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SOCIAL ECONOMY OF A POLYANDROUS PEOPLE



SOCIAL ECONOMY OF A POLYANDROUS PEOPLE

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FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

By Shri K. M. Munshi, Former Governor, Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Saksena's book throws considerable light on certain communities of the Himalayas. They live in Jaunsar-Bawar in the Dehra Dun district of Uttar Pradesh. This study, made largely from the sociological point of view, is fascinating and paves the way for further studies.

II

Two years ago, when I toured Jaunsar-Bawar in the Dehra Dun district of Uttar Pradesh, as well as some parts of Tehri-Garhwal, I came across a strange community; a fossil of the age of the *Mahabharata*. I also went to a couple of their villages, visited some of their shrines, witnessed their dances, and collected some information about them.

These interesting communities live in the lower Himalayas at a height from 3000 to 7000 feet. All of them, except the Kinnars, are divided into four castes: the Brahmanas; the Rajputs, who call themselves Khasas, a name which they share with many communities in Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh; the Doms, grouped in several castes, of which the Bajgis, or professional musicians, are the most important; and lastly, the Koltas, the descendants of the aborigines, the survivors of the race belonging to the pre-historic Koll culture.

The areas in which these communities live are Jaunsar-Bawar in the Dehra Dun district; the Upper Rawin Jaunpur in the Tehri-Garhwal district; the Upper Rampur Bushar in the Himachal Pradesh; the Spitti and Lohal in the Punjab.

Though these communities generally share a common way of life, each of them has traditions and customs peculiar to itself. Their way of life is in many ways antediluvian.

These communities are therefore of considerable anthropological and sociological importance. If they were to be studied in the context of the different cultural strata recorded in our ancient literary works, and particularly the *Mahabharata*, they would certainly throw considerable light on the early stages of the social evolution of man, particularly in India.

There is a 'staggering' of cultures in India. Its tradition of toleration has so far enabled pockets of communities with widely divergent ways of life to live happily in isolated self-sufficiency. These pockets represent different stages of culture, often removed from each other by centuries in point of evolution. Yet there is an undercurrent of harmony running between them and those parts of the country where life is more fluid.

The most interesting features of the life of these communities are their pantheon, their polyandrous customs and their history.

Ethnologically, the Khasas appear to be Aryans and they call themselves Rajputs. Inter-marriage between the Brahmans and these Rajputs is very frequent ; thus both of them constitute one group.

Most of the gods worshipped by these communities are of Hindu origin, though several have been metamorphosed beyond recognition. Their principal deity, however, is Mahasu.

III

Mahasu, with his three brothers, lived in Kashmir. Ages ago, a demon called Kirbir Dana, was spreading terror throughout Jaunsar-Bawar. As in the epic story of the Pandavas, the demon was eating up the members of the family of a Brahman. His name was Una Bhat. Ultimately with his three sons and one daughter, he fled to the forests on the banks of the Yamuna, planning to take his revenge on the demon.

One night the Mahasu brothers appeared to Una Bhat in a dream and advised him to proceed to Kashmir and invoke their aid. Una set out for Kashmir the next day and ultimately succeeded in persuading the Mahasus to come to Jaunsar-Bawar and destroy the demon. Una was told by the Mahasus to return to his own country and, as a parting gift, the Chalda (that is, the moving), one of the four Mahasus, gave Una a handful of rice, an earthen vessel and his own staff and told him that when he was hungry, he had only to strike the staff on the earth to find the rice ready cooked in the vessel.

On the way, Una arrived at Mendrat, where, according to the instructions given, he threw some rice into the Tons river, rendering the demon Kirbir harmless.

On the first Sunday after his arrival in Jaunsar-Bawar, Una yoked an unbroken heifer to a plough and had it driven by an unmarried boy, who had never driven the plough before. As he had been told, the plough turned golden and the share silver. Five furrows were ploughed, in each of which a stone image appeared. These represented the four Mahasus and their mother Deolari. The first to appear was Basak, with his thigh transfixed by a plough share. Then came Pibasaka with a wound in his ear ; then Baitha with an injured eye. Chalda alone appeared hale and hearty.

The first three remained in temples dedicated to them, while Chalda had to be taken in procession from one *Khut* to another.

Deolari, the mother, appeared in the fifth furrow and a temple for her image was erected in a field.

Una worshipped the Mahasus and ordered his youngest son, who became a *deopujari*, to serve them. The second son was directed to strike a gong and became a Rajput, while the third son became a musician, or Bajgi. The two Mahasus, Basak and Pibaska, left for Garhwal, while Baitha and Chalda remained behind. The temple at Henol is dedicated to Baitha, while Chalda is always on the move.

A friend of mine, who had been to the Temple of Mahasu

at Henol, described it to me. It had four compartments, one leading into the other. The first room contains an altar; in the next are arranged *dhols* and *ransingas*, the drums and bugles, the sacred musical instruments which are played upon by the Bajgis at most social and religious functions. The third room contains a multitude of images of the Hindu gods. In the fourth, Mahasu is enthroned with his three brothers and one sister, all their images being made of metal.

I also went to a temple of Mahasu in one of the villages I visited. It was a wooden structure, as temples all over India must have been before stone came to be used twenty five hundred years ago. I crawled up a very narrow wooden staircase into the one-roomed shrine, entering it by a very low, narrow door. A number of symbols, images and musical instruments were placed all round the wall. In the centre of the room was Mahasu, surrounded by a crowd of images.

In every temple, Mahasu has attached to him a *pujari*, the man who does *puja* (worship) and a *thani* or *mali*, through whom he speaks to his people. The *mali's* job is very strenuous. When he has to invoke Mahasu, he first goes on a fast; then, sitting in front of the deity he prays. Slowly, the *mali* starts trembling and his head shakes till he is almost unconscious. Mahasu then takes possession of him and speaks through his mouth.

I tried to induce the *mali* of the temple I visited to invoke Mahasu for my benefit. But I had no luck. After a certain amount of effort he told me that Mahasu did not want to speak to me. It was very unkind of him; perhaps I was not fit to be spoken to.

IV

In most of the areas, apart from Mahasu, the favourite deities are the Pandava brothers, the heroes of the *Mahabharata*. Time seems to have stood still in these parts of the Himalayas after the Pandavas climbed to Heaven by

Satopantha, a snowpeak near Mana, the last village on the Indo-Tibetan border.

Many important spots in these areas have associations with one or the other of the five sons of Pandu. Some of the Khasa villages have temples dedicated to the Pandavas, called *Pandavonki-chauri*, and the courtyards of most of the temples are called *Pandavon-ka-Angan*.

Bhima is the most popular of the Pandava deities of this region, all of whom are very touchy and ready to take offence at the slightest lapse or misdeed.

The main feature of the social and religious festivals of these areas is the Pandava Dance, in which most of the people in these villages join. The persons who act as the five Pandavas are held in high esteem, and the Bajgis, the musician, play a very important part on such occasions.

Bhima, as the hero of the festivals, has to perform prodigies of dance heroics on such occasions. The man who impersonates him is selected with great care, and he has to prepare himself for the part for days beforehand. During the dance, his strength, endurance and agility, are severely tested. It is believed that on such occasions, Bhima himself takes possession of the dancer, who, after the festival, enjoys the privilege of wearing a silver bracelet as a mark of distinction.

How the communities of Jaunsar-Bawar and the adjoining areas came to worship the Pandavas, is a very interesting question. No doubt, after his retirement, their father, Pandu, lived in the Himalayas with his wives, Kunti and Madri. The Pandavas were also born there, possibly near the place called Pandukeshwar, on the way to Badrinath. When Kunti enjoined that all the five brothers should take Draupadi as their common wife—a flagrantly unorthodox affair in Aryavarta—she may have been following the custom of the Himalaya regions where she had lived with her husband.

The most intriguing parts of these areas are the few villages called Fateh-parvat, in the upper Rawain of Jaunpur, in the Tehri-Garhwal district. Their presiding deity is Duryodhan.

He is the god and king of the people, and is offered tribute. Here his enemies, the Pandavas, are the demons.

In Fateh-parvat, Duryodhan is true to his reputation. If you visit any of its villages and fail to offer a buffalo, a goat, or even a rupee, to Duryodhan, he will see to it that you suffer some permanent injury. He even orders his people, through the *thani* of course, to steal a buffalo, from the neighbouring villages or to kill someone.

Duryodhan in life was highly political-minded and even as a god, his tastes have remained unchanged.

During the last general elections, party organisers approached the headman of these villages for votes. The community was in distress. They had never heard such importunities before, and they did not know exactly what they should do. So the *pujari* invoked Duryodhan, who, through the *thani* commanded that all the votes should be cast for a particular candidate.

It is difficult to explain why, of all the heroes of the *Mahabharata*, the wicked Duryodhan came to be worshipped. Did some of his adherents escape to the Himalayas after the battle of *Bharata* and found this colony ? Or, was there a war between the Pandava-worshipping Khasas and the Fateh-parvat Khasas, who, having won a victory, foreswore allegiance to the gods of the enemies and accepted their enemy, Duryodhana, as their guardian deity ?

V

The marriage customs of the Khasas and other members of the communities are most interesting. They observe Manu's Law. *Anuloma* marriage, *i.e.*, a marriage between a high-caste man and a lower-caste woman, is valid ; *pratiloma* marriage, *i.e.*, a marriage between a high-caste woman and a lower-caste man is ordinarily not ; at the same time, in many of these areas, *pratiloma* is permitted between the Brahmans and the Rajputs.

All the Khasa areas of U.P., Himachal Pradesh and East Punjab, are polyandrous. In Jaunsar-Bawar, the bride

generally goes through a marriage ceremony with the eldest of the brothers, but becomes the wife of them all. There is both polyandry and polygyny. The eldest brother, however, is the master of the household. While in his presence, the younger brothers do not even talk to the common wife. Whatever domestic felicity they enjoy with her has to be found under the open skies.

In Bawar, on the other hand, every brother has a day allotted to him for consorting with his wife. The wife, however, has an alternative. She can get rid of her multiple masters by going away to her parents ; then, after seeking divorce from the first set of husbands and with the consent of her parents, she is free to choose any other man she likes. The new bridegroom, however, has to pay a bride-price to the husbands.

Among the Khasas of Jubbal and Girupar in Sirmaur District, polyandry is restricted only to two brothers. If there is a third, he must marry another wife.

The impact of modern civilisation is putting a great strain on the people of Jaunsar-Bawar. Recently, I heard of an educated Khasa girl refusing to live with any of the brothers of the person she had married. This young woman insisted that, if in accordance with custom she was called upon to live with them, she would return to her father's house and live with any lover she likes.

I heard another report of a curious case. A boy from Jaunsar-Bawar came to a school in Dehra Dun. The whole class began to tease the poor boy by asking him : "How many fathers have you got ?" He innocently answered "Four" and his class mates made fun of him.

VI

In an area in the Himachal Pradesh adjacent to the Khasa area lives the community of Kanowars or Kinnars. Ethnologically, they are different from the Khasas and have an interesting cultural pattern of their own. The spiritual heads of the community are the Lamas. The eldest of the brothers

is not only the husband of a common wife but the owner of all the property of the family. No partition of the family property is permitted and the younger brothers have no rights over the children.

The Kinnars thus have one common trait with the Jaunsaris, polyandry. True to their classical description, *ashva-turaga-mukhah*, their faces are long and not unlike horses. At the Vaishakhi fair, when they hold a community dance, every Kinnar wears the mask of a horse. The Kinnar women have very sweet, musical voices, which explains the word *Kinnara-kanthi*—musically-throated like a Kinnari—so often used in Sanskrit literature.

Kalidasa has left admiring references to the dances and songs of the Kinnars. The *Harivamsa* refers to them as dressing themselves in flowers and leaves. Bana has described them as experts in music and dance, and even to-day, the Kinnars sing, dance and smile and possess a happy temperament.

There is, however, no polygyny amongst the Kinnars. If one of the brothers marries another woman, he has to go out of the family and live separately.

The Kinnar women work very hard. With polyandry, and no polygyny, a large number of girls remain unmarried and become *jomos*, that is, become dedicated to the *devata* (deity). If a *jomo* marries, the husband has to pay a fine to the *devata*. Their parents value these *jomos* very much for the household work that they do while unmarried.

The Kinnars are a highly moral tribe, and, I was told, that the women, in particular, are very loyal to their husbands. Evidently, they have been well-known for their morality from ancient times, for Bhishma, in the *Shantiparva*, said that they are very moral and can be kept as servants in the *antahpura*, women's apartments.

VII

The Khasas of Jaunsar-Bawar appear to be an ancient

community connected with Indian tradition and history. The *Mahabharata* groups them with other apparently non-Aryan tribes living in mountains. According to the Epic, they dig gold-like ants and live between the Meru and the Mandar mountains on the banks of the river *Sailoda* in a country full of bamboos and canes. We learn from the *Matsya-purana* that there was a lake called *Shailoda* in the Himalayas, west of Kailasa from which flowed the river *Sailodaka*, which ultimately joined the Western Ocean. The river was also known as Chakshushi. The *Purana* also states that the tributaries of the Ganga flowed through the countries of Kukuras, Raundhras, Barbaras, Yavanas, Khasas, Pulikas, Kulaththas and Angalokyas, all of them being practically *mlechchhas*.

The *Markandeya-purana* also refers to the Khasas as *Parvat-asrayinah* (mountain dwellers). In another chapter they are located in the middle of Kurmachala (Kumaon) along with Salvas, Nipas, Sakas, Surasenas etc. Manu also states that several communities, including the Khasas, became degraded from the status of the Kshatriyas to that of the Shudras, because of their omission to perform the sacred rites and not consulting the Brahmans. It is more than likely that the Khasas referred to are the Khasas of the Himalayas who lived in Kumaon and the Jaunsar-Bawar area.

Rajasekhara in his *Kavyamimamsa* has an interesting verse which throws considerable light on the Khasas. It says:

"Your glory is being sung by crowds of women of the city of Kartikeya situated on the Himalayas; the town is resonant with the singing of the Kinnars, living inside the big caves and from where King Sharma-Gupta returned frustrated and humiliated after having been surrendered by Queen Dhruvaswamini to the king of the Khasas."

The incident of Sharma-Gupta is interesting, because the name Dhruvaswaminidevi is the very name of the queen, whom her husband Ram-Gupta, son of Samudra Gupta,

and referred to in the play *Devichandra-guptam*, the fragments of which have been recovered, surrendered to Shaka King. If this verse does not contain merely a transposed echo of the same incident, it points to the king, the Khasas having their capital at Kartikey-nagar in the Ḥimalayas. It must also be remembered that the Kinnaras is a tribe residing north of Jaunsar-Bawar, providing interesting riddles which have thrown considerable light on the history of the Khasas.

The Khasas also played an important role in the annals of Kashmir, as mentioned in the *Rajatarangini*. Mr. R. S. Pandit, in his translation of that work, wrote that the Khasas of Kashmir are a hill-tribe inhabiting the region to the south and the west of the Pir Panjal range. Sir George Grierson has also discussed the origin of the Khasas in his *Linguistic Survey of India*.

In the songs of Jaunsar-Bawar, the feats of one Nanteram, a local general, who fought the Muslims near Kalsi and Paonta, are referred to. Nanteram was killed in the battle, but he saved the country from the invading army, by adopting the guerilla tactics from the jungles. This reminds one of the disastrous expedition sent by Muhammad-bin-Tughluq against Kurmachala, the old name of Kumaon. "It is evident," says Dr. A. M. Hussain, "from the Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, that the hills of Kumaon served as the place of refuge for the rebels against the government of Delhi. Some of the rebels may have entered the Khasa tract and adopted the manners and customs of the locality".

These are very interesting riddles and require to be thoroughly studied.

Dr. Saksena has made a very valuable contribution to the study of the interesting people of Jaunsar-Bawar.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my Jaunsari students, who represent the dawn of learning in an extremely isolated and backward mountainous region, since they are the first generation of young men who have ever been admitted to a college in the history of Jaunsar-Bawar. The courtesy and warm hospitality extended to me when they frequently invited and escorted me to their village homes, situated on mountain slopes, proved to be extremely fruitful in establishing very cordial relations with their village-folk. The willing and understanding cooperation given to me by their parents and other members of the community enabled me to acquire a keen insight into their socio-economic life, without which it would have been impossible to write this book.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not mention how grateful I feel to my teacher and friend, Professor D. P. Mukerjee, Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology, Lucknow University (now Chairman of the Department of Economics, Aligarh University), who spared no pains in going through the MSS and offering valuable suggestions which have been fully incorporated in the book; and to the late Dr. D. N. Majumdar, Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology, Lucknow University, who has also been my teacher and colleague and has done pioneer work in this field, for giving me the full benefit of his experience and knowledge.

In the end, it is my privilege to thank Sri K. M. Munshi, Rajyapal, Uttar Pradesh, for the interest that he has taken in my work and for having spared some of his valuable time to write an Introduction to the book.

R. N. SAKSENA

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SOCIAL ECONOMY OF A POLYANDROUS PEOPLE

Chapter I

THE HABITAT

OUR STUDY is concerned mainly with Jaunsar-Bawar, a sub-division of the district of Dehra Dun. It constitutes the hilly part of the district. It lies between North latitude 30°31′ and 31°3′30″ and East longitude 77°45′ and 78°7 20″ with an area of 343.5 square miles. It is bounded on the North and the East by Tehri; on the West by the hill states of Bashar, Raiengarh, Tharoch, Jubal and Sirmoor and on the South by the Doon Valley. It is separated from the Sirmoor State by the Tons up to its confluence with the Yamuna near Kalsi.

This region is composed, entirely, of a succession of hills and mountains, so that "there is not a single spot of one hundred yards of level ground in the whole *parganah.*" The characteristic physical feature of the region is the ridge separating the drainage area of the Tons from that of the Yamuna. Commencing from Haripur Byas near Kalsi it runs west of Deoban and thence in a north-easterly direction to the Kharamba peaks above Lokar and finally enters Tehri and loses itself in the spurs of Bandarpunch. From the main range, ridges are thrown off on either side towards the great rivers. Each of these ridges also gives off lateral spurs, the hollows between which form the beds of torrents that feed the numerous tributary streams of the Yamuna on the east and the Tons on the west. The mountains are conspicuously rough and precipitous. The ravines are, as a rule, deep and steep in their descent, often ending in dark chasms, sometimes wooded, but mostly exhibiting bare faces of precipitous rock covered with fine wiry grass. Life in such a region is naturally hard and existence is a continuous struggle with the elements.

The two main lines of drainage are the Tons and the Yamuna. The Tons rises north of the Jamnotri peak in the

Har-Ki-Doon. It receives the water of the Kuni Gad, the Chatra Gad, the Dharmi Gad and the Pabar stream in a westerly course of about 50 miles. The Gads are small tributaries which descend in a series of small rapid slopes and carve out their own narrow channels through the masses of hard rocks, carrying great boulders along with them in the fury of their downward rush. The beds of these rivers are for the most part narrow and precipitous gaps between the mountains though here and there they open out into wide and fertile areas, where alluvial soil has been deposited. The river Tons thence turns almost due south between *khuts* Bawar and Deoghar. The Dhara Gad, the Benal Gad, the Mainder Gad and several other small streams join the river Tons in its southward flow till it meets the Yamuna at Kalsi.

The source of the river Yamuna is in Jamnotri glacier and it enters the district at a point in *khut* Bonder, twelve and a half miles due east of Deoban. It receives several small streams like the Riknar Gad, the Amlawa and the Chamer Gad. The Riknar Gad divides Bawar from Ram Serai and the Khutnu Gad flows through the Mohna and Bawar *khuts* of Jaunsar-Bawar. The rivers and streams afford a cheap means of carriage for timber felled in the forests. Mountains impose severe handicaps upon transport lines and the beds of the rivers alone permit of access into the district.

Climate: This region is situated within the temperate zone and is remote from the sea. The sea has thus no influence on its climate. Owing to the influence of the snow-clad Himalayas in the north, the distance from the Equator is immaterial. The factors which determine climate here are the direction and height of the mountain ranges and the nature of the soil.

Generally speaking, the hilly area of the Chakrata Tehsil has two very distinct types of climate—cold and moderately cold. The extreme northern portion has the cold climate and the southern moderately cold climate. The summer is short and the winter is very severe in the hilly areas. De-

cember, January and February are the three months when there is a heavy snowfall and the temperature sometimes falls below the freezing point.

The range of temperature is greatly influenced by the physical conditions. The climate of the river valleys is always trying. From March to the end of October, except during or shortly after heavy rains, the heat is always excessive. In the cold weather it is more pleasant in the valleys than on the hills, except during or shortly after rain when they are liable to be shrouded in heavy mist. In open situations above the valleys the climate is more equable though the heat is always excessive in May and June.

Rainfall: The economic importance of rainfall in India is of the highest order in as much as rainfall is an imperative necessity of agriculture. The prosperity of the people depends on the success or failure of the Monsoon. The timely rains are very important.

The rainfall of a given locality generally depends on its surroundings. The forest clad regions have a greater rainfall. Open localities surrounded by lofty mountains get less rain than the high ridges and their outskirts.

The monsoon rains are heavy in the vicinity of the high hills and become lighter as the distance from them increases. The preliminary showers of monsoon are very heavy and those showers do enormous damage by eroding the dry surface. The heaviest rainfall recorded in this region, in the last ten years, was 108.49 inches in 1943. The lowest, during the last ten years, was 72.3 in 1944. The average rainfall of Chakrata is 70 inches.[1]

On account of the rapid slope of the hill-sides the rain quickly drains off and a long rainless interval is exceedingly injurious to the crops.

Situation of Villages: The villages are generally situated on spurs running from the middle and lower level of the ridges, in the midst of cultivated terraced fields. Such sites are neither too hot nor too cold and windy like the hill tops.

[1] See Appendix II.

They are elevated, well-drained, and healthy. Another consideration in determining the village site is the supply of drinking water. A spring or water-hole suffices to meet the requirements of the village. A village may be found situated on the same level as the water-supply or a little higher. A village should have access to good forest land and also to irrigated fields in the valley. Thus a village may be seen covering the whole of the slope, from the top of the hill to the valley below.

The village lands can be distributed into three subdivisions: (1) the upper reaches which consist of forests and pastures, where they maintain their *chaoni* or cattle-sheds during summer; (2) the middle sub-region formed by dry, gentle sloping land which is cultivated by terracing; and (3) the lower sub-region in the valley near the banks of a stream where they maintain their irrigated fields.

The major portion of the cultivated area of these villages lies between 3000 ft. to 5000 ft. above sea-level. The number of villages in Jaunsar-Bawar is 383 and they contain the entire population of this region. There are only 23 villages having a population of 300 or more persons. These villages are re-grouped into 39 *khuts*.

A village of Jaunsar-Bawar is entirely self-sustaining. It grows its own food; it makes its own implements and domestic utensils; it weaves its own woollen cloth; and looks to the outside world for little more than its requirements of salt, iron, sugar, kerosene oil and cotton cloth. Even the cotton cloth is made locally in some villages and instead of kerosene oil the people burn torch-wood, locally known as *doee*. Another peculiar feature of the village community is that the majority of the artisans and labourers are the functionaries of the village, who are paid a customary fixed share at each harvest by all the families to which they are attached. Indeed this isolation due to the self-sufficient economy of the village has been so complete that even the dialect changes from one village to another. The result is so marked that few people in Jaunsar can

understand the dialect of Bawar and *vice versa*.

Since the whole community depends on agriculture for its livelihood, the geographical factors, such as composition of the soil, the situation of the fields and the water-supply are of vital importance to them. For example, the northern slopes retain more moisture and due to less rains are subject to little soil-erosion, and so they yield a better out-turn than the southern slopes which are exposed to the direct heat of the sun and heavy rainfall. Similarly, one side of the hill is generally sunny and the other shady. These sides are locally known as *tapli* and *sailee* respectively. The *tapli* is preferable due to the heat of the sun which is essential for the growth of vegetation and, only when the former has been fully utilised, is cultivation started on the shady side.

Life in mountainous regions is hard. Every moment of life is a struggle with the elements. Yet the tremendous difficulties of the environment have not been able to suppress the initiative and adventurous spirit of man. On the other hand they have evoked a high degree of adaptive skill and uncommon vigour, which is responsible for the self-sufficient agricultural economy of the region. The picturesque terrace fields on the slopes bear testimony to the extraordinary degree of strenuous toil and resourcefulness. But the rigours of such a life have been greatly mitigated by the development of a community life of mutual aid and labour, of which the village is a unit and the hub of all activities. Cooperation in economic undertakings and periodical communal engagements of feasts and festivities form, even today, the salient features of the daily life of the Jaunsaris. This cooperation is a form of voluntary association for the sake of better realisation of economic possibilities, while, at the same time, reducing the monotony and tedium of daily routine. The economic limitations imposed by the meagre supply of land available for cultivation and the inhospitable soil requiring a large number of helping hands have brought forth a deep sense of cohesion and mutual obligation among all members of the community, while among the members of a family

the same feeling is largely responsible for the complete absence of male jealousy noticed in the practice of fraternal polyandry. The same attitude of fellow-feeling and common interest is displayed by the people when men, women and children of all ranks and social strata sing, dance, eat and drink together at fairs and festivals.

Similarly, the hardships of economic life have completely influenced the social life and customs of the people, who have been forced to adopt a system of family life in keeping with the demand for joint labour within a village. The practice of polyandry is the outcome of this demand. In a region where nature is extremely hard to exploit, it is difficult for an individual to maintain his independent family in the modern sense of the word. A Jaunsari woman can thus be conveniently looked after by a group of brothers who own her as their common wife. The obligations of a polyandrous life have also placed a serious check upon emigration. It is very rare among the Jaunsaris to cross the river Yamuna and go to the plains for service or any other occupation.

Houses: The Jaunsari enjoys the reputation of sinking all his fortune in the construction of his house and in the ornaments. The houses are substantial structures, consisting of two to three storeys. The walls of the ground floor are either built of stones and mud plaster or alternating layers of masonry and stout beams of *deodar*, often a square foot or more in section. The upper storey is made of *deodar* wood and is essentially a cubicle or rectangular wooden box divided into two or three compartments, with sloping roofs at the top. In Jaunsar the roofs are made of slabs of quartzite hewn out of rocks; while in Bawar the roofs often consist of square or rectangular wooden boards and bark chipped off the trees. The quartzite slabs are mostly small pieces irregularly placed over the wooden ceiling consisting of planks placed on angle-beams, in which long nails are driven at various places to prevent the stones from slipping down. In the case of wooden roofs of Bawar, a roof has often to be weighted with stones to prevent pieces of wood

being blown away. The wooden pieces are not finely shaped and are placed two or three thick to make a water-tight roof. In most of the houses, there is also an underground cellar, covered with wooden planks, which is used for storing grain and other spare things. The houses cost much in time and labour and are carefully maintained by the people. The cost may vary from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 8,000 depending on the size of the house. The outer front walls of the houses are also carved and painted in red and white.

The ground storey has usually a verandah in front of the house, while the upper floor may have a verandah or a covered platform, called *chuja*. The ground floor is reserved for animals—sheep, goats and cattle. The people live immediately above their cattle-shed. A small square opening in the corner of the wooden floor of each floor is cut, through which the people climb by means of a ladder or more generally by means of a log in which steps have been cut out. The ceilings are just high enough to allow a man to stand on the floor. The windows are small apertures, and there are two or three small openings in the roof, which can be opened or closed by sliding the quartzite piece over them. If there are two apartments, one is used for sleeping and the other as kitchen. In the case of three apartment houses, the outermost is used for receiving guests. There are also certain forms of rules and etiquette connected with the house situations. No *Dom* is allowed to enter the living apartments. He must remain at the ground floor. No person is allowed to sleep on a cot. If in case of serious illness or child birth it had to be done, the patient must be removed to the ground floor. There is also a raised platform on the wooden floor on one side, which is specially meant for guests who have to be received with honour and respect.

The construction of a house is always a great social event. Since the houses are mostly built of *deodar* timber, the wood has to be brought from forests or hill-tops, which is beyond the capacity of any single individual. Hence, an invitation is issued to the whole village and on the eve of the expedition

a feast is given to all those who have assembled and is followed by folk-dances. Thus, after having celebrated the occasion, they start next morning and bring all the required *deodar* wood from the forests for the person concerned. At times the distance covered may be ten to fifteen miles and the heights involved really great. But all the hardships and labour involved are willingly shared by the whole village community.

Chapter 2

THE PEOPLE

THE PEOPLE of Jaunsar-Bawar call themselves Khasa. But the Khasas do not constitute the entire population of this region. Closely akin to them are the Brahmans and marriage between the two is possible and quite common. In the lower scale of their social stratification are the *Doms*. They are more or less social out-caste and suffer from various handicaps. Ethnically they can also be regarded as constituting a separate group. Their total number is 18,000 out of a total population of 58,469.

The Khasas are Rajputs. Their physical features—fair complexion, tall stature, aquiline nose and well defined features of the face—easily distinguish them from their neighbours, the Garhwalis. The Khasas have always been referred to as a very powerful race who came at a very early period from Central Asia and who were supposed to have left their name in Kashgar, Kashkara, the Hindu-Kush, Kashmir and in the colonies bearing similar root names in the hill area extending from Kashmir to Nepal. There is a theory that after an early swarm of Indo-Aryans had occupied the mountainous region to the south of Hindu-Kush, a later swarm of Aryan-speaking people, impelled by some ethnic upheaval, or driven forward by the change of climate in Central Asia, made their way into India through Gilgit and Chitral and established themselves in the Indo-Gangetic plain, which came to be known as Madhyadesh of the post-Vedic tradition. Here their contact with the Dravidians was established; here the Vedas were composed; and here was the whole structure of orthodox ritual and usages built up. While the historical events mentioned above are more or less established, the effects of the earlier wave or waves of immigration have to be inferred from certain traits and vestiges, chiefly social, cultural and linguistic. We will have

occasion to refer to this earlier wave of Aryan settlers to explain the widespread prevalence of polyandry among the Khasas of Jaunsar-Bawar.

The ancient Sanskrit literature is full of references to the Khasas from which we can infer that in the Northern Himlayas were found the Daradas, Kashmiras, Kambojas, Gandharas, Chinas, Sakas, Yavanas, Hunas, Nagas, Khasas and Kiratas. There is also reason to suppose that the Nagas, Kiratas and Khasas entered India by the same route as the Aryans, and that the Kiratas were the first to arrive; then the Nagas followed by the Khasas.[1] Frequent mention has been made of a tribe whose name is usually spelt Khasa (खश), with variants such as Khas (खस), Khasha (खष), and Khasira (खशीर). The earlier we try to trace them the further north-west do we find them. There are many legends connecting the name Khasa with cannibalism, said to have been practised in the mountains in the extreme north-west of India. We may recall a legend regarding a woman named Khasa of which the most popular version may be found in the *Vishnu-Purana*. Kasyapa to whom is also attributed the origin of the country of Kashmir had numerous wives. Of these Krodhavasa became the mother of the cannibal Pisacha and Khasa of the Yakshas and Rakshasa. These Yakshas are also mentioned in *Bhagwat Purana*. To this we may add Pliny's remarks:[2] "next the Attacori (Uttarakurus) are the nations of the Thuni and the Porcari; then come the Casiri (Khasiras), an Indian people who look towards the Scythians and feed on human flesh." Thus the Khasas have not been free from the imputation of cannibalism. And they have always been regarded with suspicion by the Vedic Aryans as outside their fold, though contact has been maintained with them. The *Mahabharat*, the *Harivamsa* and the *Puranas* all mention the Khasas as a tribe inhabiting the north-

[1] *Gazetteer of the Himalayan District of the North-Western Provinces*, Part II, p. 363.

[2] McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, p. 113.

west Himalayas with whom contact was maintained but not on very friendly terms. Manu mentions the Khasas as the offspring of outcast Kshatriyas. He also says that Kambojas, Sakas, Parodas, Pahlavas, Chinas, Kiratas, Dardas, and Khasas are those who became outcast through having neglected their religious duties.[3]

Kalhan's chronicle of Kashmir, the *Rajtarangini*, is full of references to the Khasas, who were always a continuous source of trouble to the rulers of Kashmir. In this connection it may be mentioned that while the name Kashmira (Kashmir) is, by popular tradition, associated with the famous legendry saint Kasyapa, it is possible that Khasa and Khasira are etymologically interrelated.

We may, therefore, agree with the conclusions arrived at by Grierson: "... in the extreme northwest of India, on the Hindu-Kush and the mountainous tracts to the south, and in the Western Panjab there was a group of tribes, one of which was called Khasa, which were looked upon as Kshatriyas of Aryan origin. These spoke a language closely allied to Sanskrit, but with a vocabulary partly agreeing with that of the Eranian Avesta. They were considered to have lost their claim to consideration as Aryans, and to have become Mlechhas or barbarians owing to their non-observance of the rules for eating and drinking observed by the Sanskritic people of India. These Khasas were a warlike tribe, and were well-known to Classical writers, who noted, as their special home, the Indian Caucasus of Pliny."[4]

They apparently penetrated along the southern slopes of the Himalayas as far east as Nepal. Thus the Khakhas of the Jehlam Valley are Khasas; and so are Kanets of the hill country between Kangra and Garhwal and Khosa of Jaunsar-Bawar. Further to the East, in Garhwal and Kumaon, the bulk of the population is called Khasia. In this way we can find a group of people of the Aryan speaking population in

[3] Quoted. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Volume IX, Part IV, p. 5.

[4] *Ibid* p. 7.

the lower Himalayas from Kashmir to Nepal whose ancestry can be traced to the ancient Khasas of the *Mahabharat*. Thus, the whole region also constitutes Atkinson's 'Khasiya tract'. According to Atkinson, Jaunsar-Bawar is a representative Khasiya tract, and "forms a very important link between the almost Hinduized Khasiyas of Kumaon and their brethren converts to Islam on the ethnical frontier in the mountains of the Hindu Kush, and apparently gives customs and practices of the Khasiya race in full force at the present day which distinguished them a thousand years ago."[5]

The language spoken in Jaunsar-Bawar is of an Aryan group, termed as Western Pahari by Grierson. This language is spoken by the people inhabiting the mountainous region, which consists of Jaunsar-Bawar, most of the Simla Hill States with a small portion of the adjoining district of Ambala, Kulu, the states of Suket, Mandi and Chamba, and the eastern end of Kashmir, and consists of a number of dialects, which may be grouped as follows:

Jaunsari	Kiuthali	Mandeali
Sirmauri	Satlaj group	Chameali
Baghati	Kului	Bhadrawah group

Grierson in his comprehensive *Linguistic Survey of India* has traced the origin of Western Pahari and arrived at the definite conclusion that the earliest Aryan-speaking inhabitants of this country, and of whom we have any record, were the Khasas.[6]

It is, therefore, evident that the Jaunsaris, specially the Rajputs and Brahmans, are of Aryan origin. It is possible that there were many waves of Aryan settlers, which preceded the Vedic Aryans and one of them, a warrior group, settled in the mountainous tracts adjoining the Hindu-Kush and later on moved along the southern slopes of the Himalayas,

[5] *Gazeteer of the Himalayan District of the N. W. P.*, Volume XII p. 353.

[6] Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Volume IX, Part IV, p. 373.

but did not fully adopt the Vedic cult. But their close contact with the Aryan Kshatriyas was never lost. And it is this close affiliation with the Rajputs that provided the latter an asylum during the dark Middle Period of Indian History, when they had to suffer great privations and persecution at the hands of Muslim rulers. Throughout these hills, the ruling classes claim to be Rajputs. Among the Simla Hill States the earliest Raja of Sirmaur, which had the common ethnic and geographical frontier with Jaunsar-Bawar for a considerable period, was a Suryavansi Rajput who lived in the latter part of the 11th century, and was succeeded by Subhanes Prakash of Jaiselmer in 1095 A.D. The Ranas of Jubbal, Balsan and the Thakur of Tharoch belong to the same family. Similarly the families of the rulers of Baghal and Bija came from Ujjain, of Darkoti from Marwar, of Bhagat from the Deccan, and of Bashar from Banaras. The ruling families of Mandi and Suket as well as that of Keonthal are Chandravanshi Rajputs who came from Bengal in the 11th century.

These Rajput leaders were accompanied by a band of followers. Their number was increased considerably in later centuries by others fleeing from the plains before Mughul oppression. These intermarried with their Khasa kin, and gradually their own language became mixed with that of the Khasas. This explains the close affinity of the Western Pahari with Rajasthani and differentiates it from the language spoken in the immediate neighbourhood, that is, the Punjab. In Jaunsar-Bawar this absorption of the Rajputs among the Khasas, who were their nearest cousins, went even a step further. The Rajput leaders were not only accompanied by a band of Rajput followers but also by a priestly class, as has always been the case in Indian history. The geographical isolation of the region and their racial affinity forced them to close in their rank and take to intermarriage for self-preservation. The practice of *anulom* has always permitted a girl of lower caste being married into a higher caste. Thus a Rajput girl could always be married into a Brahman

family. But for reasons already mentioned above, the rule of *anulom* was forgotten and the Rajputs and Brahmans, in course of time, formed an endogamous group, though even now a tendency to stick to their own caste in the choice of a mate may be observed.

The Doms: The Doms are probably the descendants of autochthons subjugated by the Khasas. The local code[7] of Jaunsar-Bawar expressly prohibits the Doms from holding land either as tenants or Zamindars. Though this prohibition is no longer recognised by the courts, yet it works with all its sanctions. It is not easy for a Dom to acquire land and cultivate it. The Doms consist of a number of sub-castes—Bajgis, Auzi, Lohar, Badhi, Chamar, Hurkiya and Kolta. These are all functional groups. The Bajgi is the drummer, the Auzi a tailor, the Lohar a blacksmith, the Badhi a carpenter, the Chamar a skin-tanner and cobbler, the Hurkiya a professional dancer and the Kolta a landless labourer.

The Bajgis are the drummers, but at the same time they undertake the work of barbers and tailors. In the social structure of the Doms the Bajgis are on the highest rung in the social ladder and are regarded by the Khasas as socially higher than the rest of the Doms. They are also allowed a considerable amount of social latitude by the higher castes. Their women may wear gold ornaments, while the local code totally forbids the Doms to use them. Next in the hierarchical order among the Doms are the Lohars, whose main function is the making and repair of agricultural tools and implements and other household articles. The next in order of social ranking are the Badhi (carpenter), Chamar and Hurkiya (professional dancer). The social rank of the professional and artisan castes is just below the Bajgis, and some of them are actually Bajgis. But the professional castes and Bajgis form two mutually exclusive marriage and dining groups. Another important difference between the Bajgis and the professional classes is that the latter cultivate land, which

[7] See Appendix I.

they obtain from the Zamindars. The artisans keep the entire produce with them and the land passes from father to son, but when there is no heir, then it reverts to the zamindars, who are the real proprietors. A majority of the artisans are attached to different families who pay them either by the above method of land grant or in kind after each harvest (this payment is called *khaik*), while some of them may carry on their craft independently on individual order.

The lowest rung is occupied by the Koltas. The Koltas are also the most numerous, constituting nearly one-fifth of the total population of Jaunsar-Bawar. These unfortunate people are without a backbone, because the documents which carry the whole force with them are all against them. The customary law, as incorporated in *Dastur-ul-Amal*[8] and *Wajib-bul-Arz*, has denied them the right to hold land in their own right so far. As a result, the Koltas are forced to suffer great privations, and work for their masters from morning till evening under conditions of semi-starvation. And to add to their virtual serfdom is the heavy weight of their indebtedness, which lies so heavily on them that one can easily see the utter futility of any attempt on their part to get rid of it, or even to lighten it due to the exorbitant rates of interest charged by the Zamindars. This interest which is known as Ganth Khulai is of the magnitude of $6\frac{1}{4}$—$6\frac{1}{2}$% per month, that is, 75—78% per annum. Most of the debt can only be regarded as legal fiction, because all the debt entered in the account books is not in the shape of the advance of money made, but includes any amount which has been spent by the zamindar on the Kolta, such as marriage or birth or death in the family of a Kolta. There is also a legitimate ground to question whether accurate entries are made in the books, especially when we know that the Kolta is an ignorant and illiterate man, who lives in perpetual fear of his master. He submissively puts his thumb impression wherever his master desires him to do so. The outcome is that this indebtedness

[8] See Appendix I.

goes on increasing as it is passed on from father to son. And whenever a Kolta makes a bid for his freedom by migrating to another village, he is hauled up before a court of law for the non-payment of his debt, which is practically impossible for him to pay. Thus, for generations together his lot is cast with that of his master and his existence is at the will of those who control his destiny. He is just a tiller of the soil and a hewer of wood without any economic or social freedom of his own. There are three types of Koltas, as follows:

(1) *Khundit-Mundit*—They get themselves clean-shaved whenever there is any death in the family of the zamindar and take part in the mourning ceremonies for some days, usually three to five. They have no property rights.
(2) *Mat*—The chief cause of their serfdom is their heavy indebtedness.
(3) *Sanjayat*—They are a village (panchayat or khut) Kolta. One of their functions is the keeping of death and birth records. They serve their masters by turn.

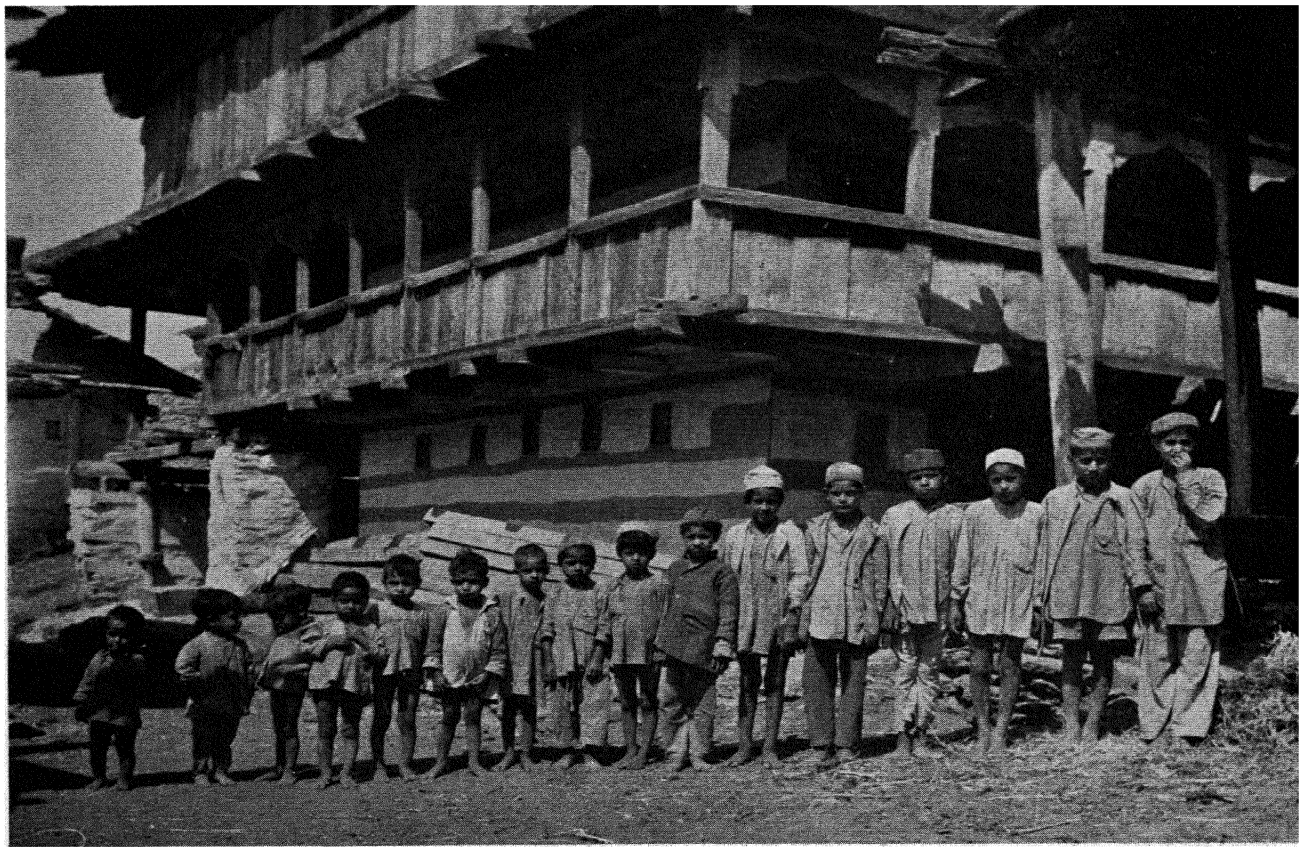
It must be said to the credit of the Doms that they are very honest people who serve their masters, to whom they are indebted, only too well. They dare not repudiate their debt, because they count it as a great sin. The people locally believe that the Sun and the Moon once borrowed large sums from a Dom, but could not repay it due to the high rate of interest and repudiated it. Therefore the Dom troubles them every year by throwing a skin over their face, that is, when the eclipse occurs. So they would not like to repeat the mistake committed by the Sun and the Moon.

Population: The following statement shows the population of Jaunsar-Bawar during the census enumerations of previous decades :









Population of Jaunsar-Bawar

Year	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
1881	25,400	19,717	45,117
1891	28,435	22,262	50,697
1901	28,349	22,752	51,101
1911	30,518	24,294	54,812
1921	31,567	24,056	55,623
1931	31,922	24,852	56,774
1941	32,345	25,305	57,650
1951	32,704	25,765	58,469

It will be observed that the population of this region is almost static and the net increase in the population is showing a downward trend, as would be evident from the following analysis:

Mean Decimal growth rate				(1881—1901)	+	13.3
,,	,,	,,	,,	(1901—1921)	+	8.8
,,	,,	,,	,,	(1921—1941)	+	3.6
,,	,,	,,	,,	(1941—1951)	+	1.4

Another interesting feature of the population is the disparity in sex-ratio which is said to have exerted its influence on the form of marriage and helped polyandry. But this sex disparity is not peculiar to Jaunsar-Bawar alone. In the whole of the district of Dehra Dun, excluding Jaunsar-Bawar where sex disparity already exists, the same disturbed sex-ratio is noticeable. According to the census of 1951 there were 177,423 males and 126,134 females. But certainly polyandry cannot be said to exist in other parts of the district of Dehra Dun.

Thus they are a delicately poised people on the brink of extinction. If we attack their social economy, either through legislation or administrative measures without adequate safeguards, they are destined to meet the fate of a dying race like the Maoris or the Red Indians. Therefore, what is needed is a well-planned policy which aims at improving their living standards but, at the same time, is not revolutionary

as to adversely affect their social organisation. For it is here that the chief danger lies. It has been suggested by some eminent persons who wield considerable influence over public opinion that the salvation of the Jaunsaris lies in their giving up their polyandrous practices and adopting monogamy. The country has of late been swept by a wave of social reform and we have a number of proposals to change customs to bring them up to what is presumed to be the Hindu level. Mention has already been made of the fact that the sex ratio of the population in this region is greatly unbalanced. According to the census of 1951 there were 7 females to 10 males approximately. If we were to enforce monogamy, either through legislation or as a social reform measure, it is bound to give rise to social vice. Prostitution is altogether unknown in this region. Moreover, partition of property due to setting up of monogamous families will prove economically ruinous.

A theory has been advanced that the extremely low birth rate in Jaunsar-Bawar may be attributed to polyandry. It has been suggested that excess of sex indulgence which is inevitable when a woman has to live with many husbands, leads to a kind of sexual atrophy which is responsible for the widespread prevalence of sterility among Jaunsari women. But at the same time we are reminded of the large-scale infection of venereal disease among the people, which is the most important cause of sterility among women. The W. H. O. team, which visited the border of Jaunsar-Bawar in the Sirmoor State, estimated that sixty to seventy per cent of the population were suffering from venereal disease. No such figures are available for Jaunsar-Bawar but here the estimate cannot be said to be in any way lower. The focus of this infection is usually alleged to be Chakrata, where British soldiers had been stationed for a considerably long period when on holiday. Spreading to adjacent villages, the system of village exogamy allowed the infection to spread to the interior. Polyandry as well as the double standard of morality for women claimed more victims, and

thus it went on spreading till it has become a common disease of the people. Sterility, therefore, is mainly due to this affliction among the Jaunsaris. Once stringent scientific measures for combating venereal disease have been adopted in this region and the people convinced of their efficacy, at least one of the major causes of sterility among Jaunsari women will disappear.

Chapter 3

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

AS INTERMARRIAGE between Brahmans and Rajputs is permissible, and as marriage outside the group is taboo, they constitute a single endogamous group; while each separate group among the Doms constitutes a single endogamous group, arranged in hierarchical order. Again, no man is allowed to marry within the same village. This has given rise to a subtle distinction in the status of a woman; as a *rhanti* when she is in her husband's village and as a *dhanti* when she goes back to her own village.

Polyandry is the common form of marriage in Jaunsar-Bawar, where all the brothers are the common husbands of a wife or wives and the family resulting therefrom is patri-local and patriarchal. It is the eldest brother who gets married and all others *ipso facto* become her husbands. But so long as he is in the house they cannot have sex relations with her under the same roof. The usual practice among other brothers is to follow her in the field, or else, to wait for the eldest brother to be absent from home for some work; since all the management of the house-hold is in his hands he is mostly away. To a married woman all the brothers with whom she has to live are known by a single term *khawand*, meaning husband. There is no word in Jaunsari terminology to differentiate her relationship with her husband's brothers. Similarly, all the brothers are called Baba or father by the children born out of this polyandrous union. The only distinction that may be drawn between one brother and another by the children is according to the function they perform. The brother who looks after the goats is called Bakrawa-Baba, one who tends sheep as Bhedava-Baba, and the the third who looks after the cows as Ghair-Baba. If there is a brother who looks after the buffaloes, he is known as Mohishava-Baba, and so on.

It is obvious that the the husbands of a woman are always brothers with the same set of fathers, although if their fathers had shared more than one wife among them, all the brothers need not be the sons of the same mother. These brothers may have one wife among them, or they may have two or three wives, or even more, in common. Thus, we may come across a peculiar combination of polyandry and polygyny. But nowhere has polyandry been given up even with the plurality of wives. All the wives have to share bed with the eldest brother turn by turn, and so it goes on in the strict order of precedence among all other brothers. An interesting case was brought to my notice in which a family consisted of seven brothers, four being the sons of one mother and three of another. All the seven brothers first shared two wives, but subsequently one of them took another wife. Finally, the four brothers from one mother took to the first two wives and the other three from another mother shared the new wife. Thus, a distinction between foster brothers was established. Again, a second wife may be taken if there is great disparity in age between that of the first wife and any other brother. In such cases, either the eldest brother marries again according to custom more for the sake of the younger brother, or the younger brother himself takes a new bride. But that does not mean that polyandrous relationship ceases. In the former case the eldest brother may have access to the new bride and in the latter case the younger brother may retain his sex relationship with the older wife. A second wife may also be introduced in the family if the first wife does not give birth to a child within a reasonable limit of time. In this connection it may be mentioned that a barren woman enjoys a very low social status. She may even be branded a witch and thus incur a great social wrath which may end in her being turned out of her husband's family.

The additional wife is generally a sister of the first one, but sometimes she comes from a different family. In order to avoid quarrels between co-wives a certain ceremony is ob-

served when the newly wedded wife comes into the house. The new wife is made to sit in a corner of the room and the old one sits opposite her. Two elderly women stand by each holding a lighted stick in her hands. The light is held in such a manner that the shadow of one wife does not fall on the other. A third woman joins their hands and each gives the other a silver coin. If there be more than one wife in the house, this ceremony is repeated with each one of them.

Origin of Polyandry: Mention has been already made that the Jaunsaris, particularly the Rajputs and Brahmans, are of Indo-Aryan origins. Though the popular belief is that polyandry has never prevailed among the Aryans, yet a polyandrous belt can be traced extending from Jaunsar-Bawar through Kangra Valley to Hindu Kush and even beyond. This led Briffault to remark: "The practice of polyandrous marriage among the Indo-Aryans of the Punjab is associated with other survivals of a more archaic and tribal order of society, which are culturally identical with usages of the polyandrous people of Hindu-Kush, whence the invaders came to India."[1]

It has been suggested by Mayne that the Indo-Aryans adopted their polyandrous customs from the aborigines or from neighbouring polyandrous people.[2] If this contention were accepted, we get a ready explanation for the prevalence of polyandry on the basis of another hypothesis that the contact of the Rajputs and Brahmans with Doms, who may be regarded as aborigines of this region and were polyandrous, was responsible for their adoption of polyandry. And this process was greatly helped by the force of circumstances, such as geographical isolation and economic hardships of the region. Dr. Majumdar also appears to subscribe to the view: "The culture of the Khasas of Jaunsar-Bawar has been deeply impressed by their contacts with the Doms or the aboriginal element in the population. The Doms belong

[1] Briffault, *The Mothers*, Volume I. p. 691.
[2] Mayne, *A Treatise of Hindu Law and Usages*, p. 79.

mostly to an early racial strain, and their cultural life greatly resembles that of various tribes of pre-Dravidian or early Mediterranean origin."[3] But when a superior culture imposes itself over an inferior culture, it is the latter which is affected more. Nor does this conjecture find support in facts. The polyandrous practice among the Indo-Aryans of the Western Himalayan tract, as there is ample evidence to show, is closely associated with other survivals of a more archaic and tribal order of society.

As Tod declares, polyandry is part and parcel of the social organisation, which is common to the Rajputs and to the peoples of Hindu-Kush and Chitral.[4] Similarly, polyandry is described in Chinese accounts as having been not only customary, but obligatory, among people of Turkistan, that is, the ancient Bactria and Sogdiana, the main habitat of the Indo-Aryans.[5]

Yet working on this 'Aryan' hypothesis, we should not confuse it with the concept of Aryan race of the German scholars and regard it as a racial trait; for as Max Muller remarks, "There is no Aryan race. Aryan is in scientific language utterly inapplicable to race. It means a language and nothing but a language."[6] So it is never intended to suggest that polyandary in Jaunsar-Bawar could be regarded as a racial trait of the Aryans. Setting aside the speculative conjectures concerning a hypothetical 'Aryan' race and confining ourselves to the data of historical documents, we find that the earliest known people, who are referred to as Aryans, are the Medes, the aboriginal inhabitants of Persia, and the Central Asiatic off-shoots of the same race, to which the early or 'Vedic' invaders of India belonged. These historical Aryans were polyandrous. Polyandry is expressly stated to have been a social institution among the Medes. Strabo,

[3] Majumdar, *Fortunes of Primitive Tribes*, p. 149.
[4] J. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Volume I, p. 23.
[5] Quoted Briffault, *The Mothers*. Volume I, p. 680.
[6] Max Muller, *Biographies of Words and the Home of the Aryans*, pp. 89-90.

describing the customs among the Medes, mentions: "The women, on the other hand, reckon it an honour to have many husbands, and to have less than five is accounted a misfortune."[7]

As has been already mentioned in Chapter 2, an early swarm of Aryans, who are referred to as Malekshas by the Vedic Aryans, settled in the mountainous region of Western Himalayas, followed by another wave of Aryan-speaking people who made their way into India through Gilgit and Chitral and established themselves in the Indo-Gangetic plain. Thus a considerable amount of similarity in customs and usages prevailed among the former and the inhabitants of adjoining areas. Biddulph is of the opinion that polyandry was once widely prevalent in Hindu-Kush and Chitral and extended as far as the western shores of the Caspian.[8] This also finds support in the testimony of the Arab traveller, Al-Biruni.[9] It is, therefore, evident that polyandry was an institution not unknown to the early Aryan settlers in the Western Himalayas from where it gradually spread to Jaunsar-Bawar through the Kangra Valley as these people expanded southwards, and is even now the accepted form of marriage among the Rajputs and Brahmans of Jaunsar-Bawar. To quote Briffault again: "The highland regions of the Himalayas are but a residual cultural island which preserves social customs that had once a far more extensive distribution. The institutions which are found there were once common throughout the greater part of Central Asia."[10]

The wide prevalence of polyandry among the Jaunsaris also found support from the peculiarly hard economic circumstances in which the people found themselves in this extremely inhospitable region, involving a tense struggle for existence for every individual. In order to make life successful a system of life in keeping with the demand for joint

[7] Qnoted Briffault, *The Mothers*, Vol. I, p. 602.
[8] J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo-Kush*, p. 82.
[9] Quoted Briffault, *op. cit.* p. 671.
[10] *loc. cit.*

labour within a village had to be evolved. The wide practice of polyandry seems to be the outcome of this demand. In regions where nature is extremely hard to exploit, it is not possible for a single man to earn subsistence for a family, and the woman is also anxious to have a large number of supporters. A Jaunsari woman can thus be conveniently looked after by a group of brothers who own her as their common wife.

The obligations of a polyandrous life have placed a serious check upon emigration. While it is a common practice among the men of an adjoining territory, Garhwal, to leave their home and go to distant towns in the plains for earning their livelihood, it is indeed very rare among the Jaunsaris to cross the river Yamuna in search of a job or some other occupation. Fraternal polyandry also leads to the setting up of an intense form of joint family. Due to the absence of 'male jealousy' and the high status given to the eldest brother all other possible causes of dispute among the brothers, that may split the family, are eliminated.

Marriage: A girl is usually married at the age of eight or nine to a boy three or four years her senior. Betrothal often takes place at a very tender age, even when the child is hardly one year old, by mutual arrangements between the parents. The boy's father accompanied by one or two relatives goes to the bride's house to meet her father. If both parties agree, the boy's father gives a *bandho*, that is, earnest money, of one rupee to the girl's father. This is also called *jeodhan*. The betrothal is thus completed. After this the local Brahmin finds out some auspicious day for marriage. One or two days before the fixed date, the bridegroom's father along with a batch of relatives goes to the bride's house. The bride's people show him their herd of goats out of which he selects a few and slaughters them with his own hands. The boy's father, also gives one or two ornaments to the bride and after enjoying a feast his party comes back. A day later the bride (*jojolty*) is brought to the bridegroom's house with her dowry (*painta*) and accompanied by her relat-

ives and other members of her party. The size of her party (*jajoria*) depends upon the type of the marriage to be celebrated. There are three categories of marriages, but the difference among them is only of degree:

(1) *Bewa*— Bride's party consists of 5-10 persons and there is little or no dowry. It is the simplest form of marriage.

(2) *Boee Daudee*—The party consists of 20-30 persons or even more and the dowry is carried by 8-10 persons (*paintrus*).

(3) *Bajdya*— This marriage is celebrated among the rich Zamindars and *sayanas*. The invitation is extended to the whole *khut*. The bride's party may consist of 500-2,000 persons, or even more. More than 50 goats are slaughtered on such occasions and *ghee*, rice and superior wine (*phool*) are freely served. The dowry is carried by thirty to forty men.

In this connection it is interesting to note that it is the bride's party that goes to the bridegroom's village and all the ceremonies are gone through under the roof of the bridegroom's home. It is also significant to mention that while the bride is known as *jojolty* there is no equivalent term for the bridegroom. It may be due to the fact that since there is not one bridegroom but all the brothers who *ipso facto* become her husbands, no word for 'bridegroom' exists in their terminology.

If the distance is long, the bride is sent beforehand under the escort of one or two persons so that she reaches her destination before the auspicious hour, while the other members of her party take their own time. After reaching the bridegroom's village, the members of the bride's party are requested to sit in front of the house of the bridegroom, and the women of the household or other persons on their behalf

wash the guests' feet with warm water, which is a great gesture of welcome on their part. Then double the number of goats that were slaughtered by the boy's father at her home are killed. The marriage ceremony is quite a simple affair. It consists of a vermilion mark (*tilak*) being applied to the bride and the bridegroom by the Brahman and then the mother-in-law applies a *tilak* to the forehead of the bride. Some hymns in the local dialect are also recited by the priest (*purot*). A *tilak* is also applied to the head of a he-goat, which is then sacrificed and thus the marriage is announced. But now more elaborate Vedic rites are gradually being observed. Not only are the services of a Brahman priest being availed of, but also seven rounds of the sacred fire (*phaira*) are performed, and Sanskrit *mantras* recited as in the case of orthodox Hindu marriages.

The bride's party usually arrives in the evening and the whole marriage ceremony is finished in a very short time—not more than half an hour. The guests are then entertained to a big feast and served with the best wine. The guests spend the whole night singing and dancing. This type of dance is known as Bhiarashaka Nach, that is, indoor dance. It consists of each person dancing to the tune of some local music turn by turn in a crowded room. Early next morning at about 9 a.m. they are served with tea and meal. Then they start another type of outdoor folk dances, putting on a special dress (*juda*) which closely resembles the medieval Rajput dress, with swords in their hands. The most usual dances are Jaintha, Rasho, Jangbaji, Patebaji, Saranwin, Ghee, Tanda Ghee and Thoro. All the dances involve moving about in a circle, with variations in their movements of hands for wielding swords and footsteps, except Patebaji in which it is a movement of two persons depicting a sword-fight between them. After this performance, the whole party leaves for their village blowing their trumpets and beating their drums but the bride, who was brought to the village in a similar manner, is left behind.

Status of Women : It is also necessary to mention the status

of women which is intimately connected with the Jaunsari institution of marriage. As a wife in her husband's house she is known as *rhanti*, where she has to work from early morning till late in the night. She gets up early and brings water from distant water-holes or springs. Then she does the cooking before she goes to the field to do each and every kind of work. She pounds paddy, breaks up clods of earth, transplants paddy and reaps the harvest. She goes to the forests and climbs steep slopes of the mountains to cut grass. When she returns in the evening, she again brings water for the whole family and does all the cooking. She is the first to get up in the morning, usually long before sunrise, and the last to go to bed. Over and above that she has to meet the sex demands of all the brothers. She is denied all rights to own property. If she is divorced, she has to leave all her ornaments and other jewellery behind. She is strictly prohibited from taking any kind of liberty with any other member of the community except her husbands. The slightest disloyalty or the slightest slip will be finalised by divorce (*chut*) or life-long ill-treatment from the husbands' family, without any one to sympathise with her.

But once she goes to her parent's house during the festivals, she is free to do things at her own pleasure. In her parents' village she is known as *dhanti*. A *dhanti* goes to her *mayta* generally during fairs and festivals. She moves freely in her village, talks, sings and dances freely with her friends. She is also permitted considerable freedom in her 'affairs' and society ignores her *amours* in her own village. In fact she becomes a gay bird there. Thus, a double standard of morality exists for women.

When there are a number of co-wives in a family, the first wife enjoys many rights and privileges which she makes good use of. She is known as *ghariawi*. Hers is the ruling hand in the family. She keeps the key of the wardrobe where all clothes and ornaments are kept and she distributes them among the co-wives when any occasion arises. She wields the same dominating power over the co-wives as the eldest

brother exercises over the group of brothers. In household management her word is the last. Every member of the family has to look up to her with a feeling of great reverence.

Most tragic is the fate of a barren woman, who is supposed to possess the knowledge of witchcraft and sorcery. Such women are greatly feared and ill-treated. All the calamities and misfortunes that hang on the village are traced to the evil deeds of these witches, who are forced to produce countermagic or prove their innocence.

Divorce: In the local language divorce is known as *chut* and is frequently resorted to. When a wife is divorced, her parents or the new husband have to pay her former husbands an amount of money, as demanded by them as compensation. The amount demanded and paid in divorce has increased during recent years. There are known cases in which, large sums of money—between two thousand and three thousand rupees—have been demanded. Only a few decades ago, it is said, the compensation paid in divorce was never more than fifty to sixty rupees.

This has resulted in another great social evil. A husband can have many wives and if he marries a young girl, the expenses incurred in the marriage are not much. So polygyny combined with polyandry is increasingly practised. But since sex ratio is greatly disturbed in this region, this creates a further artificial sex disparity. Thus it is advantageous for a husband to divorce one of his wives and allow another man to marry her on payment of a few thousand rupees to him as compensation. Hence, the new trend in marital relationship is an increase in polygyny and an increased divorce rate. In a society where women are assigned an extremely low status in their husbands' home, no more than a chattel or a little better than household goods, one can easily understand this attitude. But now there appears to be a gradual realisation of the evils of this system among these people, particularly after the first General Elections when they exercised their vote for the first time and came in contact with the outside world. Recently some elders met in a few *khut*

panchayats and condemned this evil. But more positive steps are needed to check this growing evil, because virtually it means selling women in the name of *chut.*

There are no prescribed rules or regulations for divorce. There may be many factors which lead to divorce in Jaunsar-Bawar. If a wife has committed an act of adultery while she is in her husband's village, on detection of such an act, she may be divorced; or she might be reluctant to return to her husbands' home from her village, once she has gone there to attend some festival. But the more frequent cause of divorce is her sterility. In fact, a woman, who has given birth to children, is in great demand and a high bride-price is paid for her by the new husband as compensation to the former husbands. A case is reported where a young man of twenty-five years preferred an old woman of forty to a young maiden of thirteen years and paid a heavy bride-price only because the adult woman had changed her affiliation to three families and enriched each of these with children. Or else a woman may herself refuse to live with her husbands because of their failure to get ornaments for her, which are highly treasured by every Jaunsari woman. The frequency of divorce, therefore, makes the wife a very weak link in the family organisation.

Divorce is not obtained through a court or panchayat; nor are any formalities observed. If a husband or his family is desirous of divorcing a wife, all that he does is that when she goes to her *mayata* during festivals a word is sent that she need not return to her husband. Or else she is subject to a very harsh treatment in her husbands' house by all the members till she herself decides not to return to her husband's house once she goes to her *mayata.* In that case, her father or any near relation will go to her husband's house and settle the amount of compensation money that has to be paid to him. At times it entails many visits before any agreement is reached. But things are much easier if another man agrees to marry her. In that case he is required to pay all the required money to the former husband. In fact, obtaining a divorce

in this manner and then marrying the divorcee has come to be recognised as another form of marriage, especially when marriage has not taken place at an early age or else the first marriage has proved sterile. In any case, it is the prerogative of the husband to divorce his wife, and a wife can claim it only when the husband has agreed to it, for which, obviously, a large amount of money has to be paid.

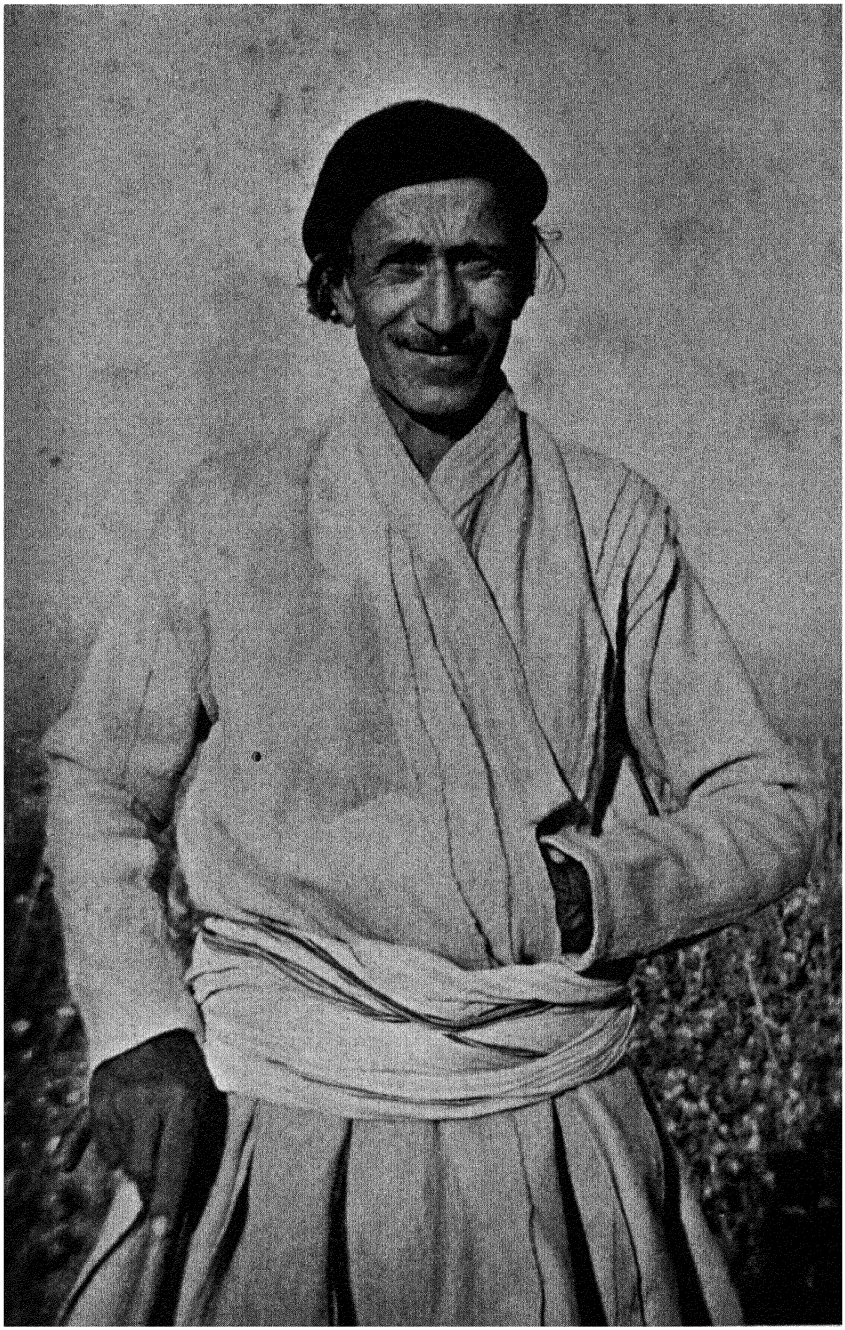
Inheritance: Closely connected with fraternal polyandry is the institution of inheritance peculiar to the Jaunsaris, which is based on the principle of collateral inheritance. All the brothers have an equal claim to all the property, but the eldest brother receives an additional share and the youngest brother half the additional share. For example, if there are three brothers, four-and-a half shares would be made of the whole property. Out of these, the eldest brother will get two shares, the youngest brother one-and-a-half shares and the second brother one share. The additional share of the eldest brother is known as *jethang* and of the youngest *kanchang*. The eldest brother is also given the first choice of agricultural land (terraced fields) and other domestic articles and cattle. In addition, he has a claim over the common wife or wives and the children born of them. If the common wife shows an inclination to go with one of the younger brothers, his permission must be obtained. If he refuses permission but she is bent upon living with one of the younger brothers, he can dissolve the marriage. But in case she remains with the eldest brother, even after partition the younger brothers can have an access to her, though not in his house.

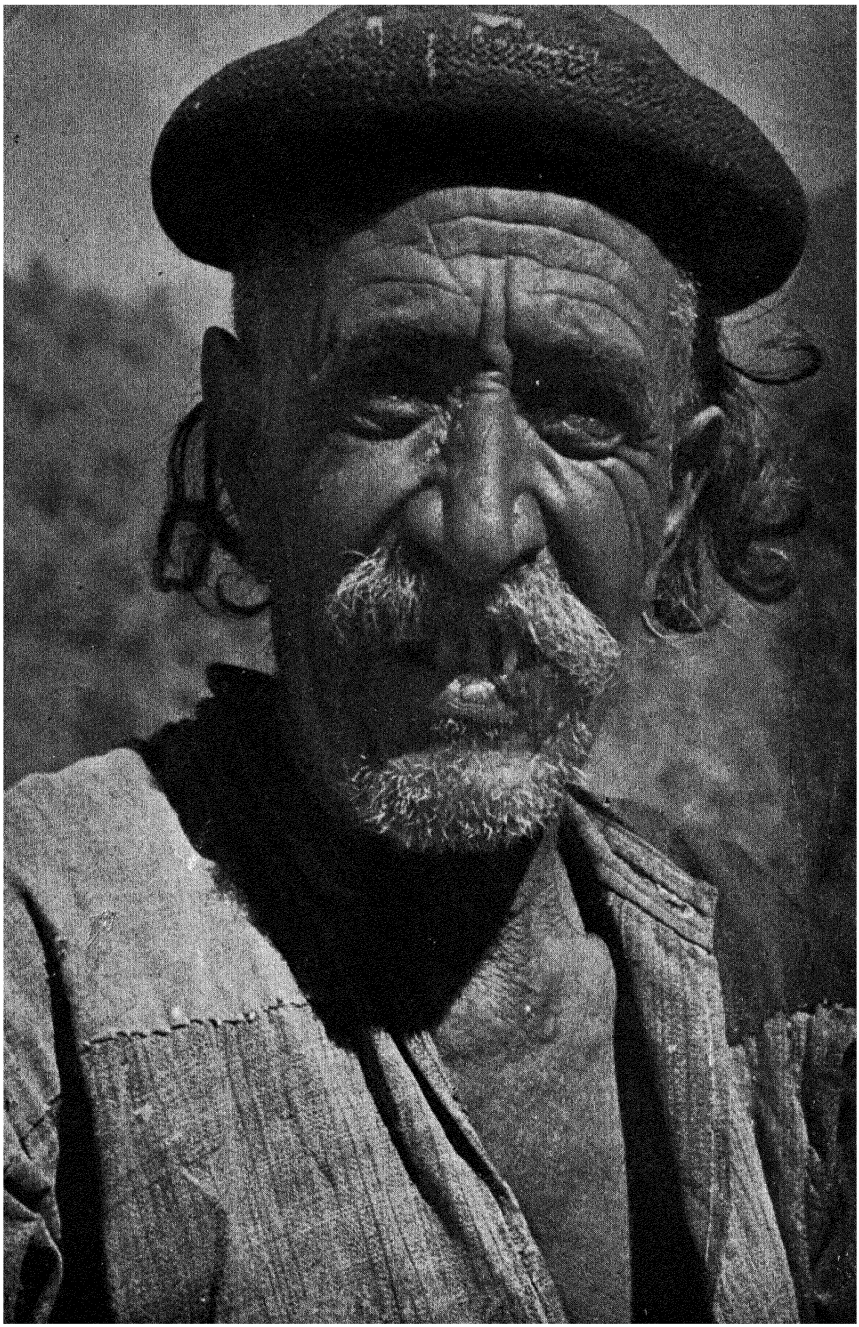
Village: The village is the most important social and economic unit in the life of the people. Due to great hardships imposed by Nature on the socio-economic life of the people, they have developed an intense community life of which the village is the hub round which their life rotates. It is the most cohesive group that one comes across. To add to its solidarity it also constitutes an exogamous group, since marriage in the same village is taboo.

Naturally the village panchayat is a great regulative force.

It consists of one representative of each household in the village, of course, excluding the Doms. For summoning a panchayat one has to lay one's grievance before the *sayana*, who is the village headman. The *sayana* then orders a Bajgi to send information to all the members of the panchayat to meet on an appointed day and time. When the panchayat has gathered, the person at whose initiative it has been called gives one rupee to the Bajgi in the presence of the *sayana*, and this payment is called *nalis*. The deliberations of the panchayat then proceed, and may last from a few hours up to a few days. If a panchayat is called during the slack season then the contending parties are not charged anything; but if it is summoned during the agricultural operations, the parties are required to contribute, half each, to provide the panchayat with rations as long as it lasts and sometimes have to contribute a few additional goats also.

Although the panchayats have lost much of their old influence yet even now it can be strongly felt in the social life of the people. All disputes ranging from minor quarrels arising out of calling names, to big fueds resulting in the separation of the joint families and division of property or leaving the village, are settled by the panchayats with a fair degree of justice. Apart from this, the panchayats make all the arrangements with regard to the celebration of festivals, realise subscriptions (food rations, or personal services) from the different families whenever the occasion arises and punish the culprits and thieves. In case of a theft of sheep etc., the thief, if caught, is required to surrender the stolen property (or an equivalent number of sheep) and pay a fine along with that, although the punishment laid down in *Dastur-ul-Amal* (para 20) is seven goats for each goat stolen. If a high caste man seduces a high caste woman, he has to pay a fine of sixty rupees. If a low caste man runs away with a high caste woman then *dand* (i. e. fine) is paid by the low caste man or by the Khutdar who keeps the man. This fine is of the magnitude of one hundred and twenty-five rupees, but if previous intimacy is proved









between the couple, then the fine is considerably lowered. "*Har* is the fine paid by a man who runs away with another man's wife; it is paid to the former husband and the custom is that he retains half and the other half is distributed among the *khuts* or village people."[11] In cases of distribution of property, the *sayana* receives one sheep, one goat, one dish, one weapon and five rupees.[12]

The panchayats have their dark sides as well and the *sayanas* sometimes abuse their position of influence. The influential party or person meets the *sayana* privately and thus influences the decision of the panchayat. Nobody is allowed to make any statement against the *sayana* or the panchayat. There have been occasions when no witnesses could be available against the panchayats or the *sayanas*, when cases against them were reported in the court. This may be because the people are afraid of speaking out anything against them, for they know very well that after doing such a thing there will be no place left for them in their village or even beyond it. Thus the judgments of the panchayats are sometimes the wishes of the *sayanas*. Appeals of the Koltas are generally badly handled. In no dispute between a zamindar and a Kolta does the decision go against the former.

The village panchayats are re-grouped into *Khut* panchayats presided over by the *Sadar-Sayana*. These panchayats are vested with certain extra-judicial powers, such as deciding disputes regarding boundary, etc., between villages or their grazing rights. Besides, there are at present 54 panchayats, or *gram-Sabhas*, which have been given powers by the State Government under Panchayat Raj Act and all these 54 panchayats have been grouped under *panchayati adalats* as shown in the Table below.

Mention may also be made here of the *sayanachari* system which is widely prevalent in Jaunsar-Bawar. The *sayana's*

[11] Additional clause inserted by J. C. Robertson in *Dastur-ul-Amal* (para 15).

[12] *Ibid*, Para 12, 2nd.

Name of Panchayati Adalat	*Number of Panchayats under its Jurisdiction*
1. Bisoi	5
2. Nagao	3
3. Kalsi	3
4. Manjra	4
5. Koruwa	4
6. Birontha	5
7. Mindal	3
8. Sahiya	4
9. Kandol (Baundar)	4
10. Daso	4
11. Viruar	5
12. Kirar	5
13. Kandoi (Bharam)	5
Total	54

office is hereditary. Certain semi-judicial powers have also been conferred on him by the Government. Doubts concerning advantages of the *sayanachari* system were expressed as early as 1893 when Mr. H. G. Ross was placed on special duty to report whether any better system could be devised. Mr. Ross strongly recommended the continuance of the *sayanachari* system, although he admitted that it was in many ways objectionable. The chief argument for retaining the *sayanachari* system was "that the people themselves preferred the *sayanachari* system, and that, with the disappearance of local men of influence, litigation instead of a friendly discussion would be the means adopted for the solution of quarrels." Perhaps his opinion holds good even to this day. The people at present obtain a ready justice on the spot at no great expense and are saved trouble of paying several visits to the courts and pay large amounts of money to the petition-writers and lawyers. The *sayanas* constitute a stable

and loyal element who can be relied upon to maintain law and order in a tract where there is no police. But at the same time it is highly desirable, that strong steps are taken to safeguard against the malpractices of the *sayanas* and that their activities are subjected to intelligent supervision.

Dress: The clothes of the people are made from home-spun wool, while their blankets are made from wool, or goat's hair or a mixture of the two. Cotton cloth is imported from the plains. In summer the men wear a very scanty cloth, not more than a few square inches, tied round the loins and a shirt and round cap. During winter the additional clothes used are a pair of woollen trousers, locally known as *jhangail* and a short woollen coat. In northern parts of Bawar, a long double breasted coat is put on. If the weather is very cold, a blanket and a pair of home-made grass or woollen shoes are also used.

The women true to their sex have a greater variety of fashion and a bigger wardrobe than the men. In northern parts of the country, their clothes are similar to those of the men in that they have thick woollen double-breasted coats. But the coats are a little longer and more voluminous than those of the men and the women have woollen leggings instead of trousers. The usual dress of the women consists of a voluminous *ghagra* and a tight-fitting bodice or jacket called *kurti*. The head gear, known as *dhantu*, is a small piece of coloured or black cloth, placed simply over the head and given a knot behind. It is just like a big handkerchief tied round the head, and the women can rarely be seen without it. The *sari* of the women of the greater part of India is quite unknown in these parts, and would, of course, be useless where warmth and freedom of movement are essential considerations.

Nearly all the women have special clothes for festivals and other celebrations except in the uppermost parts, where conditions are harder and the people poorer. The special clothes are the same *ghagra* and *kurti* but these are usually brightly coloured, often blue or green with a wide patterned

border of bright red at the bottom, and sometimes these are richly enbroidered.

Jewellery, with the women, is almost an article of dress, and the style varies from village to village, though only slightly. It is usually of pure silver, but a small gold nose-ring (*nath*) distinguishes the upper class women from the Kolta women, who are not allowed to were gold in any form. In Jaunsar-Bawar, the jewellery is much more fanciful than in the adjoining regions like Garhwal, etc. It includes necklaces of different shapes and lengths, ear rings and tops, nose rings, head chains, bracelets, anklets and rings for the fingers and the toes. Some of the local names of the jewellery are:

Bullak, Nath, Long ...	Nose rings.
Utreyan	Head chains.
Kanthi	Garland of silver rupees.
Kanduri	Garland of silver rupees with a *munga* bead in centre. The *munga* beads are obtained from the sea and imported from the plains.
Sooch	Ordinary garland.
Khagli or Khagaili ..	Necklace of round silver bar.
Kantha	A Khagli with gold pendant in centre.
Tungal	Ear rings.
Dorsu	A garland with several chains of 4 as., 8 as., and 1 rupee pieces, united to a single chain which forms the back portion.

The ear and nose rings, *utreyan* and the *kanduris*, are made of silver as well as gold. The designs of the ornaments have been undergoing a change for the last several years. On the one hand the use of ornaments is decreasing, while on the other more and more of the ornaments are now being

made of gold. The result has been that many ornaments have become lighter in weight, but costlier in value. At the same time some of the silver ornaments have gone out of use. The *dhogule* and several other ornaments which were at one time worn by the women are non-existent today, though their names occur in the folk tales of old. A large nose ring, often very large, denotes marriage in some parts. With all her jewellery on, a woman has a very great weight to carry; and quite a considerable amount of wealth is often carried in the form of a very thick collar of solid silver, which is the *Khagli*.

The weight of the ear jewellery frequently causes disfigurement. The lobes of the ears are greatly extended and the tops are completely pulled down. The piercing of a girl's ears with numerous holes and big enough to carry all the jewellery must be a very painful process. First, small holes are made and these are gradually widened by placing in them small pieces of bamboo sticks of increasing thickness.

A woman's jewellery often represents all the family wealth, it being the only form in which wealth is stored. Paper money finds little favour with the people, perhaps because if carried by a villager, it is liable to be spoilt at once by rain or perspiration. Also it is difficult for the people to store paper safely, whereas gold and silver do not deteriorate and can easily be converted into cash.

The men wear only ear rings and often a small but heavy necklace of silver, or really half a necklace, since the silver is only in front of the neck, with a piece of string sufficing for the back half. Sometimes the men have a silver tooth-pick and an ear-pick hanging from a long silver chain or a fine cord placed round the neck. Women also often have these two articles attached to their necklace, thus combining utility with ornament.

Food: In matters of food, it may be said that the rich farmer is better off while the poor farmer is worse off than their brethren in the plains. Rice and *mandua* are staple crops. *Mandua* is extremely liked by the people, perhaps

because they like its taste and are able to work for a long time in the fields due to its slow digestion. Rice, *mandua*, *jhangora*, maize and barley are used for making *chapaties* apart from other methods of consumption. Maize is generally used in the form of *satu* which is taken along with curd and salt. Wheat and all the vegetables and pulses grown by the people are also consumed.

Mutton and local liquor are also consumed in large quantities during fairs and festivals. Fish is eaten occasionally. Liquor is prepared in two ways. First of all, water is mixed with barley flour and certain powdered intoxicating roots. Then big cakes, each weighing about 6 chataks, are prepared and stored up in some place, generally an underground chamber. These cakes are just like the common *gur-bheli* in the plains and are called *kheem* or *keem*. This operation is undertaken during the spare months of the winter season. Whenever liquor is to be prepared, *mandua* or *jhangora* flour is mixed with water in a vessel and a few *keem* are dropped according to the quantity and strength of the drink desired. The vessel is then covered and stored away for about three days for fermentation. The contents are now heated on fire in a vessel and distilled. The distilled liquid is then collected in bottles and is locally called *soor* or *daru*. While the bottles are being filled, a small quantity of the liquor is every now and then thrown into the fire to test its strength and quality. So long as it catches fire at once, it is graded as *phool* (i. e., superior), but as soon as it becomes slow to catch the fire, it is graded as inferior.

The alternative method consists in mixing a number of *keem* in flour of barley or *jhangora* with a large quantity of water in it. The whole mixture is then stored away for a long time, usually one to two months. During this interval, fermentation takes place and beer is prepared. This beer is locally called *ghankati* or *pankhuri*. The *pankhuri* is stored in a big iron vessel having a capacity of over 1½ maund. It is taken out in an earthen pot, called *gudki* and then served to the people in shallow utensils.

The people are so addicted to smoking that they seldom do anything for more than an hour or two without a smoke. Generally they are more pleased if they are offered a cigarette instead of a few annas. When there are several men together a smoke takes quite a long time. Since they smoke in succession, one pipeful of tobacco suffices for all of them. One or two leaves from a bush are twisted into a conical receptacle for the tobacco and this forms the pipe. In place of matches, the men sometimes have a small piece of rough iron which is struck on a piece of quartz held in some dry moss or grass, which easily catches fire from the sparks produced. The leaf pipe is passed from hand to hand, each man inhaling the smoke through his hands without letting his lips touch the pipe.

Sometimes in the pine and fir forests there are no suitable leaves available for smoking. On such occasions two small holes, which are connected together underneath the ground, are scooped out with a small piece of wood. The tobacco is placed in one hole and the smoker, lying flat on the ground, places his hand over the other hole and draws up the smoke through the ground and his hand. One by one the men lie flat on the ground and have a few puffs in this way, none actually touching the ground with his lips. Apart from these methods cheap cigarettes and hubble-bubble are proving quite popular.

Chapter 4

RELIGION

THE JAUNSARIS are Hindus, but their religion deviates considerably from orthodox Hinduism. The deeper and higher one goes into this region, the more obvious the deviation becomes, till the local religion becomes quite distinct from Hinduism. The Jaunsaris believe in the doctrine of transmigration; they marry by taking a vow before the sacred fire; and they cremate their dead. But they also worship Mahasu, whom they regard as the presiding deity of Jaunsar-Bawar and whose name is no where to be found mentioned in Hindu scriptures or literature. The laws, as revealed by Mahasu, are fully observed by these people in their daily life and beliefs. Any calamity or catastrophe overtaking them is always supposed to be due to some violation of these laws. Thus they have built up a code of rites and rituals, beliefs and superstitions, all based on the great reverence shown to Mahasu, which governs their life.

The legend of Mahasu is that they were four brothers who lived in Kashmir. In some remote part, a demon named Kirbir Dana made his appearance at the confluence of the Tons and Yamuna, near Kalsi, and spread a reign of terror throughout Jaunsar-Bawar. The first victims were the relatives and dependents of one Una Bhat, who had a big family. All other members of his family were killed and eaten by the demon except Una Bhat, his three sons and one daughter. Una fled to the forests of the Yamuna and wandered about from place to place seeking means to destroy the demon and revenge the death of his relatives. One night Mahasu appeared to him in a dream and said, "Be of good cheer, Una, proceed to Kashmir where the four Mahasus dwell and invoke their aid. They will destroy the demon, for no one else can." Una set out for Kashmir the next day and arrived at the place where the watchman of Mahasu lay

fast asleep with two iron clubs, some hundred maunds in weight, beside him. No one could approach Mahasu without the watchman's permission; so Una took up one of the clubs and placed it at the foot of the sleeping watchman, who soon awoke and demanded the name of the intruder and his business. Una at once replied, "*Mamu*,[1] I am thy nephew." The watchman at once retorted, "*Bhai*, you are not my nephew, but as you have chosen to address me, what has brought you here?" Una narrated his story and the watchman tried to dissuade him from attempting the perilous journey; but finding Una adamant told him that he should first proceed to the forest of Ghagti and if troubled by storms, a handful of rice and lentils, given to him by the watchman, when sprinkled in the air would cause the storm to abate. He would next reach Kanani Tal (Lake Kanana), into which he was to spit and throw some of his hair. If his saliva turned into cowries and his hair into snakes, he would know that he was in the miracle-working land of Kashmir. Thus, according to instructions Una Bhat proceeded to Kashmir and met the four Mahasus—Basak, Pibasak, Baitha and Chalda.

Una's petition was favourably received by the Mahasus, who eventually told him to return to his own country and also promised to destroy Kirbir and thus free the country of his ravages. The Chalda gave Una a handful of rice, an earthen vessel and his own staff and told him that when hungry he need only strike the staff on the earth and water would come forth with which the rice might be cooked for food. This would also give an indication to him that Mahasu was with him and when he arrived at Mendrat he should throw some rice into the Tons so that Kirbir could do no harm to him. On the first Sunday after his arrival he should yoke an unbroken heifer to a plough and have it driven by an unmarried boy who had never before driven the plough and he would find that the plough would turn to gold and

[1] Maternal uncle ; because the mothers belong to another village, all strangers from other villages are addressed as such.

the share to silver. He should plough five furrows, in each of which a stone image would be found representing four Mahasus and their mother Deolari. Una on his return acted accordingly. Basak appeared first with his thigh transfixed by a plough share, then Pibasak with a wound in his ear and then Baitha with his eye injured. Chalda alone appeared sound and free. The first three, even now, are supposed to remain in temples dedicated to them, while Chalda is taken in procession from one *khut* to another according to definite etiquette. Deolari, the mother, appeared in the fifth furrow and a temple to her name was erected in the field. Una worshipped the Mahasus and ordered his youngest son to serve them. He obeyed and became *Deopujari*. The second son was directed to strike the gong and became Rajput while the third became a musician or a Bajgi. The Mahasus put up a fight against the demon, Kirbir, who was ultimately destroyed by them. The two Mahasus, Basak and Pibasak, left for Garhwal, while Baitha and Chalda remained behind. The temple at Hanol is dedicated to Baitha while Chalda is always on the move. Staying in the village temples for longer or shorter periods according to the invitations he receives, he is taken back at least once a year to Hanol, where a greater part of the gifts he has collected on his tour are handed over to the priests of the headquarters-temple. It has been recorded in the *Doon Gazetteer* that "formerly Chalda when on circuit observed both state and etiquette. His palanquin was invariably accompanied by a train of 60-70 men and dancing girls; but he never visited a village unless he received an invitaion through his *wazir*, at that time the headman of Bawar. The terror inspired by god however, always procured him the necessary invitation."[2]

The same practice continues even now though the extortions that were made by his *wazir* and other attendants have been considerably reduced. Long before he is taken from one village to another a form of agreement is arrived at between the elders of the *khut* where he is stationed and the inviting

[2] District Gazetteer, p. 94.

khut, and on an auspicious day, agreed to, at least one man from each family of the *khut*, to which the deity is going, assembles in the host-village. After staging a mock fight, while taking out the deity from the temple, the deity is escorted to the inviting village in a big procession with all pomp and show. But at times the mock fight assumes a real shape and even swords and *lathis* are flashed, resulting in loss of life and, therefore, great precautionary measures are taken on such an occasion and police regularly posted at all strategic points. An attempt is made by the inhabitants of villages through which the deity passes to detain him in that very village, but now it has assumed the appearance of a mock fight rather than a serious attempt on their part. Thus there are several villages in Jaunsar-Bawar which have temples but which are unoccupied or opened only when the deity has been requested to visit the village. Some villages, however, have satellite deities of their own, who are taken out on a tour of a few villages and once a year to Hanol to pay their homage to Mahasu.

As already mentioned, the conduct and beliefs of the Jaunsaris are mostly governed by laws which are supposed to have been revealed by Mahasu to them. One of such beliefs is that the people should never drink cow's milk and, to this day, the majority of the people neither drink cow's milk themselves nor supply it to others. Out of a number of cows that they may own they select one cow which is called *Devi-ki-Ga-ya*. The milk of this cow only may be used and for the rest of their requirements they depend upon their buffaloes. Goat's milk is rarely used and, if at all, it is given only to the children. While milk is generally not consumed as such, it is mostly used for making butter and *ghee*. The cows and bullocks are regarded as sacred in accordance with Hindu customs, and they must on no account be killed.

Among other decrees that the Mahasu made was an injunction never to sleep in a bed with four legs with the result that the people lie on the floor. Another decree was that the best goats should be sacrificed at the god's shrine.

For this reason goats are frequently presented to the temple priests in an offering to the god, while killing of sheep and goats and eating their meat at many of the local festivals probably has some religious importance.

A temple is built out of the contributions of money and labour given by the whole *khut*, but its maintenance is the responsibility of the village in which it is situated. The person, who is incharge of the temple, is the priest called *devpuijya*. His assistant is called *thani*, and there is also a man who is incharge of offerings made at the temple, known as *bhandari*. The priest and the *bhandari* must be Brahmins while *thani* is a Rajput. Only the priest is allowed to go into the rooms where the idols and the palanquin are kept. The *thani* cleans other rooms of the temple and gives general assistance to the priest when he offers prayers. Prayers are offered three times every day—morning, afternoon and evening. All the persons incharge of the temple are fed on the rations contributed by the whole village.

The temples have usually well pavęd courtyards in the front, which form convenient dancing ground at festivals. These courtyards are always kept very clean and no one is allowed to walk on them with shoes on. If somebody gets an injury on the courtyard and his blood drops on the ground, he is required to pay a fine (*dand*) or sacrifice one goat to the god, as punishment.

Apart from the temples of Mahasu, there are other kinds of less important temples called *Pandavon-ki-Chouri*. Here the people offer oblations on certain festivals connected with Pandavas. All these temples have also a courtyard in front, which is called *Pandavon-ka-Angon*. This is used as a general dancing ground as well as playground for the children. Occasionaly there are temples situated far away from villages in groves of *deodar* trees, on the mountain side or deep in the forest. Several such forest temples are found in the Tons Valley. Besides there are certain other sacred spots, especially in *deodar* forests, characterised by pieces of cloth tied to a tree or a mere collection of stones.

The religious beliefs of the people are based mainly on superstitions and fear; superstitions about evil eye and evil mouth and fear of their gods lest they get angry, and all evil spirits who are always on the look-out for their victims. Their fear is coupled with natural conservativeness, and they object to any changes or innovations on the ground that the god would be displeased. The god can, however, be appeased by sacrificing sheep or goat. This is always done each year before commencing fellings in the *deodar* forests and at the beginning and end of agricultural operations, for their smooth and successful completion.

But it is evil spirits that are most feared. When a man crosses from one valley to another he frequently throws a stick or a stone or a pine-cone on the top of the pass to prevent evil spirits of the one valley crossing over with him into the next valley. For example, on the main pass between Bairath Khai and the Lakhamandal side of the hill there is actually a large mound of stones, sticks and pine-cones, which at once attracts the eyes of the traveller and is the outcome of this superstition.

There are some evil spirits which are invoked by anti-social people to carry out their mischievous designs on others. One such evil spirit is the *narsin*, which is greatly despised by the people. This evil spirit is greatly feared by a certain section among the Koltas, who occasionally offer goat sacrifices to keep it appeased. When the cattle of someone among them fall ill, he will accuse one of his foes for having invoked the *narsin deota*, and in certain cases such a suspected person is asked to restore the health of the cattle or to pay the price in case of death. And strange to say such demands are sometimes fulfilled.

In the superstitious outlook of the people, the *baki*, that is, the local witch-doctor, plays an important part. When a person becomes mad, or some epidemic breaks out in a village or any such calamity happens, then the *baki* is approached. He sits down in front of a small heap of rice, which he throws hither and thither while chanting certain hymns, the meaning

of which is known only to himself. After about half an hour or so he finds out the cause of the evil and gives out certain instructions to escape from the evil, that are earnestly carried out by the people. The superstitious outlook of the people is a characteristic which they share in common with all dwellers in countries where the forces of nature are obtrusive. In cases like those of crop failures they blame themselves for acts of omission as well as commission and offer sacrifices to their gods in order to appease them, and perform magical rites to invoke the aid of the gods to produce rain and augment the yield from the fields. The district gazetteer mentions that in the times of Mr. Ross the people of Chijal, being afflicted with smallpox, burnt down four hundred *deodar* trees as a sacrifice. A more unusual case occurred about two decades ago. The people of a village known as Bainol had been greatly distressed by several deaths both among themselves and their children and also among their cattle. At the same time their crops began to go bad. So it was finally decided that evil spirits had taken possession of the village and it would have to be deserted. The decision having been reached, an immediate evacuation took place. A few necessary clothes, cooking utensils and other articles were hastily collected, and all the people shifted to a small opening within the forest. There some of them occupied the only existing one or two houses meant for keeping cattle during the summer season, while the rest made temporary shelters for themselves from grass and the branches of trees. In haste they left behind the standing crops and the agricultural implements even. Soon the food supplies ran short, and the people had to sell some of their animals to purchase further supplies. They also realised that fresh cultivation must be established if they were to live. So permission was sought from the Forest Department for clearing certain areas of reserved forests for cultivation, and also for felling trees for the construction of new houses; but this permission was not given. There the matter stood and several months passed since the people had left their

village, and conditions were getting serious. Even the suggestions of some forest officers to offer a great sacrifice of sheep and goats in accordance with local customs, or of calling a *baki* to drive away the evil spirits, were of no avail, since the spirits were thought to be too formidable. Finding the attitude of the villagers adamant, forest officers were sent to investigate the case and report whether any forest area could be cleared and given to them. But surprisingly enough it was discovered by the officers that the site suggested by the villagers was itself a village land in the past and the whole mountain side bore unmistakable signs of old terraces and there were still a few remains of old houses. The village had apparently been abandoned and pine forest had established itself on the old terraces, and there was now a very fine young forest. When the people came to know of this, they jumped to the conclusion that evil spirits had taken up residence there once and for that reason it was abandoned. Surely, they said that it would be jumping from the frying-pan into the fire if they tried to settle down in an area that had already been abandoned, probably by their own great-grandfathers, since they were the nearest villagers. And soon after, the people decided to return to their old homes.

Besides the evil spirits, there are other spirits which may be called fairies and the people are morbidly afraid of them. It is difficult to make out what is the exact relation of the fairies to human beings, but the people say that they are not so horrible looking as the evil spirits and that they have at any rate got to be respected. They live mainly in the glades in the forest, but they may also visit villages. Several areas, which could otherwise be brought under cultivation, are dedicated to the fairies, who play there every night, as the people say.

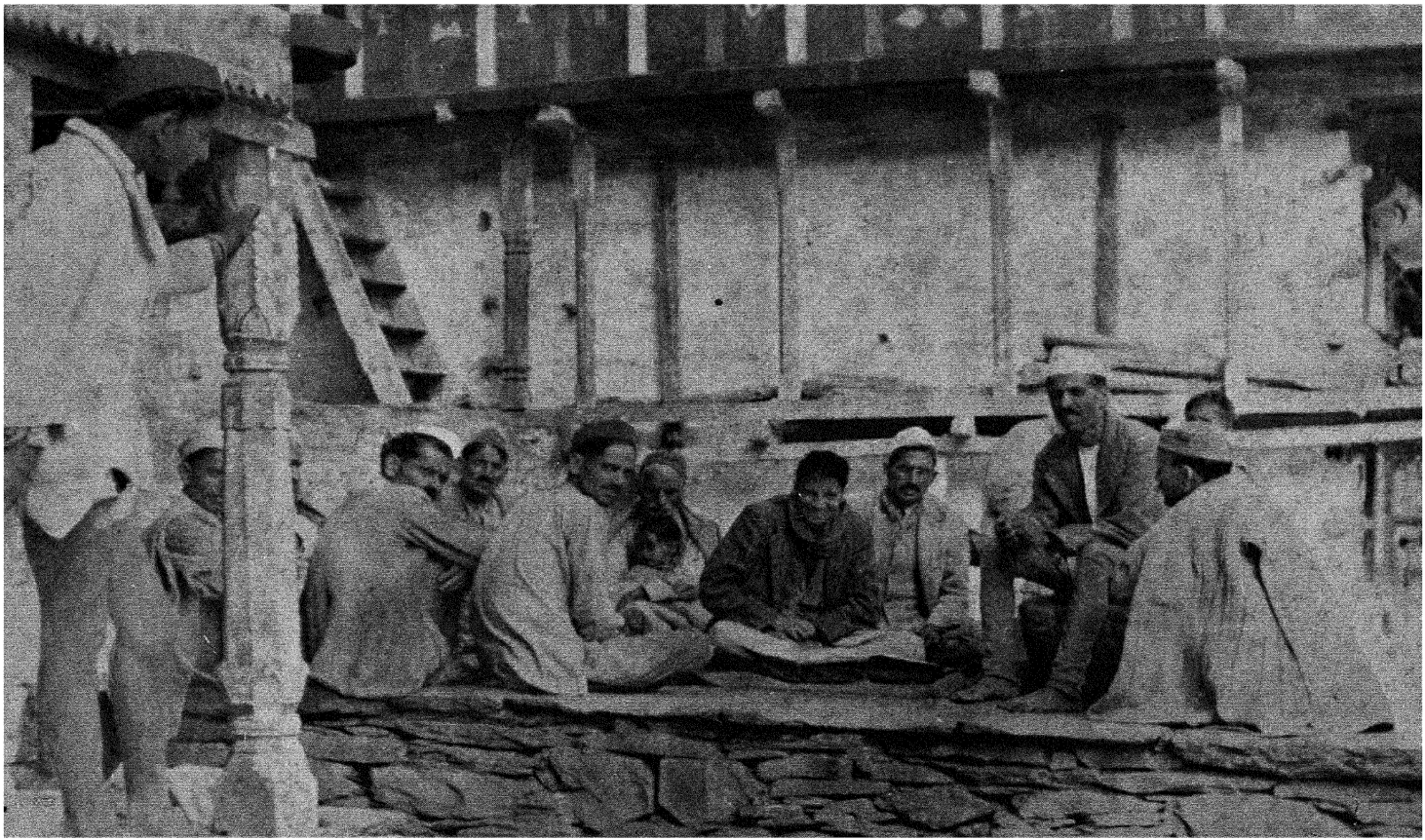
Occasionally the people suppose an old woman to be a witch and she is declared a *dag* after a panchayat has been summoned. A *dag* becomes practically an outcaste and can find a place for existence only in her parent's house. It is possible that even that shelter may be denied to her. There

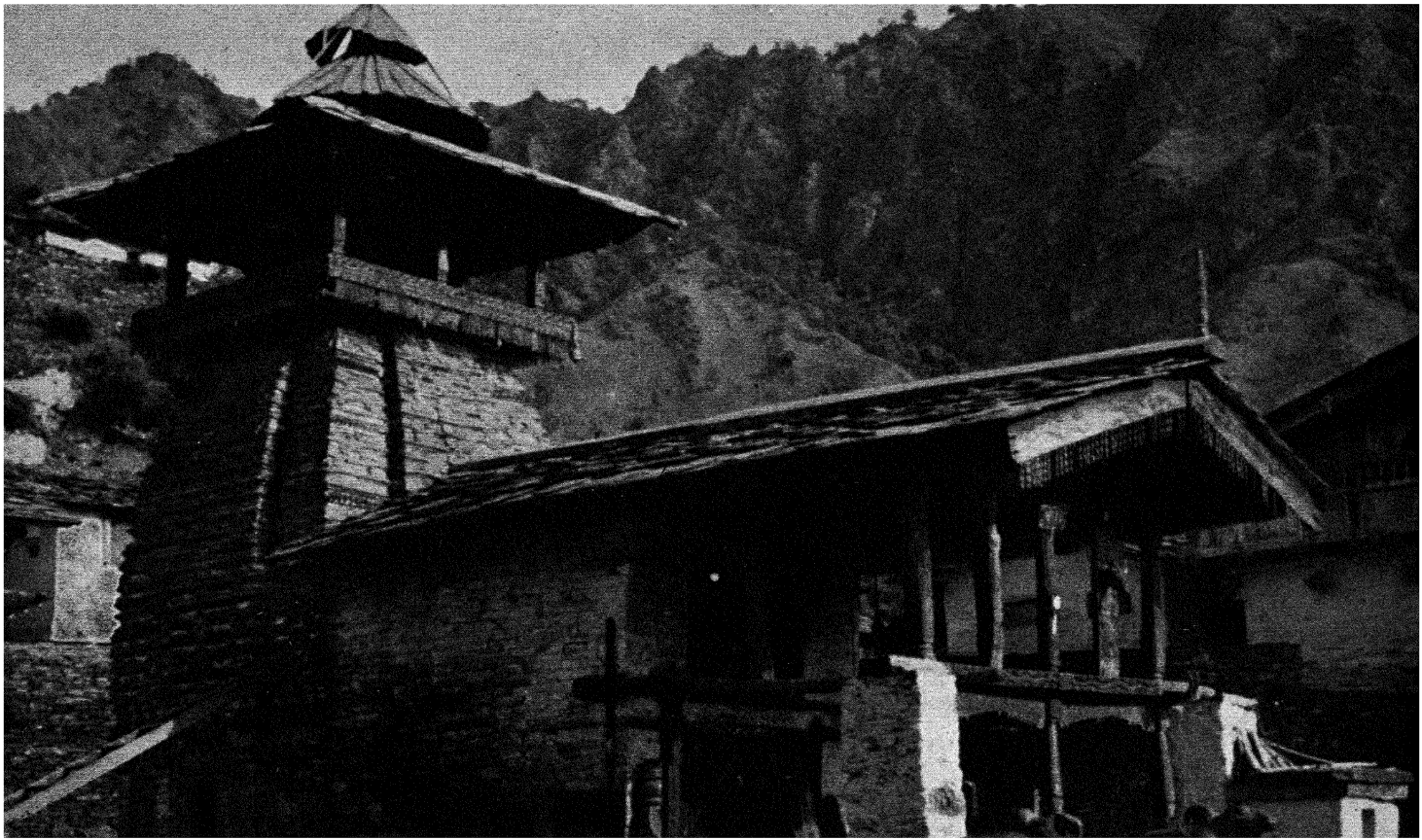
is a chance that she may even be murdered in cold blood though such cases of murder are extremely rare now. This practice has repeatedly been brought to the notice of the government and has been declared illegal since long. But even now cases do occur occasionally.

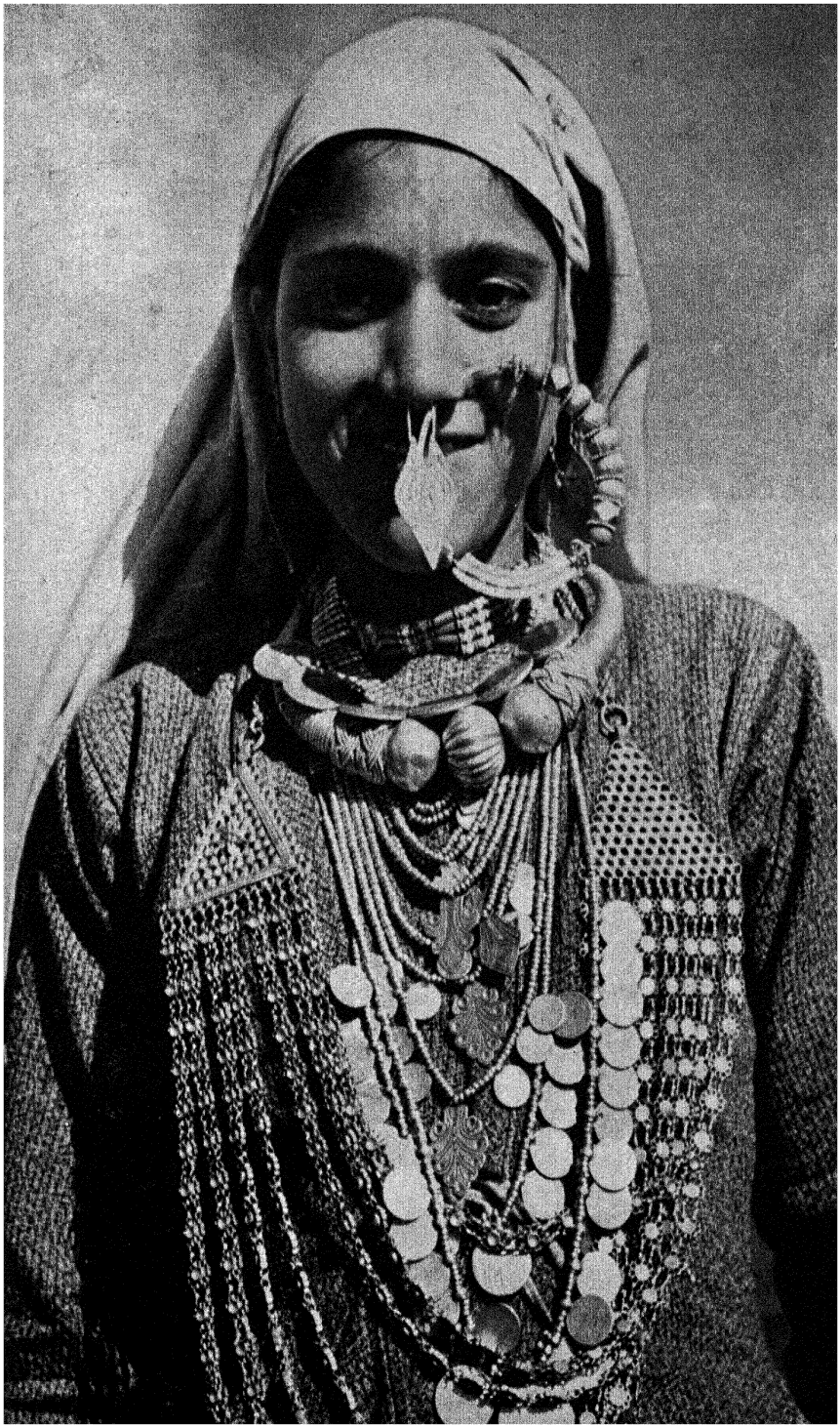
Some of the people believe that the earth rests on the head of a snake called *Sheshnag*, which is also a popular Hindu belief, while others hold that it rests on the horns of a bull and earthquakes are believed to be caused by the periodical movements of the *Sheshnag* or when the bull changes its horn. But some people go still further and hold that the earth is square and its four corners rest on the heads of four elephants.

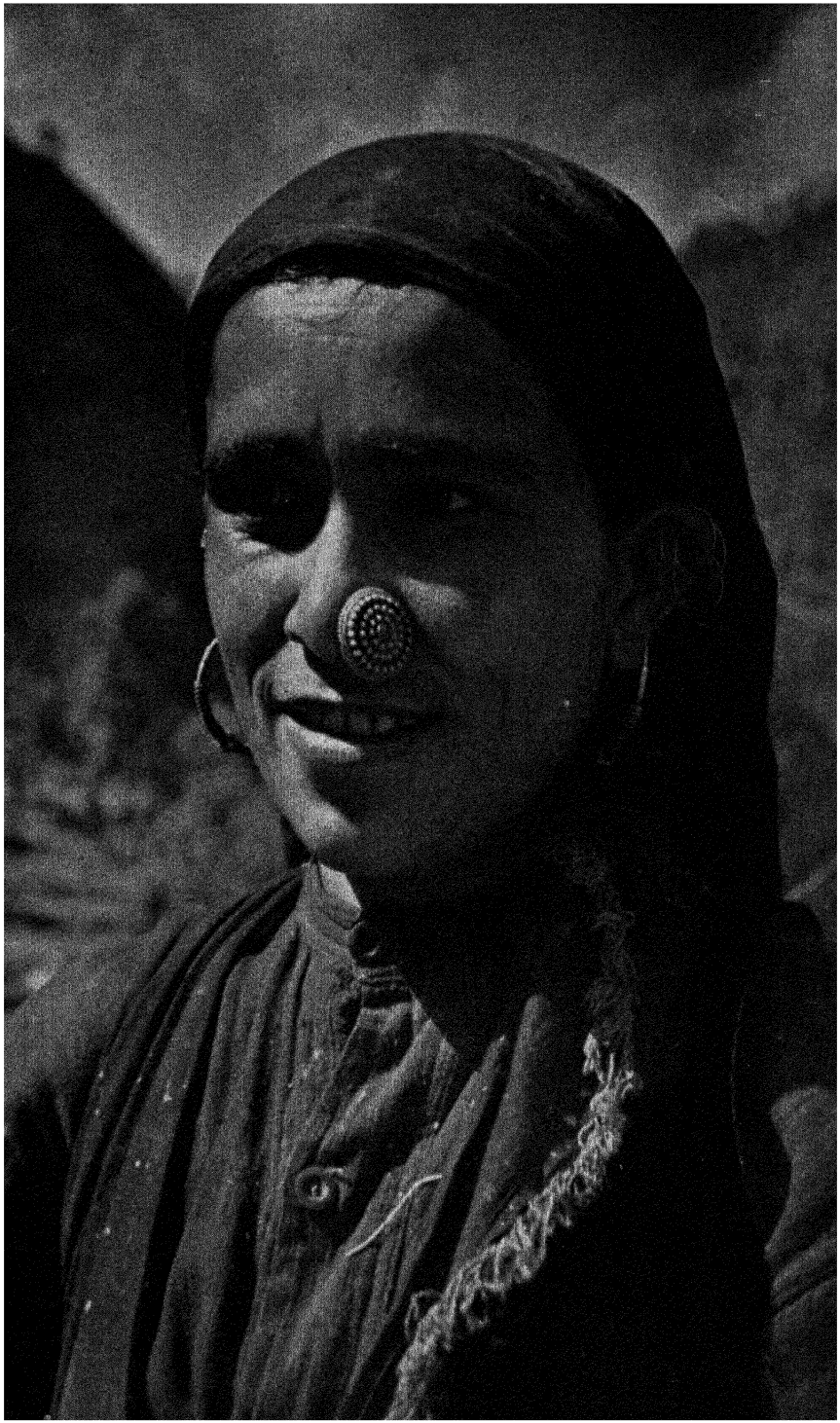
Closely connected with their belief in spirits is the practice of cursing. If one man falls out with another, all he has to do is to take a stone out of the wall of the house of his enemy or a clod of earth from his fields and dedicate it to Mahasu uttering curses. Henceforth, no one dare live in the house or till the field. Many deserted houses or fallow fields, particularly in Bawar, bear testimony to the effectiveness of this evil practice. In the local code *Dastur-ul-Amal*[3] compiled by Mr. Ross, this practice of cursing has been declared to be unlawful. So the panchayats cannot take notice of this practice nor enforce it. But due to the extreme fear of the supernatural, a curse enforce in the above-mentioned manner is equally effective and silently obeyed. Similarly, even today a case may be decided in the court on the mere testimony of a person if he makes a statement, taking an oath in the name of Mahasu, standing in the direction of his shrine. The statement, made in such a manner, is accepted by all the parties concerned unhesitatingly.

[3] See Appendix I









Chapter 5

LAND USAGES AND PRACTICES

THE JAUNSARIS are mainly agriculturists. Their agricultural economy may be said to be self-sufficient, because they grow food crops just enough for their needs, at the same time important commercial crops, such as potatoes, turmeric and ginger are also grown, and are quite paying. In fact, it is the cultivation of these crops that yields them any income. Nearly 91 per cent of the population of this region is dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, as would be evident from the following statement:[1]

Year—1953

	Occupation	*No. of persons*	*Percentage to total population*
1.	Agriculture	53,267	91.10
2.	Service and school teachers	215	0.37
3.	Persons engaged in cottage industries	1,725	2.95
4.	Black-smiths and masons	313	0.53
5.	Trade	1,149	1.97
6.	Miscellaneous	1,800	3.08
	Total	58,469	100.00

Thus, agriculture with these people is not merely an occupation; it is also a tradition, a way of life which for centuries has shaped their thought and culture.

Modes of Cultivation

On account of a wide range of physical and climatic

[1] Based on the statistics collected from the Planning Office.

conditions, the modes of cultivation differ according to the peculiarities of the region. But there are three main types of cultivation in this region: (*a*) Dry-farming in upland slopes; (*b*) Wet-farming in the low-lying valleys and slopes; and (*c*) Intermittent cultivation.

(*a*) *Dry-farming in upland slopes:* The upland slopes at a high altitude are sown with dry crops as irrigation from streams, rivulets and springs in those upland plots is impossible. These small plots require terracing, known as *dandas*. The terraces have to be supported by stone retaining walls varying from a height of four to ten feet. They constitute an ingenious method of adapting mountain slopes for cultivation, but much hard labour is required to construct them and even greater care and effort to maintain them. To prepare the terraces the digging is started at the base of a slope. The stones that come out during this operation are deposited at a lower edge as a loose retaining wall. The dug-out soil is then spread out inside this wall in such a way that a plane surface is formed. Another similar terrace may be constructed a little higher and a third one still higher and so on. Where the slopes are gentle the fields are moderately wide and terracing slight, but in the steeper parts the width of a field is sometimes less than the height of the wall that supports it. It takes years to bring a mountain slope under cultivation in this fashion. But in the meantime it works to the advantage of the cultivator in improving the soil's fertility, since tilth, rain and diluvium all help in making a terrace more perfect. And also at each ploughing as many stones as possible are removed and stored up to strengthen the walls and more manure is added to the soil. Thus the fertility of the fields increases and at the same time the chances of soil erosion are also diminished.

Where stones used for the retaining wall are not available from the dug-up soil, they are brought from the nearest source. Women and children also lend a helping hand. They generally bring stones while men place them in position.

The construction of the terraces is undertaken only during

spare time, especially during the winter months. Once made the terraces are maintained very carefully, because the cultivator has spent a substantial portion of his labour and capital in them. But sometimes landslides occur due to heavy rains and the entire range of terraces may be washed down involving the cultivators in ruin or much hard labour for a number of years to come. In addition, the terraces are subject to wild growth of weeds, which have to be cut and burnt as often as possible.

These upland terraces produce two harvests. The principal Khariff or winter crops sown are *mandua*, inferior millets, maize and pulses. The chief *Rabi* or summer crops are wheat, barley and mustard.

(*b*) *Wet-farming in the low-lying valley:* The low-lying plots of land, situated near the rivers or their tributaries or other perennial streams, which can be irrigated with ease, are known as *kyarik*. Due to their low level the climate is comparatively hot. The fertility of these fields is due to their alluvial soil. Even an inferior land near the river, consisting of sand, gravel and boulders, is more valuable if capable of irrigation than highly manured, stoneless loamy soil on the top of a hill.

Irrigation is carried out with the help of canals which are constructed by the zamindars themselves. The hill streams are generally deep, narrow and rapid in their upper courses, but lower down, when they come out in the open, their flow slows down considerably. It is here that they are used for irrigating the fields by raising dams across them. For the location of the site of a dam all the gradients and levels have to be taken into account. The flow of water should be neither so rapid that the dam may be broken nor so slow that loss of water may occur due to seepage. All this requires very intimate knowledge of local conditions and shrewd observation, as there are no instruments of measurements. Water is brought to the fields by means of diversion channels, known as *guls*. But sometimes it so happens that the stream holds enough water during its upper course but little or none in the lower

portion. In such a case, a village at the upper point constructs a water channel for its own needs and passes on the surplus water to the villages lower down by means of long *guls*. All the villages that come under the scheme supply labour for the digging up and annual reconstruction of the canals; and there are definite rules for the regulation of water-supply enforced by common consent.

Apart from streams, water from springs is also used for irrigation. But as the supply of water from the springs is very small, an earthen tank is dug or a cement stone reservoir is constructed for storing water. When the tank is full, water is released from it for irrigation of the fields below.

For irrigating the fields, water is just let into the highest possible terrace. After this terrace has been fully irrigated, a small outlet is made in its embankment, locally called *beata* or *dolla*, by removing some earth and water is allowed to fall on the lower terrace. Where the water falls, some stones are placed at that point so that a pit may not be formed.

The *kyarik* are double-cropped lands and are generally not allowed to lie fallow. The Khariff or winter crops in this region are called *Bedhundi* and the summer or Rabi crops *Ruri*. The important crops are rice, wheat, potatoes, tobacco, barley, tomatoes and onions.

(*c*) *Intermittent cultivation:* Shifting or intermittent cultivation is also sometimes carried on in the northern parts of Bawar, where the soil is not so rich and very poor crops are obtained from the established fields. It is locally known as *khil* and is characteristic of the forest region at the outskirts of the terraces. A plot of good soil composition and gentle gradient is selected near a source of water-supply if possible. The underwood covering in the field is cut during the spare months of the winter season and the timber and leaves are left to dry. In the month of April these are burnt and the ashes serve the purpose of manure, whereas fire destroys agricultural pests. These are two advantages of *khil* cultivation. The seeds are then thinly scattered over the plot of land and then the soil is roughly dug over by a small pickaxe (called

katlar) or spade. The crops thus raised are wheat or barley in the Rabi and Mandua in the Khariff, along with Chaulai and some pulse like Mas, etc. After the seed has been sown the tillers sit down confidently to await the results. A rich virgin soil fertilized with fresh ashes and receiving an abundant rainfall yields a rich return. After growing two or three crops in succession the land is left fallow for a period ranging from three to twelve years. The intermittent cultivation has undoubtedly caused the destruction of what must at one time have been very good forest, and although officially prohibited, it is still preventing potential forest from developing. It is a fact scientifically established that the wholesale destruction of forests is attended by harmful results to the country where it takes place, the worst of which are a perceptible change of climate and decrease in the rainfall. The underground moisture, attracted by the roots which it feeds, being deprived of the protecting shade, evaporates off, and the air becomes drier, and colder or hotter according to the latitude. The large mass of moist emanations which a forest contributes towards the formation of clouds being cut off, the denuded district no longer supplies its own rain, but depends more on passing clouds and has ultimately to adopt other means of irrigation. These results would be particularly fatal in a tropical country, living under continuous dread of droughts, not to speak of the immediate pecuniary loss represented by the annual destruction of thousands of gigantic. valuable timber trees.

Still it seems necessary to permit intermittent cultivation to a certain extent in order to enable the poor people to make both ends meet and also in view of the fact that all the more valuable forests have been demarcated and reserved. Moreover it is not harmful in those parts where vegetation can rapidly re-establish itself. And since the slopes subjected to *khil* cultivation in Jaunsar-Bawar are always converted into permanent terraces after a time, the whole question there is reduced to maintaining a balance between more of afforestation or more of agricultural produce.

Crops

The cropping and agricultural practices vary to an extraordinary degree from place to place. The actual produce of any one year depends on the amount and distribution of rainfall. The periodicity of the seasons often allows of two and in a few cases three harvests in the year. Double cropping is possible in about 14,031.73 acres of land in Jaunsar-Bawar.

(*a*) *Khariff:* The crops sown with the commencement of monsoon in June and reaped towards the end of October are called Khariff crops. These crops require much water for their growth and therefore are grown as soon as the monsoon commences. The principal Khariff crops are rice, *mandua,* maize, *jhangora,* potatoes, ginger, tobacco, *cholai* and leafy vegetables.

The following table shows the total area under the *Khariff* crops in this region :

Area under Khariff crops 1952-1953[2]
(in acres)

Khariff crop	*Irrigated area*	*Unirrigated area*	*Total*	*Percentage to the Total*
Rice	3104.37	3782.49	6886.86	14
Maize	..	7008.76	7008.76	17
Other crops (Mandua, Jhangora)	25.60	20975.26	21000.86	69
Total	3129.97	31766.51	34896.48	100

(*b*) *Rabi:* The second crop season begins in autumn, known as Rabi. In the absence of irrigation the crop matures

[2] See Appendix II.

in the moisture left in the soil by the monsoon, the heavy dew of winter and any casual rain that the cultivators' good luck may bring. This crop is sown in October and November and is harvested in April or May. The chief Rabi crops are wheat, barley, mustard and pulses like masur, etc.

The following table shows the total area of the Rabi crops:

Area under Rabi crops 1952-1953[3]
(in acres)

Rabi crop	*Irrigated area*	*Unirrigated area*	*Total area*	*Percentage to the Total*
Wheat	1176.95	11459.99	2636.94	57
Barley	761.77	8767.52	19536.29	36
Other crops	392.33	1356.78	1749.11	7
Total	2331.05	21584.29	23922.34	100

Thus, agriculture may be regarded as the main occupation of the people. We can have an idea of their agricultural economy from the following statement:

Cultivated area (in acres) per head of population, 1952-1953.

Net area cultivated	39417.89 acres
Total population	58469
Area under food crops	37841.18 acres
Area under non-food crops ..	1576.71 acres
Acres under food crops per head	.65 acres
Acres under non-food crops per head	.03 acres
Total cultivated area per head ..	.68 acres

This compares favourably with the general agricultural conditions prevailing in the State. According to the National

[3] Compiled from Land Revenue Records.

Sample Survey, General Report No. 1 (October 1950 to March 1951) the yield per acre in Uttar Pradesh is as follows:

Food grain	*Area in acres per person*	*Produce in mds. per person*
Clean rice	.16	0.93
Barley	.16	1.10
Maize	.11	0.71
Jowar	.04	0.19
Bajra	.07	0.59
Average	.66	4.21

But the weakness in the agricultural economy of Jaunsar-Bawar lies in the low yield per acre. No official figures of the yield per acre are available. But according to the information collected from the revenue authorities[4] and officers of the Agricultural Department, the following estimates of yield per acre were reached:

Crops	*Approximate yield per acre (in maunds)*
Wheat	5
Rice	6
Maize	4
Superior cereals (Mandua, Jhangora, etc.).	7

In comparison, the average yield per acre for the whole country is as given below.[4]

[4] Compiled from All India Crop Reports.

Crops	*Yield per acre (in maunds)*
Rice	8.5
Wheat	10.0
Jowar	3.9
Maize	9.2

This low yield per acre is inherent in the agricultural system of a mountainous region, where not only the soil is rocky but also the means of irrigation are not so well developed as in the plains.

Agricultural Methods and Crops

Rice: It requires heat, humidity and plenty of constant labour. Such conditions are coincident in the valleys, where the temperature is comparatively higher, the streams and rivers provide humidity and a denser population ensures minute and continuous care. There are two methods of raising this crop. The one which yields the better quality of rice is known as *achharna,* while the other is called *ropena.* The *achharna* system is as follows:

The first ploughing is done at the end of May or the beginning of June. The fields are then manured, watered and again ploughed while water is retained in them. After this they are harrowed with *dandyai* drawn by bullocks. The *dandyai* is a wooden log about a yard long with 6 to 9 teeth below it. After harrowing the soil is reduced to a semi-liquid mud which is kneaded by men and women by their hands and feet and finally levelled.

While the fields are thus being prepared, the seed is also simultaneously made ready. Rice is put in a pot (generally made of brass) and covered with half an inch thick layer of water. It is kept like this for three or four days and then placed for two days more in bamboo baskets, lined inside

with walnut leaves. Some leaves are also placed over the seed. The bamboo baskets are generally known as *kandi*, but more specifically the bigger ones are called *ghilta* and the smaller ones *dhauna*. The seed is thus prepared and sown by broadcast method, while the water in the field is in the muddy state. For broadcast sowing such a time of the day is selected when there is no violent wind to scatter the seeds. This precaution prevents unwise distribution of the seed. There is no transplantation of the paddy under the *achharna* system. When the plants grow up to about 6 inches, they are thinned out in places where they are in abundance. At the same time the weeds are removed by the hands. Rarely the *dandyai* is also used for this purpose, but it is a wasteful practice, since the rice plants are also uprooted and many of them destroyed. The weeding is rather a difficult task, because some of the weeds are almost like the cultivated plants. One of these is the self-grown rice left out at the previous harvest. This self-grown rice simply wastes the nourishment of the soil. But it can be easily differentiated on account of its slightly greater height than the new crop. Another troublesome weed is what is locally called *saonk* and is also just like paddy crop. But it can be distinguished because its plant is thicker than the rice plant.

In the beginning the fields are watered constantly, but as the plants grow the interval in watering is increased. When the crop has finally ripened it is reaped with a sickle at the end of September or in some cases at the beginning of October.

The second system, known as *ropena*, is more widely practiced. The seed preparation differs in the respect that germination (first under water and then in the bamboo basket) is allowed more time. The fields are first ploughed in May-June and then left for two to three weeks. Sometimes water is given to the fields for the first ploughing if the soil is found to be hard. Then they are manured heavily, watered and ploughed and the muddy soil levelled as in the above method. Then the seed is thrown over the clear water in comparatively large quantities. When the plants grow up

to 6 to 9 inches after ten to twelve days, they are transplanted in other fields known as *ropena*. A transplanter or a group of them are known as *ropenia*.

The first method requires hard labour in kneading the soil, while in the second system transplantation is a back-breaking task.

Wheat: For the cultivation of wheat the fields are ploughed in October, immediately after the paddy crop has been reaped, and are left open for a fortnight to lessen their humidity. They are then levelled by means of the wooden leveller locally known as *moee*. It is just a log of wood, about 4 feet long, one foot broad and six to eight inches thick. A long pole projects from the thickness of the block at right angle to its length and is attached to a pair of bullocks for pulling the *moee*. Another pole rises vertically from the middle of the log and is held as a support by the man who drives the pair of bullocks. It is just like a *dandyai* with no teeth below it. The levelled field is manured and the seed is sown broadcast. The *moee* is again applied and the field levelled. No weeding or any other care of the crop is required except an occasional watering of the fields. The harvest is reaped in April.

Barley: is grown just like wheat and is sown in those fields which were cultivated with paddy in the Khariff season under the *ropena* system. Its cultivation is now on the decline.

Potatoes, Onions and Tomatoes: Even a small area yields enough return. For potato cultivation, the fields are ploughed once before and twice after heavy manuring. The first two ploughings are followed by the levelling operation, but if the soil is moist or the rain is anticipated, then the *moee* is not applied. Potatoes are cut into small pieces, known as *batian*, which are sown one by one after the third ploughing in furrows. Weeding is done after a month or earlier. It is done by means of a hoe, called *godani* and the whole operation is known as *godna*. In some cases manure is given to the fields for the second time after weeding.

The onion seed is first sown in small plots which are watered daily. When the plants grow up to about 3 inches in a fortnight, they are transplanted. Before transplantation the fields are ploughed, levelled and left open for two weeks. Then the fields are manured followed by a second ploughing and levelling. At the third ploughing, the transplantation is done on the raised soil between two furrows, locally known as *dollas*. Watering is done every fourth day in the beginning and later on after a week. The crop is harvested in May.

For tomato cultivation the fields are ploughed twice followed by a levelling operation in each case. Manure is given between the two ploughings. After the second ploughing, small plots about one square yard each are made out in the field. Tomato plants are planted in these small plots which are irrigated turn by turn. This ensures proper distribution of water. As the terraces are not exactly tablelands some parts of the field will be over-irrigated while others may go dry, if the above method of small plots is not adopted. First weeding is undertaken after a fortnight followed by a second and third one in due course of time.

Tobacco is grown in a similar manner, and is harvested in June and early July. These *kyarik* are then transplanted with paddy under the *ropena* system.

The upland terraces known as *dandas* also yield two harvests like the irrigated plots below. The Khariff crop consists of rice, *mandua*, maize, potatoes (mostly sown in *dandas*) *jhangora*, *kauni*, *gagla*, ginger, turmeric, opium (only in Bawar), pulses (like *masur*, *kulthi*, harhar, etc.) and *phaphera*. The first four named are the principal products.

Mandua: Mandua is highly preferred by the hillman as he likes its taste and slow digestion, which enables him to carry on his work for a long time without feeling hungry. It forms a staple diet of the people. Mandua like *jhangora* is also used in the preparation of liquor, which is consumed by the people in large quantities. It is a hardier plant and can adapt itself to a poorer and stony soil with poor irrigation facilities and does not require much care. It is sown in those

fields from which wheat or barley has been harvested. Wheat and barley plants are not cut here near the roots as in the plains, but about the middle of their height. The lower half of the crop is left standing in the fields and is burnt. The ashes are ploughed in the field and the seed is sown broadcast in June, after the soil has been allowed to dry for a few days. Weeding is done with *godni* towards the end of July and beginning of August and then manure is thrown over the field. The harvest is reaped by the middle or end of October. One seer of seed yields about one maund of mandua. Chaulai is often grown with Mandua as a mixed crop. But Chaulai forms a smaller portion of the mixed crop, and if its plants are large in number, then some of them are rooted out in order to allow more nourishment to Mandua. Mandua harvest is always followed by a short fallow season in winter.

Maize: For maize the fields are manured after first ploughing and levelling, followed by a second ploughing and levelling. The maize is sown in straight rows. After fifteen to twenty days the weeds are rooted out with the *godni*. It requires less manure than potatoes, but more than Mandua and rice.

Turmeric, Ginger and Chillies: These crops require great heat, and are, therefore, sown at low levels. They require superior manure in large quantities. Their cultivation is just like that of maize, the only difference being that in the case of chillies the field is ploughed only twice, after which the sprouts are transplanted. Once the plants of chillies come out they last for several years. Every year the weeds are removed and manure is applied to the roots of the plants. Turmeric pieces are sown one foot apart after the third ploughing, generally in those terraces which were previously under wheat crop. The soil is then levelled by means of the *moee* drawn by a pair of bullocks. After this the field is covered with tree leaves. This covering not only generates artificial heat and promotes germination, but it also serves as a valuable manure, when the leaves rot in the rainy

season. Weeds are removed after a month's time. Ginger cultivation is exactly similar to that of turmeric.

Opium: is a valuable crop for Bawar, just as potatoes and ginger are for Jaunsar. It is grown only at higher altitudes and requires a superior kind of manure. Formerly it was grown in Jaunsar also, but now its cultivation has been prohibited there. Hail storms are extremely harmful for this crop. It is collected by giving a cut to the poppy flower with a knife and the milk that comes out is gathered when it has dried after two or three days. The opium collected in Bawar is not of a superior quality. The cultivation of opium in Bawar has also been prohibited from this year.

Commercial Crops: The chief commercial crops grown in this region are potatoes, ginger, turmeric and chillies. The potatoes are grown most extensively. In 1952-53, 2,426.14 acres of land was under cultivation of potatoes alone. Potatoes also constitute the main item of export from this region. There are three varieties of potatoes, namely *kherra*, *gol* and *lambey*, the first one being of the best quality. The market price of potatoes is always fluctuating, verging on the point of speculation. For example, *khera* potatoes were selling at the rate of Rs. 10 a maund in the end of September (1949), but the price rose upto Rs. 48 per maund by the first week of December. Most of the trade in potatoes takes place from the beginning of October upto the middle of December. The marketing of potatoes is another example of middlemen's network spread throughout the country for collecting the produce from the cultivators and selling it. Either advances are made to the cultivators and the whole crop hypothecated in advance; or the mule-men provide another link in this long chain of middle-men, who collect their own charges for transporting potatoes to the wholesale dealers. The normal rate of freightage charged by them is Rs. 4 per maund, while the price of potatoes on an average is Rs. 9 per maund. It is estimated that the total value of potatoes exported in one year from Jaunsar-Bawar is about 31 lakh rupees. So middlemen's profits can easily be imagined.

Manure: Repeated ploughing, levelling, harrowing and hoeing and constant tillage are a necessity in order to make the inhospitable soil yield food sufficient for subsistence. But perhaps the most important feature of the agriculture of the hillmen of this region is that of manuring, because not only is the scouring action of the rains more pronounced here than on the plains and the irrigational facilities poor, but also the paucity of cultivated land reduces the practice of fallowing to the minimum. But the highlander is more fortunate and wise than his brethren in the plains for he does not burn the cattle dung, which is the main source of soil fertilisation in the hills. Cattle are kept on the ground floor of the house, where tree leaves are spread on the floor. The droppings and the urine get mingled with the leaves, which are daily removed to one corner of the room and new leaves are spread in their place. In the case of goats the cleaning is done after three or four days or even a week's time. The heap of daily droppings thus collected is piled up at some nearby place outside the house, where the litter of the house etc. is also thrown and collected.

Those people, whose fields are at the outlying places, have got farm houses constructed near them. These serve as cattle sheds and are known as *chaoni*. They are managed by one or two members of the family, who often stay there. This not only ensures proper manuring of the terraces, but also avoids the wastage of time in moving the cattle from the houses to the fields. Dry leaves are also used as a manure.

Harvesting: The harvesting operations provide the most critical time in the agriculture of this region. Not only is the task a very hard one, but also it must be completed in the shortest possible time. If the reaping is delayed, the rains may come and destroy the fruits of their patient labour of so many months. Moreover late reaping means late sowing, which is prejudicial to good germination of the seed. For example, in the upland terraces where there are no irrigation facilities, a late crop may be damaged on account of the vagaries of the monsoon. Similarly, in the case of

the germination of a late sown crop, it may be greatly delayed due to the setting in of frosts. Also a ripe crop standing long in the field runs the risk of being destroyed by wild animals and pests. It is on account of these reasons that all the members of the family above the age of twelve take part in the cutting of the crop. Reaping is locally called *lona* and it is done with a sickle which is shaped like the sign of interrogation (?). The smaller sickles are called *dandale* (having teeth inside it) and *dantuti* (without teeth), while a bigger sickle is known as *datera.*

The first crop to be reaped is Cheni which is sown on the outer edges of the terraces. The next to fall under the sickle is the upland paddy. Rice in the irrigated fields is reaped a bit late as it is sown a little later. The last to be harvested are Mandua and Chaulai by the end of October. Among the Rabi crops, barley is cut a little earlier than wheat, but both of them are reaped later than they are harvested in the plain or in warmer places near the banks of the Jumna. The harvested crops are brought to the houses in bamboo baskets, known as *ghirlo.*

Land Tenures: Under the British rule a number of land settlements were made starting from the one of 1815-16 (for Rs. 1,800 per year) by Capt. Birch. The others were:[5]

Second Settlement (1818-21) for Rs. 17,001 a year, made by Capt. Ross.
Third Settlement (1821-24) for Rs. 17,001 a year, made by Capt. Young.
Fourth Settlement (1824-27 and later on extended upto 1829) for Rs. 18,701 a year, made by Capt. Young.
Fifth Settlement (1829-34) for Rs. 18,100 a year, made by Major Young.
Sixth Settlement (1834-49) for Rs. 21,412 a year, made by Major Young.

[5] *Memoirs of Dehra Dun,* p. 219.

Upto the end of the 6th settlement, the land revenue of Jaunsar-Bawar was managed by means of a curious system of representative government requiring careful explanation to render it intelligible.[6] The *pargana* was divided into *khuts* over each of which presided a *sayana*, generally the most intelligent member of some leading family, among whom the office was hereditary. The four most influential *sayanas*, bearing the title of *Chauntra*, constituted a senate (*Chauntroo*), which exercised control over all the *sayanas*. The government arbitrarily fixed the revenue on the whole *pargana* in a lump sum; this the *chauntras* distributed over the *sadar sayanas* (headmen of *khuts*), who redistributed it over village *sayanas*, who in turn fixed the sum to be contributed by each land owner, and all were held jointly and severally responsible for the collections. The united body of *sayanas* appointed at the commencement of each settlement their *Mahajin*, who resided at Kalsi and became their surety (*malzamin*) for the punctual payment of the revenue on the appointed day. "The surety paid up the revenue and debited the sum due by each proprietor to him as a personal account with interest from date fixed for payment without reference to the date when the money was actually paid, and this was considered a lawful perquisite of the office."[7] The *chauntras* were not only revenue officers, but also managed all internal affairs, being arbitrators and judges in civil and criminal suits. They had plenary power to flog, fine, imprison, mutilate and execute. As revenue officers they received small salaries of Rs. 40, Rs. 60 or Rs. 100 per year. The *sadar sayanas* also had similar powers to a lesser degree and were given an allowance of 5 per cent (*bisaunta*) on the collections.

The next settlement made by Mr. A. Ross was a very important one and requires a little detailed mention. Prior to this settlement, the death of the surety, Lala Deendyal, occurred in 1829 and due to his son Kirpa Ram being a child, the affairs consequently fell in helpless confusion, while the

[6] A. Ross. *Settlement Report*, 1949, paras 17, 18, 19.

[7] *Gazetteer of the Dun.*, p. 139.

chauntras availed of the opportunity to compass their own ends. So notwithstanding the official recognition of the *malzamin's* position at the commencement of the 6th settlement, he practically degenerated into a non-entity. But when Kirpa Ram had attained majority, he tried to assert himself and thus a quarrel arose between him and the *chauntras*. This quarrel assumed an alarming shape in 1844, and was brought to the notice of Mr. Vanisttart, who ordered *malzamin's* removal. But the new system did not function well and Kirpa Ram was re-installed by Mr. A. Ross in 1846. Still Kirpa Ram's opponents continued to give trouble by setting up a rival *malzamin* in his place. To remedy this state of affairs a regular settlement (for Rs. 19,750) was made after an inquiry into the condition of each *khut* and its villages. The powers and duties of the *chauntru* were abolished, because they represented an irresistible temptation to corruption. The fiscal duties of the *chauntru* fell on *sadar sayanas* and the joint responsibility imposed on the whole pargana was limited to each *khut*.

But the patriarchal regime still survived to a certain extent. The *sadar sayana* continued to settle petty disputes arising within his own *khut* with the assistance of his brethren, while larger panchayats elected by the parties concerned decided those of a graver nature affecting two or more *khuts*, subject to the general control of the Superintendent. At the same time Mr. A. Ross drew up a code of common law known as *Dastur-ul-Amal*,[8] for the use of local panchayats in administering justice among themselves. This was compiled from popular tradition, only making alterations where local custom was directly opposed either to the criminal law or to the dictates of commonsense and morality. Provisions were inserted, for example, prohibiting the practice of compounding felonies or the disposal of such cases, more especially murder, by the *sayanas*, and also declaring the accusation of witchcraft to be a punishable offence, as well as the pernicious habit of cursing the ground from

[8] See Appendix I.

motives of vengeance. But still some manners and customs of the people received a semi-judicial sanction by being embodied in the above code. That is why, "when the question of legislation for Jaunsar-Bawar was under consideration in 1862-64, this *Dastur-ul-Amal*, was brought to the notice of the government, but the form in which the rules had been cast was too crude, and some of its provisions were too startling to admit of its receiving legislative recognition."[9] For example, the decision of cases by oath, allowed by this code (and followed even now), when a dispute could be settled in no other way, is highly objectionable. This custom leads to such bitter feuds that the men of one *khut* often refuse to eat or sleep in another, and will not allow their children to attend a school situated in an obnoxious village from their point of view. Nor do these quarrels die out easily, being handed down from father to son, and breaking out afresh whenever any misfortune befalls the man who has taken the oath or his heirs, for the mishap is always attributed to perjury.

The *Dastur-ul-Amal* (para 4) divided the cultivators of Jaunsar-Bawar into two classes: *Maurusi* and *Gair Maurusi*. The former are also known as zamindars and belong either to Brahman or Rajput caste. They have got rights of alienation. The *gair maurusi* cultivators are mere tenants and can dispose off their land only to the zamindars whose land they cultivate and whom they pay rent. When the land is disposed off by a *maurusi* cultivator, pre-emption can be claimed by any other cultivator of the *khut*.

According to *Dastur-ul-Amal*, the *sadar sayana* should keep the zamindars satisfied, look after the welfare of new tenants, settle all quarrels, discharge the duties of a revenue officer and obey government orders. The eldest son of a *sayana* succeeds him at his death. If the son is a minor, he still holds the title, while some relative discharges the duties. If there is no issue of a *sayana*, then his brother takes up his office, and government confirmation is required for this.

[9] *Gazetteer of the Dun.*, p. 193.

A woman cannot hold this post. A *sayana* may resign in favour of his eldest son. The *sadar sayana* appoints the village *sayana* and assigns him a share in the dues (*bisaunta*) paid to him. In reality, however, the latter has now become quite independent of the former, and his office has also become hereditary.

The above rules, regulations and practices adopted under the 7th settlement (1849-59) of Mr. A. Ross and embodied in *Dastur-ul-Amal* are being followed up to the present time with certain additions and amendments introduced by Mr. J. C. Robertson in the next settlement (1860-70) for Rs. 21,525 per year. In this settlement an attempt was made for the first time to find out the total area under cultivation by means of plane-table measurement, which worked out to 21,603 acres. The ninth settlement, which was made by Mr. Cornwall, after a revision lasting from 1870-73, assessed the total revenue at Rs. 26,355. The rent rates were : Rs. 4 an acre for irrigated land, Rs. 2 for first class dry and 13 as. 4 ps. for second class dry land. Land under ginger, opium and turmeric was charged higher. These rates were modified according to remoteness of markets and the flocks and herds of the cattle. The new office of Patwari was also created at this time.[10]

But the above assessment was felt to be too high and several protests were made by the *sayanas*, which led Mr. H. G. Ross to revise the whole scheme in 1883. In the end he granted a remission of Rs. 2,000. The *sayana's* duties and privileges were more clearly defined. He was held responsible for the revenue on waste land, which he disposed off as he liked and was expected to represent all hardships or grievances etc. of the people.

The above scheme of Mr. Ross is still current. Only the land-tax has been increased by a cess of Rs. 15/10 approximately per hundred rupees. According to the latest land settlement (1949-51), the U. P. government has fixed the land revenue of Rs. 28,225-2-3. Under this settlement the

[10] *Gazetteer of the Dun.*, pp. 144-49.

powers of the *sayanas* have been greatly circumscribed, and the revenue has been fixed by the government for each cultivator separately which shall not be changeable by the *sayanas*. Further, well defined rights of *nautor* (reclaiming new land) and land ownership have been conferred on the lower classes.

Chapter 6

ECONOMIC SERFDOM

IT IS evident from the last chapter that agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Jaunsar-Bawar. The population consists of peasant proprietors. Agricultural labour is provided by the Koltas to the landlords who give them land for their own cultivation. Agriculture with these people is not merely an occupation but also a tradition, a way of life, which for centuries has shaped their thought and culture. But the size of holdings is not big. The produce is hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of the family.

The Koltas, who render the most important economic service by providing all the necessary labour on land, occupy the lowest rung in the social hierarchy. The Koltas are also the most numerous, constituting nearly one-fifth of the total population of Jaunsar-Bawar. These unfortunate people are without a backbone, because the documents which carry the whole force with them are all against them. The Koltas are all agriculturists. They cultivate their own fields and at the same time provide labour to their Zamindars. But they do not enjoy the privilege of having any tenurial rights in the fields under their plough. In the land records they are shown as *Khidmati* (servicemen) without any tenurial rights. They are more or less like 'bondsmen'. However, a small minority of Koltas owns and cultivates land. Our investigations show the distribution of landowning and non-owning section as following:[1]

No. of families where land has been acquired through Khidmat	*No. of families who have acquired land on rent but render service in payment of interest for debt.*	*No. of families who have both Khidmati and rental-land.*	*No. of landless families*	*Total number of families*
187 (44.00)	138 (32.47)	14 (3.29)	86 (20.24)	425 (100.00)

[1] See Report on Economic Serfdom among Koltas of Jaunsar-Bawar by R. N. Saksena (submitted to the Ministry of Education, Government of India).

As a result they are forced to suffer great privations and work for their masters from morning till evening under conditions of semi-starvation. And to add to their virtual serfdom is the heavy weight of indebtedness, which lies so heavily on them that one can easily see the utter futility of any attempt on their part to get rid of it, or even to lighten it. The outcome is that whenever a Kolta attempts to run away from the clutches of his master by migrating to another village, he is brought before a court of law to face his trial for non-payment of his debt, which is practically impossible for him to pay. Thus for generations together his lot is cast with that of his master, who controls his existence and destiny. He is just a 'tiller of the soil and hewer of wood' without any economic or social freedom of his own.

There are three types of Koltas:

(1) *Khundit-Mundit:* They get themselves clean-shaved whenever there is any death in the family of the Zamindar and take part in the mourning ceremonies for some days, usually three to five. They have no property rights.
(2) *Mat:* The chief cause of their serfdom is their heavy indebtedness.
(3) *Sanjayat:* They are a village Kolta. One of their functions is the keeping of death and birth records. They serve their masters by turn.

Indebtedness: As has been already mentioned, the Koltas are under bondage to their Zamindars because of their heavy indebtedness and the exorbitant rate of interest charged by the Zamindars. This interest is known as *Ganth Khulai*, and is of the magnitude of 6¼ to 6½% per month, that is, 75 to 78% per annum. Most of the debt can be regarded as legal fiction, because all the debt entered in the account books is not in the shape of the advance of money made, but includes any amount which has been spent by the Zamindar on the Kolta, such as marriage or birth or death

in the family of a Kolta. There is also legitimate ground to question whether accurate entries are made in the books, especially when we know that the Kolta is an ignorant and illiterate man, who lives in perpetual fear of his master. He submissively puts his thumb impression wherever his master desires. The outcome is that his indebtedness goes on increasing as it is passed on from father to son. And whenever a Kolta makes a bid for his freedom by migrating to another village, he is hauled up before a court of law for non-payment of his debt, which is practically impossible for him to pay. Thus, for generations together, his lot is cast with that of his master and his existence is at the will of those who control his destiny.

Apart from the ancestral debt which is in the books of the Zamindars, a Kolta resorts to frequent borrowing because of his extreme poverty and dependence, which further increases his indebtedness. The following table will give a clear picture of his self-borrowing indebtedness amongst the Kolta families:

Indebtedness (Rupees)	*Purposes*								
	Marriage	*Consumption*	*Litigation*	*Housing*	*Marriage & Housing*	*Social ceremony*	*Purchase of bullock*	*Unspecified*	*Total*
Up to 10	..	11	..	..	..	2	..	..	13
10–25	..	4	..	1	..	3	..	..	8
25–50	14	18	..	2	..	6	12	4	56
50–100	6	8	2	4	..	..	5	5	30
100–150	3	1	..	..	1	1	3	1	10
150–200	8	1	..	1	..	..	3	2	15
200–250	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2
250–300	6	..	2	1	..	..	..	4	13
300–350	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
350–400	5	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	7
Above 400	6	1	1	1	4	..	..	2	15
Amount not known	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	49	44	5	11	5	12	23	20	169

It will be observed that nearly one-third of the families investigated were forced to borrow money for various non-economic purposes, the most compelling factor being marriage and consumption.

In 1948, the Government of Uttar Pradesh issued a regulation, known as the Jaunsar-Bawar Pargana (District of Dehra Dun) Debt Control Regulation, 1948. This measure, as the name suggests, was intended to provide relief from indebtedness, which is the main cause of poverty among the Koltas. Under the regulation all debt, upon the expiry of three years from the date on which it was incurred, would be deemed duly discharged. It provided further that an agreement or promise to render personal service in consideration of loan advanced would be void. It sought to dismiss all the suits filed for the recovery of any unsecured loan incurred more than three years before the institution of the case. It fixed the rate of interest as 5 per cent. It was further stipulated that the rate of interest would be only 3% after a case for the recovery of loan has been instituted and if the debtor or his dependent renders any kind of personal service for any period, no interest would be charged for that period.

The Regulation, as is evident, sought to provide a revolution in the traditional position of the Koltas and in their relationship with landlords. It is surprising to find that the Kolta himself in most of the cases is not yet ready to receive the Regulation. The bonds of custom are proving too strong to be broken down by mere legislation. To a Kolta, the Zamindar even now is the guardian, the protector of his family. He has not to worry as to how his children are to be fed or married or even to bother to look after his wife or pay for his marriage ceremony. All this has the approval of and sometimes managed by the Zamindar. So both by custom and instinct he has learnt to depend on his Zamindar for his requirements and in his own turn he feels that the Zamindar is fully justified in his claim over his labour which he discharges as his sacred duty. Thus, the Kolta has

absolutely surrendered himself to his master.

Where the Kolta has proved to be more assertive the Zamindar has proved to be more cunning. He has devised ways and means by which he can pursue the Kolta or victimise him. One of the easiest ways is to eject a Kolta from his land holding. In the Patwari's record, he is only shown as a Khidmatgar or a hired labourer. Thus, though he cultivates the land apart from that of his master, he does not enjoy any tenurial rights. Whenever he wants to assert his independence, the situation that he has to face is to find himself landless and ultimately face starvation. It is, therefore, in his interest that he continues to lead the customary life of servitude.

Another interesting feature of their indebtedness is the mode of repayment of their debts. Out of 276 investigated families which were in debt, 63 families were trying to repay a part of their debt in cash, 92 families in the form of free labour rendered to the creditors, 9 families partly in cash and partly in form of labour and 7 families in the form of food grains and goats etc. Thus nearly 37% of the families attempted to repay their debts directly in the form of labour, but in practice even those families who paid their debts in other ways had to render free labour in lieu of interest thereof. This shows the extent of serfdom among the Koltas due to indebtedness.

Chapter 7

RURAL INDUSTRIES

SMALL SCALE industries have always formed a "second string in the bow" in all rural communities, particularly so in mountainous regions where, due to the severity of the winter season, which lasts from November to February, all the agricultural operations are virtually paralysed. And because of the extremely low resources at their disposal, such industries have to be of a very simple nature, to provide their daily requirements and add to their self sufficiency. There is no problem of marketing the products of home industries, since they are essentially meant for personal or local consumption. The surplus is only bartered. Thus manufacture of home-spun woollen cloth and blankets, wooden and iron agricultural implements and weaving of baskets constitute important items of their home industries.

The manufacture of home-spun woollen cloth is closely connected with and dependent on the rearing of sheep and goats. According to the Cattle Census of 1951 the heads of cattle in Jaunsar-Bawar were 56,450 goats and 13,835 sheep. Though every household maintains its own flock of sheep and goats, it has not in any way lent a pastoral tinge to their life. It only provides another feature of their agricultural economy. All that is done is that if there are many brothers in the family then one of them takes charge of the cattle and looks after them. He is also addressed by the children in the family in a similar fashion, Bhairawa Baba or Bakrawa Bawa, as the case may be. These cattle also provide them with milk, manure and meat. Sheep hair are also used in the making of ropes and also shoes which are used for walking on snow.

The sheep are fleeced only once a year and not all of them. But the goats are fleeced twice and sometimes even thrice a year. Before fleecing, the animals are first tho-

roughly washed with water in the morning, but this is not generally done in the case of sheep as water bathing is considered to be harmful for them. They are then tethered in the sun to dry up and in the evening they are shorn with a locally made pair of scissors.

The wool is then subjected to a process of combing by a carder, locally called *pharno*. It is a kind of ordinary bow made of bamboo, about five feet long. The carder is not tied to the ceiling, as is generally the practice in the plains, but is held in the left hand and the string is pulled and released with the thumb of the right hand. After carding is over, *poonis* or small fluffs about nine inches long are made out of it, which are again pressed into small spherical balls, known as *gorahs*.

Wool is spun on a spindle, which consists of a small bamboo stick, about 10 inches long attached to a disc. The spindle is locally known as *takri*. The carded wool is held in the left hand, while the *takri* is placed on the ground in a vertical position and twirled in a clockwise direction with the right hand. It is not necessary that the *takri* should rest on the ground. It can even be kept suspended to enable a person to move about or do some other work.

Most of the weaving is done in winter. The type of loom commonly used is a vertical loom, known as *ide*. One end of the loom is attached to a peg on a wall, while the rest of the weaving is done sitting on the ground.

The popular patterns of woollen cloth woven by the people are the *bandis* and *burkis*. These are coarse woollen tweeds having a width of three-fourths of a yard. They are usually white in colour, but at times black wool is also used in mixture with white or alone. These are the natural colours of wool, but the people are also well-acquainted with artificial dyeing and prepare good designs of cloth out of dyed wools. In winter almost all the men in Jaunsar-Bawar can be seen putting on white coats and white or black trousers made out of *bandis* and *burkis*, which nearly gives the appearance of a complete uniformity in dress. The Jaunsaris

generally manufacture cloth for self-consumption; but if there is a surplus quantity, it is bartered among themselves or sold to the merchants at Kalsi, Saiya and Chakrata.

The Jaunsaris also manufacture home-spun and home-woven blankets, known as *pankhis*. The *pankhis* are white woollen blankets. They are manufactured in the same way as *bandis* and *burkis*. After weaving they are soaked in water, in which bark of *bhimbal* tree has been put, for softening. Those having double thickness are used as overcoverings during winter nights, while the others having single thickness are used as wrappers during the day time, if it is very cold. Superior kinds of *pankhis*, also known as shawls, are made in the northern parts of Bawar from fine wool, called *pushmina*. Pushmina consists of the small underhair of a special breed of sheep reared by the people. These *pankhis* are made exceptionally fine and are just like Kashmir shawls. Another type of blankets used by the people is known as *dohrain*. These are heavier than the *pankhis* and are always of double thickness. They are widely used as overcoverings.

Woollen rugs, the size of a bed, are also made, especially in Bawar, from the hair of sheep. These rugs are called *numdas*. They are made by weaving long hair in the midst of yarn. The upper side of these *numdas* is hairy and looks like the fleece of a goat, while the lower side is plain and even. These rugs may have floral or other designs in various colours. They are articles of luxury and are manufactured by expert weavers.

Among other woollen articles of Bawar may be mentioned the snow-shoes, called *khurshay*. These are made of sheep-wool and are woven by means of an iron needle. They are very thick and are closely woven. They come up to half the legs and each one of them has got four lace-holes. But these shoes can be used only on snow. On rough roads they readily wear out.

Cloth-bags and haversacks are also made from woollen cloth. But this cloth is of a loose texture. They are always black in colour. The smaller ones are used for carrying light

articles hither and thither, while the bigger ones are used for storing odd things.

A variety of ropes is made from the hair of sheep, as well as from a special kind of grass and tree-bark. The woollen ropes are only prepared in Bawar from hair over six inches long and of a particular species of sheep. The sheep hair are first spun on a wooden cross, locally known as *mutyati*. As a result of this spinning the hair are turned into thin ropes, called *suts*. Three or more *suts* are then twisted together and thus the rope of the desired thickness is obtained.

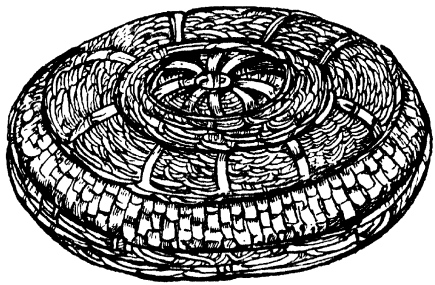
Another type of rope is made from the bark of the *bhimbal* tree. The branches are cut and the leaves are given to the animals. These are made into short sticks by chipping off the small twigs and are then put in the sun for nearly a fortnight to dry up. The dried sticks are kept under water for nearly a month and the bark is removed from them. Then a rope is made out of this bark by means of the *mutyati*. This process takes quite a long time. If a rope is needed at short notice, then a special kind of grass, known as *koula*, is used. But this rope is not so strong as the one prepared from sheep hair or the bark of the *bhimbal* tree.

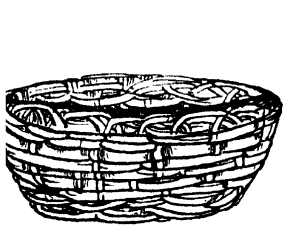
Most of the woollen manufactures are softened by a process of soaking the cloth in water in which bark of *bhimbal* tree has been mixed for four to eight hours, and a person treads over the woollen cloth or beats it with a mallet. By this process all the tiny holes are filled and the fabric becomes more impervious to air.

Cotton weaving has now greatly declined in Jaunsar-Bawar. Formerly cotton was grown in the warmer regions of each *khut* and the people used to spin and make all the cloth for their requirements themselves. But now cotton is grown only at a limited number of places as most of the cloth is imported from the plains. In the case of cotton fabrics, all spinning is done by women, but the weaving is again the task of men.

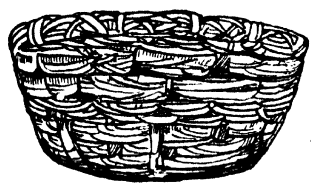
Among the low class people, the Koltas and the Chamars do a variety of bamboo-work. For this purpose they use

BASKETS

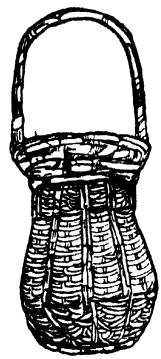












ringal, which is a kind of small bamboo. It is cut when it is leafless and green. The only other instrument used is a knife with a handle at each end and a blade of 7 or 8 inches in length. Sometimes even the ordinary sickle suffices. All the bamboo-work is done by hand. Among the various types of bamboo-baskets made by them, mention may be made of the following:

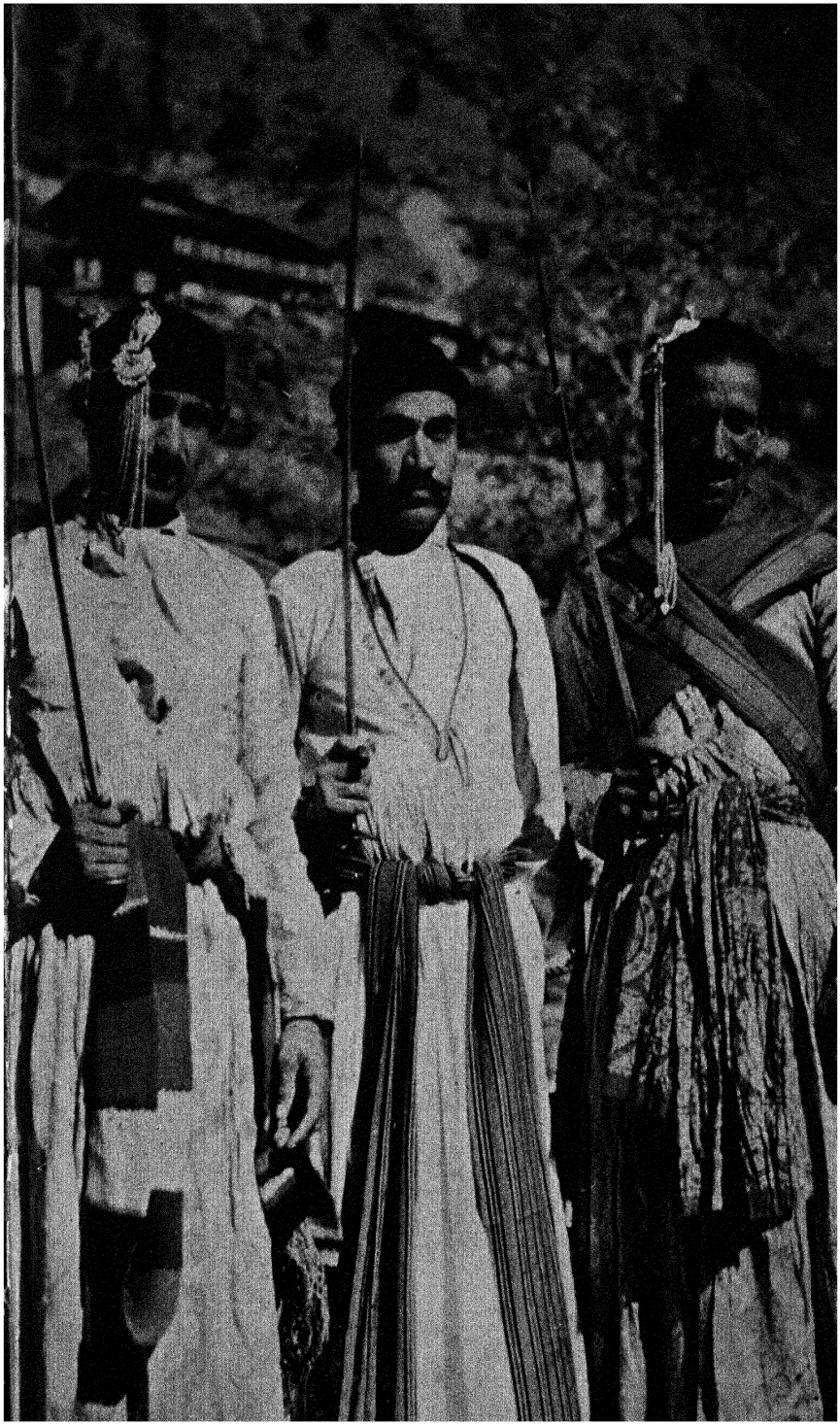
The *ghirlos* and *ghiltas* are long bamboo baskets of circular design. The base of the basket is round and the diameter gradually decreases towards the top. They are of different sizes, but the most common size is about 4 feet in depth with a diameter of 1½ feet. The smaller baskets are called *ghirlos* while the bigger ones are called *ghiltas*.

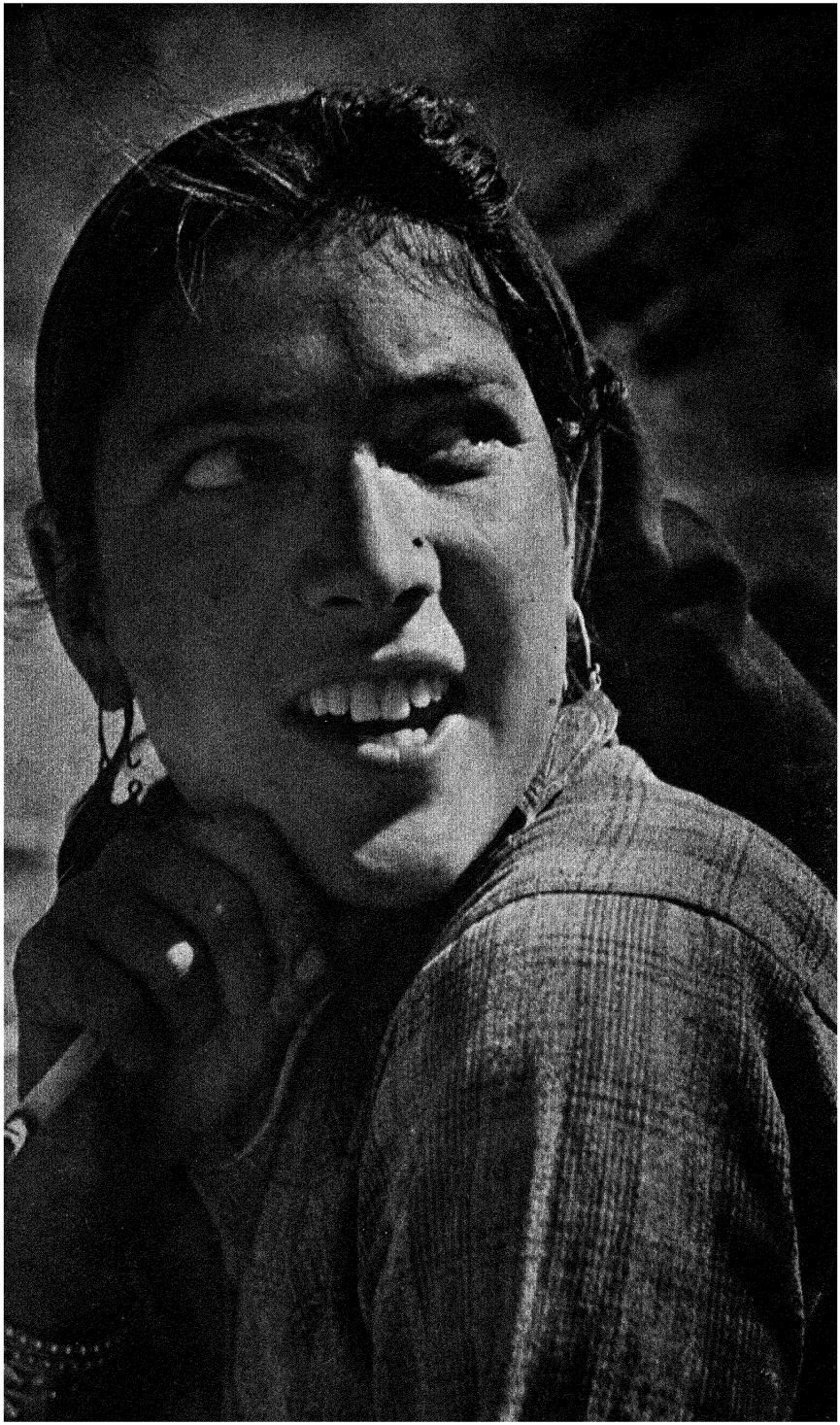
The *pitars* are circular baskets for storing grains. They have got a flat base, are broad at the bottom and narrow at the top. In fact they have a conical appearance. They are fitted with lids. The capacity of a *pitar* is nearly a maund. They are made very durable.

The *kanetis* are small baskets used for keeping fruits and flowers. They are provided with handles. They have got narrow bases and necks, but their bodies bulge out.

The *besaees* are strong and durable disc-shaped baskets. Their diameter is four feet and sometimes even more and they have got 7 to 8 inches high wall at their edges. They are plastered with mud and cow dung. The *besaee* is mainly used for drying the grains.

Tanning of skins is also done by the Koltas and Chamars. They render this service free to the whole of the village, because they cannot charge anything from their masters and from other people of the village from whom they receive food-grains on various occasions. The goat skins are used for making big bags, which are of three sizes. The biggest one is called *khal* and is made of three or four goat skins. The *ghartal* is of medium size and is made of a pair of goat skins. The smallest one is called *khalta* or *kharta* and is made of a single piece of skin. These different bags are used for carrying foodgrains.





The carpenters make all agricultural implements and several other wooden articles. But sometimes the agricultural implements are made by the cultivators themselves.

Among the various kinds of boxes made by the carpenters, the most popular type is *kothar* which is used for storing grains. Its capacity is nearly 3 maunds. It is also some times used for keeping clothes and blankets. In addition to *kothars*, wardrobes and almirahs are also made for keeping the clothes and other such articles.

The people who have come under the influence of modern ideas have erected spacious houses in which they keep cots, and other furniture like chairs and tables. All these articles are manufactured by the local carpenters. Skilled carpenters also undertake the carving of houses and the making of wooden images of wild animals, which are fixed to the projecting portion of the central beam of the house-roof.

Another industry is the manufacture of round wooden vessels, which are turned out of a single block of wood. The lathe is driven by water power, and so the industry is established only where good timber is found near a stream. These wooden vessels are in great demand throughout the region as they are used for storing milk, curd and ghee. They are of different sizes, their capacity varying from half a seer to twenty seers. The bigger ones are called *nayara* while the smaller ones are called *kathiya*.

The ironsmiths manufacture all kinds of agricultural implements that are needed by the agricultural community. In addition to this they make various kinds of knives and swords. The swords are of two kinds—curved and straight. The former are known as *talwars* and the latter as *katars*. Another popular weapon made by them is a kind of dagger with a triangular blade and wooden handle, which is to be found in every house.

Chapter 8

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

TRADE AND transport are both interdependent. A brisk trade means improved means of transport, while a backward and primitive economy holds no incentive for providing better facilities of transport. At the same time lack of transport facilities in any region leads to its economic isolation and backwardness. Such is the case with Jaunsar-Bawar. The problem of transport is the most difficult one in this region, owing to the rugged and inaccessible nature of the country. A motor road has cut some way into the territory upto the hill station of Chakrata. This road carries much vehicular traffic and the people of the roadside villages are gradually coming in touch with modern civilisation. Many of them have even experienced the thrill of going in a motor bus. But this applies only to a thirty miles stretch, running through the heart of Jaunsar-Bawar. Beyond, few villagers have ever journeyed to the plains, and a great majority of them have never seen even a cart. They live as their forefathers did, worrying little about external events and maintaining their own traditions and customs and means of transport which are all centuries old.

Their needs are few and so is their economy. They lead almost a self-sufficient existence as a result of the geographical barriers which had partially cut them off from the rest of the world, until a suspension bridge was constructed across river Yamuna at Kasli. They grow their own food, they make their own implements and domestic vessels, they weave their own woollen and bamboo articles and look to the outside world for little more than their requirements of salt, iron, sugar, kerosene oil and cotton cloth. Even the textile goods are manufactured locally at some places and instead of kerosene oil the people often burn torch-wood, locally called *doee*. Another peculiar feature of the village

community is that the majority of the artisans are in service of the village and the chief source of their income is the fixed share of each season's produce, paid to them by the respective families to which they are attached. The hereditary office of the artisan class has stereotyped the whole life of the village. Indeed the isolation has been so perfect that even the dialect changes from one village to another. The more distance one travels in the interior, this difference becomes even greater. The result is so marked that few people in Jaunsar can understand the dialect of Bawar and vice versa. Even the people residing near Kalsi cannot express themselves freely in the northern parts of Jaunsar. Such a compact form of the village community coupled with the meagre means of transport gives us a clue to the limited volume and variety of the internal as well as external trade of Jaunsar-Bawar. So far as the internal trade is concerned, it is nearly absent. No marketing fairs take place, which are an important feature of the economic life of the people of several other Himalayan regions like Kumaon and Kangra valley. One such fair is held annually at Rampur (District Garhwal) on the 20th day of the month of Katuk, but the people of Jaunsar-Bawar seldom take any part in it. All local transactions are carried out on a barter system. When a person wants to buy a cow, for example, he will first find out the place and the person from whom the cow is available. He will then go to that village and offer his sheep, food-grains or woollen articles in exchange. If both sides agree, the transaction is over. Such transactions are generally limited to persons who are known to each other.

Since the Second World War, Jaunsar-Bawar began to feel the impact of new forces and a change of some magnitude has been going on in her economic structure since then. Several Banias and local merchants have opened grain and sweetmeat shops in the big villages. Even on the long and lonely mountain routes some tea-shops have been set up and they are proving to be very popular, as the people are gradually becoming accustomed to tea. It may also be indica-

tive of the fact that the use of liquor is on the decline due to the propaganda carried on against it by various individuals and agencies and the recent policy of the Government to apply excise rules to this region.

There has also been an increase in the bulk of external trade of Jaunsar-Bawar. Actual figures are not available, but according to the estimates of local merchants it runs up to the tune of twenty lakh rupees annually. The chief article of export is potato. Other commercial crops are tomatoes, ginger, turmeric and onions. The area under these money crops is fast increasing. In the *dokhras* about one-third of the area, which was formerly under *chaulai* and *jhangora*, has been devoted to them, while the *dandas* are almost exclusively being utilised for the cultivation of potatoes. In the irrigated plots, where the potatoes are a winter crop, they have so much displaced the cultivation of wheat that Jaunsar-Bawar has become deficient in it and wheat is now imported from the plains.

This expansion in trade has naturally brought into prominence the need of more and better roads for bringing cash crops to the market. The other alternative is exploitation at the hands of a long chain of intermediaries, who pocket most of the profit, leaving very little or nothing for the cultivator. Even today the wheeled traffic is unknown in this region and the only roads are the narrow trails of the roughest and most dangerous character, with precipitous ascents and descents. They run parallel to the big streams and rivers high above their banks or are out in a zigzag fashion around the mountain slopes. Thus in going from one place to another which seems quite near as the crow flies, one has to travel a long distance.

On these rudimentary and primitive trails, the only means of transport are the mules and the human beings themselves. The forest roads (maintained by the Forest Department) are the best among them, but most of the other roads are mere footpaths, quite unfit for the animals.

Some of the paths, running at great heights in Bawar,

come under snow during the winter season and consequently all traffic is stopped on them for nearly three months of the year. Even the routes going to the north of Chakrata are blocked by the heavy snowfalls and Chakrata is cut off from Bawar occasionally. During those days the alternative path used by the people for entering Bawar is the non-metalled road which starts from Saiya.

The number of mountain streams and the rapidity of their currents offer further impediments to traffic, more especially during the rainy season. Their dangerous and uncertain character makes it impossible to construct bridges over all of them, so that the number of bridges across rivers and streams is almost negligible. Three types of bridges are generally used by the people. Their technical details vary but slightly, according to the breadth of the stream. The most simple type of bridge consists of a single plank of wood or the trunk of a tree thrown across the stream from bank to bank. Such a bridge can be put up only when the stream is very narrow. The wood-plank or the tree-trunk is changed every now and then when it has gone weak.

When the stream is a bit broader, then another type of bridge is used which has a little more elaborate structure. It is more or less a ladder which is stretched over the stream. This ladder is suspended from two parallel rope cables, also stretched across the stream. This bridge is locally known as *jibaee*. As it cannot bear much strain, the travellers cross it one by one. In places where such a bridge cannot be constructed, because the stream is very broad or due to other technical reasons, the people take recourse to a very primitive device. The two banks are connected merely by a single rope slung across the stream and anchored securely to two strong stakes, or trees, or rock boulders, on both sides. The connecting rope, locally called *tungun*, has got a thickness of nearly one and a half inches in diameter. There are two ways of crossing such a bridge. Either a person balances himself on the rope and glides to the other side on all fours, more or less like a monkey, or he sits in a basket which

is suspended from the rope and is either pulled across by a man on the opposite bank by means of another rope attached to the basket, or the person himself pulls it to the opposite bank. This system is known as *jhula*. The crossing of such a bridge requires both courage and strength.

Loads and cattle are taken across the stream by the second method. The sheep and goats are placed in a basket and pulled to the other side. But in the case of cows and buffaloes, they are suspended in such a way that while they float on the water in the river, they still hang from the rope, and are pulled across by means of another rope. The rope bridges are found at a number of places and are very common as they cost little and can be readily set up. The following are the important rope bridges. One is over the Yamuna river near Merora village (*khut* Bahlar) for going to District Garhwal. Another one over Yamuna is near the village Celon (*khut* Phartar) for going to Binhar. Two important bridges over the Tons river are, one below Koti village (in Ladi area) and the other near Kuanu village (*khut* Pusgaon) for crossing over to Sirmur state. The Ladi area bridge is the longest one in Jaunsar-Bawar, the length of the connecting cable being 150 feet. All the above bridges are maintained throughout the year. During the rainy season one bridge is set up over Amlawa river near Kalsi.

The chief means of transport are mules which are well-trained in the art of lifting heavy weights on their backs to great heights. They exert great strength and exhibit marvellous endurance in carrying loads up the steep hill-tracks and across treacherous screes. The value of the mules in Jaunsar-Bawar can be gauged from the fact that they are worth a good fortune—about five hundred rupees—while their price in the plains is less than half. The mules are owned by the merchants of Chakrata and Saiya, the Baniyas and local merchants in the interior, all of whom are engaged in the export and import trade of Jaunsar-Bawar with the plains and the neighbouring hilly areas. The big merchants may own as many as one to two dozen mules.

Apart from Baniyas and other merchants there are also many Pathans, who own large numbers of mules, and whose only business is to transport goods from one place to another. They charge one rupee per maund for every 5 to 8 miles according to the nature of the bridle-paths over which the loads are carried. These Pathans belong to Kashmir and they speak Kashmiri as well as Pushtoo in addition to the local dialect. Although they have been residing in Jaunsar-Bawar for a long time, they have maintained their customs and traditions intact and generally do not take any part in the local festivals, etc. They live together in Chakrata during the summer season and come down to Kalsi in winter, so they have got their houses at both the places.

The mules are very hardy, brave and sure-footed and carry loads up to three maunds with comparative ease. The total weight that a mule has to carry is packed into two jute bags, slung on each side. The two bags are sewn together, and placed on the back of the pack animal, care being taken that the loads are apportioned equally on both sides. The task of the muleteer in taking the animals over the dangerous and narrow mountain paths is by no means an easy one. Every now and then he has to resort to a good deal of coaxing in order to get the kicking and braying animals cross the numerous streams and difficult sections of the track. One man for every four mules is generally needed to control them on the mountain paths.

In addition to these beasts of burden, man himself has given a proof of his sturdiness and stamina in these regions. On account of the paucity of means of communication and transport he has to carry heavy loads on his back over long distances and his adaptability in this matter is nothing short of a marvel. Whereas it may be very difficult for an average man from the plains to merely walk at these heights, the hillman climbs them with a load of forty to sixty seers with comparative ease. Although the amount of weight carried annually by men is not very great, yet they are indispensable even where the animals fail. All able-bodied men and

women in Jaunsar-Bawar have to carry loads to some extent, because they have to bring fodder and fuel daily from the forest and carry the harvests from the outlying terraces to their houses. They carry the loads in bamboo baskets or skin bags.

In addition to the above methods river transport is also utilised for floating down timber. The Forest Department sells annually a large number of standing trees, by auction, to contractors who exploit them for obtaining fuel, wood and timber.

These felled trees are sawn into sleepers which are conveyed to the 'wet slide' or the stream, either on the shoulders of labourers or by means of the 'dry slide'. A dry slide consists of a wooden channel about one foot wide and one and a half feet high and is constructed along the mountain slope from the top to the base. Wood is placed in the channel at the top and it slides down with such a great velocity that there is danger that fire may break out due to friction and often the wood, when it strikes the ground at the base of the mountain is broken into pieces. Therefore the channel is provided with wooden steps in order to retard the velocity of the falling wood, but even then it is generally used for the conveyance of fuel wood only. Such a dry slide formerly existed between Chakrata and Deoban and there was also a truck line for bringing the wood to Chakrata mainly for the requirements of the military stationed there. But the work on this slide has been given up for the last three years, partly because the needs of the cantonment have declined as the number of troops has decreased and partly because a dry slide is comparatively more expensive and difficult to manage.

When the sleepers have reached the streams, they are floated down either by the wet slide or by the telescopic method. The latter method is adopted when the stream has got enough water in it. A wooden channel 20 inches to 24 inches wide and about 2 feet high is constructed in the middle of the streams at its base. The slides of the channel

slant outward and come out of the surface of water, and the wood is floated down this channel. A large number of men are required to accompany the floating wood and to again set it in motion, if it gets stuck up somewhere. Since most of the streams and rivulets (locally called *gads*) have got very little water in them, the system of wet slide has proved to be very convenient. A wooden channel is constructed along the bank of the stream at a higher level—generally a yard. The width of this channel is twelve or fourteen inches, that is, two inches wider than the width of the sleepers that are to be floated down. The slides are not slanting as in the case of telescopic floating, but are straight and ten or twelve inches high. The whole channel is made of wooden sleepers and the joints of the sleepers are covered with leaves, grass and mud so that water may not escape through them. The length of such an artificial channel may be about two furlongs, though sometimes it may go up to three quarters of a mile or more. The sleepers are put in this channel one by one and are made to float down by the force of water released from circular wells, called *kundus*, constructed in the stream. The sleepers float down slowly at an average speed of approximately 4 miles an hour and are made to accumulate in another *kund* constructed down below. A new channel is made from here and the process continues till the sleepers reach big rivers like the Yamuna or the Tons. From here the wood is floated down to a boom across the river at Dakpathar (a few miles below the junction of Tons and Yamuna) from where it is sent to Jagadhari and other places. Labour expenses on handling timber in telescopic floating are much more than in transportation by wet slide, but in the latter the difference is compensated for by expenditure incurred on erecting the slide.

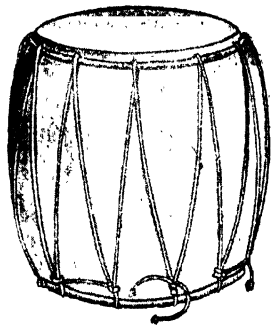
Chapter 9

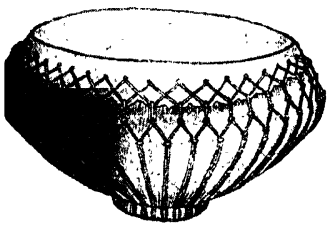
FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

THE HARDSHIPS of economic life have greatly influenced the social life and customs of the people. When the struggle with Nature is at a temporary halt, which marks a period of comparative inactivity, it releases all the suppressed exuberance of Jaunsari men and women, which easily exhibits their gay disposition. The Jaunsaris are very fond of holding festivals and fairs when they consume large quantities of home-brewed liquor and mutton, and spend much time in dancing. Thus the frowns of Nature or her niggardliness have not been able to rob them of their laughter.

Magh Festival: Their biggest festival is the winter festival known as Magh. The celebrations begin in the middle of January and go on till the end of February. On the first day a goat is sacrificed in every house. The Koltas generally slaughter a pig. The sacrifice of goats and pigs starts early in the morning and continues till late in the evening. That day invitations are extended to all friends and relatives and this exchange of visits continues throughout the whole period of these celebrations. Every night people gather in some house in the village where they recite their folk-songs and dance. It is a special type of solo dance, in which, to the tune of a local song a person gets up and dances in the centre of the hall surrounded by all the village people to a point of suffocation. After he has resumed his seat, another person gets up and so the festivities go on for the whole night. There is little dancing during the day time. Eight days after the commencement of Magh festival, goats are again sacrificed, though this time the sacrifice is not compulsory for every family. This day is known as *khora*. Goats may be killed on any other day also, whenever the meat supply runs short. There is no fixed day for ending the Magh festival. It must continue for one month, after which the elders of the

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS















village or *khut* may decide when it should be over. It all depends on the economic prosperity and disposition of the village.

Besoo Fair: The Magh festival is followed by a big fair, called Besoo. It falls in the second week of April and lasts for five days. A few villages hold their own fairs, while big fairs at central places are organised by several *khuts* jointly. The most popular fairs are of villages Chaurani and Lakhwar, in each of which, three *khuts* participate. At the top of a hill or in some open ground thousands of Jaunsari men and women gather, putting on their best and colourful clothes and ornaments, and indulge in various kinds of folk-dances and mock-fights. A favourite mock-fight is shooting with an arrow from a bow at the legs of another person when he is singing and dancing after taking a deliberate aim. Enough precaution is taken to cover his legs with woollen pads. All the time when this sport goes on extracts from the great epic of Mahabharat are recited by some people, while the Bajgis play on their drums. This mock-fight is known as *Thorua.* Menfolk also give an exhibition of their martial traditions in one of their folk-dances, known as *Jangbaji.* There is no rhythmical movement involved except going round clockwise in a circle, waving their swords or sticks in hand. The only variation is when they retrace their steps and start the same movements in the opposite direction.

But the monotony and dullness of this dance is greatly relieved by the dancing of women (known as *geet lagana*). The women, picturesquely dressed in their flowing skirts of rich red, blue or gold with a broad border of equally rich colour in contrast to the colour of their skirts, their attractive head-dress consisting of a triangular piece of cloth of some bright colour with some floral design tied round their head and bedecked with all the gold and silver that they possess, sing and go round in a circle clasping each other's waist with perfect rhythm. Their songs are of local significance and refer to some important events of their social life or the heroic achievements of persons whom they hold in great

respect, or legends of their gods or some romance worth remembering. One of such songs refers to Lt. Kesri Chand, who was a member of the I. N. A. under the leadership of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and was hanged to death after being tried by a Tribunal under the British rule. But those songs may even ridicule a person for some of his notorious deeds. At the last General Elections a young Jaunsari graduate sought election to the State Legislature and his election was contested by a non-Jaunsari Congress candidate, who succeeded in getting the support of a Jaunsari *sayana*. To ridicule this act of the *sayana*, which was regarded as an act of betrayal, many songs were composed expressing disapproval of the community and sung on such occasions. Similarly, there was a song which referred to the days of rationing and controls, how a permit for water-pipes, which was really meant for the whole village, was abused by a *sayana*.

Jagra: It is a religious festival, held towards the end of August. It is celebrated in those villages which are near the river Yamuna and where there are temples dedicated to Mahasu. On the eve of Jagra the Jaunsaris keep a fast and do not sleep for the whole night. Next morning the priest takes out the idol of Mahasu from the temple and hands it over to the crowd which has assembled near the temple to give it a bath in the waters of Yamuna. Since everybody in the crowd is anxious to hold the idol in his own hands and give it a bath, there are cases on record in which almost a fight has ensued in the crowd causing even serious injuries to some persons. After the idol of Mahasu has been bathed in the river, it is brought back to the temple, which is followed by the dancing of Bajgi women in the courtyard of the temple. Otherwise, this festival is conspicuous for the absence of popular folk dances and folk songs.

Man: In between the Besoo and Jagra, there are fairs held for catching fish during the Monsoon season. There are no fixed dates or places for holding the fair. This fair, called Man, is held on the banks of streams and rivers, like Yamuna and Tons, and is purely a men's affair. All the men

forming the expeditions may come from one village or several villages of the same *khut.*

A few weeks before the holding of the fair, the Koltas of the respective villages are entrusted with the duty of collecting powdered bark of a tree, known as *taz-bal,* from each of the families who intend taking part in the excursion. On the actual day when the people from the various places have gathered on the appointed spot, the ceremony begins with the application of a *tilak* or vermilion mark on the forehead of the *sayana* or *sadar sayana,* as the case may be. The *sayana* then throws a handful of powdered *taz-bal* in the water which is followed up by other men and they start catching fish. An important feature of these fairs is that the party undertaking the excursion is often attacked by the people of other villages with the object of upsetting their programme, and the people take great pride in these fights and thoroughly enjoy them. The results of such a skirmish are remembered long after and the defeated party tries to take revenge whenever the opposite side organises a Man.

Lonai: Towards the middle of September the people celebrate Lonai, in which the shepherds take all their herds of cattle to the pastures and give them a bath, good feed and salt. The villagers in their turn bring specially prepared food for the shepherds to the mountain slopes and all of them take their meals together.

Panchon: This festival synchronises with the Dasehra festival of the plains and is held at the end of the monsoon season. The peak of the celebrations is reached on the main Dasehra day when a fair is held at various places, known as Painta. This fair may be organised by one village, a *khut* or a number of *khuts* jointly. There is no prescribed form for these celebrations. The most popular Painta fair is held at Utpalta. On the steep slopes of the mountain-sides two parties, belonging to different villages of the *khut,* gather, after having marched in a procession from their respective villages. There a mock-fight is staged, in which stalks of *gagli* plant are freely thrown at each other by both the

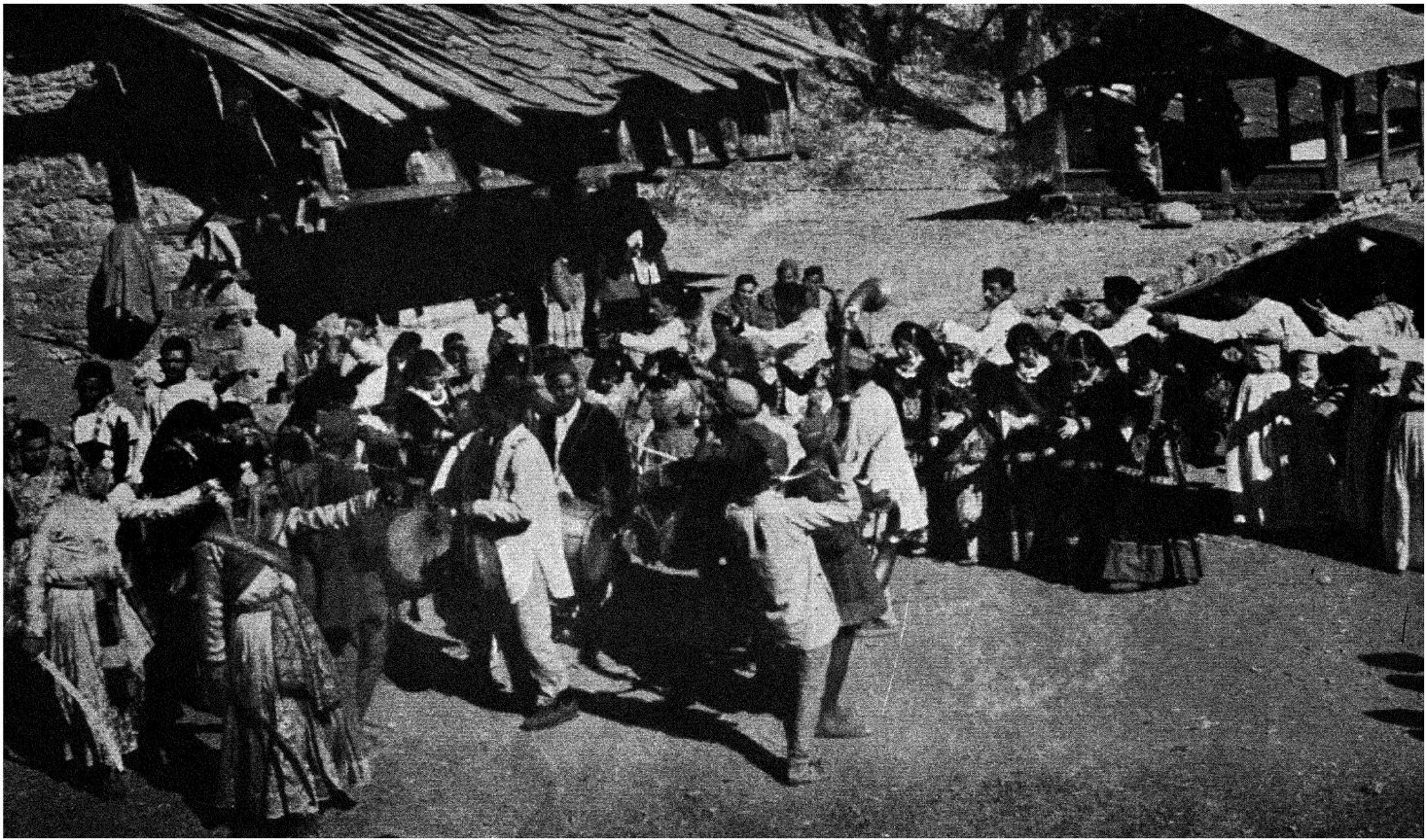
parties, while the Bajgis beat their drums. After this mock-fight is over, both the sides greet each other and the procession starts for the village Utpalta with the banner in front. At the head of the procession are the elders of the villages participating in the fair, who may be seen singing folk-songs and dancing while moving towards the villages. After reaching the temple courtyard, the banner is flown on a raised platform, which is a permanent structure, and all men and women gathered there sing and dance to the tune of local music. The same folk dances which are common in the Besoo fair may be seen here. What impresses a visitor is the great enthusiasm and keen sense for rejoicing that prevails among these people. At other sacred places like Lakhwar and Besoee, the Bajgi women dance before the temples to observe Painta, while a display of the epic of Ramayana is also staged by people.

Devali: This famous festival, known as the 'festival of lights' in the plains, is celebrated in quite a different manner in Jaunsar-Bawar. Their Dewali starts twenty days after the 'festival of lights' in the plains and lasts for five days. This also marks the beginning of a period of comparative inactivity due to the onset of the winter season. It also heralds their big winter festival of Magh, when visits are exchanged and guests are freely entertained with wine and good food. It is also the time when married women return to their villages, to play the role of *dhanti*, and add gaiety to the general feeling of rejoicing which prevails throughout this festival. On the main day of their Bari Dewali, which they call Huliat, heaps of *bhimbal* wood are collected and fire is set to them a little before dawn. All the men will pick up burning sticks from the heap and go round the whole village in a procession with burning sticks in their hands. After having made a round of the village, they will gather in some open space and dance. At sunrise women join them and they form a procession again, going from door to door, collecting walnuts which are thrown to them from the balcony or verandah of every house. Throughout the day men may

be seen dancing Gundiarasa or Pataybazi. In Gundiarasa dance men form a circle and go round in that very formation clockwise and anti-clockwise, waving handkerchiefs in their hands, while Pataybazi is an exhibition of sword-craft between two men. After evening meals women dance in the common courtyard (*panchon-ka-angan*). This dance is called Rasho. At a time only two women take part in it. They hold each other's hands and swing each other in a circle with considerable speed to the beat of drums.

Folk Songs: Singing among the Jaunsaris, as in the case with most of the hill people, is a well recognised form of recreation which they have combined with their elaborate system of folk dances. Mention has already been made of some of them. They deal essentially with the legends of their gods and feats of bravery and romance, or they refer to recent local events, essentially transitory in their nature. For example, many years ago a person named Khushi Ram, a non-Jaunsari, fell in love with a woman of the village Chaurani and married her. But the local people did not consider it proper. So they composed a short poem condemning this act of Kushi Ram. Occasionally a local event of another nature becomes the source of inspiration. One such case was when a certain forest block, which had been closed to burning for regeneration purposes and in which a village was situated, was opened to burning for the benefit of grazing on the petition of the villagers. When their petition was granted, a song was at once composed to commemorate the occasion. Similarly when Lt. Kesari Chand of the I. N. A., who belonged to village Kyawa, was hanged, a long poem was composed depicting his patriotism. But most of these songs are necessarily of a very ephemeral interest and they are soon forgotten. In contrast to these songs are the historical and religious songs which are very old, and are generally sung on particular occasions. One such song deals with the feats of Nanteram, a local general, who fought the Moghuls near Kalsi and Paonta (in Sirmur State). He himself was killed in the battle but was able to save his country







from the invading armies. The song connected with him describes in detail how he attacked the enemy hiding in the jungle and adopted guerilla tactics successfully. So long as Jaunsar-Bawar was under Sirmur State no land revenue was taken from the family of Nanteram. Similarly, some of the songs deal with their mythological gods, pandavas and Mahasus.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

Dastur-ul-Amal of Jaunsar-Bawar, as drawn up by Mr. A. Ross, with additions and amendments by Mr. J. C. Robertson.

Mr. A. Ross	Mr. J. C. Robertson
Whereas the revenue is fixed on the general resources of the Zamindars as well as upon the lands actually under cultivation and not as in the Doon and plains, it is necessary to have knowledge of the capabilities of the people as regards quantity of sheep, goats, plough-cattle, labourers, and quantity of land; and of its produce, viz., walnut-trees, apricots, etc. cabbages, honey. All this is referred to as, on account of the frequent changes or distribution of shares, a frequent change of the revenue is necessary.	
2. In this paragraph, land is not measured in beegahs and biswas in the usual manner; there is only the measurement of the beegah, that is to say, as many pathas of seed as they sow in their lands the measurement of that land is called so many pathas, namely such and such a field is four-pathas or five-pathas. The patha is one kind of measurement, of which mention is made in paragraph 3. In the new measurement, according to the orders of Government, each piece of cultivated land has been measured in blocks by acres—one acre four beegahs, or one beegah one rood.	

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3. The weight is according to paemanas, viz., the kutcha seer is called two seers and a half, and four kutcha seers make one patha (of rice or *oorud*), sixteen pathas make one doon, and twenty doons make one khar, and twenty seers kutcha make an adhooue, forty seers kutcha make sixteen pucca seers; the chattank and adhpou are not used here, but the quarter-seer and half seer are.

4. 1st.—There are two kinds of cultivators, one *mouroosee* and the other *gair mouroosee*. Cultivators are of the Brahmin and Rajput caste, and have the power to sell or otherwise dispose of their lands. They have in every way a right and title to their villages, but the *gair mouroosee* cultivators have no right to sell or otherwise dispose of their lands; but to the Zamindar, whose land they cultivate, they pay rent in money; this payment is called *kara*.

2nd.—If any *mouroosee* cultivator removes or runs away from his villages the land in the first place should be made over to his brother, nephew, or any other nearest relation he may have; if he has no relations, the sayana of the *khut* distributes the land among the *mouroosee* cultivators of the village. But if they do not agree to such an arrangement the sayana gives it to some other person on a *gair mouroosee* tenure, and settles the quota of revenue payable by him. And if any such land cannot be settled in the above manner it lies fallow,

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and the sayana distributes the due from it over the whole *khut*, according to the capabilities of each person: but no Dome, Bajgi, or any such castes can get possession of such land; only Brahmins and Rajputs can, and they can only hold it on a *gair mouroosee* tenure.

3rd.—As regards a runaway cultivator, it was always the custom that, without any limitation as to time, whenever he chose to re-settle and take possession of his land, whatever Government revenue was due could be collected from him, and he cannot forego his claim to his land unless he became a *mouroosee* cultivator in another place, or resigned his claim by writing a *bainama*. As this causes confusion, and loss of revenue to Government, we have, with the permission of Government, ordained that a runaway cultivator can reclaim his right to his land within five years, after which time the new cultivator can lay claim to the land, no matter if the former cultivator has or has not become a *mouroosee* of any other place.

4th.—If the sayana should make a *gair mouroosee* a *mouroosee* cultivator, he should give such person or persons a bond: the candidate must give Rs. 2 to the sayana, Rs. 4 and a goat to the *punchayat*, and Rs. 2 to the residents of the village of which he is made a *mouroosee* cultivator.

5th.—When the tenant of any

khut or *mehal* settled in another, the practice was that there was still a claim upon him for the revenue of his former tenures, and in his new *khut* he gave *kara*. Now we have to ordain that in such a case, there be no claim upon him for his tenures in his former *khut*, and he will only pay the revenue in his new *khut*.

6th.—If a cultivator dies, leaving a widow and young children, and the widow takes to herself another husband, the husband can claim the tenures of the former one as *gair mouroosee*, but in any such case it is customary to take a written document from the new husband that the claim to any such tenures (as he may have got by marriage of the widow) of the children of the former husband, and any that might be born of him shall be as follows:—Two-thirds are claimable by the children of the former husband, and one-third by any children that might be born of him; if, however, a cultivator should at his death be in debt and have no heirs, then whoever takes possession of his effects is liable for and must pay his debts.

5. When land that has been lying fallow is taken possession of for cultivation, the natrual boundaries of the village should be looked to, such as trees, khuds, water-courses. Land for grazing goats and sheep can be taken without reference to boundaries.

6. If there should be a quarrel with any other *khut* about

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boundaries, it is settled either by *punchayat* or by making oath, but it is settled by oath only where it cannot be settled by *punchayat*. The person in possession should take the oath, and if the sayana is interested he must take the oath, and in case he should refuse, the opposite party should be given the oath. Any quarrel about the lands in each *khut* is settled in the same way.

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All trees are the property of Government, except a few near villages which were included in the *chucks*, and were planted by the Zamindars. The Zamindars have, however, permission to cut wood for making ploughs, houses, or for their own private use as fire-wood, but are not allowed to sell it; and those in whose *khuts* there is no deodar, are allowed to bring them from the *khuts* they have been accustomed, subject to the above conditions. And the persons from whose *khuts* the wood is cut are not allowed to charge for it. They have a complete right to all *bansie* jungle, and to medicines, such as *kakua, singhie;* and as they pay revenue on those, they also possess the right of grazing cattle. But other rights, such as mines, belong to Government, and no Zamindars can cultivate any barren land which has not been included in any *chuck*, without permission of the Collector. And Government has the right of selling and letting that land to whomsoever it chooses.

Measurements having been made, and boundary-pillars erected to avoid future disputes, a

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7. The customs of the *punchayats* are, that when a case has been settled by *punchayat*, the punchayat can claim a rupee from both sides, and as regards the claim of the *punchayat* in heavy cases of quarrel about boundaries, as described in para 6, or regarding abductions of females, vide para 15, the punchayat can claim two rupees from each side.	report is to be made within fifteen days after a case has been decided, stating what decision has been arrived at, and what objections either of the parties make to the decision; if no proper objection is filed within fifteen days, the decision of the arbitrators will be confirmed.
8. 1st.—In the whole parganah there are thirty-five *khuts*. Each *khut* contains several villages. The head man of the *khut* is called sayana. The duties of the sayana are as follows:—To keep the Zamindars contented, to collect the dues of Government according to custom only, equal shares according to the capabilities of each one; to settle all quarrels; and look after the welfare of new ryots; and obey the orders of Government. The sayana and Zamindars of *khuts* are of the same caste and parentage, but the title of sayana is hereditary. In some *khuts* there is a difference of caste between the sayana and the Zamindars.	One *khut* constitutes a *mehal*.
	If any ryot does not pay his dues, the sayana can sue him in court for the amount, and if a cultivator should run away, he can distrain his effects, through the Tehsildar, that they may be forthcoming when called for by the authorities, in order that Government may not be a loser; and if he cannot by any means in his power collect the Government revenue he must re-arrange the *phant* over his *khut*. The *phant*

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2nd.—The sayana is appointed in the following way:—on the death of a sayana his eldest son succeeds; but if he should be under age, or otherwise unfit, the title of sayana still continues in his name. His brother or any other son of the deceased, does the work for him as his deputy, or *naib*, and if the sayana wishes, he can make his eldest son sayana during his lifetime; but his brothers have no claim to the sayana because they are Zamindars: the sayana can, if he choses, allow them to receive a portion of the *bisouta*. In case of division of property, the sayana *charee* is not distributed, though all other property is. A younger son cannot take the title of sayana. If the eldest son should die, and have children, such children can claim the title, no one else can claim it.

3rd.—When a sayana dies without issue, his wife cannot claim the title of sayana; deceased's brother succeeds to the post.

4th.—In each *khut* there are several sayanas, but that person is considered the head sayana whose orders and power extend throughout the *khuts*. In this

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bundee must be filed in the Tehsil in December; if the sayana should fail to do this, he makes himself liable for such arrears. But even even if no alteration is made, the *phant bundee* must be filed, in order that the arrangements for the following year may be looked into, and may be settled by the end of April.

parganah the village of such a sayana is called *khoond*.

5th.—If the sayana should in any way injure the Government revenue, or act contrary to the Government orders, or injure the ryots by harsh measures, or wrongfully levy fines from the ryots of Government, or should be remiss in obeying the orders of his superiors (or Government), he may, according to the orders of Government, be dismissed. In such a case the person who has the next claim, and is capable will succeed to the *sayana-charee*, if approved by the district office. If he should wish, for any particular reason, to give up his claim, to the *sayana-charee*, it is customary to do it in the following manner:—First, he resigns his claim to his brother, then to any other person; but the rightful owner cannot sell it to destroy the rights of the next person.

9. In many *khuts* in each of the villages there is an officer of lower rank than the sayana, who is called in the language of the district, *'chuckroutta.'* There is this difference between him and the Zamindar, that in some *khuts* the sayana from his own share gives them one or two rupees each, and in some *khuts* the sayana at the termination of any suit makes the Zamindars give him something. These *chukrait* do all the work of the *khut* under the guidance of the sayana, but if he should disobey the orders of the sayana, the sayana can dismiss

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him and appoint another person (*chukrait*) in his place.

10. If a sayana should have to attend kutcherry or the district officer on his tour, he is entitled to a coolie as a servant, and another to carry a load; he also receives one seer of *atta* from each Zamindar. Formerly sayanas were in the habit of distributing any heavy expenses incurred by them over the whole paraganah. On account of the great injury done to the Zamindars by this, that custom is abolished, and in future a sayana will be entitled once a year, to levy from each Zamindar at the rate of one-half anna per rupee of jumma payable by him, to cover his expenses when employed on business in the *khut*; but he can claim no other fees except small perquisites that he is entitled to from his office.

11. 1st.—If a Zamindar wishes to sell any portion of the land he has under cultivation, he must first through the sayana get the permission of the share-holders of his village, and also of the Zamindars of the *khuts*. When a person of that *khut* wishes to buy it, he cannot sell or mortagage it to a resident of another *khut*.

2nd.—It was formerly usual that a purchaser of land was responsible for the revenue, and a mortgager was not responsible. Not approving of this we have changed it as follows, viz:—in either case—viz., either of a mortgage or sale —the person in possession is responsible for the revenue.

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3rd.—Formerly, in case of sales, if the purchaser and seller lived in the same *khut*, the purchaser gave a dinner to the relatives of the seller, and four annas for their having been witnesses. All the other witnesses of the sale received one anna per rupee on the value of the sale. Besides the price of the land, he gave one rupee (*khurtawun*), or gave a dinner to the relatives of the seller. The sayana of the *khut*, the relatives of the seller, and other residents, attest the deed of sale; if the purchaser belongs to another khut his relatives should be witnesses, but receive nothing for it.

4th.—With regard to mortgage. It can only be completed by permission of the sayana. No period is fixed for the duration of the mortgage, and no fees are paid; and the sayana receives four annas for writing the deed, the mortgage must be recorded by the *karkoon*.

5th.—If any one sells or mortgages any thing to two people, and the first purchaser takes

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But the deed of mortgage must contain a condition that only the Zamindaree rights are mortgaged, not the land itself; but when the mortgage takes possession, he is only entitled to it till his claim has been paid, or till the expiry of any period agreed on at the time of the mortgage. The mortgager is also responsible for the revenue. All charges of possession must be entered in the *phant bundee*.

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possession, and the money is returned to the second, the seller is considered dishonest.

12. 1st.—If, according to custom, four brothers have two, or perhaps one, wife between them, and four or five daughters are born, and one of the brothers marries again, the children are not shared between them, but remain with the woman; and the woman cannot go to the younger brothers, but must live with the elder; but the children are entitled to equal shares from the four brothers, which are paid to the elder. If they separate, the elder brother bears expenses of the marriages.

2nd.—Goods are divided in the following manner, viz.: After deducting one thing of each kind, and one field for *pitans*, viz., rights on account of seniority, and half of that field, viz., *kanchoo*—for the youngest, all the rest are divided equally among them: but if there should be any bought land, viz., by mortgage or sale, or if there is any of their own land mortgaged in another place, that is also divided among them.

The sayana distributes the shares, and received one sheep, one goat, one dish, one weapon and five rupees. The punchayats receive five rupees, and the villagers two rupees; but if they are poor, no one receives anything in the shape of fees: no fees are paid in cattle.

3rd.—If the mother or father

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should be alive, the brothers with whom they live must provide them with a cow, plate, clothes, *budlen* currie; but if there are two fathers and mothers the second receive nothing.

4th.—If any man have three wives, and they have children in unequal numbers, viz., one have two, another three at the time of sharing, the children all receive equal shares, except that the son with whom the first mother is to live receives a little more.

5th.—If two brothers have one wife, and have two children at the death of the wife, and both brothers marry again, and after the marriage the elder brother dies, leaving four sons at the time of sharing, after deducting half the whole property for the children by the first marriage, the remainder is divided into six equal shares: from those six shares two more besides the half previously deducted, are given to the children by the first marriage

6th.—Daughters can claim no shares in the paternal property; only the following is the custom—that the father should provide whatever is necessary for marriage ceremonies; and if he has any grown-up brothers, he should get them married.

13. The following are the customs as regard marriages. That only the Mia and Rawuth castes intermarry with the Kunnaith and Bhat castes, Brahmins

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and Rajputs; in this district the marriage ceremony is called '*Jhajerae.*'

1st.—The bridegroom's father gives the father of the bride one rupee as earnest money; the father of the young women will give him a feast (dinner) of *pourees;* this makes the betrothal binding. The bride's father having dressed the young woman in a *chola*, a *damun* and a *dhatoo* (head-dress), and having given her as many dishes, etc., as in his power, goes with all his relatives to the bridegroom's father's house, and the bridegroom's father gives them one or two dinners.

2nd.—If the bridegroom's father should decline to fulfil the contract of marriage after the betrothal has taken place, he must not take back the earnest money he has given; but if the bride's father should give her in marriage to another party without the permission of the young men's father to whom she is betrothed, the girl's father will pay the youngman's father sixty rupees.

14. When a son and heir is born, alms are distributed according to the means of the parents; and if any one be in great sorrow, their relatives give them a he-goat and a rupee, to try and dispel their sorrow.

15. If any person of low caste should run away with the wife of a respectable man, then, either the person who runs away with

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her, or any person who allows them to remain in the district, must pay one hundred and twenty-five rupees; or else the woman, together with the person who ran-away with her, should go out of the country. If it be proved that intimacy has previously existed, the man should be made to pay twenty-five rupees through the sayana. If any person of respectable caste seduces a woman of respectable caste, he is made to pay a fine of sixty rupees.

16. The following is the custom in this district as regard bargains:—There are no written documents taken; everything is done verbally; if any person knows how to write, he will write it down. If any quarrel arise on this account, it is settled in the following way:—If a debtor denies his entire debt, the *sahokar* has to swear to it in the name of his deity, but if a debtor denies a part of his debt and acknowledges a part, the *sahokar* gets that portion of the money which the debtor acknowledges, and for the remaining he must make the usual oath.

2nd.—As regards interest, the following is the custom.—The debtor has to give the sahokar eight pucca seers of corn at each harvest for each rupees, until the original sum is paid up, and if any one is unable to pay interest, and becomes insolvent, the sahokar takes his original amount in the presence of four arbitrators, and if the *kooth* (viz., the eight seers paid annually) remain due,

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he foregoes it. If a debtor cannot pay his interest to the *sahokar* and has to give much grain, then the *sahokar* makes him pay double the original debt.

3rd.—The following is the custom with regard to debts of grain:—That for the space of one year the original quantity is increased 50 per cent., and in the second year the accumulated amount, or that which remains after a part being paid back, is again increased 50 per cent. If the debtor has not paid any interest, and becomes poor and insolvent, then the *sahokar* takes three times the original amount of his debt.

17. 1st.—In this district the most binding oath is by the Deity Mukasoon (*sic*). To swear by, especially the one in Kally Bole, viz., Benoli, is more particularly binding.

2nd. There was also the following custom prevalent in this district:—Often in cases of quarrels amongst themselves, people used to offer up at the temple of their deity stones from the *khuts* and mud from their houses; and that house having become the residence of their deity, fell to ruins—no person could take possession of it. In several cases deities were in the habit of ordering "land or house be freed" and this order of the deity was made known by the Mallees, who come from Garhwal. The Government having thought this custom wrong, did away with it.

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18. Besides persons of high caste, there are other people of low caste, such as carpenters, bajgis, kolis, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, chamars, etc., but these attend to their own trades and get pay for the work they each perform. Every Zamindar gives to the blacksmith, bajgi, and carpenters only four pathas of corn; the chamar does the work of the master in whose service he is, if he gives him food and clothing, and gives a little land to his family.	
	2. All disputes between servants and master to be referred to arbitrators.
20. If any person steals sheep, goats, etc., and eat them or sell them, if the theft of one of these be proved, seven will be taken from him in exchange for each one he has stolen; and if the person will not give them, then he will be forwarded to the kutcherry and punished as a thief.	
21. If any serious case of murder, etc., occurs, it was the custom to decide such case by *punchayat*. It is now no longer in the power of the people to interfere in such cases; the cases must be decided by the District Officer.	
22. If there is any quarrel among the people, generally they settle it themselves, or the sayana settles it, and if the sayana even, should not be able to settle it, the case is brought before the Magistrate to be settled.	

MR. A. ROSS

23. Besides the above mentioned customs, some of the customs of the under mentioned *khuts*, viz., Churtharee, Mulaitha, Kothal, Rungao, Hurreepore Beas, differ somewhat from the customs of the other *khuts* in the district of Jaunsar-Bawar.

2nd.—For in these *khuts* the entire family of the sayana are entitled to receive *bisouta*. One person from amongst them is made for sadar sayana, and whatever power the sadar sayana has in other *khuts* is given to the whole of the sayanas family in these. After the sadar sayana the eldest son becomes sadar sayana.

3rd.—All the cultivators of these *khuts* are *gair mouroosee;* none of them have power to sell their cultivated lands. The sayana has power to make them cultivate the lands, or to take away the land from them.

4th.—In the *khuts* of Kalsi, viz. Hurreepore Beas, there is one custom quite different from the rest of Jaunsar that is to say, the revenue in this *khut* is not taken upon the capabilities of each one. There is plenty of cultivable land; the sayanas take the rest in *bhutaee;* and all the remaining customs of the whole parganah are the same.

MR. J. C. ROBERTSON

(NOTE—The "Dastur-ul-Amal," as it stands above, was drawn up by Mr. Ross in 1851. The alterations and modifications proposed by Mr. J. C. Robertson are shown in the second column. These were afterwards incorporated in the original rules, and the whole accepted and signed by the sayanas of each *khut*.)

Appendix II

RAINFALL (1940-1950)

	Jan.	*Feb.*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Total*
1940	2.83	4.60	1.76	0.62	3.43	13.37	20.52	15.42	5.06	0.07	..	0.27	67.95
1941	2.97	0.65	0.61	0.01	3.11	8.82	14.96	24.00	8.17	5.30	0.31	0.44	69.35
1942	4.11	5.41	0.50	1.23	1.77	6.88	25.14	36.85	14.88	..	..	1.85	98.62
1943	3.99	0.96	0.94	1.21	0.76	2.83	26.61	51.37	20.41	..	..	0.01	108.49
1944	2.42	2.57	4.52	2.41	0.23	4.24	29.28	18.01	6.84	1.67	..	0.11	72.30
1945	7.54	..	1.11	0.87	0.42	5.83	25.59	14.04	25.98	5.55	..	0.52	87.55
1946	0.02	2.62	0.65	2.36	2.34	10.31	44.70	19.75	55.67	5.03	0.60	0.74	94.79
1947	1.74	2.76	1.20	0.22	0.65	4.14	32.95	23.23	32.74	1.00	..	0.31	100.94
1948	0.04	2.02	3.40	0.21	0.69	3.60	22.21	34.20	11.78	8.31	..	0.36	86.91
1949	0.18	6.87	0.47	0.82	1.31	2.56	22.08	34.79	12.49	0.08	..	0.38	82.03
1950	4.18	1.61	2.81	0.19	2.47	7.08	26.05	37.44	5.76	..	..	0.44	88.95

Source :—Survey of India, Dehra Dun (Rainfall Record).

Appendix III

POPULATION OF JAUNSAR-BAWAR
(1951 CENSUS)

Name of Patwari's Circle.	*Population*
1. Bawar	4792
2. Lakhwar	2431
3. Haripur Vyas	5281
4. Sil-Gaun	6462
5. Koru	3675
6. Kailo	4477
7. Buntad	4880
8. Bharam	3595
9. Daso	4574
10. Bun-Gaun	4206
11. Baundar	4284
12. Sehli	3908
13. Bana Dhar	1421
Total	58469

Male = 32704
Female = 25765

Total = 58469

Scheduled Caste = 4378

Note—There are 383 villages in Jaunsar-Bawar. They are grouped into 39 khuts. Three khuts are put in the charge of a Patwari and constitute his circle. Again, these 383 villages are grouped under the jurisdiction of 54 *gram sabhas*. Eight *gram sabhas* are placed under the jurisdiction of one *panchayat* adalat.

Appendix IV

NUMBER OF FIELDS AND PLOUGHS IN JAUNSAR-BAWAR (1950-51)

Name of Patwari's circle.	*No. of fields*	*No. of ploughs*
1. Lakhwar	34051	343
2. Sil-Gaun	31250	868
3. Bana Dhar	17952	575
4. Bawar	25297	767
5. Bharam	23204	506
6. Ban Gaun	28472	691
7. Daso	24804	803
8. Bum Tad	45274	668
9. Sehli	27074	627
10. Kailo	23858	753
11. Haripur Vyas	37838	800
12. Koru	32506	525
13. Baundar	24038	617
Total	355620	8542

Appendix V

TOTAL AREA AND CULTIVATED AREA OF DIFFERENT KHUTS (1951)

Name of Patwari's circle.	*No. of villages.*	*Total area in acres.*	*Cultivated area in acres.*
1. Bawar	30	5263.84	3588.00
2. Lakhwar	31	3704.42	1634.37
3. Haripur Vyas	49	6967.38	3357.78
4. Sil-Gaum	36	6336.58	4128.63
5. Koru	30	3391.88	2556.07
6. Kailo	0	4462.14	3312.25
7. Bumtad	30	5573.08	2898.60
8. Bharam	21	4005.78	2843.37
9. Daso	23	6023.29	2363.00
10. Bum-Gaum	23	5210.15	3724.95
11. Baundar	24	4290.94	3156.45
12. Sehli	33	3474.66	2319.51
13. Bana Dhar	23	4641.54	2854.91
Total	383	63345.68	39417.89

Appendix VI

AREA UNDER CULTIVATION—RABI CROP[1]

[1952-1953)

Villages under the jurisdiction of gram sabha	*Rabi-Wheat*		*Rabi—Barley*		*Other Rabi Crops*		*Total Rabi Crops*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
1. Buraswa	14	226	7	143	50	6.5	71	375.5
2. Kohla	7	147	4	84	26	6	37	237
3. Narya	32	463	..	374	.9	90	32.9	927
4. Kandoi	25	238	4	95	2	95	31	378
5. Magroli	28	260	—	187	—	23	28	470
6. Lakha Mandal	99.12	470.90	20	263.23	5.97	27	125.09	761.22
7. Begi	—	65	—	17.29	—	5	—	87.29
8. Rikhar	19	237	6	142	4	6.5	29	385.5
9. Sujan	16	167	40	171	40	13	96	351
10. Khaban	104	437	5	160	—	194	109	791
11. Kunain	32	117	61	117	—	19	93	253
12. Bhatgarhi	40	185	18	97	15.7	58	73.7	340
13. Sahiya	31	317	1	226	7.5	18	39.5	561
14. Birnar	28	230	13	122	1.5	17.5	42.5	369.5
15. Lakhwar	17.42	209	—	154	—	288.46	17.42	651.46
16. Badnu	—	450	—	233	—	—	—	683
17. Doha	21	180	14	128	7	2	42	310

18.	Myunda	27	95	—	87	—	16	27	198
19.	Sujan	8	210	2	140	6	52	16	402
20.	Kharsi	31	137	7	206	52	6	90	349
21.	Nada	11	40	1	3	3	4	15	47
22.	Thana	1	536	—	286	—	—	—	822
23.	Nagau	14.5	320	11.5	265	—	1	26	586
24.	Bisoi	20	250	10	210	—	2	30	462
25.	Kanbhuwa	2	130	1	78	—	8	3	216
26.	Manjh Gaon	—	234	—	207	—	17	—	458
27.	Kerar	38	70	30	67	—	24	68	161
28.	Dagura	19.5	187	13.5	141	5	6	38	334
29.	Mandhol	15	185	5	119	1	12.5	21	316.5
30.	Kandoi	—	235	816.5	435	28	20	109.65	690
31.	Bhunar	30	330	15	275	—	100	45	705
32.	Karuwa	20	196	1	90	—	15	21	301
33.	Birontha	14	216	—	209	59	5	73	430
34.	Lailta	11.6	172	—	106	—	16	11.6	294
35.	Bhanjra	4	290	—	177	—	20	18	448
36.	Jhutaya	18	358	—	90	—	—	18	448
37.	Kalsi	168.22	330	—	6	—	—	168.22	336
38.	Mindal	14	252	20	244	60	—	94	496
39.	Gangran	6	190	4	175	—	1.5	10	366.5
40.	Mundhan	13	190	6	175	—	1.5	19	366.5
41.	Sainj	47	135	15	74	2.5	10	64.5	219
42.	Samalta	8.24	237	6.2	229	9.46	5	23.9	471
43.	Dayala	—	4	122	79	—	135.42	122	218.42
44.	Desau	21	353	19	547	—	27	40	927
45.	Koti	—	58	60.4	132	1	—	61.4	190

Appendix VI—(contd.)

Villages under the jurisdiction of gram sabha	*Rabi-Wheat*		*Rabi—Barley*		*Other Rabi Crops*		*Total Rabi Crops*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
46. Lohn	61.86	259	—	238	1	12	62.86	509
47. Maindrath	73	174	29	106	2.8	9.9	104.8	289.9
48. Chilar	8	48	16	40	—	18	34	106
49. Dimau	13.9	208	—	134	—	14	13.9	356
50. Bhandroli	19	106	14	74	—	31	33	211
51. Buraila	6.59	36	7	70	—	3	13.59	109
52. Jadi	—	160	—	301	—	8	—	469
53. Masak	—	50	70.52	169	—	7	70.52	226
54. Phanar	10	80	8	70	1	30	19	180
Total	1176.95	11459.99	768.77	8767.52	392.33	1356.78	2333.05	21584.29

[1]Compiled from the Revenue Records maintained by the Tehsildar.

Appendix VII

AREA (IN ACRES) UNDER CULTIVATION—KHARIF CROP[1] (1952-1953).

Villages under the jurisdiction of gram sabha	*Late growing rice*		*Maize*		*Other Crops*		*Total*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
1. Buraswa	71	99	—	87	—	562	71	748
2. Kolha	41	62	—	62	—	346	41	470
3. Narya	34	282	—	403	—	327	34	1012
4. Kandoi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. Magroli	45	62	—	263	—	136	45	461
6. Lakha Mandal	114.12	260.26	—	90.0	5	166.97	119.12	432.23
7. Begi	17.29	—	—	23	—	132.18	17.29	155.18
8. Rikhar	44	160	—	98	—	481	44	739
9. Sujan	96	40	—	100	—	453	96	593
10. Khabau	103	183	—	54	1	297	104	526
11. Kunain	96	40	—	50	—	375	95	465
12. Bhat Garhi	155	38	—	31	—	469	155	538
13. Sahiya	32	231	—	318	—	201	32	750
14. Birnar	72	64	—	100	—	460	72	624
15. Badnu	12.28	12.3	—	259	—	398.43	19.32	654.56
16. Lakhwar	19.32	150.13	—	106	—	398.43	19.32	654.56
17. Doha	53.10	36	—	83	—	294	53.10	413

Appendix VII—(contd.)

Villages under the jurisdiction of gram sabha	*Late growing rice*		*Maize*		*Other Crops*		*Total*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
18. Myunda	34	63	—	41	—	230	34	334
19. Sujan	12.07	160	—	200	—	573	12.07	933
20. Kharsi	109	120	—	43	—	1281	109	1444
21. Nada	15	85	—	15	—	60	15	100
22. Thana	23.77	102	—	322	—	758	23.77	182
23. Nagau	30.37	30	—	90	—	575	30.37	695
24. Bisoi	66.88	115	—	200	—	606	66.88	921
25. Kanbhuwa	4.75	53	—	130	—	356	4.75	539
26. Manjh Gaon	21.59	73	—	345	—	202	21.59	620
27. Kerar	82	—	—	60	—	130	82	146
28. Dagura	47.76	35	—	64	—	378	47.76	477
29. Mandhol	102.32	35	—	101	—	580.36	102.32	616.36
30. Kandoi	81.65	8	—	—	—	681.4	81.65	690.4
31. Bhunar	5.6	330	—	27	—	740	5.6	797
32. Karuwa	2.1	63	—	166	—	80	2.1	309
33. Birontha	7.7	100	—	177	—	578	7.7	855
34. Lailta	2.36	68	—	183	—	371	2.36	622
35. Bhanjra	5.05	147	—	420	—	543.13	5.05	1110.13
36. Jhutaya	24.95	50	—	214	—	413	24.95	676
37. Kalsi	98.1	1	—	319.76	41.27	17	139.37	337.76
38. Mindal	94	100	—	200	—	694	94	994

39.	Gangran	19	50	—	100	—	596	19	746
40.	Mundhan	35	50	—	100	—	599	35	749
41.	Sainj	85	40	—	128	—	252	85	420
42.	Samalta	23.9	48	—	103	—	390	23.9	541
43.	Bayala	122.47	200	—	45	—	—	122.47	245.7
44.	Desan	52.43	121	—	494	531	42.43	1146	—
45.	Koti	60.4	—	—	—	—	186	60.4	186
46.	Lohn	165.91	217.10	—	139	—	617.27	165.91	873.37
47.	Maindrath	242	39	—	98	—	413	242	550
48.	Chhilar	39	11	—	12	—	—	39	23
49.	Dimau	19.26	152	—	237	—	420	19.26	809
50.	Bhandrali	51	13	—	22	—	168	51	203
51.	Buraila	19.26	152	—	60	—	26	19.26	238
52.	Jadi	12.28	6	—	42	—	405	12.28	453
53.	Masak	71.46	—	—	26	—	407	71.46	433
54.	Phanar	30	6	—	2	—	165	30	137
	Total	2881.1	3762.49	—	7008.76	41.27	20995.26	3109.37	31766.51

[1] Compiled from the Revenue Records maintained by the Tehsildar.

Appendix VIII

AREA (IN ACRES) UNDER CULTIVATION OF POTATOES AND TOBACCO (1952-1953)

Name of gram sabha	*Potatoes*		*Tobacco*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
1. Buraswa	45	5	2	80
2. Kolha	25	1	2.35	—
3. Narya	.12	8.1	.37	1.2
4. Kandoi	6.0	15	1.5	4
5. Magroli	1.6	—	1.25	2.9
6. Lakha-Mandal	4	80	2.50	1.5
7. Begi	—	1	—	1.3
8. Rikhar	2	1.5	40	75
9. Sajan	40	80	3.7	30
10. Khaban	—	—	—	3.2
11. Kunain	—	80	3	—
12. Bhat Garhi	—	5	—	3.5
13. Sahiya	.07	.25	14	2.56
14. Birnar	—	—	1.9	2.16
15. Badnu	—	20	—	1
16. Lakhwar	2.8	6.2	1.9	2.1
17. Doha	1	1.5	3.3	4.2

18.	Myunda	15	18	1.25	2.5
19.	Sujan	—	—	.8	4.2
20.	Kharsi	52	790	1.4	—
21.	Nada	2.8	6.2	1.9	.55
22.	Thana	—	5	—	.1
23.	Naga	.7	37	.4	4
24.	Bisoi	—	50	2.9	—
25.	Kanbhuwa	—	10	.3	1.7
26.	Manjh-Gaon	—	—	—	3.4
27.	Kerar	1	39	2	—
28.	Dagura	2	17	1.1	3.2
29.	Manhol	—	10	—	3.5
30.	Kandoi	—	11	2.7	1.8
31.	Bhunar	—	160	3	—
32.	Karuwa	.1	.05	.88	1.62
33.	Birontha	59	5	5	—
34.	Lailta	—	60	—	—
35.	Bhanjra	—	80	1	4
36.	Jhutaya	—	—	—	1
37.	Kalsi	—	—	—	.25
38.	Mindal	76	74	4	—
39.	Gangran	—	—	1.7	—
40.	Mundhan	—	1	1.33	—
41.	Sainj	—	—	—	1.8
42.	Samalta	.1	20	.5	1.5
43.	Bayala	—	12	1.45	.85
44.	Desan	2	101	—	4
45.	Doti	—	46	.6	.85

Appendix VIII—(contd.)

Name of gram sabha	*Potatoes*		*Tobacco*	
	Irrigated	*Unirrigated*	*Irrigated*	*Unirrigated*
46. Lohri	—	—	2.8	1.95
47. Maindrath	—	—	—	2.95
48. Chhilar	—	—	1.6	—
49. Diman	—	—	2.1	3
50. Bhandroli	—	20	3.4	—
51. Buraila	—	6	1.59	—
52. Jadi	—	185	—	1
53. Masak	—	47	1	.3
54. Phanar	—	25	2	—
Total	358.29	2067.75	110.61	269.63

1 Compiled from the Revenue Records maintained by the Tehsildar.

2 Note—All the 283 villages of Jaunsar-Bawar have now been put under the jurisdiction of 54 *gram sabhas*. Thus, all the revenue records are classified accordingly.

Appendix IX

CENSUS OF LIVE-STOCK OF CHAKRATA
(1950-1951)

Name of Patwari's circle.	*Cows*	*Bullocks*	*Female buffaloes*	*Male buffaloes*	*Sheep*	*Mules*
1. Lakhwar	3543	3009	1002	18	1581	17
2. Sil-Gaum	2616	2794	738	25	1900	5
3. Bana-Dhar	2617	2149	172	28	345	19
4. Bawar	2809	2255	341	57	1070	18
5. Bharam	2098	1840	8	3	887	8
6. Bun-Gaun	2217	2201	703	9	783	23
7. Dass	3977	2888	246	11	529	5
8. Bum-Tad	1668	1898	430	9	1182	5
9. Sehli	1536	1603	613	3	1297	11
10. Kailo	2498	2393	522	5	126	9
11. Haripur Vyas	1930	1922	577	5	1032	6
12. Koru	1284	1422	553	6	1100	5
13. Boundar	2241	1927	605	10	2003	10
TOTAL	31034	28301	6510	189	13835	141

Appendix X

GLOSSARY

Achharna—a system of raising paddy crop.
Bajdya—a particular type of marriage celebrated among rich persons.
Baki—a diviner.
Bakrao—fleece.
Bakhriyaro—a special small chamber for keeping a goat.
Bandi—a coarse woollen serge used for making garments.
Banta—presents sent by the girl's family to her husband's family on various occasions after marriage.
Batian—pieces of potato used for sowing.
Beaoki—a particular type of marriage celebrated among poor persons.
Bedhundi—khariff crop.
Beesa—twenty.
Becta—raised soil between two furrows.
Besaee—a big disc-shaped bamboo basket.
Besoo—a fair held annually in the second week of April.
Besauti—a woman belonging to Besoee (a village in khut Bahlar).
Bhadlochara—a disease of sheep and goats.
Bhaetee—younger sister.
Bhandari—a person in charge of the offerings made at the temple.
Bhasand—a disease of sheep and goats.
Bhonre—small underground pits for storing grains.
Biyatha—wood of bhimbal tree.
Boee-daudee—a particular type of marriage celebrated among the middle classes.
Bouri—a small well.
Bullak—a nose ring.
Burki—a coarse woollen serge used for making garments.
Byaee—last meal in the evening.
Chuja—a gallery around the upper storey.
Chaoni—cattle sheds on the terraces.
Chan-ha—winnowing.
Chatoi—a rice crop sown in the month of chait (March-April).
Cherrti—a small bamboo basket for keeping chapaties.
Chut—divorce.
Chul—a furnace.
Churere—'jelabies' made from the flour of phaphera.
Churkhi—a wooden instrument used for churning curd.
Dalpuris—'puris' stuffed with 'dal.' A favourite food preparation of the people.
Damama—a hemi-spherical drum used as a musical instrument.
Dand—fine paid as a punishment for some crime or sin.
Danda—a cultivated table-land on the top of the hill.

Dandale—a small sickle having teeth inside it.

Dandi-dola—a particular type of marriage that has been introduced among the people only recently.

Dandyai—an agricultural implement drawn by bullocks used for weeding purposes.

Dangra—a local weapon kept by every family.

Dantuti—a small sickle without teeth inside it.

Daru—a liquor made locally from barley and mandua or jhangora by heating the contents.

Datera—a big sickle (without teeth inside it).

Davat—a black round woollen cap forming a part of the male dancing dress.

Devi-ki-ga-ay—a cow selected by every family in the name of god Mahasu.

Devpujiya (*Devpujya*)—a priest of the temple.

Dewars—a section of Bajgis that does not cultivate land.

Dhakis—a section of Bajgis that cultivates the land.

Dhantu—a black or coloured cloth always worn by the women on the head.

Dhantudi or *Dhanti*—a married or unmarried girl in her parent's village.

Dhauna—a bamboo basket used in the preparation of rice seed.

Dhol—a drum made of brass or silver and goat skin, used as a musical instrument.

Doee—wood taken out from fallen chir trees, used for lighting purposes generally in temples.

Dohrain—heavy woollen blankets of double thickness.

Dokhras—terraces that depend on the rainfall.

Dolla—raised soil between two furrows. Embankment on the terraces.

Dopari—early morning and afternoon meals.

Dosru—a necklace of coins.

Gani—a grass which is eaten by the people.

Ganiat—a fair held on the last day of Besoo, a local festival lasting for 5 days.

Ganth-Khulai—interest charged by the zamindars on the loans given. This is of the magnitude of 75-78% per annum.

Gath—cattle sheds on the terraces.

Gati—burial of dead animals, a task entrusted to the Koltas.

Geet lagana—most popular form of dancing and singing by the women. This is not accompanied by music.

Ghankati—a local liquor prepared from barley and jhangora without heating the contents.

Gharet—a primitive water-mill.

Ghartal—medium sized skin bags.

Ghilta—a bamboo basket used in the preparation of rice seed.

Ghirlo—a bamboo basket for bringing reaped grass, mandua, chemi, etc.

Gindera—a local play resembling the football played in the plains.

Godna—weeding.
Godni—an implement used for weeding.
a quality of potatoes.
Goldara—a local sport.
Gorahs—wool or cotton at a particular stage during the process of making cloth from it (just before spinning).
Gudki—an earthen pot in which home brewed liquor is put.
Gundiarasa—a dance performed by a group of men.
Gutoo—a big stone mortar.
Harool—a group dance of women.
Horah—a gallery around the upper storey.
Hurera—brown pig.
Huliat—a fair in 'big Dewali,' celebrated in the last week of December.
Ide—a loom for weaving cotton and woollen cloth.
Jagra—a festival celebrated in the end of August or beginning of September.
Jeodhan—earnest money given to the girl's father in order to complete the betrothal ceremony.
Jethong—'primogeniture.'
Jhainta—a dance play of men.
Jhangail—a woollen pair of trousers worn by men.
Jibaee—a primitive suspension bridge.
Juda—a robe made of cotton cloth, forming part of the male dance dress.
Juthiana—a ceremony performed after the death of a person, analogous to the 'kirya' ceremony of the plains.
Kameti—a costly and durable local blanket weighing from 8 to 14 seers.
Kanaee—a trumpet (straight) made of brass or silver used as a musical instrument.
Kanari—a fair held during the Besoo festival, which lasts for 5 days.
Kanch—younger brother.
Kanchong—'Junior-right.'
Kandi—any long cylindrical bamboo basket.
Kanduri—necklace of silver rupees with 'munga' bead in centre.
Kaneti—a small bamboo basket used for keeping fruits and flowers.
Kenayati—a wooden 'cross' used for spinning ropes.
Kangi—made of bamboo and used in the looms for weaving the cloth.
Kantha—a necklace of round silver bar with gold pendant in centre.
Kanthi—necklace of silver rupees.
Kata—a local made sword (straight in design).
Kothar—a big wooden box used for storing grains.
Kathiya—a small wooden vessel.
Katna—spinning.
Keem (*or Kheem*)—cakes prepared from barley flour. These are used in the preparation of liquor.
Khagaili (*or Khagli*)—necklace of round silver bar.
Khaik—part of the crop given to the Bajgis and family artisans after reaping the harvest.

Khal—big skin bags.
Khalta (or Kharta)—a small skin bag.
Kharis—net-bags made from cotton and used for carrying various odd things.
Kherla—a disease of sheep and goats.
Kherra—a quality of potatoes.
Khil—intermittent cultivation.
Khlian—specially made floors for carrying out threshing of crops.
Khonkhri—a local weapon resembling the kukri of Nepaleese.
Khora—eighth day celebrations after the commencement of Mag tahvar.
Khundit-Mundit—a section of Koltas.
Khurshay—snow shoes of Bawar.
Khurund—a foot disease of cattle.
Klyar—day time meals taken at about 10 a. m. in the morning.
Koula—a grass from which ropes are made in a very short time.
Kul—earthen channels used in irrigation.
Kunor—a shepherd of Nahan State.
Kunoria—dogs kept by the kunors.
Kurti—tight-fitting bodice worn by the women.
Kuthars—separate granaries built for storing grains.
Kyari—an irrigated terrace found near streams.
Kyarik—plural of kyari.
Lakhauti—a woman belonging to Lakhwar.
Lamby—a quality of potatoes.
Lona—to reap the harvest.
Lonai—a fair held sometime in September.
Long (or Nath)—a nose ring.
Mag tahvar—biggest and longest local festival lasting for one to two months. It falls in the second week of January every year.
Mai-terang (or Mater-paksh-ka-adikar)—a nominal sum paid to the bridegroom's party at the time of marriage.
Mama—maternal uncle, a common form of addressing a stranger.
Man—fairs held in the month of June.
Mand—a disease of cattle.
Mat—a section of Koltas.
Muson—a long wooden pestle for threshing rice, etc., in big stone mortars.
Mutyati—a wooden 'cross' used for spinning ropes.
Mauwa bale—a creeper used for making ropes that are slung across streams and serve the purpose of a bridge.
Nalis—a nominal payment of one rupee for calling a panchayat.
Nao—hollow bamboo stick used in the weaving of cloth.
Narsin—a deota believed in by a certain section among Koltas and invoked for causing harm to others.
Nautor—land newly brought under cultivation.
Nayara—big wooden vessel generally used for storing curd.

Neto-douli—a section of Koltas that has recently been granted the rights of Nautor by the government.
Numdas—carpets with one side hairy made from sheep hair.
Otwa—a local made cotton ginning machine.
Painta—dowry.
Paintrus—men who carry the dowry.
Panchon-ka-angan—common courtyard. There is one such courtyard in every village.
Pandavon-ki-chouri—a temple dedicated to the pandavas.
Pankhis—woollen blankets of single as well as double thickness.
Pankhuri—a local liquor prepared from barley and jhangora without heating the contents.
Panwals—flat sticks projecting from the verum used in a water-mill.
Pat—upper grinding stone of a water-mill.
Patay-bazi—a dance played by two men.
Patnalu—a hollowed chir or deodar trunk used as a water pipe.
Parali—threshed sheaves of paddy etc.
Paree—specially prepared floor for threshing rice, etc.
Parnao—a wooden water channel used in a gharet (water-mill).
Pharka—a small wooden board used in threshing.
Pharno—a bamboo bow used for pharnona.
Pharnona—'dhun-na.'
Phawa—iron rod used in front of the plough.
Phool—superior quality of home brewed liquor that catches fire rapidly.
Phoophee—any Brahman or Rajput boy addresses a girl of the other caste in this way.
Pinuay—a local food preparation made from flours of Jhangora, cheni, kauni and wheat.
Pitars—flask-shaped bamboo baskets for keeping grains.
Ponda—unthreshed sheaves of paddy etc.
Poonis—wool or cotton at a particular stage during the process of making from it (just before preparing gorahs from it).
Rabra—the under-contents of the pot in which pankhuri (local liquor) is prepared. Rabra is also used for eating purposes.
Ranch—a loom used for weaving cloth.
Rantudi—a woman in her husband's village.
Rantudian—plural of rantudi.
Rasha—a dance in which two women take part.
Ropena—a system of raising paddy crop.
Ropenia—a group of persons preparing the fields to be sown by Ropena system.
Rot—a local 'charkha.'
Runsinga—a trumpet (curved in design) made of brass or silver.
Ruri—rabi crop.
Sailee—shady side of a hill.
Sanjayat—a section of Koltas.
Saonk—a weed that grows up in the paddy fields.

Sasu bhaint—a small sum of money (Rs. 1 to 5) paid by the bride-groom to his mother-in-law when the former pays her a visit after marriage.

Seen—a furrow made by the plough.

Shilta—a disease of the sheep and goats.

Shukrog—another disease of the sheep and goats.

Sooch—a necklace of silver.

Soor—a liquor made locally from barley and mandua or jhangora by heating the contents.

Tali—lower grinding stone of a water-mill.

Tando—known as jeodhan—a payment made to the girl's father in order to complete the betrothal ceremony.

Tangoee—a wooden 'horse-shoe' used while crossing a stream across which a thick rope is slung.

Tapar—a big local mat on which threshing is done.

Tapli—sunny side of a hill.

Tasli—a brass or iron vessel.

Tej-bal (or taz-bal)—a tree the powdered bark of which is thrown in water in order to catch fish.

Tekri—a hand-spindle.

Thani—assistant of the temple priest.

Tharnoos—big sized hand-spindles.

Thoura—played by the people during Besoo fair.

Tolna—to carry heavy stones in the hands; a local sport.

Tungan—a very thick rope slung across the stream in order to cross it.

Utreyan—head chains worn by the women.

Verum—a wooden block used in a gharet (grinding-mill).

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