The volume of migration between Champaran and distant places is comparatively small, but those who thus leave the district outnumber those who come into it in the ratio of more than 4 to 1.

“Immigration from Nepal to the half reclaimed country in the north of Champaran formerly took place on a large scale, but it is believed that the influx is now counter-balanced by an ebb of population in the opposite direction; in 1901 the number of immigrants from Nepal was 19,540 as compared with 34,626 in 1891. Rents, it is said, are lower in Nepal, good land is plentiful and settlers are particularly attracted by a strip of jungle in the Nepalese Tarai which is now being cleared for cultivation. There are, however, no statistics of population of Nepal, and it is impossible to verify this inference. As a rule, it is reported, the emigrants only go a few miles inside Nepal, and have their permanent houses in British territory.”

In 1911 census a decline of immigration in Champaran district was noticed. In 1911 the figure of immigration was 95,518 as against the corresponding figure of 1,06,781 in 1901. Simultaneously there was an increase in the number of emigrants and this stood at 47,832 in 1911 as against 36,077 in 1901. The fact that although the

uncultivated portions of the district needed a large contingent of occasional field labourers but there was an increase in immigration shows that other districts must have offered higher wages and other amenities.

The trend of decline in immigration continued as shown in the census figure of 1921. In this census the figure for immigration went down to 70,412, recording a decrease of 25,106 persons. But the emigration figure remained more or less stationary.

In the report for the Census Operation in Bihar for 1931 Mr. W. G. Lacey, i.c.s., Superintendent of Census Operations, had observed as follows :—

“The total number of births recorded in the district during the decade exceeded the total number of deaths by 2,22,500, whereas the increase in the actual population was only 2,05,000. As we can assume in the case of this district that the deaths of emigrants abroad were roughly balanced by the deaths of immigrants within its borders, the difference of 17,500 ought (if both sets of figures are accepted as correct) to represent the extent to which the number of emigrants has increased in comparison with the number of immigrants. The statement (below) shows that the volume of immigration has remained almost stationary. As regards emigration, there has been an increase of some 4,000 in the number of emigrants from Champaran to other parts of the province. Whether the whole of the balance would be made good if we were in possession of details of extra-provincial emigration is a question which must remain unanswered, but there is reason to believe that at least a substantial portion would have been.”

Champaran District.

Year.	Males.	Females.	Immigration.		Emigration.	
			Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1931 ..	10,80,956	10,64,731	31,081	42,079	..	..
1921 ..	9,68,478	9,72,363	30,242	40,170	25,101	21,361
Variation ..	1,12,478	92,368	839	1,909	..	..

The figures in 1931 census indicate that the flow of immigration which had begun to decline since 1921 was arrested while emigration figure showed an upward jump.

In the census of 1941 there are no figures to show the movement of population as the census operations in Bihar were curtailed owing to war emergency. In 1951 census the number of immigrants was

recorded at 62,508 while that of the emigrants within the State was 24,340. So far as the immigration figure is concerned, there was a fall as compared with the corresponding 1931 figure. So far as the question of emigration is concerned, it is difficult to comment on the actual trend as we do not have the extra-State figures for 1931 or 1951.

Towns and Villages.—The table below shows the population of the towns in the district as recorded since 1901 :—

Census year :—	1901.	1911.	1921.	1931.	1941.	1951.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Total population	17,90,463	19,08,385	19,40,841	21,45,687	23,97,569	25,15,343
NAME AND POPULATION OF THE TOWNS.						
Bettiah ..	24,693	25,793	24,291	27,941	30,309	35,634
Motihari ..	13,730	14,876	13,828	17,545	20,717	24,489
Sugauli Bazar ..	..	..	..	..	..	9,106
Raxaul Bazar ..	..	..	..	..	..	6,594
Shikarpur Bazar ..	..	..	..	..	..	6,576
Bagaha ..	..	..	..	..	..	5,820
Chakia Bazar ..	..	..	..	..	..	5,817
Chanpatia Bazar ..	..	..	..	..	4,510	5,100
Kesariya Bazar..	..	..	..	..	..	4,307
Luathaha ..	..	..	..	..	..	1,417
Total urban population.	38,423	40,669	38,119	45,486	55,536	1,04,860

The table below shows the urban and rural population since 1901 :—

Year.	No. of villages.	Rural population.	Percentage of total.	No. of towns.	Urban population.	Percentage of total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1901 ..	2,623	17,52,040	97.87	2	38,423	2.13
1911 ..	2,651	18,67,716	97.85	2	40,669	2.15
1921 ..	2,554	19,02,722	98.0	2	38,119	2.0
1931 ..	2,548	21,00,201	97.90	2	45,486	2.10
1941 ..	2,612	23,46,033	97.83	3	51,536	2.17
1951 ..	2,622	24,10,483	95.82	10	1,04,860	4.18

(The small variation in the number of villages appears to be due to the fact that at every census only the number of inhabited villages is recorded.)

The figures will show that a number of new townships have grown recently. We have the figures for the growth of population since 1901 only for the towns of Bettiah and Motihari. It will be seen that there has been a steady growth in the population of the two towns of Bettiah and Motihari, although in 1921 census a slight decline was recorded. The population of Motihari has almost doubled now as compared with the figure of 1901. The total population of the towns according to 1951 census comes to 1,04,860 and this represents 4.2 per cent of the total population. This percentage of the present urban population may be compared with O'Malley's observation in the District Gazetteer of Champaran (1907) that the urban population contained in the two towns of Bettiah and Motihari represented only 2 per cent of the population of the district.

Since the partition in 1947, both the urban area and the immediate surrounding localities of Bettiah town have received more than 25,000 displaced persons from East Pakistan for rehabilitation purposes. Most of them at one time lived in camps and hutments, but they are now being distributed throughout the subdivision, for permanent settlement. At any rate, the population of Bettiah town is now increased by several thousands over the 1951 figure. A few hundreds of the displaced persons were rehabilitated in Motihari town and its neighbourhood.

Density of Population.—The district of Champaran is more thinly populated and has lesser density per square mile than its neighbouring districts of Saran and Muzaffarpur. The density of population in Champaran was 507 persons per square mile in 1901 as against 898 and 908 per square mile for Saran and Muzaffarpur, respectively. The density of population in Champaran in 1951 has been calculated at 713 per square mile as against 1,178 and 1,168 for Saran and Muzaffarpur, respectively. According to the census of 1951, the most thickly populated thanas in Champaran are Dhaka, Adapur and Madhuban which fall in the eastern part of the district near the border area of Muzaffarpur. The density of these three thanas is 1,080, 1,007 and 968 per square mile as against the density of 771, 749 and 810 per square mile, respectively, in 1901. Madhuban was most thickly populated in 1901 but in 1951 it was third in the district from that angle. The most thinly populated thanas in 1901 were Shikarpur and Bagaha to the north-west of the district. The density of these two thanas in 1951 was 432 and 374 per square mile as against the density of 270 and 301 per square mile, respectively, in 1901. The recent figures show that while the density of Shikarpur thana has increased considerably during the last 50 years, Bagaha thana has not shown any sign of satisfactory progress in respect of density. The reason for the sparse population may be more unhealthy climatic condition of this district than the other districts of Tirhut Division.

It may be mentioned here that the density figures as in 1951 census for the different thanas have now undergone a change, particularly for Bettiah thana by the settlement of about 25,000 displaced persons from East Pakistan near about Bettiah in 1956.

We may review the population trends during the period 1872 to 1950 and observe that there was a large increase in population due mainly to emigration from other districts between 1872–1890. There was a severe famine in 1897 and also persistent unhealthiness in this decade and the population fell by 3.7 per cent. The following decade (1901–1910) again showed a large increase which is attributable chiefly to improvement in public health and economic conditions though immigration had practically stopped by this time. During 1911–1920, mainly due to ravages of cholera and influenza, the rate of growth fell to 1.7 per cent. The population increased rapidly during the succeeding two decades, the net increase being no less than 4,56,728. In the 1920–30 decade, public health conditions were exceptionally good and economic conditions were also generally favourable in spite of disappointing harvests in 1923, 1925, 1926 and 1930. A light railway was constructed during this period by the Nepalese Government linking Raxaul and Bhiknatori with Nepal. This facilitated communication and trade between Nepal and India through Champaran and an inflow and outflow of population. Though small it has some effects. The 1931 census recorded a net increase of 2,04,846 or 10.55 per cent over the 1921 population in spite of the fact that by this time the number of emigrants had begun to exceed that of immigrants. In the last decade, however, the decennial rate of growth had fallen to 4.8 per cent only as compared with 8.4 per cent for the North-Bihar Plain Division and 9.6 per cent for the State as a whole. The marked fall in the growth rate during the last decade appears to be due to the ravages of cholera and small-pox and increase in emigration.

The following statement quoted from the *Census Report of India*, Vol. V, published in 1956, shows variation in the population of the district, and its constituent units down to revenue thanas during the last two censuses :—

District, subdivision and revenue thana.	Population, 1951.	Percentage variation.		Density, 1951.
		1941–51.	1931–41.	
Champaran	25,15,343	4.9	11.7	713
Motihari subdivision ..	14,43,961	4.1	12.1	944
Motihari	2,63,997	5.0	16.7	921
Adapur	2,28,151	2.8	9.0	1,007

District, subdivision and revenue thana.	Population, 1951.	Percentage variation.		Density, 1951.
		1941-51.	1931-41.	
Dhaka	3,66,554	3.2	9.9	1,080
Kessaria	2,39,072	5.3	13.1	890
Madhuban	1,20,764	0.7	7.8	968
Gobindganj	2,25,483	4.8	15.1	795
Bettiah subdivision	11,71,383	6.2	11.2	536
Bettiah	4,88,698	4.8	11.4	878
Bagaha	2,61,741	3.5	7.8	374
* Shikarpur	3,20,943	10.8	14.2	432

"In 1931-1940, the increase in population was distributed more evenly between the different thanas, but in the last decade, the sparsely populated thanas have generally speaking, gained more than the densely populated thanas, the highest increase having been recorded in Shikarpur which has even now a density of 432 persons per square mile."

DISPLACED PERSONS.

After the partition in 1947 and the creation of East Pakistan there has been, from time to time, a heavy influx of displaced persons from East Pakistan to West Bengal. According to agreed arrangement between the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Government of India and the State Government of Bihar, it was decided that the State Government would rehabilitate a portion of the population of displaced persons within the State of Bihar. Champaran was one of the districts selected. The first batch of displaced families arrived on the 4th June, 1956 at the Bettiah Refugee Relief Camp. By February, 1957 the population of displaced persons in Bettiah Camp came to 28,065 comprising 7,707 families.

Arrangements were made to accommodate the batches of displaced persons on arrival in Transit Camps located at Bettiah. The dispersal of families from the Transit Camps to the Rehabilitation Centres could follow only after lands had been purchased and preliminary arrangements were completed for the reception and settlement of the displaced persons.

There are two Transit Camps (1958)—one at West Hazari and the other at Kumarbagh at a distance of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles and 7 miles respectively from Bettiah town. The Transit Camps are under the

administrative control of the Camp Commandant, who is a gazetted officer of the State Civil Service. He has a number of officers to assist him, which include doctors, lady welfare assistants, camp superintendent, etc.

As mentioned before, the Camps had received 28,065 displaced persons. Till the end of December, 1958, there is a population of 14,458 displaced persons still in the Camps. They consist of 3,283 families out of which 1,763 families are agriculturists with 7,276 displaced persons and 1,520 non-agriculturists with 7,182 persons. Considering the pressure on the Camps and the low incidence of health with which most of the displaced persons came, the number of 1,018 deaths that had taken place in the Camps till the first week of December, 1958, should not be considered as high. It may be mentioned that there were 1,798 births within the Camps during the same period. Unfortunately for various reasons there have been desertions of the displaced persons both from the Camps and the Colonies from time to time. A total population of 4,249 persons comprising 927 families had deserted from the Camps. Many of them have returned but their actual figures are not available.

For the rehabilitation of the displaced persons blocks of good cultivated lands have been acquired. In Bettiah subdivision alone 7,400 acres of land have been acquired till the middle of December, 1958. Some lands have been offered by the Narkatiaganj Sugar Mill and Motihari Sugar Mill within the district of Champaran.

There are four colonies of displaced persons distributed over 22 villages within the district. The villages are : Materia, Chautarwa, Dudhawarah, Biranchi, Dumari, Pachrukha, Lalsaraiya, Bairiya, Majharia, Sirisia, Semra, Lakshmipur, Sirsa, Dhekaha, Hanumangarh, Belwa Mukari, Bhirbheria, Parsauni, Parsa, Sirkohia, Harpur and Kothia Punas.

The colonies are under the administrative control of the respective Subdivisional Magistrates of Bettiah and Sadar under the direct supervision of the District Magistrate. In order to give a start to the displaced persons in the colonies, cash doles and lands are given for the purchase of seeds, agricultural implements, bullocks and the building materials of hutments. Basic amenities like water-supply, medical aid and primary education are provided for. Technical training is also given at selected centres. Particular attention is paid to the women of the displaced persons who are encouraged to do knitting and sewing and follow other suitable vocational training. Trainees are also given stipends.

There has also been a dispersal of selected displaced persons to different districts of Bihar, namely, Saran, Muzaffarpur, Purnea, Santhal Parganas and Singhbhum. Separate districtwise figures for such dispersal are, however, not available. It may be mentioned that

batches of fishermen have been sent to Raj Mahal in Santhal Parganas district which offers excellent fishing facilities for such people.

It has been decided that persons who are disabled or otherwise, physically infirm or unfit, due to old age or illness and those families which do not have any adult male member will be included in the Permanent Liability Category and they will be maintained on free cash doles from Government.

It is felt that there should be a mention of the very great difficulties with which the rehabilitation problem has been tackled in this district. Unfortunately there has not been much response or co-operation from the displaced persons themselves. There have been far too many political intrigues within the Camps and most of the desertions were due to such cross currents. The displaced persons have also been frequently changing their professions. It is also unfortunate that there should be a peculiar complacency and a fond expectancy of being spoon-fed. While visiting a colony a case was noticed where a man had been ill but would not go to a dispensary at a distance of about one mile from the colony as he was expecting an ambulance to come from a distance of about 12 miles to take him to the dispensary. On being questioned the displaced person gave out that since he was refugee, he wanted preferential treatment and he thought that he should be carried in the ambulance. This instance is mentioned as being typical of the attitude.

THE THARUS.

General—Origin.

The Tharus of Champaran represent a small cross section of the population in the district but, nevertheless, they offer an excellent field of study where a semi-tribal population through close contact of a different type of culture has almost completely changed their essential characteristics within the last five or six decades. Mr. H. H. Risley in volume II of his "Tribes and Castes in Bengal" (1891) and John Nesfield in an article in *Calcutta Review* in January, 1885, had indicated that the Tharus were essentially an aboriginal tribe. They held that this aboriginal tribe was slowly pushed out from the Sub-Himalayan forests by the Aryan Community and made scattered settlements in the border areas of India adjoining Nepal. Risley felt that the Tharus belonged to the Dravidian or Kolarian aboriginal races and his conclusion was largely based on the peculiar dialect the Tharus spoke. Both Nesfield and Risley rejected the claim of the Tharus as originally coming from the region of the Thar desert of Rajputana. Risley described the religion of the Tharus as a compound of animism and nature worship and of some popular elements borrowed from Hinduism. Risley mentions Rikheswar as the principal deity for worship by the Tharus. He mentioned about their love for communal dance and song and that no orthodox Hindu would inter-dine with a Tharu.

This description of Tharus by Risley about seven decades back, if correct, is now absolutely out of date. By slow acculturation the Tharus have now changed themselves almost radically as our spot investigations indicate.

The Tharus now number about 50,000 living in parts of Bagaha, Ramnagar, Shikarpur and Mainatani police-stations of Champaran district. All these areas are contiguous to Nepal Tarai. It may be mentioned here that there is a considerable Tharu population in Nepal and in the areas of some of the districts of Uttar Pradesh adjoining Nepal. In Champaran they live in an area extending over 800 square miles on the northern border, bounded on the north-east and the west by Nepal and on the south by the Tribeni Canal. This area is known as Tharuhat.

The origin of the Tharu tribe is a matter of controversy. The opinion of Nesfield and Risley has already been indicated. There has not been much of investigation on their origin. The physical features of the Tharus are mongoloid. The women are more comely and energetic than the men. The women look much more intelligent. The Tharus are very fond of meat and fish. Dried fish, ham and poultry are much prized. They tend cows, but never milch them. Fond of drinking, they often brew their own liquor from stale cooked rice. Their craze for liquor has ruined many families. It is very peculiar that the language they speak is more or less Bhojpuri Hindi as is common in Chotanagpur district. They have some peculiar slangs and a proper compilation and investigation of these slangs might give a clue to their origin.

The Tharu women do not observe *pardah*. The present day Tharu girl of higher income group has taken more quickly to modern make up and dress than their Hindu sisters. The influence of the modernised Nepalese girls is quite apparent on the Tharus. They are fond of songs and dancing, but no Tharu women have been known to stage a communal public dance like the Adibasi women of Chotanagpur. They are artistic in temperament and have a good idea of colour and pattern scheme for their knitting, sewing and household work. They are good house-wives and home-proud.

The theory of the infiltration of the Tharus from Rajputana rejected by Nesfield and Risley does not find support from another living scholar, Shri Rahul Sankrityayan. He thinks that a stay of four to five hundred years in Champaran district could not have extinguished the other tribe whose daughters they claim to have married and the localised Magadhi, the spoken language of the Tharus, could not have been the result of only a few hundred years of fruition.

The word Tharu has been variously analysed. To some it originates from Thar in Rajputana. Some other take that the people of the Tarai are known loosely as the Tharus. The word Tharu is also held to be the corruption of the word Thakur.

It would be interesting to know the social values of the Tharus. The incidence of literacy among the Tharus is, indeed, very low. Probably, even now (1958) there are not more than half a dozen graduates among them. But the common Tharu who has had contact with the world outside their Tharuhat take pride in claiming a Rajput descent. They are anxious to associate themselves with the Sakyas and call themselves Rajputs like the Sakyas. Their mongoloid features and the worship of a goddess called Sahodara, a localised term for Yasodhara, are fondly pointed out to support the theory of Rajput descent. Peculiarly associated with the theory of Rajput origin is a tradition of the Tharu women, who have a superior complex regarding their male-folks. Till a decade or two back, a Tharu woman would hesitate to partake of any food that has been eaten by any male member of her family. She would not even allow a male to enter into her kitchen. There is no doubt that this complex is now liquidating itself but even today there are some ladies who observe these taboos. This taboo is very much contrary to the usual set up of a Hindu family life and suggests the higher caste complex in the women. It is said that being driven away by Muhammadans they came up to the border of Champaran with a view to migrate to Nepal. It was decided that the male adults would reconnoitre Nepal before they would take the female-folks to Nepal. As a result the women were kept long in charge of the older men and the servants. After waiting for several months when the husbands did not return the servants gave out that the masters were not coming back and they started living with the Tharu women as their wives. Sometime after the men-folk returned and took away only the women that had not been seduced. The women left in Champaran district thereby imbibed a superior complex.

A closer analysis of the Tharus as a tribe shows that there are sub-castes with occupational nomenclature. A sub-caste of the Tharus, namely, Gaurihara was originally incharge of the maintenance of the cows, the word 'Gau' being a Hindi version of 'cow'. Similarly another sub-caste 'Diswas', served as the scavengers, the word 'Disa' being the local term for night-soil.

The Tharus have been able to upgrade themselves through sheer contact with the other more advanced sections of the Hindus. The Tharus also point out that the Nepal Government have recognised them as *Sabarn* Hindus (high castes). Risley's Riksheshwar is now an unknown deity throughout Tharuhat. The Tharus of today worship Kali, Shiva, Mahavira, Satyanarain and other deities worshipped by the Hindus and observe the normal Hindu festivals, like Chat, Diwali, Holi, etc. They have been able to completely Hinduise themselves and there are hardly left any avowedly tribal beliefs and practices. There has been a wonderful osmotic process through contacts.

The upsurge in the Tharus does not, however, appear to have helped them economically. In the census of 1941 the Tharus were

recorded as an aboriginal tribe. There was a great agitation and as a result the Tharus were removed from the list of the aboriginal tribes in the census of 1951 where they were recorded as members of the Backward Community. Agitation and representation helped them to get their clan deleted from the list of aboriginals and now they are trying to get it deleted from the list of Backward class and get it recorded among the high caste Hindus as Rajputs. But at the same time there is a small section of the Tharus who feel that they did a blunder by getting the community deleted from the list of aboriginals as thereby they have become ineligible for the special facilities that are available only to the aboriginals. These trends mentioned may help the future investigator for their origin and changes. Their urge to upgrade themselves has to be organised and well guided.

Social and Family Organisation.

The social organisation of the Tharus also shows this unobtrusive struggle and the clash of pulls. Originally divided amongst 60 to 70 sub-castes known as Gaurihar, Rautar, Bantar, Khausia, Diswa, etc., it is now difficult for many of them to disclose a complete list of the sub-castes. There is not much of watertightness amidst these sub-castes like their counterparts in the more orthodox Hindu community. In this respect the Tharus are more akin to the tribals who do not observe restrictions of inter-dining between different sects although there are marriage taboos. It is significant that there is no case of caste-hierarchy among the Tharus and no sub-caste is considered to be a top notcher. Rudiment of literacy, however, has been successfully injecting the virus of casteism among the Tharus as our investigators came across several men of different Tharu sub-castes who claim their sub-caste to be superior to the others. This virus has to be syphoned off by social education.

In spite of the impact of the modern trends the Tharus have still their traditional head of the village known as *gumasta*. The *gumasta* is elected, but once elected, the office becomes hereditary unless a particular incumbent is considered misfit. An unsuccessful *gumasta* can also be removed by the villagers. The *gumasta* with the help of the influential members of the village would settle the family disputes of the Tharus and impose fine upon the defaulting persons. This fine is pooled, kept in custody and utilised for social purposes. If a girl of one Tharu sub-caste elopes with a boy of another sub-caste and the leader of the boy's sub-caste asks for a ransom before the girl is returned, such ransoms will be met from this common fund if other resources fail. Cases of misappropriation of this common fund are rare but have occurred. The Tharus are not quarrelsome by nature and seldom use strong language. Their petty quarrels are often decided by the *gumastas*. The social organisation stands at par with the community organisation among the Oraons, Mundas and Hos of Chotanagpur. Impact of modernism

has almost liquidated such community organisations among the aboriginal tribes of Chotanagpur and it is difficult to say that the future of the Tharu organisation is also not in peril.

Joint family system is still the rule. Every joint family has a Master (Malik) and a Mistress (Malkin) of the house. Usually the son succeeds the father and takes up the family responsibility. It is remarkable that the servants of a well-to-do Tharu family like ploughmen or herdsmen live as members of the family. They eat along with the other members of the family in the same dining room and share the common food.

The Tharus have still a few indigenous customs and manners. Whenever a Tharu comes from outside he touches the hands of all the persons present by going round. A man coming from outside cooks and takes his meal just outside the boundary of his village before he enters the village. The idea is that if anything untoward has happened in the community during his absence he may not be able to have his meal. This indicates strong clan feelings. Apparently the indigenous customs in connection with marriage have now disappeared. Even the marriage songs are mostly some popular *Bhojpuri* songs with local variation. The Tharus marry in their own clan or *gotra* and exchange of boys and girls with two families is a common form of marriage. This often leads to a disparity of age of the bride and the bridegroom. Child marriage is common.

It is, however, remarkable that marriage negotiations among Tharus normally start from the side of the bridegroom. The custom will also underline the superiority complex of the Tharu women. The economic status of the bridegroom is carefully appraised before a marriage is fixed. On the marriage night the bridegroom's party is not offered any meal at the girl's house. The meal is given on the next morning. If married as a child, a girl goes to the husband's place when she attains puberty. She is usually accompanied by a number of female relations and these female relations have to be satisfied as to the economic status and manners of the bridegroom's family. There have been cases where marriages have been broken off because the inspecting party of women was dissatisfied with the treatment or with the status of the husband's family. This is also a pointer to the superior complex of the Tharu women.

Polygamy is prevalent to a limited extent. Widow marriage is quite common but marrying a brother's wife is a taboo. There is no recognised system of divorce but usually this is brought about by the girl's refusal to live with her husband and she is married to another man of the same clan and the husband has to pay a fine for being a misfit for the girl. In the case of desertion by wife the children of the deserted husband are treated as the legitimate children of the latter and live with him. If a Tharu girl is detected in love intrigue with an outsider, the society will fine the boy, usually a sum

of Rs. 81. This sum is utilised for a community feast. Any child born of any such love intrigue is treated as the legitimate child of the woman's husband. The society and the families of the Tharus are comparatively free from a large number of taboos and this has led to remarkable resilience which has kept up the solidarity of the Tharu society. A Tharu woman has her social status and civil rights according to tradition and custom.

Economic Condition.

The economic condition of the average Tharu is unsatisfactory. At a rough calculation only about 20 per cent of the Tharus have some land and the rest are landless labourers. They have been very much exploited by the non-Tharu businessmen and money-lenders. It is also a remarkable feature in the Tharuhat that when the crops are being gathered, a large number of itinerary shopkeepers open their shops within Tharuhat and sell cheap trinkets and other attractive articles which take away most of their money. Much of the cultivable land of the Tharuhat area are now under the possession of the non-Tharus. The simplicity and the improvident habits of the Tharus have been fully exploited by the *mahajans* and the incidence of indebtedness of the Tharus is very high. Many of the Tharuhat areas are still without proper communication. They cultivate only one crop, paddy. They have not yet taken to any technical avocation. They are not very hardworking and they do not care to utilise their labour for fixing up minor irrigational work if they know.

It is, however, peculiar that in spite of the backwardness, there is hardly any beggar in the whole of Tharuhat. A Tharu shudders at the site of a Tharu beggar. A Tharu would willingly help another Tharu in case of necessity.

As mentioned before, the incidence of literacy and education among the Tharus is very low. A few years back there were only a few primary schools in the Tharuhat. The major part of the Tharuhat area has now been covered by the Community Development Projects and the National Extension Service Block. Owing to the efforts of these projects a few more primary and middle schools and small irrigational facilities have been provided. It is calculated that the proposed Dam on the river Masan will be much beneficial to the Tharus.

It is a notorious fact that a Tharu would not willingly send a boy to the school because he could hardly afford to lose the boy's labour for the family income. The deletion of the Tharus from the list of aboriginal tribes has deprived them of any special aid from the State.

The backwardness of Tharuhat area is illustrated by the prevalent indigenous weights and measures. The smallest unit of weight in the Tharuhat is known as *hathai*. This *hathai* is the name of a

container, which, when filled in, would contain 13 *chataks* of paddy and 18 *chataks* of rice according to the standard weight. The biggest unit is known as *bisa*, that is, twenty times of a *hathai*. Liquids like oil, milk, *ghee*, etc., are also measured with *hathai*.

Land measure in the Tharuhat area is also very different from the other parts of Champaran. Three bighas of Tharuhat would roughly measure about one acre.

The economic future of Tharuhat area is now largely with the two Community Development Projects and one National Extension Service Block. The projects are located at Bagaha and Ramnagar thanas while the Block is situated at Gaunaha police-station. Some useful work has already been done in the Tharuhat area but much still remains to be done. There is no doubt that the Tharuhat is an excellent area for showing good work as the people are simple and responsive and the needs are acute. The basic materials for improvement exist and it is up to the Project Officers to do a good job in Tharuhat.

The Tharus of Champaran district have a close affinity with the Tharus in Nainital and Kheri districts of Uttar Pradesh. The Tharu women in Kheri district still observe the dietary restriction referred to and would not allow the male-folk to come to the kitchen. There is some sort of a sub-tribe hierarchy among Kheri Tharus. Although hypergamous marriages are becoming rare the social gradation still exists. Levirate is a common and preferred form of marriage. The Tharus of Kheri have no *gotra*. They have, however, the marital circle of what they call Kurma. The Kurma stands for kin who once lived together, and is an exogamous unit.

Dr. D. N. Majumdar in his article "The Tharus and their Blood Groups" (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. VIII, 1942, no. 1) mentions: "The Tharus and Bhoksas are most interesting to ethnologists as both have maintained many of their primitive customs and traits in spite of their recent contacts with advanced social groups. The Bhoksas are found dovetailed between the Tharus in the Tarai and Bhabar from the Nainital-Pilibhit district border extending westwards across the north of Bijnour district and the south of Garhwal to the Ganges. The total Tharu population as recorded in the 1931 census is 77,021, of which 40,288 are males and 36,733 females (1931 Census, Vol. I, pt. II, p. 523). The distribution of the Tharus province-wise is as follows: Bengal 482, Bihar and Orissa 37,338 and U. P. 39,201. In the Nainital district of the U. P. there are 30,753 Tharus and 6,600 Bhoksas. The Nainital Tharus are found in the following places: Bilhari, Nanakmata, Kilpuri and Tanakpur, but the majority are found in the Khatima Tehsil, which includes the whole of Bilhari Perganah, a part of the old Nanakmata, a part of Kilpuri and Tanakpur. In the Kheri district in U. P., the Tharus inhabit the northern areas bordering Nepal, from Bilraian to Bankati and even beyond. They

are found on either side of the river Sarda, in British India and Nepal.

There is little doubt that the Tharus and the Bhoksas belong to the same ethnic stock and it is perhaps true that both of these groups had come to the Tarai at the same time. The little difference in their culture should be attributed to the process of tribal transformation which must have taken place in their present habitat. It is possible that one group joined the ranks of Hinduism earlier than the other. The stories about their origin, the traditions the people still remember, do not give any clue to their affiliation or difference. The Bhoksas say that they came from Dakshin or the south; some among them believe that they have come from Delhi, others that they were Panwar Rajputs and under Udayjit came to live at Bonbassa on the Sarda. Udayjit rendered valuable services to the Raja of Kumaon who gave them shelter. We shall discuss this aspect of their prehistory in another connection.

Culturally the Bhoksas are more advanced than the Tharus; they engage Brahmins to officiate in their marriages, and put on sacred thread like caste people. The Tharus allow divorce and remarriage of widows, the Bhoksas look down upon such practices. The Tharus are a devil-ridden people, have oaths and ordeals in plenty and much of their disputes are settled through them, while the Bhoksas have lost their faith in such expedients. Witchcraft is a special characteristic of the Tharus and so great is the belief in their magical powers that the other people who come to trade with them dare not come too near their villages. The Bhoksas do believe in magic and witchcraft but they do not practise these arts, but leave them to the Tharus who are consulted in times of crisis.

"The Tharu women have a dominant position in the society. They form 90 per cent of the crowd in markets and fairs. The women move about freely, and even smoke and drink in the bazar. Fishing is a feminine occupation and outdoor activity such as marketing produce, buying and selling, and business negotiations are also done by women. The acknowledged superiority of women among the Tharus has been the subject of much speculation and widely divergent views are held by scholars who have written on them. The Tharu women do not allow their husbands to touch food or enter the kitchen. They do not allow the men to touch the water pots wherein water for drinking is stored. The women are expert painters and decorators; they paint pictures and scenes depicting fights and warriors on horseback. The women fish and hunt; the men carry traps and receptacles. In the Census Report of the U. P. (1931) further peculiarities of Tharu women are recorded. While the caste women proceed to the fields, very early in the morning, have a meal at mid-day and work till the evening, the Tharu women go to their fields after a good meal corresponding to English breakfast. At mid-day they eat some grain and then return home in time to prepare

the evening meal for their men-folk. They thus work two to three hours less than women of other tribes and castes. Again, Tharu women unlike other women do not carry paddy seedlings to the fields where they have to be transplanted; the seedlings have to be carried by men. Other women carry them on their head thus saving the expense of a labourer or two. Local landlords did their utmost to change these conditions but rather than change their mode of life the Tharus chose to leave the fields altogether. The result was an emigration of the Tharus to Nepal and adjacent parts where they live by agriculture or by engaging themselves as labourers."

Dr. Majumdar's observations are regarding the Tharus of Kheri district. It would not be correct to say that Tharu women of Champaran district drink in the bazar.

DHANGARS.

The term "Dhangar" is derived from the Oraon dialect, meaning a retained labourer. Dhangars in the district of Champaran comprise of four castes or tribes, namely, Oraon, Dhangars, Munda Dhangars, Lohara or Lohar Dhangars and Bhuiya Mahato or Bhuiya Dhangars. It is said that all these four castes were imported from outside by the indigo planters and Raja Prahlad Sen of Ramnagar towards the end of the eighteenth century to be engaged as labourers. Some of the Dhangars were imported from the Gaya district and others from the Chotanagpur Division. Dhangars are not included in the list of scheduled castes or tribes and hence they are debarred from enjoying the facilities granted by the Government to the members of scheduled castes. A short note in respect of each Dhangar caste is given below.

Oraon or Oraon Dhangars.

Oraon Dhangars or Nagpuri Dhangars, as they prefer to be called in order to distinguish themselves from their fellow brethren, chiefly live in the Tharuhat area side by side with the Tharus in some villages. But in union no. 8 of Bagaha police-station in about 40 to 50 villages they form the main population. This is called Dhangeran area. Their exact number is not known but the Special Officer, Backward Class Welfare, Champaran, estimated their number at 25,000 in 1953. This also included Munda Dhangars and Lohara Dhangars. These people are said to have migrated from the hills of Chotanagpur. They sing a song which indicates their migration from Chotanagpur. They might have some exclusiveness of culture from other Dhangars, but that is not of such order of standard which would make them conspicuous or could be easily detected by an individual.

Among themselves, they speak Oraon dialect, but in dealing with others they speak adulterated Bhojpuri.

They are strong and stout, dark complexioned men of medium height. Men are less active than women. They indulge in drink

which they prepare themselves. On special occasion men and women drink and dance together. They are said to be very simple and honest people. They are fond of hunting.

So far as religion is concerned, they prefer Hinduism but observe their own religious festivals, such as "Karma Dharma", "Holi", "Sohrai", etc. They also retain *shikha* on their head. They might have in earlier days some forms of primitive modes of worship, but with the passage of time and mixing among the local populace they have now adopted more or less the Hindu religion as their own. Holi festival and keeping of *shikha* (tuft of hair on the head) are definite features of Hinduism, which they follow. Also they have "Karma Dharma" and "Sohrai" which are rather crude forms of Hinduistic festivals. Economically and educationally Oraons are even more backward than Tharus.

Munda or Munda Dhangars.

Munda or Munda Dhangars are very few in number in this district (about two to three thousands). They have become one with Oraons. In bodily structure they are a bit different from their Oraon brethren. In respect of other things they are akin to Oraons. However, inter-marriage and inter-dining are not prevalent.

Lohara or Lohar Dhangars.

Lohara or Lohar Dhangars are similar to Oraons, although inter-marriage and inter-dining between these two castes are not prevalent. Loharas are considered inferior to Oraons. Smithy is their main profession, although they are also tillers of the soil. Their numerical strength is more or less the same as that of Mundas.

Bhuiya Mahato or Bhuiya Dhangars.

The origin of Bhuiyas is not exactly known. They say that they are descendants of Ovi Rishi and that their original homes were in the district of Gaya whence they were brought to Champaran by the indigo planters to work in their factories. They are scattered all over the district, specially near the old indigo factories. They are said to be of either Musahar species or Bhuiyas of Gaya who are members of scheduled caste. The indigo planters are said to have brought them to take cheap and maximum labour from them on the line of slaves. So long as indigo factories were functioning they were no better than slaves, although they were not purchased or sold. They were given *jagirs* of 5 to 10 *kathas* and were forced to do hard manual labour, although they were paid for it. With the decline of factories they have lost their employment and in many cases *jagirs* as well. They are now field labourers. Educationally and economically, they are very backward. In 1953 their number was estimated to be 10,000.

In bodily structure Bhuiyas are slightly different from the other three Dhangar castes. They worship Hindu gods and goddesses.

Their way of living are nearer to the members of Hindu society than to the other three Dhangar castes.

LANGUAGE.

In the old District Gazetteer Mr. O'Malley mentions under the sub-head "Language" as follows :—

"The vernacular current in the district is a dialect of Bihari Hindi called Bhojpuri, of which two main varieties are found, viz., a border sub-dialect called Madhesi and a broken form called Tharu, which is current along the Nepal frontier. Muhammadans of the upper classes again mostly talk Awadhi, a dialect of Eastern Hindi. There are thus three dialects prevalent in the district of which the following sketch is condensed from Dr. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India."

Evidence of Hindi being used as Court language at the earliest can be had from letter no. 68, Champaran, dated the 3rd March 1840, from G. D. Wilkins, Joint Magistrate, to I. Hawkins, Registrar, Sudder Dewany and Nizamaut Adawlut, Fort William. This mentions that in response to the Court's Circular no. 500, dated the 4th ultimo, to introduce the *Nagree* character in the office of the Magistrate, only the Session Judge had failed to adopt the character. Also the Magistrate expressed his views as to the inevitability of delay and inconveniences due to the illegibility and variety of the character as well as the time occupied in writing it.

Madhesi.

"The Champaran district is to the north of and separate by the Gandak river from Saran, with which it has historical and political connections. On the other hand, it forms part of the ancient country of Mithila. The language spoken in it illustrates this state of affairs. Although it is based in the main on the same stock as that of the Bhojpuri spoken in Saran and East Gorakhpur, it has some peculiarities borrowed from the Maithili spoken in the neighbouring district of Muzaffarpur. The Maithili influence is strongest in the east of the district on the Muzaffarpur border, where Maithili and not Bhojpuri is spoken in a strip of land, about two miles wide and 18 miles long, in Dhaka thana. As we go west the influence decreases, till on the banks of the Gandak, the language is the same as that spoken in north-east Saran, and in Eastern Gorakhpur. This dialect is locally known as Madhesi, a word formed from the Sanskrit *Madhyadesa*, meaning midland, an appropriate name enough for the language of the country situated between the Maithili-speaking country of Tirhut, and the Bhojpuri-speaking country of Gorakhpur. Some of the people actually name the form which the dialect takes in the western part of the district "Gorakhpur", but such minute distinctions are not necessary, and excepting the small strip in which Maithili is spoken it is sufficiently accurate to say that the language

spoken over the whole of Champaran is Madhesi. As its name implies, the dialect is a border form of speech possessing some of the characteristics of both Bhojpuri and Maithili, but its structure is in the main that of Bhojpuri. It shares with Maithili a dislike to the cerebral 'r' frequently substituting the dental 'r' for it. The Maithili form *okni*, current in Muzaffarpur, is used for "to them" and the third person singular of the past tense of transitive verbs regularly ends in *ak*, as in Maithili, e.g., *kahlak*, he said, *delak*, he gave, etc. It is estimated that no less than 17,14,036 persons in this district speak Madhesi, while 28,800 persons speak Maithili.

Tharu.

"Tharu is the dialect of the aboriginal tribe of Tharus, who inhabit the Tarai along the Nepal frontier. They have no speech of their own, but have adopted more or less completely the language of their Aryan neighbours and speak a corrupt form of the local Bhojpuri mixed with aboriginal words. It is estimated that in Champaran 27,620 persons speak Tharu. Tharu is spoken by all the Tharus of this district who number about 50,000. Excepting them, this dialect is not current among any other section of the district population.

Awadhi.

"Awadhi, literally the language of Oudh, is a dialect of Eastern Hindi spoken by middle class Muhammadans and by people of the Tikulihar or spangle-maker caste, the total number of persons speaking it being estimated at 58,000. The Awadhi spoken by the Tikulihars is locally known as Tikulihari, and that spoken by the middle class Musalmans is called Shekhoi.

Domra.

"Domra is a gipsy dialect or a kind of "Thieves" "Latin" spoken by criminal tribes. It is merely a perversion of the local dialect deliberately intended to prevent outsiders from understanding what is meant, e.g., *jamadar* becomes *majadar* and a rupee is called *bajaiya*, i.e., a thing which rings. It is estimated that in Champaran 4,000 persons speak Domra, but it is probably that most of these are quite as much at home in the ordinary Bhojpuri of the district as in their own peculiar jargon." (O'Malley).

These observations have their value but cannot be accepted as exactly indicating the present picture. The dialects have now been more broadbased owing to the changing circumstances and it may generally be said that the bulk of the population speaks Hindi. Domra in spite of the influence of other dialects like Madhesi, Bhojpuri or Maithili, is current among the Doms even today. The tribal Doms use it more than the *deshwali* Doms.

A table is given below showing the number of speakers of different languages as their mother tongue as returned in the census of 1951 :—

Languages.	Persons.	Total speakers.	
		Males.	Females.
Indo-Aryan languages—			
*Hindi	25,13,548	12,66,428	12,47,120
Nepali	977	618	359
Bengali	632	241	391
Marwari	73	26	47
Punjabi	11	3	8
Other Indo-Aryan languages ..	11	7	4
Dravidian Languages :—			
Oraon	64	64	..
Other Dravidian Languages ..	2	..	2
European Languages :—			
English	25	19	6

The 1951 figures have also undergone substantial change by now. A large number of displaced persons from East Pakistan and a much smaller number from West Pakistan have now been rehabilitated in Champaran district. The influx of Bengali speaking displaced persons from East Pakistan would naturally swell the number of Bengali speaking people in the next census.

Another table is given below indicating the number of bilingual speakers as recorded at the census of 1951 :—

Mother tongue.		Total speakers.	* Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in col. 1.	Subsidiary languages	
Hindi	2,513,548	647	Bengali ..	234	
			Nepali ..	339	
			Punjabi ..	19	
			Marathi ...	6	
			Marwari ..	47	
			Gujrati ..	2	

* This also includes figures for Urdu speakers numbering 1,33,150. It has been found on a close observation that the majority of the rural muslims speak Bhojpuri or the general local dialect used by the Hindus, among themselves and with others. Urdu as a speaking media is mostly confined to the urban or the literate muslims.

Mother tongue.		Total speakers.	Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in col. 1.		Subsidiary languages.	
Bengali	.. ..	632	204	Hindi	.. ..	204
Nepali	.. ..	977	686	Do.	.. ..	686
Marwari	.. ..	73	73	Do.	.. ..	73
Punjabi	.. ..	11	11	Do.	.. ..	11
English	.. ..	25	25	Do.	.. ..	25
Oraon	.. ..	64	64	Do.	.. ..	64

(Several languages like Bhojpuri, Maithili, Domra, etc., do not find a separate mention at the census of 1951 and as such it is difficult to ascertain the number of their speakers. Many of them were recorded as Hindi speakers.)

RELIGION.

According to the census of 1951 there are 21,15,840 Hindus, 3,97,669 Muslims, 1,695 Christians and 119 Sikhs as against 15,23,949 Hindus, 2,64,086 Muslims and 2,417 Christians recorded in the census of 1901. Of the total population of 25,15,343 in 1951, Hindus constitute 84.12 per cent whereas Muslims constitute 15.81 per cent as against their percentage of 85 and nearly 15, respectively, in the year 1901. This shows that the ratio of Hindus and Muslims has more or less remained stationary. However, there has been a notable change in the fact that in 1901 Muslim population was more numerous in Champaran than any other districts of the province, excepting Purnea. But now the position is different. There are several other districts having a larger number of Muslim population than Champaran. Another important feature noticeable in respect of religion is that in 1901 there were no Sikhs in this district and even at the census of 1941 their number was only 29. The increase in their number in the census of 1951 appears due to settlement of displaced persons in the district. There appears to be a decrease in the number of Christians. This apparent decrease in the Christian population is not easily accountable. Their number appears to have been incorrectly recorded as the Bettiah Mission alone has the number of the Christians of Catholic faith as 5,000 in the district. There are also other non-Catholic Christians in the district. The Christian Mission claims that the actual Christian population in the district would not be less than 8,000 to 9,000. The 1951 census figures do not appear to be very correct.

Religious Movements.

The district has had several religious movements, many of which relate to the closing decade of the last century.

The district witnessed an anti-kine killing movement in 1893—1895 sponsored by the *Gorakshini Sabha* (association for the protection of cattle) whose object is the care of cattle wealth. It caused some unrest amongst Muhammadans for some time. Another movement believed to have been caused by the *Gorakshini* was the ploughmen's begging movement. This appears to have originated in the rumour that God Mahadeo appeared one evening to a *raiya*, who was ploughing late, and caused his cattle to vanish in the fault of overworking them. On promising a penance of resting the cattle for three days and himself carrying round his plough and begging to prepare three wheaten cakes out of the proceed, one for himself, one for his cattle and the third to be buried under the stalls, the cattle were brought back. For some time it was carried by the Hindus scrupulously. There was another religious movement in 1894, known as tree-daubing, under which daubs of mud with hairs of different animals stuck therein were found on the trees. The reason could not be ascertained.

Another religious movement witnessed by the district is known as *Mahabiri Jhanda* or *Mahabiri Dals* sponsored by the Arya Samaj which started their activities in 1923. It is reported that it was started by the Hindus as an anti-religious movement to *Muharram*. On this occasion the Hindus assemble and start in a procession with a long flag post as a mark of their reverence to Mahabirji, the much venerated devotee of Rama of the epic Ramayana. The flag bears a picture of Mahabirji. In the beginning, the movement was very popular among Hindus and threatened communal peace. In 1927 it caused bitter communal feeling and resulted in the Bettiah riot. The *Mahabiri Dals* are still found in the district but have lost much of its original ill feelings.

Snake Worship.

There is a Hindu mythological belief that there is a king of snakes which holds the earth on its head. They feel obliged to it for keeping the earth on its head and thus helping the snakes in living. It is believed that this king of snakes, called Sheshanag, loves to take milk and fried paddy. This food is offered during a *puja* to the snakes in the month of *Sravan*.

Tree Worship.

Certain trees like *pipal*, banyan and *amla* are worshipped by the villagers. The *pipal* tree is considered to be holy and nobody generally cuts it down or uses its wood for fuel. Spirits are believed to live on *pipal* trees and they are worshipped if they happen to be in the village or outside it near a temple, etc. There are some people

who regularly pour water at the root of *pipal* trees in the belief that Ram's devotee, Hanumanjee, would be pleased with them one day and bestow superhuman powers on them and help them in getting salvation. Other trees are significant for specific reasons. Generally they are worshipped because they are considered to be the abode of a particular god, deity or ghost. Women offer *puja* under such trees at the time of marriage and birth in the family. In this way they hope to win the support and help of the spirit living on the trees at the time of marriage and birth. Some trees are worshipped for getting a child. Generally such trees are very old and big. The basis is an erotic idea.

Witchcraft.

There is still a popular belief in witchcraft influencing the daily life. There is a notion among the villagers that by practising certain rites and by enchanting certain *mantras* on the cremation ground during the period of *Dashera* and *Diwali* festivals, a man or woman can attain the superhuman power. Some near or dear one is believed to be sacrificed by the practitioner of the craft in the beginning after which alone that superhuman power is bestowed. Children are supposed to be their easy prey and every mother tries to keep her child away from any woman who is supposed to know this art. There are certain methods of protection, such as applying black ointment in the eyes, tying black strings on the forearm of the child and wearing certain metallic ornaments containing blessed ashes or a piece of paper with *mantras* written on it. When a child falls ill and is supposed to be under the influence of some witch, a priest or a *tantric* is called or the help of some deity is invoked to ward off the effects. Fantastic stories of cure by such methods make the unsophisticated village-folks have firm faith in the art. In many cases of serious illness in a village a *tantric* is seen doing something simultaneously with a surgeon or a physician and at times the former is more relied upon than the latter.

Christians.

The Catholic Mission in Champaran district has a very interesting history, as it is a lineal descendant of the great Capuchin Mission which had gone to Lhasa in Tibet and Nepal at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Mission was established at Bettiah in December, 1745, by the Rev. Father Joseph Mary (Giuseppe Maria dei Bernini), Italian Capuchin Father. He came to India in 1740 and was first stationed for two years in Patna where he made the acquaintance of Dhurup Singh, Raja of Bettiah, and treated and cured his wife from some illness. Dhurup Singh wanted him to stay in Bettiah, but the Father refused to do so unless sanction was obtained from Rome. He was transferred in 1742 to Lhasa, and in the meantime both the Raja and the Superior of the Mission wrote to Rome for permission to establish a Christian station at Bettiah, the

Raja asking the Pope to send two Capuchin Fathers there. Eventually the Superior of the Mission opened a Mission in Bettiah in 1745. The Capuchin Fathers had to abandon Lhasa on account of the persecution of the Tibetans and took refuge in Nepal, whence Father Joseph Mary was sent to Bettiah. He arrived there on the 7th December, 1745 and the Raja assigned him a house with a garden near his palace and allowed him to preach and make converts. This work Father Joseph Mary carried on with the occasional assistance of a second Capuchin Father until his death in 1761. When the English took Bettiah in 1766, Sir Robert Barker, who was in command of the forces, assigned the mission about 60 *bighas* in the fort and also a plot of land outside Bettiah, called Dassiya Padri, extending over 200 *bighas* for the support of themselves and their Christian converts. These grants were approved and renewed by the Governor-General in Council at Calcutta in 1786. The mission is still in possession of these lands with the exception of about 10 *bighas* of which they were deprived in 1792 by the then Raja. In 1892 Bettiah was made the headquarters of the Prefecture Apostolic of Bettiah and Nepal which was made over to the Capuchin Fathers of the Tyrolless province.

At the beginning of the Great War in 1914 the Austrian Capuchins of Bettiah and Chuhari were interned and a year later expatriated. Their place was taken by the Belgian Capuchins from Lahore, with the very Reverend Father Felix as Prefect Apostolic. They were assisted by six Indian priests, residents of Bettiah, who had been ordained between 1907 and 1914. In 1931 Bettiah was included in the new Diocese of Patna which was inaugurated by the Holy See in that year. The first Bishop of Diocese was the Right Rev. Dr. Loss Ven Hoeck. The Bettiah Mission was in the jurisdiction of the society of Jesus of the American province of Missouri. As this province was afterwards subdivided, the Patna Mission is dependent on the Chicago Province. Since 1921 the Mission has expanded their educational activities in Bettiah subdivision.

The Jesuit personnel of the Bettiah Mission reside either at the Bettiah Parish or Krist Raja High School area and consists of American and Indian Jesuits. At the Bettiah Parish there are a number of Jesuit Fathers who take care of the Christian Community of Bettiah town numbering about 4,000 souls. Besides, the Fathers conduct a Middle School which is the largest Middle School in the State of Bihar with an enrolment of over 1,000 students. The Mission also manages a printing press which was established over fifty years ago. Krist Raja High School situated about 2 miles from Bettiah was founded in 1931, and has at present a number of Jesuit Fathers, Scholastics and Lay Brothers on the school staff. It is one of the best schools in the State. It has a well-kept compound with good arboriculture.

The Holy Cross European Sisters conduct at Bettiah St. Teresa's High School for Girls, and a Middle Training School for Lady

Teachers, a Charitable Dispensary for outdoor patients and St. Rita's Knitting School. Excellent work is being done by these institutions.

In 1934, in the Great Bihar Earthquake, the century old Church built by the Italian Capuchins was destroyed. In November, 1951, the formal opening of the new Bettiah Church in Bettiah was held. The Church building is a noble structure and one of the finest churches in North India. Its style is an adaptation of the Byzantine to Indian Architecture. The Central tower rises 72 feet high and is surmounted by a large silver dome which covers the four famous bells which when rung are heard for many miles around Bettiah. These bells were salvaged from the destruction of the Church after the Earthquake in 1934. One of the bells is a present from Nepal. The overall length of the new church is 243 feet, while its width is 60 feet. The altars are made from Italian marble while the floor of the church is in Terazza marble and marble tile. Because of its structure and environs in church it is a place well worth a visit by the non-Christians.

At Fakirana, about two miles from Bettiah town, the Sisters have an orphanage and home for destitute women. An Indian Congregation of Sisters, called the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, was founded in 1924 with its headquarters also at Fakirana. There are about 80 Indian Sisters in the Congregation who are employed either in teaching or nursing in hospitals and dispensary work. The Bettiah Zanana Hospital owes a lot to their devoted service.

Other Roman Catholic Centres in Champaran are at Chainpatia, Chuhari, Chakni and Rampur with a total population of about 1,500 at these places taken together. There is besides, the Assemblies of God Mission with a centre only at Bettiah. Their flock numbers nearly 300. This is a non-Catholic mission.

DAILY LIFE.

Recent Trends.

The daily life that is prevalent at the present time, either in towns or in villages, in the district is somewhat different from the daily life in vogue fifty years back, the change being more perceptible in the urban areas and the newly sprung up townships. Some of the factors that have brought about the changes are the spread of western education with all its corollaries, growth of libraries and places of amusement, the influence of the press, trends in the economic condition of the people and improvement in communications. Another social factor is a slow disintegration of some of the communities, particularly in the villages. There has been a remarkable change in the social values of castes and communities. The land reforms policy of the Government has also been an important factor in minimising the social and economic influence of the intermediaries like zamindars. At one time the zamindar and the high caste men, both in the rural as well as in the urban areas of the district, were the

natural leaders of the public. The English educated people had a fascination for the villagers. But at the moment it cannot be said that there is anything like natural leadership being exclusive to any caste or community. Incidence of unemployment among the English educated people has depreciated their premium in the villages. The influence of the press, particularly the vernacular press, has brought about changes in the mental outlook affecting the daily life.

The much neglected villages have now attracted the attention of the Government and the desertion by the zamindars and the richer people for the towns has been to some extent compensated. Decentralisation of administration and the policy to uplift the rural life have touched the village life. The system of *Gram Panchayat* has a great role to play in raising the status of the villages. In many a big villages, a Block Development Officer, a Karmchari, a Mukhiya, a Gram Sevak, a Co-operative Inspector, a Veterinary Assistant, a Medical Officer, a Health Assistant, an Overseer, etc., may be found. This picture is quite different from what we had a decade before, when in the rural area the only static official normally was the police thana officer. With the emphasis on development work the villages have assumed a new role and will go on playing a bigger role in the future.

Another factor affecting the village life is the fairs and *melas*. North Bihar is famous for fairs and *melas* and Champaran is no exception. Whether originating in economic, religious or social reasons, these *melas* and fairs do not appear to have lost their importance. They still attract a vast floating population and there is always a large turnover of saleable commodities, including livestock. A description of many important fairs and *melas* has been given in a separate chapter. The Areraj *mela* attracts thousands of visitors from beyond the district.

The *melas* and fairs bring to the village communities the commodities which have now become a part and parcel of the village household. Articles, like lantern, torch, bicycle, better types of shoes, various toilet articles, etc., have a very good sale. In spite of better communication facilities that have cut out the distance between the urban markets and the villages, the *melas* and fairs have still their fascination for the rural public. They have also affected the social life of the people and have helped break the rigours of casteism and orthodox habits. They have also helped to liquidate the strict *parda* system to a very great extent. The *melas* and fairs are more patronised by the women-folk.

The daily life of the people varies according to different status and avocations of the castes or classes. Rich people, whether in the urban or in the rural areas, will have a different routine than that of a poor man, a day labourer or an office assistant or a petty shop-keeper. In the urban areas the common pattern of daily life of the

intelligentsia class of people is that the person rises early in the morning and gets ready after his bath and breakfast within an hour. He reads the newspaper or has some chat and then turns to the call of his profession. By 10 A.M., he is ready after a meal for his place of business. In the evening he will probably study, visit friends or a club or some amusement centre or spend the evening with the family. This is the usual routine for a doctor, a pleader, a school or college teacher, a businessman and a Government servant. A lawyer or a doctor will have to deny himself the pleasures of social amenities sometime after dusk because of the demand of his profession. Usually a businessman stays at the place of his business till quite late in the night. Amusements, like cinemas or theatricals, will not be normally resorted to as a part of daily life. Probably once or twice a week one will pay a visit to the local amusements. The Sundays or other holidays are usually spent in resting or visiting friends or some amusement centre. Taking holidays over a continued period to break the monotony of daily life is still rather uncommon to the average man. With the development of tourism and travel facilities, for which Champaran district has got ample facilities, that is, however, likely to develop.

The office assistants or the persons associated with the offices, courts, etc., in the towns have a regular pattern of life. By 9-30 A.M. or so he is to get ready for office and after a quick meal he will be in the office by 10-30 A.M. In the noon he takes a cup of tea with probably some snacks. His evening is spent in reading cheap literature or playing some indoor game.

A daily labourer in the town starts his work early in the morning and returns by 6 P.M. or so. His meal is either taken to the site by his people or he has to take some dry food, like *chura*, *sattu* or *bhunja* with him. The labourer in the town has seldom an opportunity to have a noon-day meal at his house on a working day. Usually by the evening he comes back very tired and has to relax himself.

The daily life of a big land-owner or a big farmer in the countryside starts early in the morning. He will normally supervise the work of the labourers. If he is a petty land-owner he will usually do a part of the manual work. Village politics and his own cultivation affairs take away most of his time.

The labourer in a village takes some food cooked over night, locally known as *basia*, early in the morning and goes for his work. He works in the field whole day and usually has no proper mid-day meal. If at all a noon-day meal is taken to him by the woman-folk of his family, this meal usually consists of cooked rice and probably some spinach (*sag*). He comes back home in the evening and after a wash he has his substantial meal in the night and retires. This meal will also consist of cooked rice, probably a little *dal* and some vegetables. The evening meal is usually taken quite early and by

8 P.M. or so a labourer's household will cease for the day. The woman-folk of his family would add a little to the family income by working in the house of some rich neighbour. They would keep themselves busy in cooking food, washing clothes, looking after the children and doing a little marketing. They would also scrape grass for fodder and pluck some leaves for the same purpose.

The average town-wage earner would go to his place of work after taking some snacks, the quality of which depends on the financial means of a family. If he is a mechanic, or a mason or a carpenter or belongs to a slightly higher wage-group, he would probably have some *chapatis* of wheat, some vegetables, or some *gur* and cup of tea. Some of them also take a hastily cooked meal of rice. This type of wage earner goes to his work with some *chapatis* for his mid-day meal. He takes his substantial meal in the night on return from work and this consists of rice, *dal*, some vegetables and very rarely meat or some fish. Meat or fish or even *dal*, however, does not find place in the daily menu of an ordinary wage-earner, whether in the town or in the village, whose income ranges between Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 per day.

The women-folk apart from the work indicated before, also supplement the income by keeping goat and poultry, particularly of the Muslim community, if there are facilities. If the wage earner of the lower income-group belongs to a caste which does not observe *parda*, the women-folk would probably add to the family income by hawking fruits or vegetables.

Food and Cooking.

It is not financially possible for a lower income-group to have a balanced diet and generally the food taken is deficient in protein. The size and income of a middle class family, whether of lower income group or of higher income group, both in urban and rural areas, control the daily menu. Rice, *chapati*, *dal*, some vegetables and probably some milk form the usual menu with an occasional variation with a very small quantity of fish or meat or sweets. Eggs have not yet become an ordinary item of food in the rural area.

Among the cereals used, rice ranks easily the first and then comes wheat, maize and *marua*. Fish and meat are the principal items of non-vegetarian food. Game birds, chicken, ducks, eggs, etc., hardly come in the ordinary menu. Fruits also are not a common item of the dietary excepting probably plantain or mango during the season, provided they are cheap. Sweet potatoes, *sattu*, *litti* (wheat flour shaped like a small ball stuffed with *sattu* and spices and baked in the fire without the help of any utensils), *chura* and *dahi* (curd) occupies the first position in the menu of the average man. Milk is a common item for those who could afford. Milk is consumed in its original form and also in the form of curd, *ghee*, butter and *chena*. The milk of both cows and buffaloes is used.

Potato, *parwal*, lady's finger, *lauki*, *komhra*, brinjal and cauliflower are the common vegetables. The use of onion is becoming common. *Salad*, consisting of slices of tomato, onion, etc., with lemon juice or vinegar has already come into use even in the villages.

Several methods of cooking are in vogue. Roasting in fire is one of the primitive methods of cooking, but is now confined to making what is known as *chokha* by adding salt, mustard oil and green or red pepper to the potato or brinjal or any other kind of vegetables roasted. Some grains, such as wheat, barley, gram and maize are scorched and used as food (*norna*). Among the roasted food *litti* stands first. Frying is also a common method and grains, like rice, flat-rice, gram, maize, peas, etc., are usually fried and taken. This goes by the name of *bhunja*. Frying with *ghee* or oil but without water is resorted to usually for preparing vegetables known as *bhunja* or *chakka* (big flat pieces of vegetables coated with *besan*).

Another process which is coming into use is stewing vegetables or meat in closely covered pots with *ghee* or oil or any other cooking medium and some condiments or just in water. This mode of cooking is more or less confined to the middle and upper class families with an acquired taste for food without *masala* or spices. Another method of cooking is to steam vegetables or meat in a closed cooker or in a closed utensil. *Ghee*, mustard oil, hydrogenated oil, etc., are the usual cooking medium.

Food is ordinarily cooked on an oven made of clay or bricks with two mouths and an opening below. Fuel is fed through the opening below and food are put in pots at the two mouths and are prepared simultaneously.

Meat is prepared in various ways. Tasty, well-seasoned, highly spiced, *kabab*, *korma*, *don-piyaja* and curry are the legacy of the Muslim cooking. Roast, stew, cutlet, steak, chops, etc., have come into the menu from the west. Fish is also prepared in various similar ways.

Vegetarian food has also several variety, some of which may be mentioned here. There are various kinds of sweets and *kheers* or puddings prepared from milk. Special kinds of puddings are prepared with the help of milk, *ghee* and dry fruits like *pista*, *kismis*, *badam*, etc., *kachauri* or *pooree*, wheaten cakes prepared in *ghee* or oil (*poorer* section of the people use oil), are very much liked. *Pooree* stuffed with powdered gram or *sattu* or pulse with some spices and prepared in *ghee* is supposed to be a delicacy. This is also offered to deities. *Polao*, a preparation with rice and *ghee*, water and spices is very much liked. Sometimes some vegetables are also mixed in the rice to make *polao* more tasty. *Halwa*, a preparation of *sujji*, *ghee*, sugar and dry fruits, constitute a special dish of vegetarian foods. There are several methods to prepare *halwa* of different constituents. *Halwa* is also prepared of different kinds of fruits.

Apart from these, there is an elaborate arrangement of vegetables, among which *raita* (a preparation of curd and pumpkin with spices); *karhi-bari* (a preparation of curd and powdered pulse with condiments); various kinds of *papars* (a very finely and flattened circular shaped stuff, prepared out of powdered pulse and fried in *ghee* or oil or without them); *tilauri* (a preparation of thoroughly pulverised *til* and fried in *ghee* or oil); *danauri* (a preparation of pulverised *dana* or poppy seeds, fried in *ghee* or oil); *adauri* (a preparation of pulverised pulse used as a combination of potato or other vegetables); *kumharauri* (a preparation of *kumhar* used as a combination of different kinds of vegetables), etc., could be specially mentioned.

The culinary condiments which are generally used in the preparation of savoury dishes are turmeric, cumin seeds, red-pepper, black-pepper, ginger, cardamoms, both big and small, cloves, coriander-seeds, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, cassia, cubeb, mustard, saffron, onion, garlic, and green chillies.

The utensils used for cooking in common household are *battlohis*, cauldron of brass or iron, flat pans, tongs, *jhanjh*, etc.

A special room is set apart, if accommodation permits, for kitchen and the verandah is commonly used for dining where food is served hot and quick from the kitchen. In the villages commonly no cook is employed. Female-folks do this job. In towns also cook is rarely kept now. The domestic servant is utilised for the job who generally comes from low Hindu castes, viz., Dhanuks, Kurmis, etc. Cooks and servants in the urban areas can now be kept only by people of higher income group.

ENTERTAINMENTS.

Economic pressure has left little room for entertainments. Population has increased enormously but there has not been much expansion in the field of production. Wants of common man have also increased without any commensurate rise in income. A lot of leisure is spent in idle talks and local politics. However, as the simple village folks are very much God fearing, they devote a part of their time in *bhajans*, *keertans*, *Satyanarayana Puja*, etc. Many of them assemble at a place having some religious sanctity, like temple, venerated old trees in the village, etc., and engage themselves in *bhajans* and *keertans*. There they sing all sorts of religious folk-songs and enchant passages of the Ramayana. The *Satyanarayana Puja* is generally arranged individually. At this *puja* *Satyanarayana Katha*, a book in Sanskrit narrating the beneficial effects of devotion to God, is enchanted. The meaning is communicated to the attendants in vernacular language. The *Satyanarayana Puja* is also accompanied by *keertans* and *bhajans*.

Jatra parties, a kind of theatrical, different other kinds of theatricals and *Ramleela*, the drama exhibiting the life of Rama, have a strange fascination for village folks. Cinema shows are a great

attraction for villagers as well as for town dwellers, but the former can scarcely afford for it.

INFLUENCE OF COURTS.

A section of the middle class people of the country-side is in the habit of attending the court and this appears to be both a necessity and a form of entertainment. Usually in the villages there are professional *pairbikars* or people who work as go-betweens and are the link between the lawyers and the litigant public. These *pairbikars* take the parties with them, visit the lawyer's house, get the case prepared, spend the whole day in the court and come back home by the evening. They have a busy life.

LADIES.

Ladies of the house of a middle class family, both in the urban and rural areas, have to do a lot of household work. They have to cook meal, look after children, clean the house, wash, mend and sew clothes, do the embroidery work, make *achars* (pickles), *burees*, *morabbas*, etc. A middle class family can hardly indulge in too many servants. They generally keep one whole-time servant or a maid-servant, either whole-time or part-time. Males, girls and boys, seldom do any household work. Girls in towns are generally sent to schools and they could be drawn upon only on Sundays and holidays. On account of economic pressure spending time in making artistic things is not resorted to. It is quite common for the ladies to knit sweaters, mufflers, hose, etc. Music and dance is not a common feature. However, the cinema is making girls music minded. Spread of female education has definitely led to a better tone in the average middle class family, a distinct change for the better in food, dress and mode of living.

TOILET.

The common village-folks are very simple and hardly use any toilet. The little oil they use is either of mustard, coconut, *til*, or any other ordinary scented oil. Soap is becoming more popular, both for washing clothes and cleansing the body. Cosmetics are seldom in demand by the male-folks. However, ladies of the present generation do use little bit of cheap cosmetics. In towns cosmetics are in great demand by the ladies. *Itr* or musk is used only on ceremonial occasions. Use of soap is pushing out *sajimati* (a kind of clay) and *ritha* (soap berry) which were in common use before. Shampooing hair with certain indigenous herbs is still popular. Bottled shampoo has not yet made much headway. Tooth paste is very rarely used and that also in towns. Lip-stick, rouge, etc., are not in common use except by some ladies in towns.

DRESS, ETC.

Shoes are not in common use among the labourers or the people of lower income-group. However, they are commonly used by the

middle class people, both in the towns and villages, particularly when going out of the house. There has not been much change in the wearing apparel of ladies, excepting in the cut of the dress and the mode of wearing. Use of *shalwar* and *dopatta* is becoming more popular, particularly for the young girls in towns. During the last war, owing to scarcity and high prices of *dhoties*, men-folk started wearing trousers and this has stuck. A pair of trousers last longer and are more economical in the long run than a pair of *dhoties*. Use of half-pants and shirts is also in vogue now for school-going children. Boys in the colleges wear trousers which was very unusual thirty years back. Buttoned up or open-neck coat is becoming a casualty among the younger generation and bush-shirts are replacing them. Open-neck shirts, mostly half-sleeved, a pair of trousers, or *dhoties* or *pajamas* are the usual costume of the average middle class males. The western costume of trousers, shirt with tie and an open-neck coat for office purposes is being replaced by trousers and bush-shirt or buttoned up coat. For ceremonial occasions men wear *kurta* or *dhoti* or *pajama* or *sherwani* and *churidar pajama* or a buttoned up short coat (prince coat) and a trousers. Use of turban or cloth cap for the head is distinctly on the decline. On such occasions the ladies wear costly *sarees*, blouse, etc., and get their finger nails painted by the barber woman or themselves with *mehdi* leaf decoction or imported nail-paints. Jewellery is more used by the ladies while going out of the house. *Upten*, a paste made of several ingredients, is still used by ladies for their face.

ORNAMENTS.

Ornaments for Males.

There have been significant changes in the use of ornaments for both men and women.

Fifty years back every well-to-do male of certain communities used to wear ornaments. Male ornaments were not confined to childhood or youth alone. They were used irrespective of the age.

Male ornaments were meant only for arms, neck, waist, wrist, ears and feet. Ornaments for arms included *chakutha*, *bank*, *tabiz*, *anant* and *lapet*. All these ornaments, excepting *anant*, used to be worn singly. The *tabiz* was used more for protection against certain spiritual evils than to adorn the arm. Now only *tabiz* is commonly used and *lapet* is used by some well-to-do males of certain communities. Ornaments for neck consisted of *rudrachh* (*Eelcocarpus ganitrus*), *kantha* (solid gold or silver piece and often with some sacred relics), necklace or corals (locally known as *munga*), *mohar mala* (string of *mohars* or gold coin), *gop* or *ghunsi* (twisted gold wire), and *sikri* (gold or silver chain often with filigree work). All these have now disappeared, excepting the *kantha* for boys and the

chain for the males of some well-to-do families of certain communities. Ornaments for waist was known as *harhara*, *jai*, etc. They have completely disappeared, excepting for boys. Ornaments for wrist were named as *balea*, *bera*, *mathia* and *tora*. They were exclusively meant for boys and are still in use. Ornaments for ears were *long*, *kanfools*, etc., and were confined to boys alone but are now gradually vanishing. Ornaments for feet were known as *ghunghru*, *kara*, *rings*, etc., of silver and were confined to boys alone. They are also now gradually vanishing.

The ornaments that are in current use are gold or silver wrist-watch and rings. Those who could afford wear rings bejewelled with precious stones.

Ornaments for Females.

The incidence of casualty in female ornaments has been much less. Several ornaments that had their bad days are now again coming in vogue, of course, in a modern style. *Bunni* or *mangtika* (an ornament covering the vermilion mark on the forehead), *mukut* (crown like ornament), *tikuli* or *bindi* (spangle or wafer gummed on the forehead), and several nose ornaments like *nakchanda* or *chhuchhi*, *nathiya*, *bulak* or *besar*, etc., could be counted among such ornaments which have staged a come back with some change in structure.

It could be said that there is no part in lady's body left uncovered by clothes for which an ornament is not available to decorate. Naturally there is an elaborate arrangement of ornaments for hand, forehead, nose, ears, neck, arms, forearms, wrist, fingers, waist, ankles, toe and other fingers.

Head ornaments are *tika*, *mangtika*, *mukut*, etc. They are used by only young ladies and that also casually, specially on ceremonial occasions. The spangle or wafer is pasted in between the two brows. This is meant for every day use and is very much liked by young ladies. The nose is very commonly decorated with the nose-pins, often bejewelled with cheap stones. *Nathia* is used casually by the woman in general, but is more common among Marwari young ladies. The ear ornaments are named as *jhimjhimiya*, *machhiya*, *dhela*, *jhumak*, *kanfool*, *kanbali*, *mankari*, etc. Of these the first three and the like which are very heavy for the ears, are now very rarely seen and that also among the ladies of backward class. New ear ornaments of lighter weight and fascinating designs, sometimes bejewelled with precious stones, are more commonly seen now.

The neck is the most favoured part in female physiognomy to decorate with ornaments. There have been considerable casualties in the ornaments for the neck. The ornaments used earlier were *tikh*, *takh*, *hasuli* or *suit*, *champakali*, *chaukthi*, *humel*, *hekal*, *jogni*, *sikri*, *chandrahari*, *mala*, *sautin*, etc., made of silver or gold. They are no longer in use. Nevertheless they have staged a come-back in more

modernised form and lighter weight and usually of gold. The *sautin* among all was used only by the second wife of a man whose first wife had died. This was used to ward off the evil effects and not to decorate. However, this is not much in use now.

Ornaments for the arms consisted of *panchkhandi*, *navrattan*, *anant*, *bank*, *jasan*, *bajuband*, *bijouth*, *pait*, *kusiar-akgeri*, *tinkhandi*, etc. This elaborate arrangement is now gradually vanishing. Ornaments for the forearms and wrist were known as *ageli*, *pacheli*, *majheli*, *chaan*, *kangani*, *barhari*, *kangana*, etc. They are very little in use now, excepting a few. Fingers were decorated with several rings, probably three to four in each finger. This has given way to one or two of gold, often bejewelled with precious stones. The ornaments for waist consisted of *karghani* and *darkas*. They are no longer much in use. Ornaments for the feet were *kara*, *chhara*, *jhabiya*, *panjebs*, *guchha*, *nupur*, *pair*, *shankar*, *angutha*, etc. Leaving aside a few, all have gone out of use.

SALUTATION.

The custom of salutation is an integral part of the daily life. Salutation by touching the feet or knee is supposed to be the most intimate and affectionate. Raising of both hands and touching the forehead and uttering the word '*Pranam*' or '*Namaste*' is the usual mode of salutation. It is also customary to touch each other as a mode of affection and salutation. Exchange of smile is also a recognised form of greeting. If two equals meet, the usual mode of salutation may be just touching each other with their right hand.

Hermits or *gurus* or other saintly people are usually saluted by uttering the word '*dandwat*' and by joining the two hands, lowering the body and touching their feet. Previously caps or turbans used to be taken off when salutations were offered to the superiors or at the temples. This mode of salutation is dying out.

HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLD.

Changes are seen in the pattern of houses and household, particularly in the urban areas. The traditional house with a few rooms, narrow verandah, and a courtyard with a well, kitchen, lavatory and cowshed is now better planned, although the floor space has become less. The use of cement is common and the low mud and brick house with lime is being replaced by cemented concrete smaller houses. Owing to the great demand for residential houses flat system has been superimposed on houses which were not built for that purpose and not much privacy is allowed. The part of the house in towns which is neglected is the bath-room. Even in big residential houses very small bath-rooms are to be seen. Housing conditions are rather exacting in every town and for the average family the house rent paid represents a big percentage of income. Although living in flats is gradually coming in vogue with difficulties about sharing of entrance, kitchen, bath-room, lavatory, well or tap.

there is no sign of community cooking coming in. Even in a small house, where there are several occupants, everyone has a separate cooking arrangement. Yet this system of sharing houses goes to break down many social conventions and caste barriers.

There has not been much change in the pattern of houses in the villages. Richer people who are building cemented concrete houses in the villages are adopting the models in vogue in towns adding certain rural features. There is more of living space per inmate in houses in the rural area. The poor live in very small huts in insanitary conditions.

Another sign of the upgrading of the standard of living is in the provision of more furniture in the household both in rural and urban areas. The average family has some furniture in the house consisting of bedstead, tables and chairs. However, in the villages, tables and chairs are a rarity. But in the towns there will be found one or two benches, tables, a couple of stools or chairs even in the household of a man of lower income-group. The sophisticated families of higher income-group have the proper furniture for the drawing, dining and other rooms.

EATING PLACES.

A remarkable new feature in the town is the growth in the number of tea, *pan* and *sharbat* stalls and cheap eating places which often make encroachment on public roads. Owing to congestion in the towns many people have to come from villages every day to attend their daily duties and have to take their snack meal at these eatings houses. Usually fried food (*pakorahs*), cheap snacks, *sharbat* or tea or a simple hot cooked meal are available in them. A number of Punjabi hotels and Bengalee sweetmeat shops have grown up in the urban areas.

Tea, *lussee* (cold drink of curd) and *sharbat* are the usual drinks served in restaurants and hotels. Coffee has not made much headway. The big towns in the district each have one or two bars where stronger drinks are available. The *bhatikhana* or the country liquor shops are common feature in every town and also in some of the larger villages. *Tari* shops are very commonly found in the towns as well as in the villages.

DRINKING AND SMOKING.

Tea has become very common in the middle class family and in the group of people belonging to the class of mechanics, drivers and other hard manual labourers. It has not yet become a habit with the cultivating class or the lower income-group in the villages. Coffee is confined to a very small percentage of middle class families in the urban areas. Cold drinks or *sharbat* are used very casually and more on the ceremonial occasions in the average middle class family. Cold drinks prepared with various kinds of seeds of flowers, rose petals, almond, curd and sugar are in vogue. Aerated water is confined to

townships. *Bhang* is also a beverage indulged in, but more on the ceremonial occasions, particularly on *puja*, *holi* and *diwali* days, and is followed by spicy dishes of meat. The consumption of country liquor is not common in the middle class family. Daily labourers in towns do indulge in country liquors. Foreign liquors are confined to the higher income-group of the urban areas. *Tari* or fermented palm juice is a popular drink in the summer season. *Tari* is the poor man's beer.

The habit of smoking is spreading particularly among the younger generation. Smoking of *biri* and cheap cigarettes is very common among the labourers. Ladies of some castes also smoke *hookka* or hubble bubble. However, *biri* and cigarettes are replacing it. Chewing tobacco is very popular among the cultivating labourers. Chewing of *pan* is very common and the expenditure of the common middle class family on it is not inconsiderable. Cigars and pipe smoking have a very restricted circle of adherents.

HOBBIES.

Reading of books and newspapers has yet to become a habit in the average educated family, whether in the rural or the urban areas. No daily newspapers are published in this district. The libraries, although very few are not well patronised. Cheap books on light subjects, particularly novels in Hindi or English, have, however, some attraction. Gardening as a hobby has yet to make a headway. Indoor games like playing cards, chess, etc., are the usual hobby. Among the outdoor games football is most popular, particularly among the student community.

Radio sets are still luxury both in the urban and rural areas. Radio sets are switched on more for film songs or news than for the educative talks. As already mentioned, amusements and entertainments hardly form a regular feature in the life of common man, excepting in the urban areas. Popular lectures, art exhibitions and cultural shows have not yet become a regular part of the civic life. The common man, however, has practically no hobby even if he can afford it.

FOLK LITERATURE AND PASTORAL SONGS.

Pastoral songs have still a prominent role in the daily life of the villagers. They are full-throated songs by men and women while working in the field at transplantation of paddy or harvesting the crops. The theme is generally a love episode or a famous battle of the past. Sweet and melodious, they are often in the form of question and answer. They are important for the musical value. These unrecorded lyrics are handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Many songs have been lost.

With the advent of spring in the month of March men begin to sing a type of song full of mirth, joy and rather suggestive appeal

to women. The song is known as *holi*. This is sung till the festival of *holi* at the end of the month of *Falgun*. *Holi* is not sung in any other season. With the *rabi* harvest ready in the field in the month of *Chaitra*, another type of song, known as *chaiti*, are sung. These songs weave a thread round the romantic love of the newly wed couples or lovers. This goes on till the harvesting and threshing of *rabi* crop. It marks the close of the cycle of harvest and a fresh start is made by sowing new crops which require water after a few weeks or so. Songs sung during this season, i.e., before the rains set in in the month of *Asarh* and also during the rainy season, viz., *Shravan* and *Bhado*, depict cloudy scenes, torrential rains and thunders of the cloud. This is known as *kajli*. Women have their own set of songs for this season. They often sing on *Jhoolas* (swings) and sing *kajli*. Sometimes when rains are delayed the women folk come out of the village in groups and sing songs invoking the pleasure of the rain-gods. This is known as *jata-jatin*.

Labourers, both men and women, are fond of singing while paddy transplantation goes in the field. They have special type of songs for this occasion. Women sing songs full of humour and jokes while men sing romantic amorous songs inviting their sweet-hearts to come and join them in the pleasant weather. A special type of song, known as *birha*, indicating the pangs of separation between lover and a loved, is also sung. Generally the singers go on composing when they sing. There is not much of established version. These songs are not very rhythmic and methodical.

Quite a number of pastoral and folk songs are very good example of imagination. There are some long descriptive songs delineating chivalrous character of some imaginary personality of the past ages. Stories of Alha and Kunwar Vijayee are available in book form. They and the songs of *loric* are very popular. Many villagers have got one or two persons who remember the whole story in verse by heart. Sometimes they go on singing such songs for the whole night at the pressing demands. They sing them at the pitch of the voice and louder the tone the better is its effect on the audience. They are not accompanied by any musical instrument. Nothing is known about the composer of these verses.

The songs of one or two remarkable authors, such as Bhikhari Thakur, in people's everyday language have become very popular. These songs are about village life, methods of cultivation and some undesirable practices, such as early marriage, dowry system, etc. They have acted as a powerful satire on many habits of the villagers. Another important writing is the anonymous '*Bideshia Natak*'.

Cinema songs have gained popularity and they seem to be slowly supplanting the folk-songs. The younger generation does not appear to be impressed by the old music in comparison with the new tilt in cinema songs. Cinema songs have not, however, got a lasting

hold. One popular song is soon replaced by another. The old folk-songs are nearer to the life of the villagers and give a truer picture of their life, culture and habits.

A tendency to enrich folk-literature in regional languages has been noticed in recent few years among the poets of acknowledged status. They have attempted to produce folk-songs, but their creations are easily distinguishable from the old folk-songs which are unsophisticated and natural expression of a villager's sentiments.

THE PLANTERS AND ZAMINDARS.

As has been mentioned before there were a large number of European planters and a number of big and small zamindars in Champaran district. The majority of the European planters left the district with the liquidation of indigo plantation. A handful had lingered for some years more as gentlemen-farmers or zamindars but they have also now gone away. The institution of zamindari was abolished by statutory law and most of the zamindars are now farmers. Bettiah Raj which had the largest zamindari in the district was under Court of Wards for decades and now the Bettiah Raj has escheated to the State Government. Although these institutions stand liquidated now, there is no doubt that they had contributed a lot towards building up the social and economic life of the district which regulates the daily life of the present generation. The European planters had good roads, consolidated holdings and better type of agriculture. They had also encouraged better animal husbandry and sportsmanship. The zamindars and particularly the Bettiah Raj have given most of the charitable and educational institutions of the district. By patronising fine arts, the landlords and particularly the Bettiah Raj had kept up the flow of culture from the past. There is no doubt that some of the landlords had amply fulfilled their social obligations as mentioned in their old *Kabuliats*. The Bar had supplied the intelligent leadership.

This district has always had a certain amount of social and trade contact with Nepal. That mountainous country was opened up by the early Roman Catholic Fathers and British administrators who had mostly kept up the contacts through the soil of Champaran. In the good old days when there was hardly any excise duty there was a considerable trade and commerce with Nepal through the various contact posts in Champaran district. The early postal communication with Nepal was maintained through Champaran. The borders of Nepal were well-defined by fixing up the boundaries in the second decade of the twentieth century only.

GENERAL.

This district has a very good soil and a considerable area of forests. Excepting sugar industries there is no other large-scale manufacture although there are the possibilities of tanning and timber

manufacture on a large scale within the district. The excellent grazing grounds of Champaran ensure a good breed of animals provided other precautions are taken. The hide industry of Champaran has its importance and particularly the kid hide of Champaran has got a great demand abroad. With the availability of cheap power there is no reason why the excellent timber of the forests of Champaran, both hard and soft, cannot open up a manufacturing line. This district has certain prospects for the cultivation of jute. The East Pakistan refugees settled in Bettiah subdivision came from districts of East Pakistan where jute is very commonly grown. The problem of resettlement of the displaced persons is still having its teething troubles, but once that stage is over it could be expected that the settled displaced persons will add to the agricultural prosperity of the district.

The overall prosperity of the district will depend on a simultaneous and healthy development of both urban and rural areas. There has already been a certain influence of the upgrading of some of the rural areas through the efforts of the Community Projects, National Extension Service Blocks and a certain amount of decentralisation of administration to the Anchals and Gram Panchayats. The availability of cheap electricity in the rural areas will go a great way in upgrading the life of the inhabitants in the rural areas. The district lives in the villages and the ruling force of the villages is in the hands of the women-folk. The ultimate problem is to educate and to enlighten the women-folk if the general upgrading of the community is to be solved. The Christian Missionaries were able to upgrade the life of the women of the Christian Church. Education has already been spread to the villages and there is no doubt that the beginning has been made to educate the women-folk but there is still a lot to be done. The Gandak Project which has now been decided upon with the consent of Nepal Government will bring more irrigation, electricity, industrialisation and a general upgrading of all that constitute life. With the opening of the communications and particularly the air passage to Nepal through Raxaul, this district will play a large role in maintaining the good relationship of India with Nepal. There is already a plan to extend the railways to Bhaisanlotan which will lose its sylvan and rustic grandeur with the implementation of the Gandak Project.