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MONOGRAPH No. 42

MAHSA TIBBA

A VILLAGE IN AMBALA DISTRICT

Field Investigation and First Draft
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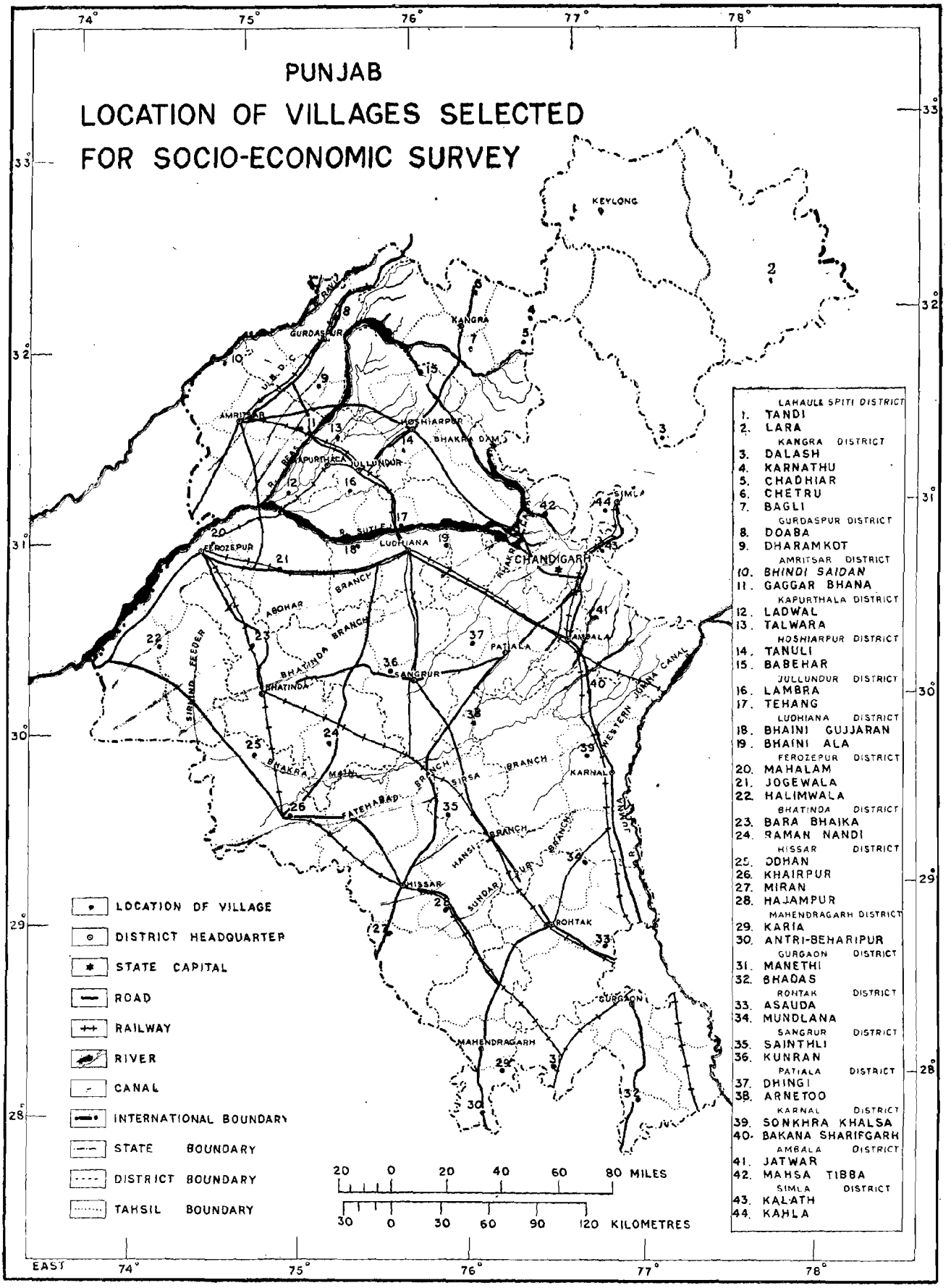
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CENSUS PUBLICATIONS

The 1961 Census Reports on Punjab will bear uniformally **Volume No. XIII**, and will be printed in the following parts:—

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PUNJAB
LOCATION OF VILLAGES SELECTED
FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY
74°
75°
76°
77°
78°
33°
32°
31°
30°
29°
28°
KEYLONG
KANGRA
GURDASPUR
AMRITSAR
HOSHIARPUR
BHAKRA DAM
KAPURTHALA
JULLUNDUR
SUTLEJ R.
FEROZEPUR
LUDHIANA
CHANDIGARH
SIMLA
RUPAR
ABOHAR BRANCH
BHATINDA BRANCH
SIRSIWAL FEEDER
BHATINDA
SANGRUR
PATIALA
AMBALA
WESTERN JUMNA CANAL
BHAKRA MAIN BRANCH
SIRSA BRANCH
KARNAL
FATEHABAD
HANSI BRANCH
JUMNA R.
HISSAR
SUNDAR BRANCH
ROHTAK
GURGAON
MAHENDRAGARH
LOCATION OF VILLAGE
DISTRICT HEADQUARTER
STATE CAPITAL
ROAD
RAILWAY
RIVER
CANAL
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
STATE BOUNDARY
DISTRICT BOUNDARY
TAHSIL BOUNDARY
20 0 20 40 60 80 MILES
30 0 30 60 90 120 KILOMETRES
EAST
LAHAULE SPITI DISTRICT
1. TANDI
2. LARA
KANGRA DISTRICT
3. DALASH
4. KARNATHU
5. CHADHIAR
6. CHETRU
7. BAGLI
GURDASPUR DISTRICT
8. DOABA
9. DHARAMKOT
AMRITSAR DISTRICT
10. BHINDI SAIDAN
11. GAGGAR BHANA
KAPURTHALA DISTRICT
12. LADWAL
13. TALWARA
HOSHIARPUR DISTRICT
14. TANULI
15. BABEHAR
JULLUNDUR DISTRICT
16. LAMBRA
17. TEHANG
LUDHIANA DISTRICT
18. BHAINI GUJJARAN
19. BHAINI ALA
FEROZEPUR DISTRICT
20. MAHALAM
21. JOGEWALA
22. HALIMWALA
BHATINDA DISTRICT
23. BARA BHAIKA
24. RAMAN NANDI
HISSAR DISTRICT
25. ODHAN
26. KHAIRPUR
27. MIRAN
28. HAJAMPUR
MAHENDRAGARH DISTRICT
29. KARIA
30. ANTRI-BEHARIPUR
GURGAON DISTRICT
31. MANETHI
32. BHADAS
ROHTAK DISTRICT
33. ASAUDA
34. MUNDLANA
SANGRUR DISTRICT
35. SAINTHLI
36. KUNRAN
PATIALA DISTRICT
37. DHINGI
38. ARNETOO
KARNAL DISTRICT
39. SONKHRA KHALSA
40. BAKANA SHARIFGARH
AMBALA DISTRICT
41. JATWAR
42. MAHSA TIBBA
SIMLA DISTRICT
43. KALATH
44. KAHLA

FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits to the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralisation on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive : the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows:

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of

them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, e.g., fisherman, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers, etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and selected character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500-700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an extra, over and above the crushing load of the 1961-census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September, 1959, the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals

and birds; markets attended; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March, 1960, by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September, 1959 Conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, movable and immovable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel'; to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusions', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the Census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May, 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June, 1961), restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November, 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. In the later half of 1961, again was organised within the Census Commission a section on Social Studies which assumed the task of giving shape to the general frame of study and providing technical help to Superintendents of Census Operations in the matter of conducting surveys, their analysis and presentation. This section headed by Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, has been responsible for going through each monograph and offering useful suggestions which were much welcomed by my colleagues. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December, 1961, when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve: to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be

conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The Schedules adopted for this monograph have been printed in Appendices I and II to the monograph on village Tandi.

New Delhi,

24th May, 1962.

A. MITRA

Registrar-General, India.

INTRODUCTION

Census is essentially a statistical survey, and as such it partakes of the limitations of these surveys because of its dealing with such aspects of human life as are capable of being expressed numerically or quantitatively. A Census report deals with the total population, rate of its growth, its distribution over land and according to age, sex, marital status, literacy, language, religion, occupation and other allied topics. But the Census report does not satisfy completely the reader desirous of knowing the people as they live : it furnishes little information on social structure and material culture of the population—the type of houses they live in, the clothes they wear, the food they eat, their household equipment, their livestock, their hours of work and recreation, their beliefs and customs, and their traditions and aspirations.

2. With a view to presenting a more complete picture of the people than was done at the previous censuses it has been decided to prepare along with the main 1961 Census Report complementary monographs on socio-economic study of some selected villages. These studies have been limited to rural areas. The mode of selection of villages for socio-economic survey has been explained in the Foreword. The list of 44 villages selected for survey is given in the location map which appears as frontispiece to this report.

3. Mahsa Tibba is a small village, inhabited exclusively by the *Chamar* community, lying in the submontane tract of the Ambala District. At the 1961 Census its population was 132 souls, living as members of 22 households. The *Chamars* were treated as outcastes as they were not assigned any place in the caste hierarchy laid down by Manu. According to "The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List (Modification) Order of 1956" the *Chamars* have been accorded the status of a scheduled caste. The Constitution of India has guaranteed special status and privileges to the scheduled castes. Therefore, any socio-economic study which depicts a scheduled caste responding and reacting to factors of change consciously sponsored by the State and the society, is bound to be full of interest.

4. The study of Mahsa Tibba has revealed that whereas the traditional occupation of the *Chamars* was lifting dead cattle, flaying, tanning and shoemaking, they are now keen to substitute the traditional occupation with farming. Land is a symbol of status which every *Chamar* is eager to possess. The level of awareness is improving and the horizon of socio-political consciousness is broadening day by day. The *Chamars* are beginning to participate in the social, economic and political activities of the society as its full members, on an equal basis.

5. The preliminary survey of this village was conducted in about three weeks during March, 1962 by Shri P. L. Sharma, M.A., Economic Investigator. The data collected during the first inquiry was scrutinised by me and Shri Ojha, and the Investigator was asked to conduct a more detailed inquiry. His work was all along supervised and guided by Shri

B. S. Ojha, I.A.S., Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations, Punjab, who visited the village a number of times and wrote the final draft. Having produced a report on tanning industry in Punjab, during my early career, I can claim some personal knowledge of the traditional occupation and institution of this community. It has, therefore, been a matter of pleasure for me to direct this inquiry and to have edited the report.

6. I am grateful to Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Officer on Special Duty (Social Studies) of the Registrar General's Office, for visiting this village and offering valuable suggestions to improve the draft; to Miss Swaranjit Chopra, ex-Investigator, and Misses Satwinder H. Singh and Ranbir Sokhi, Investigators in the Atlas Section, for preparing the location map and other charts and sketches; to Shri Kewal Krishan, Artist, for preparing the title and some sketches. I must also acknowledge the hard work done by Shri Satya Dev Sharma, Stenographer, in typing the report over again and Shri R. L. Khosla, Assistant Section Officer, who has seen the report through the press and spared no pains to improve its get-up.

Chandigarh:
The 7th July, 1964.

R. L. ANAND
Superintendent of Census
Operations, Punjab.

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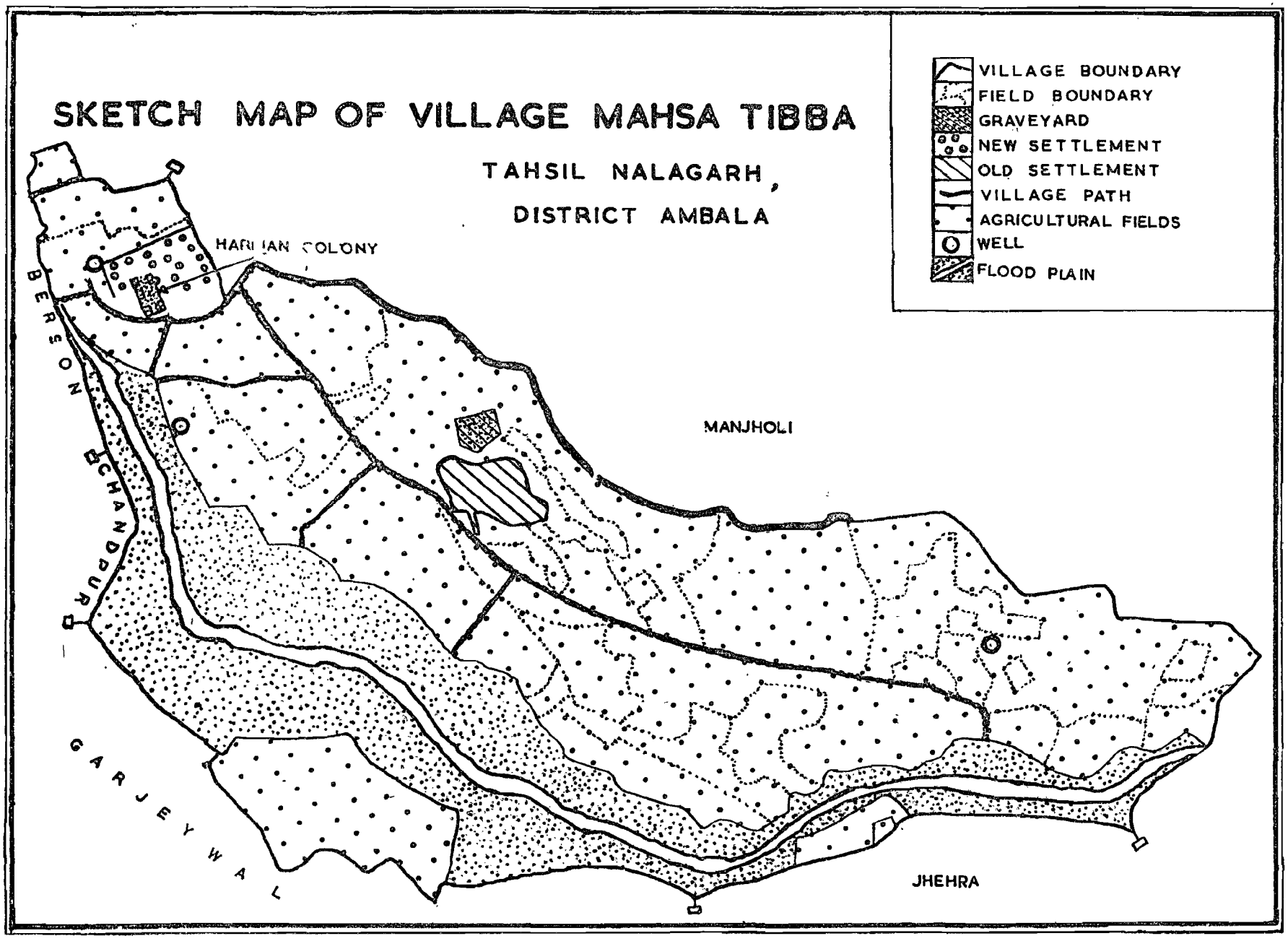
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SKETCH MAP OF VILLAGE MAHSA TIBBA
TAHSIL NALAGARH,
DISTRICT AMBALA
VILLAGE BOUNDARY
FIELD BOUNDARY
GRAVEYARD
NEW SETTLEMENT
OLD SETTLEMENT
VILLAGE PATH
AGRICULTURAL FIELDS
WELL
FLOOD PLAIN
HARIJAN COLONY
BERSON CHANDPUR
MANJHOLI
GARJEYWAL
JHEHRA

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

INTRODUCTION

Mahsa Tibba is a small village, comprising only 22 households, lying in the *dun* tract of the Nalagarh Tahsil of the Ambala District. *Gujjars*, the Muslim land-owners, having migrated to West Pakistan in the wake of Partition, *Chamars* of the Ramdasia sect are the only residents of this village now. Before 1947, the *Chamars* served the *Gujjars* as menials and were economically dependent on them. Their main occupation was shoe-making subsidised by casual agricultural labour. But the departure of the land-owning section of the village population changed the socio-economic status of these erstwhile menials, who, being the sole surviving community were forced to become self-supporting.

The land vacated by Muslim migrants was allotted to the refugees from the West Pakistan but none of them found it profitable to settle in the village and cultivate land. They either sold their holdings or leased them out to tenants. The evacuee land vesting in the Government has also been leased out to the residents so that now almost every household in the village cultivates a holding.

GROUND FOR SELECTION

The change caused by the emigration of *Gujjars* has affected greatly not only the economic status of the *Chamars* in Mahsa Tibba but also their social life. The special treatment and protection granted to *Harijans* under the Constitution and social and agrarian enactments of the Government have provided a further fillip to the phenomenon of change. The socio-economic study of Mahsa Tibba, therefore, depicts *Chamars* in the process of adjusting their life, occupations and institutions in response to factors of social and economic change. Moreover, it is of added interest to study what kind of new socio-economic relationships a single-caste village of the *Chamars* establishes with multi-caste villages in the neighbourhood.

LOCATION

Mahsa Tibba lies in the Nalagarh Tahsil of the Ambala District. This Tahsil is bounded by the territories of Himachal Pradesh and Hoshiarpur District in the north, Shivalik hills in the east, and parts of Ambala District in the south and the west. It is located 1247′ above sea level between east longitude 76°-39′ and north latitude 31°-1′. The village can be approached from Saini Majra, five miles short of Nalagarh on the Rupar-Nalagarh metalled road through a one-mile long camel track. The Nalagarh Tahsil comprises hilly as well as plain tracts: this village lies in the latter. The lands of villages Manjholi, Berson and Chandpur adjoin the lands of Mahsa Tibba on its north-eastern, western and southern boundaries, respectively.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS

Mahsa Tibba lies in the *dun* at the foot of the Shivaliks. Main stream in this tract is the Sirsa which rises in the hills above Kalka, runs north-west along the foot of the Shivaliks and finally

merges with the Sutlej near village Kotan about four miles distant from Mahsa Tibba. It flows about two miles to the north of the village. The Kanahan *nadi* which rises in the Shivaliks passes through the village lands just close to the *abadi* and joins the Sirsa on its left bank in the vicinity of Plassi Fort. Hills are situated barely a furlong away from the village habitation and run from the east to the west. The average height of the neighbouring hills is less than 500 feet from the ground level.

The soil can be classified into three types : sandy-loam, predominantly sandy, and hard clay. Sandy-loams are restricted to cultivated level lands near the *abadi*. That part of the land which has been frequently inundated by the Kanahan *nadi* is entirely sandy while the hillocks consist of hard clay. On the basis of fertility the cultivable land in the village is classified into four categories: *Lehri* land, lying near the village habitation consisting of fertile sandy-loam soil and yielding two crops every year; *Dabbar* land which is naturally moist and useful for growing rice; *Talla,* the low lying land fit for the cultivation of *jowar;* and *Changar,* the land on the hill slopes used for cultivation.

The climate of the area is extreme; the mercury falling as low as nearly 2°C in December and January, and standing as high as 44°C during May and June. The temperature figures are available neither at Rupar nor at Nalagarh. Therefore, temperature figures for Chandigarh, the nearest temperature recording station have been given in Appendix 'A'. May, June, July and August are very hot months, but the mercury starts falling towards September and it becomes fairly cold in December and January.

Rainfall figures for the Nalagarh Tahsil for the period 1951—61 have been given in Appendix 'B'. The average rainfall during the last 11 years was 50.52 inches. The area received its maximum rainfall—14.53 inches—in August, and the minimum—0.26 inches—in April. 59.52 per cent of the total rainfall, fell during June, July and August.

FLORA AND FAUNA

The village being situated at the foot of the hills is well-wooded. *Pipal* and *bohar* are the trees of shade. *Kikar* is very common. It generally grows along the boundaries of fields to a height of 15 to 20 feet and has long thorny branches which are used for fencing the fields. Its wood makes fine timber and its bark is used for tanning leather. The forest nearby abounds in *phulahi* trees. *Shisham* trees besides being found along the road, grow in low lying spots having a dense growth of long grass. The wood of *phulahi* and *shisham* trees serves as timber. *Aam, ber, shahtoot, garna,* and *khajur* trees yield fruit. The wood of *aam* tree is used both as inferior timber and fuel. Leaves of *garna* are relished by goats and its branches are used for fencing the plots under crops. Branches of *shahtoot* and *khajur* trees are used for making baskets. *Basuti* is another plant having deep roots and green leaves which grows along the village paths. *Mallairs* are small thorny shrubs bearing tiny edible fruits. *Banwah* grass grows in abundance in the bed of the Kanahan *nadi* and it is a source of income to the village community.

The village being close to the hills is frequently visited by a number of wild animals who wander down the hills in quest of water. *Bagh* is the most dreadful wild animal prowling around the village. It carries away goats, sheep

and at times kills stray cattle. It merely sucks the blood of its prey which afterwards is generally found suspended on the branches of a tree. It is very clever, agile and quick-footed. During the last decade no human being was attacked but one cow, two calves, four goats and one buffalo belonging to the village were killed. *Tarkh* very much resembles the *bagh*. It has small but weak hind legs due to which it even finds it difficult to run swiftly. It relishes the offal of the prey of the *bagh*. It is equally ferocious and does harm to goats, sheep and young livestock. Jackals, foxes, pigs, wild cats and blue-bulls are the other wild beasts found in this tract. Villagers have to exercise vigil on the movements of jackals, blue-bulls and pigs as they harm crops. Snakes, lizards, *sehs* and *gohs* are the most commonly found creeping creatures. *Seh* causes great damage to crops.

SIZE AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The village has an area of 231 acres. In 1951, it had a population of 108 including 58 males and 50 females. At the 1961-census the population was 132 persons: 68 males and 64 females. Before 1947, the village *abadi* consisted of two separate settlements: the houses of the Muslim *Gujjars* located on a hillock and the houses of the *Chamars* situated in the west, half a furlong away. Now there is no settlement on the hillock except a solitary *Chamar* household which has recently migrated from village Gaggarwal of the Rupar Tahsil and has settled on a thirty-*bigha* plot of land purchased near the hillock. The remaining 21 households put up above the right bank of the Kanahan *nadi*. The main approach to the village is from the south and as soon as one enters the village, one reaches the Common Facility Centre which is a *pucca* building having one big room, a verandah and a big cemented platform in front of it. Community gatherings are held on the cemented platform and guests and marriage parties are lodged in the Common Facility Centre. The village well is just in front of this Community Centre building. The well is covered and has a *pucca* platform. To the left of the Common Facility Centre, a village path leads through the rich growth of *banwah* grass to the Kanahan *nadi* and the village of Berson. The same village path links Mahsa Tibba with Chandpur which is located across the Kanahan *nadi*. The cultivable land lies in the north-east of the village and the fields stretch up to the Rupar-Nalagarh road.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Bullock-carts, mules and horses are the chief means of communication in this area. The small carts having wooden wheels are used for transporting grass, wood, and foodgrains from the forest or the fields. Where the surface is undulating and too much sandy, mules or horses are substituted for bullock-driven carts. Villagers carry loads up and down the steep slopes of the hills on their own heads. Men, women and children are expert in climbing steep hills with loads of grass, fodder or wood on their heads. With the construction of the Rupar-Nalagarh metalled road and improvement of village paths goods are transported mostly in trucks or bullock-carts. Five persons in the village own bicycles. They find it convenient to cover short distances on bicycles as bus service is not very frequent. The nearest Post Office is at Manjholi and the nearest railway station is located at Ghanauli at a distance of about five miles from the village. Telegraph facilities are available at Rupar and Nalagarh at a distance of 9 and 5 miles, respectively.

SOURCES OF WATER

There is no water-pump in the village but there are two wells of drinking water: one situated near the old hillock and the other in the main *abadi*. Depth of the water is about 20 feet from the surface level and the water is sweet and health-giving. There is another well near the bank of the Kanahan *nadi* but its water is rarely used for drinking. There is one Persian-wheel also below the hillock which is used by Bhajan Dass to irrigate his thirty-*bigha* plot of land. This Persian-wheel is said to have been sunk during 1945 by a Muslim *Gujjar* at a cost of about Rs. 1,600. There are two ponds situated about a furlong away from the village habitation. These are generally dry except in the rainy season when water collects there. Cattle drink water at these ponds.

Crops depend mainly on rainfall. There are no means of irrigation except the one Persian-wheel. *Kuhls*, temporary water channels made by raising bunds to divert the water of the Sirsa stream to the fields are quite popular in the area but as the Rupar-Nalagarh road intervenes between the Sirsa stream and the village, *kuhls* cannot be a means of irrigation in Mahsa Tibba.

HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE

According to *Misl-e-Haḳiat*, 1888-89, this village was founded during the reign of Raja Ramsaran Singh, who ruled over the erstwhile Nalagarh State from 1788 to 1848. In 1803, the Gurkhas routed the Raja who fled to Basali in the Hoshiarpur District. Later on, however, with the help of Sir Ochterlony, who brought an army against the Gurkhas and defeated them, Raja Ramsaran Singh was able to recover his territory. But during the regime of the Gurkhas there was great devastation in the hills and many families left the hilly-tract and settled in the area of Plassi in the plain-tract. It was sometime during this period that three persons named Kalu, Maru and Salahi came from different villages of the State and with the permission of the Raja and after the payment of tribute to His Majesty, founded a village in the place which was previously a jungle. Later on, to provide menial services and labour the original inhabitants brought Najra, Karim, Hussain, Dehra, Jamal, Tehla and Baggu from different places and got them settled in the village. During the reign of Raja Bakhshi Singh, Mamun, Ruldu and Faqiroo settled with their relatives in this village while Himmat Khan, Kali Shah, Ahmad Hussain, Faridu and Mohnu came from different places and settled in the village after making presents to the king during the reign of Raja Isri Singh, who ruled from 1876 to 1911.

The *Chamar* menials brought to settle in the village, belonged to *Guru* and *Bhatti gots* of Ramdasias. The *Guru* Ramdasias still survive but the *Bhatti* Ramdasia died issueless. *Chamar* families belonging to other *gots* settled in the village comparatively recently. The Muslim *Gujjars* of Mahsa Tibba were either killed or migrated to Pakistan at the time of Partition so that now the village is inhabited exclusively by Ramdasia *Chamars*.

The area now under settlement was at the beginning a wild tract of land. Due to the undulating character of the land, presence of *tibbas* or small hillocks and availability of grass, buffaloes belonging to the neighbouring villages were grazed here. The original settlers, therefore, gave this village the name 'Bhainsa Tibba' i.e., the hillock

where buffaloes graze. With the passage of time 'Bhainsa' has changed into 'Mahsa' and the village is now known as 'Mahsa Tibba'. This village has never been deserted since the time of first settlement.

Counting backwards from the head of the household, 3 households have been residing in the village for the last four generations, 9 for three generations, 6 for two generations and 4 households settled here only in the present generation. All the three families living in the village for four generations have come from outside the Tahsil. Of the 9 households living here for the last three generations, 5 have come from outside the Tahsil, 3 from outside the District and one from outside the State. Of the 6 households residing here for the last two generations only 3 have immigrated from outside the Tahsil while out of the 4 households settled in the present generation, one has come from outside the Tahsil and 3 from outside the village.

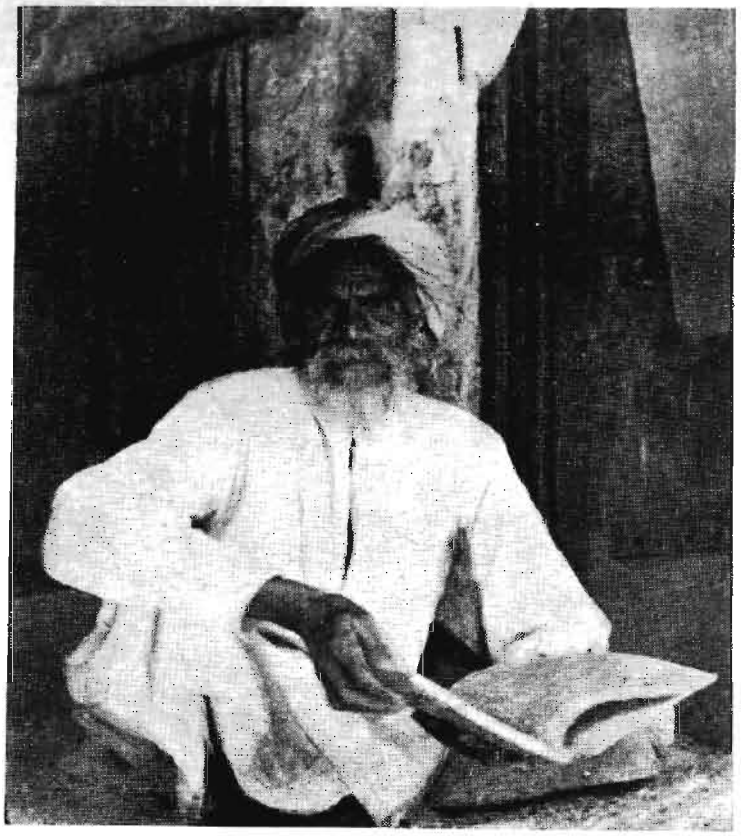
Guru Chamars numbering 49 souls have reported that their forefather, Tehla settled in this village after immigrating from the village of Baidwan in the Kharar Tahsil of the Ambala District. *Garang Chamars* numbering 29 persons claim to be the descendants of Natha, who came from the village of Olkan across the Sutlej in the hope of better prospects in the newly developing village where the demand for menial services was high. *Dandrata Chamars* numbering 16 persons believe themselves to be descendants of Titru, who came from Dungoli near Ghanauli and took up residence with his father-in-law, Darsnia of the *Guru got.* 15 persons belonging to the *Bal got,* declare that they are descendants of Chetan Das, a *Sadh,* who immigrated from the village of Sallaura of the Dehra Dun District of U.P., due to some family dispute. Of the remaining 4 families belonging to the *Bhundpall, Dahia, Samplay* and *Bhasri gots,* Sadha has come from the village of Rampur Bhasot, two miles away from Mahsa Tibba and now he proposes to shift to the village of Makauri where he has purchased about six acres of land; Surjan Singh came from his ancestral village of Do-burji about two miles away from Mahsa Tibba with his mother at her parent's house; Bhajan Dass has immigrated from Gaggarwal in the Rupar Tahsil and has settled on 30 *bighas* of evacuee land purchased by him; and the family of Ram Kishan has come from West Pakistan after the Partition.



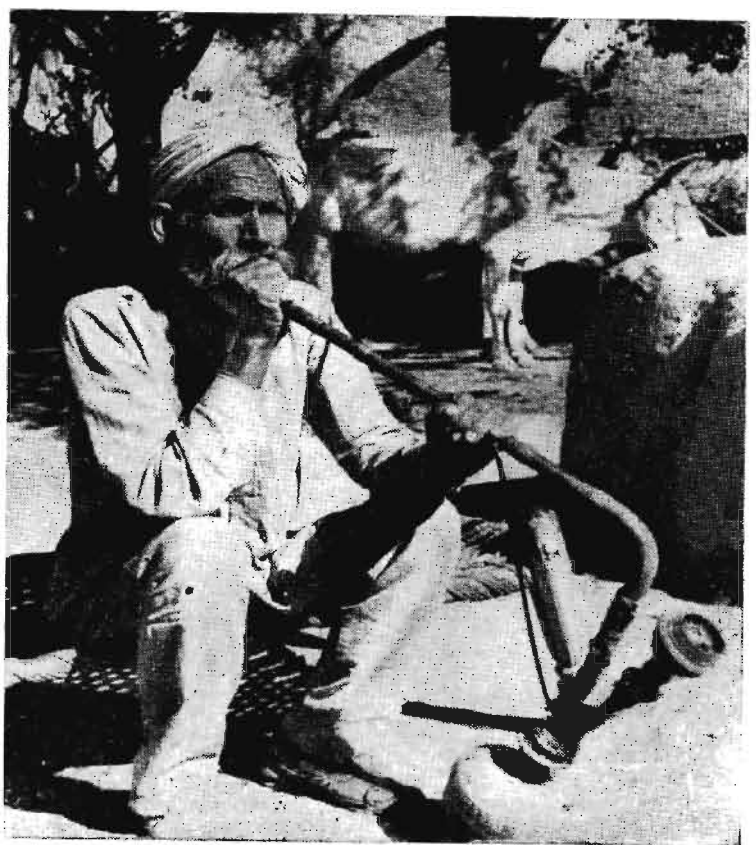
A distant view of a part of the village habitation



Dung-pits outside the habitation



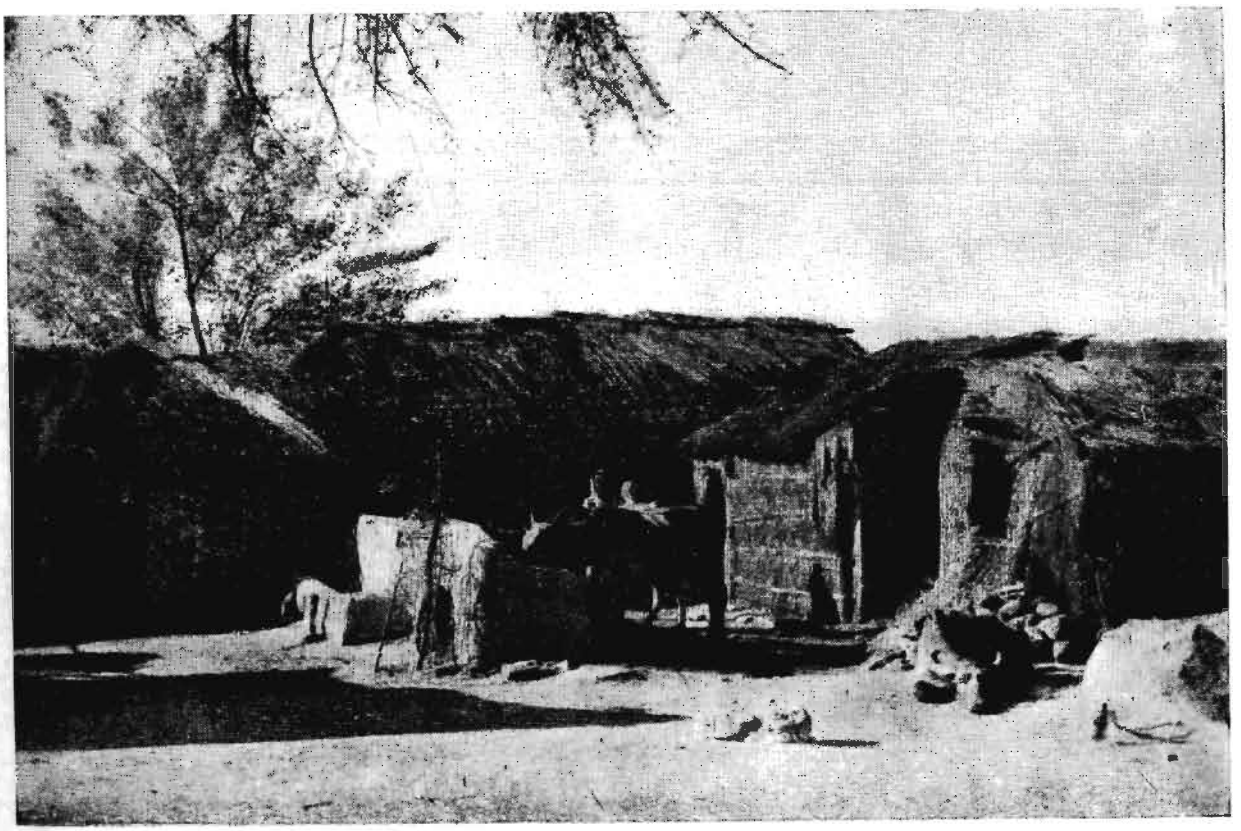
Dia Ram, the community priest



Bhambu *Chowkidar* enjoying a smoke



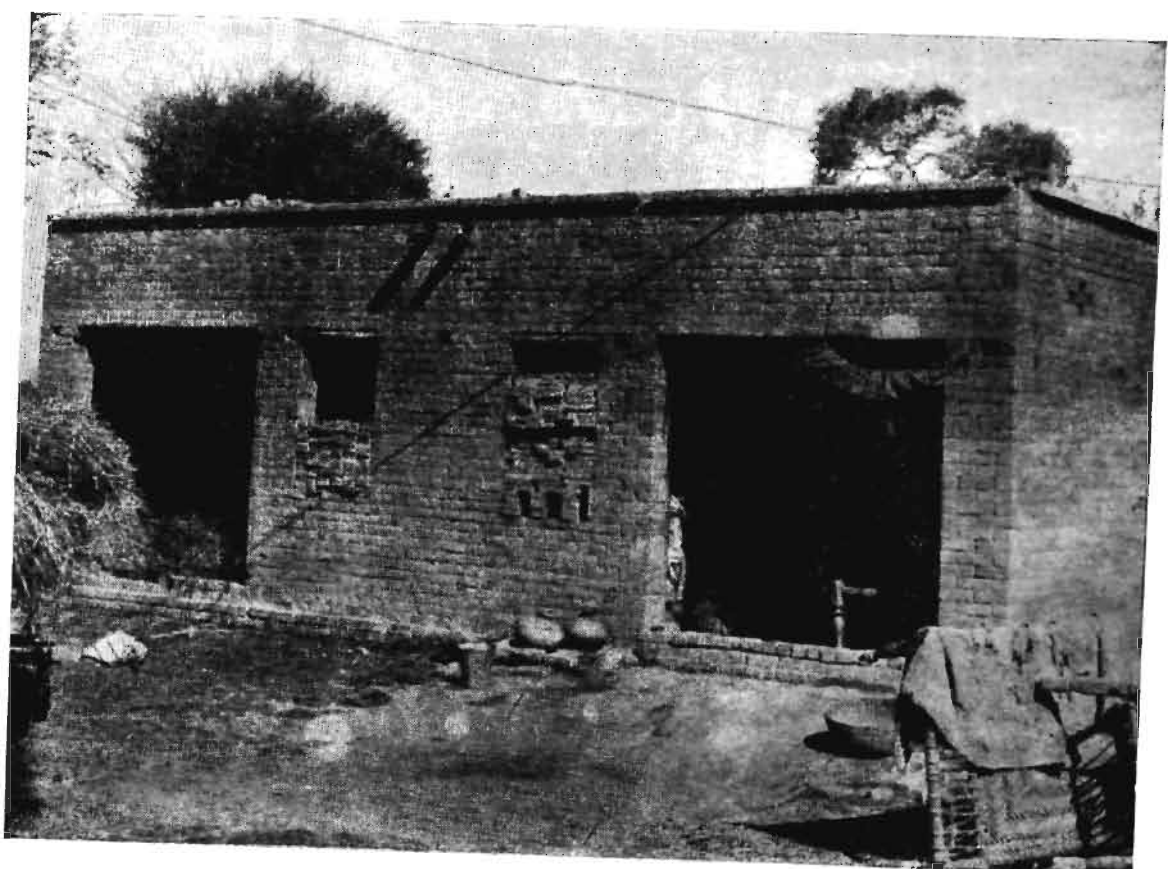
A typical *chhan*



A cluster of *chhans*



A wall of mud-clods



A Government-aided house under construction

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mahsa Tibba is inhabited solely by the *Chamars* of the Ramdasia sect. The word *'Chamar'* derives its origin from the Sanskrit word *'Charamkar'* which means a worker in hides and skins. Due to his association with Guru Ramdas and hatred for the word *'Chamar'* which directly points to his inferior occupation regardless of the change that is occurring, a *Chamar* prefers to be called merely a Ramdasia.

The population of Mahsa Tibba is composed of two broad groups—the *Chamars* and the *Chamar* priests known as *Sadhs*. The latter command superiority over the former because they are the traditional priests and do not work in leather. For the purpose of marriage the *Sadh* families constitute an endogamous unit. *Sadhs* are fair but the *Chamars* are of dark complexion. Moreover, the former are not so much addicted to wine and non-vegetarian food as the latter. The *Chamars* eat a dead goat whereas the *Sadhs* do not even touch carcasses. It is possible that they are degraded Brahmans who having fallen from their exalted position have started performing priestly duties for the *Chamars*.

The entire population of the village is divided into *gots* which are regarded as exogamous units for arranging marriages. The *Chamars* of the *Guru got* constitute the main group and those belonging to the *Garang* and the *Dandrata gots* come next in numerical importance. The following Table shows the strength of each *got* in the village:—

Got	Households	Persons	Males	Females
Bal Sadh ..	3	15	10	5
Bhundpall (Sadh) ..	1	7	4	3
Bhasri ..	1	3	1	2
Dahia ..	1	7	3	4
Dandrata ..	3	16	9	7
Guru ..	8	49	24	25
Garang ..	4	29	17	12
Samplay ..	1	7	3	4
Total ..	22	133	71	62

The *Guru Chamars* were the earliest to settle in this village. Numerically too, their strength is larger than that of any other *got*. They dominate all affairs of the village. Hari Ram and Rirku Ram of *Guru got* are the recognised elders of the Community Panchayat of Ramdasias. Hari Ram is *Lambardar* of the village and also member of Gram Panchayat, Manjholi, under whose jurisdiction the village Mahsa Tibba falls.

Bhambu, the spokesman of the *Garang* families, is a *Chowkidar*. He wields considerable influence in the

village as he has connections with Government officials. Parsinni, the most respected woman among *Dandrata* families, is a widow and acts as a *dai*. She is a member of the statutory panchayat.

LANGUAGE

The residents of Mahsa Tibba speak the local language of the plain tract of the Nalagarh Tahsil. It is a mixture of Pahari and Punjabi. They find it easier to read and write in the *Gurmukhi* script because of their frequent contact with the Sikh saints and priests. They understand Punjabi without any effort.

SOCIAL STATUS AND THE CHANGE

The low position accorded to the *Chamars* in the socio-religious structure of the orthodox Hindu society has been the concern of many social reformers and saints during the past few centuries. The present generation of the *Chamars* feels indebted to *Guru* Nanak, Swami Daya Nand and Mahatma Gandhi for paving the way for their social uplift and creating a socio-political bias against the evil institution of untouchability. Major indicators reflecting a change in the social status of the *Chamars* are discussed in the following paragraphs:—

Institution of begar.—During the reign of the Raja of the erstwhile Nalagarh State, the *Chamars* had to render *begar* to all Government officials including the *Lambardar*, the *Patwari*, police officials and the Tahsildar. Whenever the Raja or any other high dignitary of the State visited a locality in connection with hunting, or on official tour, a message was conveyed to the *Lambardars* through the peons. *Patwaris* and *Lambardars* used to inform the *Chaudhry* of the *Chamars*, who used to organise the labour force for rendering menial services. The *Chamars* would do arduous jobs and suffer harsh language without murmer or protest. The elderly persons of the village have stated that most of them were threatened, abused and sometimes even slapped by the officials and yet they were doomed to act like dumb-driven cattle as they were economically helpless and subsisted on their customary share in the village produce. But with the abolition of the *begar* in the wake of liquidation of the Nalagarh State as a separate entity, Government officials treat a *Chamar* like any other citizen. They are not conscripted to render the *begar* though they may still voluntarily attend to menial jobs.

Entry to the religious institutions.—There is no temple in the village or even in the neighbouring villages but the Ramdasias have free access to the *Gurdwara* in Manjholi constructed by Sikh Jat refugees.

Use of wells and other common places.—In the past the Ramdasias could not draw water from the wells used by other castes. The Muslim *Gujjars* who constituted the majority caste had a separate well. As a rule, even now *Chamars* have separate wells of drinking water but in times of need can draw water from the wells used by other castes. For example, the *Chamars* of Mahsa Tibba drew water from the wells in the village of Berson inhabited by Sainis and Sikh Jats when their own well was under repairs. Nevertheless, the *Chamars* state that they do not want to offend the feelings of other communities upon whom they are still economically dependent.

Physical untouchability.—The *Chamars* of this village recall the

days when they could not even touch persons of the clean-castes especially Brahmans and Banias, who used to sprinkle water upon themselves when they returned after getting a shoe repaired by the *Chamars*. Whenever the *Chamars* went to the houses of these people, they were made to sit on the ground outside the house. Food was thrown into their hands without conducting touch and if a child ever tried to touch a *Chamar* out of ignorance, he immediately got a severe reprimand from his mother for his vile act. At every step they were compelled to accept that they were basically inferior to the other castes.

Such practices are now a thing of the past. The clean-castes have abandoned rigid segregation and are beginning to own *Harijans* as fellow citizens worthy of regard and consideration. They sit together in public places and work side by side in fields. Sikh Jats and Sainis do not hesitate to serve meals to the *Chamars* in their own utensils. They freely visit the settlement of the *Chamars* for purchasing grass, for hiring labour and for consulting Ramdasia-leaders on important matters. The free mixing of all castes in the towns, buses and railways, village shops and tea-stalls, schools, panchayats and other public institutions has left no room for physical untouchability.

The practice of smoking and dining together.—In the matter of smoking and dining, the clean-castes have not relented in their attitude towards the *Chamars*. All the castes can take tea from the same tea-stall at the Saini Majra bus-stop, but a clean-caste person considers it irreligious and *infradig* to take meals cooked by a *Chamar*. The general attitude is : why should we, the high caste people, do so if we can avoid it for after all the *Chamars* work in hides and dispose of the dead cattle. The *Chamars* seem to be convinced of the force of these arguments and betray a realisation that they cannot be at par with other castes so long as they do not give up their traditional ugly jobs and become economically independent. How can they hold their heads high before those persons whose dead cattle they lift, whose shoes they repair and whom they approach for leasing in land and for borrowing money or agricultural implements in times of need ?—they reason in anguish. Complete social emancipation is not possible without economic uplift and it is the firm opinion of the *Chamar* community that the latter is not possible without the acquisition of land. A land-owning *Chamar* need not lift the dead cattle or do menial jobs. Bhajan Dass of Mahsa Tibba represents an example of a Ramdasia who has successfully struggled to acquire economic independence. He has purchased a plot of 30 *bighas* of land and is concentrating on agriculture as his sole profession. In spite of the fact that he is a Ramdasia, the Sikh Jats and Sainis freely mix with him and share tea. He enjoys the same status as that by a Sikh Jat. Similarly, other persons like Sadha, Rirku and Hari Ram who have acquired about 25 *bighas*, 16 *bighas* and 10 *bighas* of land, respectively are examples of Ramdasias becoming land-owners to raise their social status.

Place of the Chamars in the caste hierarchy.—The Ramdasia *Chamars* hold themselves socially superior to *Chuhras, Doomnas,* and *Chanals* all of whom are believed to have a common origin. They do not share meals or smoke with them and

do not lift their dead cattle. The *Doomnas* and *Chanals,* in turn, regard the Ramdasia *Chamars* as inferior to themselves and would not dine or share a smoke with them. The *Julaha* and Ramdasia *Chamars* are, however, of the same social status and they dine and smoke together and also enter into marital relationship. The refugee Sikh Ramdasias consider themselves to be of higher social status than the Ramdasia *Chamars* of Mahsa Tibba and the latter lift the dead cattle of the former.

Place of the Chamars in village organisations.—A concrete example of the enhanced social status of Ramdasias is their dominating position in the statutory panchayat of the area. The present Gram Panchayat, Manjholi, under whose jurisdiction Mahsa Tibba falls, consists of six members three of whom are Ramdasias as against one Saini, one Sikh Jat and one Rajput. The *Sarpanch* of the Panchayat is also a Ramdasia. Two out of the three Ramdasia members are from Mahsa Tibba. This new privilege for a menial class which has always been exploited by others, flows from the secular and democratic Constitution of the country which gives an opportunity even to the traditionally depressed classes to have an effective say in the affairs of heterogeneous communities and plan schemes for village uplift.

Before Partition, the Muslim *Gujjars* were the *Lambardars* of Mahsa Tibba. After Partition, Gian Singh Saini of the village of Berson acquired the *Lambardari* rights. Hari Ram preferred his own claim to the office of *Lambardar* as he was a resident of the village. The refugee Sikh Jats and Sainis, however, were not happy that a *Chamar* should become a *Lambardar*. But Hari Ram has succeeded in acquiring the *Lambardari* rights. This clearly reveals that the *Chamars* are no more regarded as inferior on the basis of their caste. But their occupation and economic backwardness is still the cause of their low social status.

Traditional occupation and change.—Traditionally the *Chamars* were workers in hides and skins. In the village economy their function was to dispose of the dead cattle, repair shoes and perform menial jobs in the fields and in the houses of land-owning section of the population. For these services they used to get customary dues from the families with whom they were attached. These dues were obtained at the time of harvesting in two instalments, generally two sheaves of wheat and two sheaves of maize, besides some share in each crop depending upon the charitable disposition of the land-owner. The other sources of their income were : sale of shoes, hides and skins, and casual labour. But now almost fifty per cent of the households are earning their livelihood either as owner cultivators or as tenants. Two households engage in casual labour. With the migration of the Muslim *Gujjars* there is a marked difference in the economic structure of the village. The loss due to stoppage of customary payments is now made up by earnings from casual labour and sale of grass.

HOUSETYPE

The village habitation mostly consists of thatched dwellings which are locally known as *chhans*. Every household possesses one to three *chhans* according to the number of married couples in the family. On the average a *chhan* has a ground area of 216 square feet (18 ft. × 12 ft.) and the height of

the roof is 10 to 12 feet from the ground. The roof which is made of *khar* (*sarkanda*) weeds, slants sideways and is replaced after about four years. The walls are built of mud clods or *kachcha* bricks. Sometimes stone-slabs are also inserted in the middle of a wall to form a square. All these *chhans* are single-storeyed and no two of them have a common wall though they are quite close to each other. The plinth is generally six to nine inches high. The flooring is *kachcha* and is periodically coated with a liquid of mud and dung. The houses do not provide any ventilators though windows can be occasionally seen. Most of the *chhans* in the village consist of a single room. As the size of the family increases, especially after the marriage of a son, the big family *chhan* is further partitioned into a number of rooms. If the family *chhan* is not big enough to be partitioned, a new one is put up. In all the old *chhans,* verandahs were provided in the front so that the job of making and repairing shoes could be done there while the houses which have been constructed comparatively recently are without a verandah as they are owned by single couples for whom one room is considered sufficient. The kitchen is located in the verandah, where one is available, a portion of which measuring 12 to 16 square feet is enclosed by a four-feet high thin mud-wall. In *chhans* without a verandah, the kitchen is located in one corner of the room. The flat-roofed six to eight feet high cattle-shed is generally close to the residential house and is entirely made of *khar* weeds. Big families have *kachcha kothas* for the cattle. A manger of mud is generally provided in the open place in front of the house, where cattle are generally tethered during the day.

Sketches of four typical houses have been given in the following pages. The first sketch is of the house belonging to Ram Kishan who heads a family of five members. The single-room tenement has been put on a ground area measuring 19¼ feet × 12½ feet. The size of the entrance door is 6 feet × 4 feet and it opens into the *behra*. This single room is used for sleeping in at night, storing household goods and cooking food. A goat owned by the household shares accommodation with the family members. The height of the roof from the floor is 10½ feet and the height of the walls is 7 feet each. The foundation of the house is one foot deep and the plinth six inches high. No windows or ventilators have been provided. The roof is slanting and made of *sarkanda* weeds.

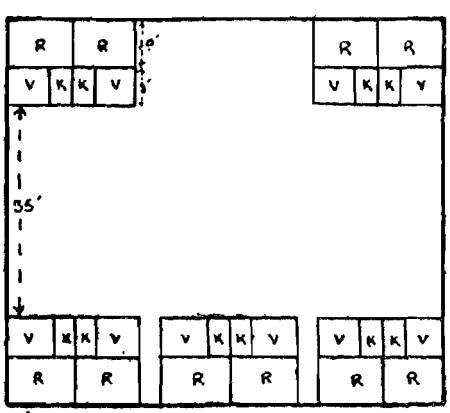
The second sketch is of the house owned by Amin Chand who also heads a five-member family. It consists of one living room measuring 19¾ ft. × 13¼ ft., and a small cattle-shed is attached to it. A three square feet space in one corner of this room has been set apart as a kitchen. The slanting *sarkanda* roof is 11¾ ft. high. Each wall is 7 ft. high and about one foot thick. The plinth is six inches high and the foundation 1½ ft. deep. A window, 4 ft. × 2 ft. in size, has been provided in the front wall near the entrance door. The cattle-shed entirely made of *sarkanda* and wood is located in front of the living room.

The third sketch is of the house belonging to Surjan Singh who is employed in the army. His wife and mother live in this two-roomed hut. The two rooms have been made by partitioning a bigger room and they measure 21 ft. × 13¾ ft. and 10 ft. × 13¾ ft., respectively. Each room has

a door which opens on a raised mud-platform distinguishable from the *behra*. The bigger room is used simultaneously as bed-room, drawing-room and kitchen while the smaller room is used as cattle-shed and for storing grass. Sometimes the old woman also sleeps in the cattle-shed. A back door provided in the cattle-shed opens into the *bara*, an enclosure fenced with thorny bushes all around. The women take bath, wash clothes and cleanse utensils in the *bara*. The roof is 11½ ft. high and each wall is about one foot thick. The plinth is six inches high and the foundation is two ft. deep. The size of the doors is 6 ft. × 4 ft. No windows or ventilators have been provided though one of the rooms has got two doors.

The fourth sketch is of the house owned by Hari Ram, *Panch* who is the head of a joint family consisting of 15 members including five couples. A narrow street passing roughly through the middle of the *abadi* leads to the courtyard of the house of the *Panch*. To the right is a *kachcha* wall about 10 ft. high against which a manger, roughly five feet high has been built with mud. At the end of the *behra*, a *baithak* and a cattle-shed adjoin each other. The *baithak* is entirely *pucca* and its door opens into the *behra*. There are two windows in its front wall each measuring 4 ft. × 2½ ft. To the left are located three living rooms adjoining one another measuring 21 ft. × 13 ft., 14 ft. × 13 ft., and 18 ft., × 13 ft., respectively. The door of the first room opens into the courtyard but that of the third opens into the second. The door of the middle room opens into the verandah in which is located the kitchen. There are two rooms behind the verandah measuring 27 ft. × 9 ft. and 27 ft. × 11 ft., respectively. No windows or ventilators have been provided in any room except the *baithak*. The roofs are slanting and are made of *sarkanda*. The walls are about one foot thick, the foundation is two ft. deep and the plinth is one foot high.

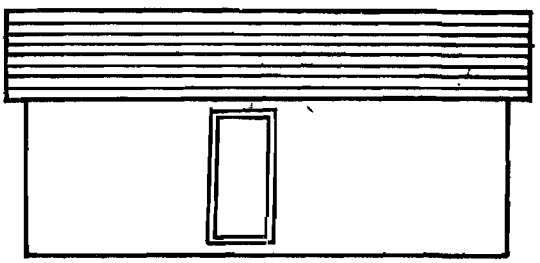
The Government Department for Harijan Welfare has aided the construction of a colony consisting of ten *pucca* houses in this village. Mahsa Tibba was selected for the construction of the colony because the residents of Mahsa Tibba were enthusiastic for the construction of the colony. They took initiative in submitting the application and pressing the need of constructing the colony in the village. Moreover, situation of Mahsa Tibba favoured the construction of the colony in the village. It is situated close to Rupar-Nalagarh metalled road and is easily approachable. The material for the construction of colony could be conveniently and economically carried. It was also convenient for the officials to inspect the place. The arrangement of houses is as under :—



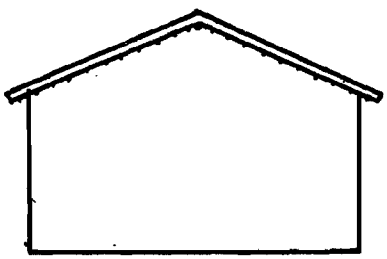
The houses are divided into two rows facing each other with their doors and verandahs facing a common piece of land measuring 45 ft. × 30 ft. All the houses have been constructed according to a uniform

1

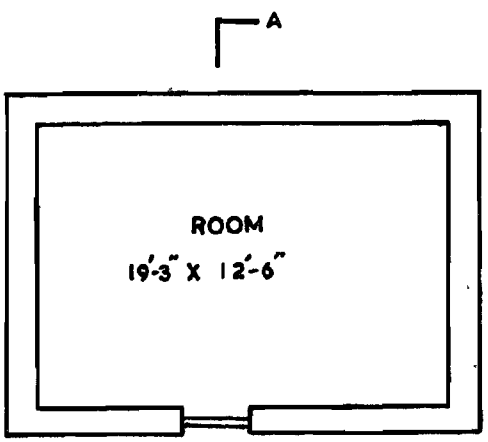
HOUSE OF RAM KRISHAN



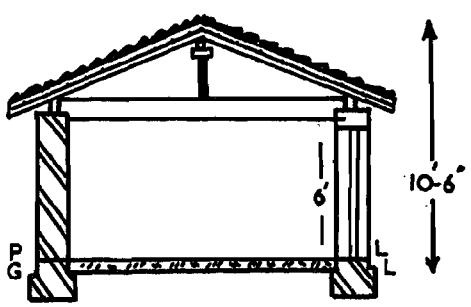
FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



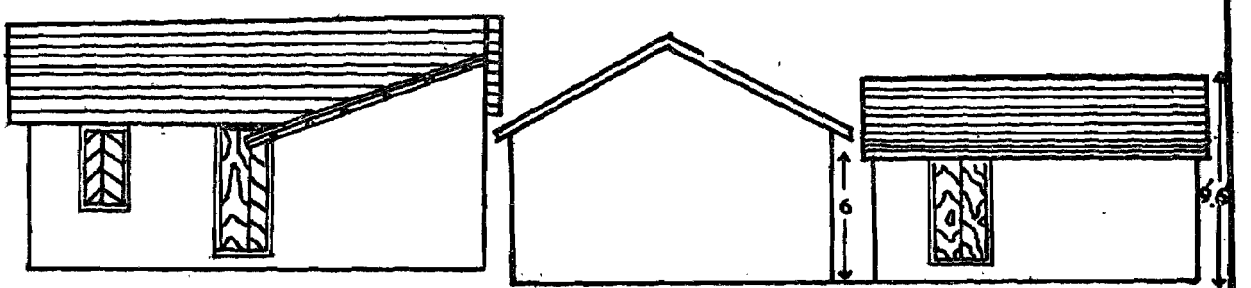
PLAN



SECTION ON AB

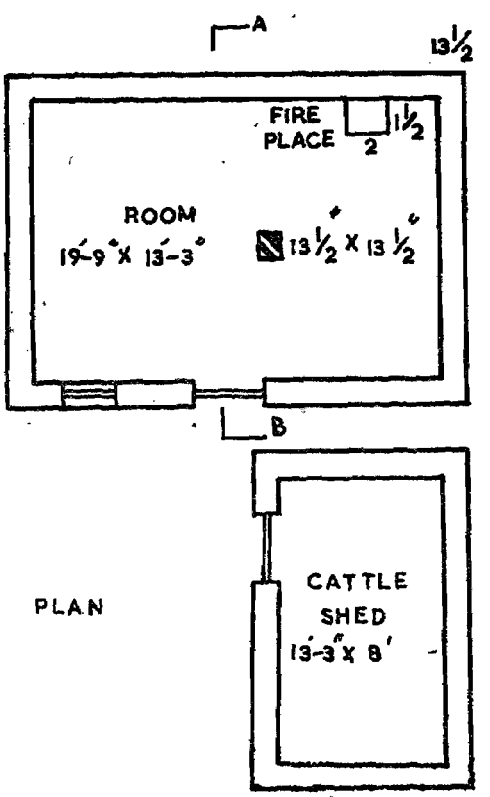
(2)

HOUSE OF AMIN CHAND

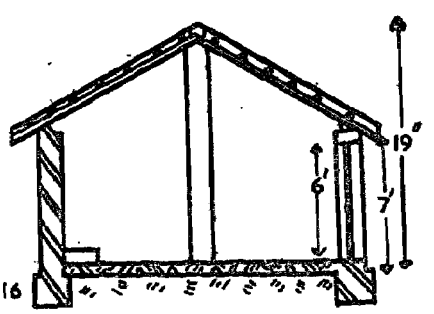


FRONT ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION



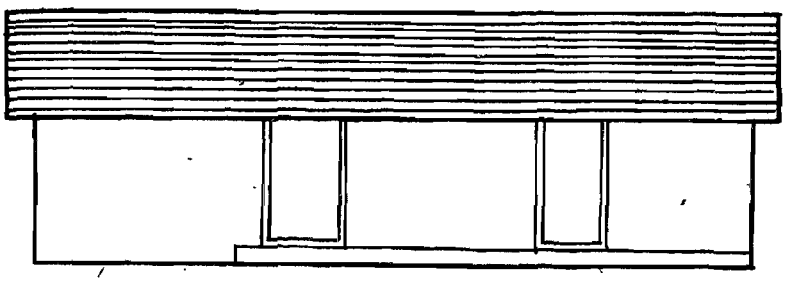
PLAN



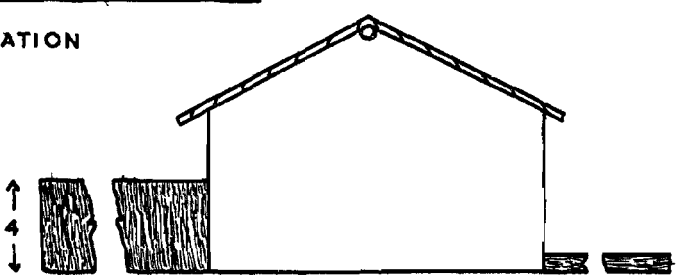
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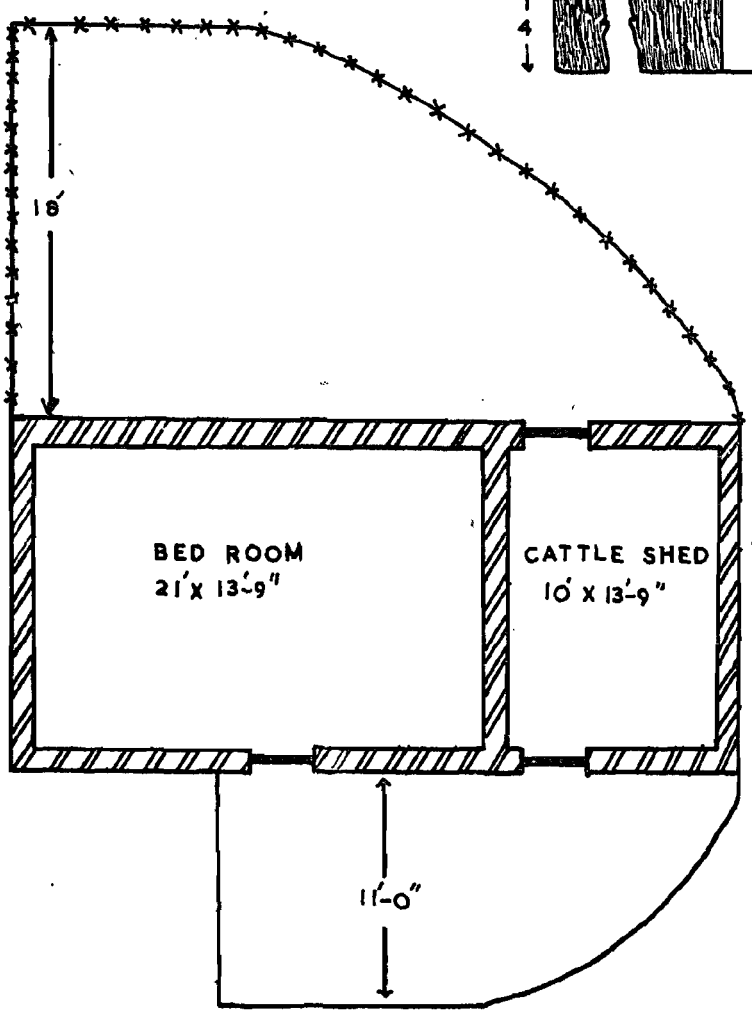
HOUSE OF SURJAN SINGH

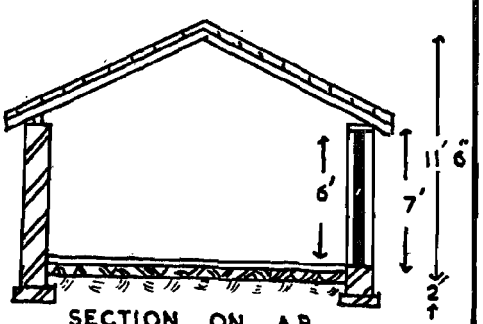


FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION

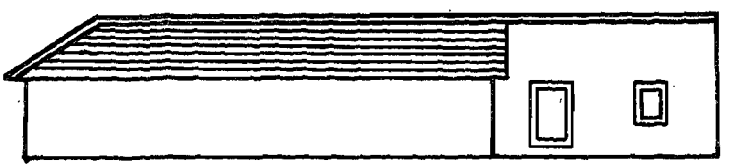




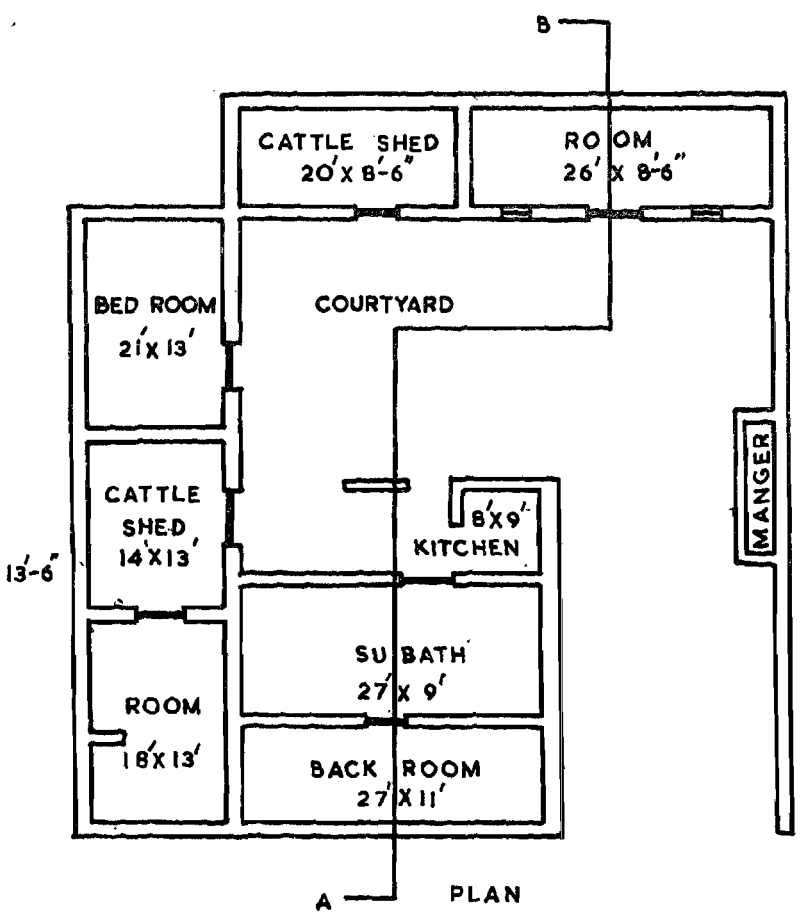
SECTION ON AB

4

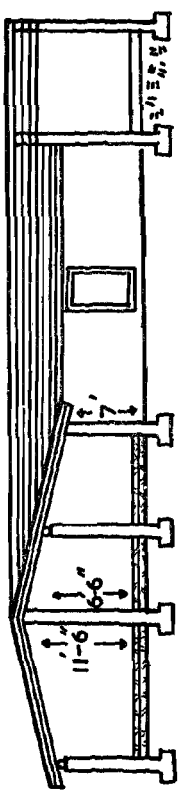
HOUSE OF HARI RAM



FRONT ELEVATION

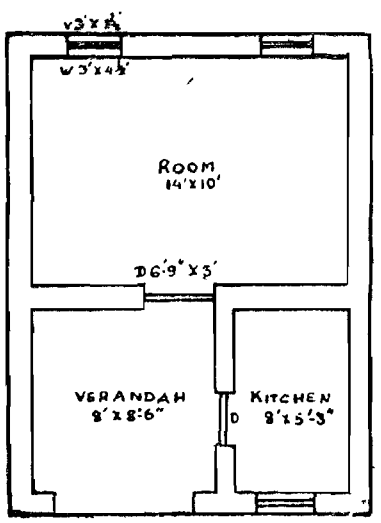


PLAN



SECTION ON A B

design. Six houses, each facing the north, are situated in pairs close to one another in a row. While the remaining four houses are located in the opposite row in two pairs each separated by a very small stretch of open space. Each house consists of a room 14 ft. × 10 ft. in size having two windows, each of the size of 3 ft. × 4½ ft. in the back wall and two ventilators in the same wall above the two windows. The roof and the walls are *pucca* but the floor is *kachcha*. The door of this room opens into the verandah which has been partitioned in the middle to provide a kitchen. The dimensions of the verandah and the kitchen are 8 ft. × 8½ ft., and 8 ft. × 5¼ ft., respectively. A window measuring 3 ft. × 4½ ft. has been provided in the front wall of the kitchen. The front of the verandah is open and the door of the kitchen opens into the verandah. The foundation of the house is two feet deep and the plinth is one foot above the ground level. The height of the roof from the ground is 11 feet and each wall is 13½ inches wide. A plan of a Government-aided house is given below.



The approximate cost of constructing this house including labour, bricks, materials used for doors, windows, beams, rafters, etc., has been estimated at one thousand rupees. The Welfare Department has given a grant of Rs. 750 for each house. All the beneficiaries were selected from the village. Selection of the beneficiaries was made by the Tahsil Welfare Officer on the recommendation of the statutory panchayat of the area. The *Sarpanch*, in consultation with Hari Ram, member of the statutory panchayat and head of the Community Panchayat of the Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba selected the names of the beneficiaries. The choice was unanimous. The attitude of the people towards the scheme is favourable. They are thankful to Government for what is being done to solve the problem of accommodation. They are, however, of the view that these houses consisting of a single room cannot provide the privacies of a homely life. They also feel that due to the intervention of Government officials the construction work is much delayed. The grants are being supplied in the form of building material which is not worth the price fixed for it. Construction work is not properly executed and the roofs of the newly constructed houses even start leaking in summer.

Material used in the construction of a chhan.—Roofing is done with *khar* grass, about 300 *poolas* of which are consumed in laying a roof measuring 18 ft. × 12 ft. One hundred *poolas* of *khar* grass, which is locally available in abundance, cost 6 or 7 rupees. It is cut, collected and transported by the members of the family on heads or on a bullock-cart. A male adult can generally cut and transport 50 *poolas* of grass during one day.

Ceiling of the *chhan* consists of a big beam, known as *bala* of *tahli, kikar* or *cheehl* wood, and rafters known as *katan* of *kikar* or *chhal* wood. The grass is spread on a network of beams, rafters, and bamboo sticks secured with thick strings of *munj*. It is propped in the middle by a wooden pillar. The wood for the beams and rafters is locally available and the services of the carpenters are hired for hewing and shaping it. The doors are made of *kikar* or *tahli* wood and fashioned by the local carpenter.

The walls are generally made of mud-clods, stones and stone-slabs all of which are locally available. The foundation of a *chhan* is about 1½ feet deep and consists of stone-slabs. *Kachcha* walls are made by the villagers themselves and no masons are employed. It takes five persons working together for ten days to erect walls and five days to put up the roof.

Exchange of mutual help at the time of construction of the roof is very common. Proper setting of the grass is an art which only a few persons know. Therefore, all families make use of their services at the time of construction of a *chhan*. Mutual help is generally exchanged on reciprocal basis only among those families which are on good terms with one another. No unskilled labour is employed in the construction of a *chhan*. The only skilled labour employed is a carpenter belonging to Manjholi who is paid at the rate of Rs. 2.50 per day. The material used in the construction of a *chhan*, the place from where it is purchased and the approximate cost of each item are given below.

Name of the Material	Cost (Rs.)	Source from where obtained
Khar grass ..	20	Locally available
Bala (beam) ..	5	Purchased from Nalagarh or locally available
Katan (rafters) ..	20	—do—
Munj grass ..	1	Procured locally
Ban ..	5	Rupar, Nalagarh or locally
Thum (wooden pillar) ..	3	—do—
Timber wood for the doors ..	25	—do—
Wages for the carpenter ..	22	Available from Manjholi
Labour cost (other than hired) ..	200	Family workers and villagers
Other costs ..	20	..
Total ..	321	

Thus, on the average an ordinary house costs about 350 rupees. A *chhan* is preferred to a *kotha* having a flat mud-roof because it does not leak during the rainy season although inconvenience is felt when the roof is blown away by the wind.

Different parts of a house.—The residential room is called *basu*. A *pucca* brick-built room is called *baithak*. Ordinarily, family members sleep in the *baithak* and if some guest arrives he stays in it. Hari Ram, *Panch* has recently built a *pucca baithak* measuring 26 ft. × 8½ ft., at an approximate cost of Rs. 650. The open space in front of the house is designated as *behra*, while that at its back generally enclosed with thorny bushes is called *bara* in which women take bath, cleanse utensils and wash clothes. Sometimes there is a small room, known as *obri*, behind a big room. It is generally quite dark and is mainly used for stacking household goods.

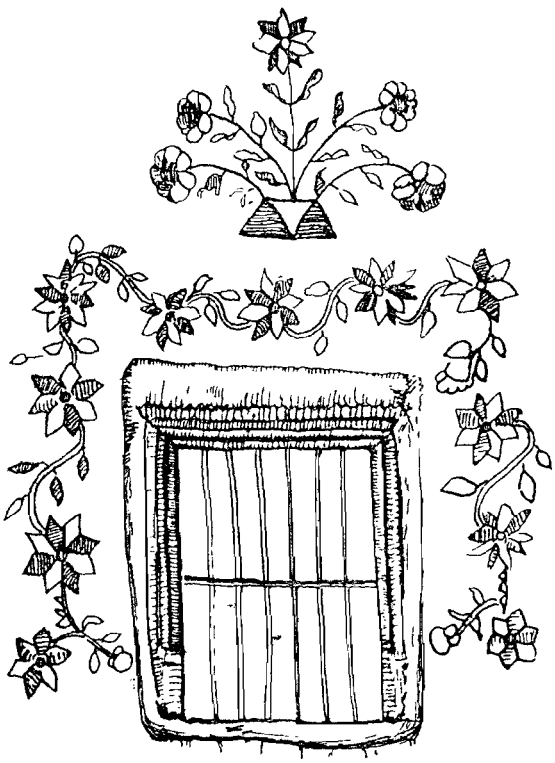
It is difficult strictly to maintain privacy in small houses which the Ramdasias have. The prevailing standard of privacy in the village demands that every couple should have a separate room. The people do not mind if a couple has to share the same sleeping room with two or three children below the age of ten years. In big families at least one room is reserved for one couple and if there is no additional room available some members of the family may sleep in the cattle-shed or in the verandah outside the room. But in no case can one room be occupied at night by more than one couple.

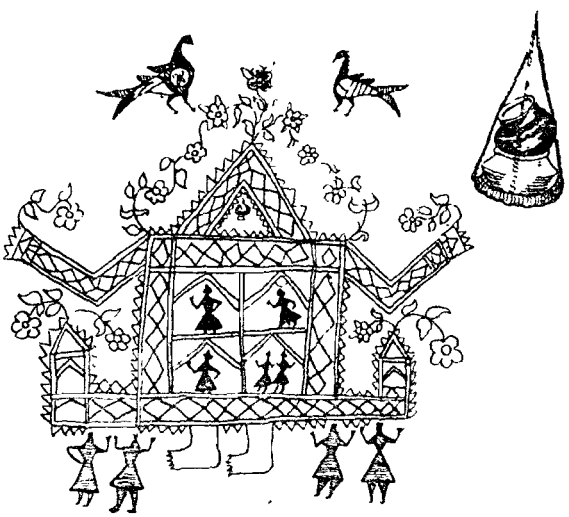
Details of size of various families, the number of married couples and rooms occupied by them have been furnished in Appendix 'C'. One single-room house is lived in by 7 persons, another by 5 persons while 3 single-room houses are occupied by 6 persons each, 2 single-room houses by 4 persons each and another 2 single-room houses by 3 persons each. There are 8 persons living in a two-room house. There is another two-room house occupied by 4 persons. Three two-room houses are under the occupation of 3 persons each, 2 two-room houses are under the occupation of 7 persons each and 2 two-room houses are occupied by 6 persons each. There is only one five-room house and one four-room house lived in by 15 and 13 persons, respectively. There are 2 three-room houses occupied by 9 and 5 persons, respectively. Thus, on the average 3 to 4 persons share a common room.

Privacy from guests cannot be maintained at all. The guest is made to stay in the same room in which the other members of the family stay. With the construction of the Common Facility Centre and the houses of the new colony this difficulty has been overcome to some extent. The guests and a few other members, especially young boys, can be made to sleep there at night if there is any shortage of accommodation. The houses are generally dark as windows and ventilators are not provided. The interior of the house is not visible from outside. There are no baths and latrines in the houses. The males take bath in the open at the village well while females take bath in the early morning when it is still dark under the cover of a cot or behind the wall of a house. Though there are no latrines in the houses the thick growth of high *khar* grass in the vicinity of the village provides sufficient privacy. The people, especially women, answer the call of nature under the cover of these grass-bushes.

Decorations and embellishments.—The residents are not fond of decorating their houses. At the time of marriages the houses are white-washed with *golu* earth and on the

outer walls floral patterns representing the branches of trees are made with different colours. On the inner walls a sketch of *Kali Mai* is drawn with different colours and is worshipped on the occasion of *Jhakkra* festival. In certain houses the printed reproductions of photographs of *Guru* Ravi Das, *Guru* Nanak, Shiva and Lord Krishna are found hanging from the walls. Specimens of floral decorations and of a sketch of *Kali Mai* as painted on walls are given below:—





DRESS

The dress of Ramdasias is very simple. A *kamiz* or shirt worn over a sleeveless vest constitutes the upper garment of males. The lower garments consist of a *pyjama*, loose trousers, with a *kachha* or short drawers worn underneath. Turban is the common head-gear. Males at work put on only a vest and an underwear as this is the most comfortable and convenient dress for field workers.

Jumper, a full-sleeved shirt extending down to the knees and having a button near the neck, worn over *bandi*, a sleeveless and buttonless short shirt, is the upper garment of Ramdasia women. *Salwar* is the lower garment and *chunni* or *dopatta* is the common head-wear.

Elderly males and females generally wear clothes of hand-spun cotton yarn while the young persons wear poplin, silk and *pata,* a cloth having a coloured lining. Ordinarily, the residents wear dirty clothes and are carelessly dressed. Females wash their clothes more frequently than males. The clothes worn by elderly persons are generally worn out and dotted with patches. Newly married brides wear comparatively clean silken dresses. On festivals and marriages women dress up gaudily; red being their favourite colour. Men attending a marriage wear a starched muslin turban, a new shirt and a white or coloured *chadra.*

During the winter season, a woollen sweater is generally worn over the shirt to prevent the chill though some persons also possess warm coats made of *patti* cloth. Males often wrap themselves in a *chadar* or *khesi.* The cloth is mostly purchased from the village of Ghanauli which is about five miles from Mahsa Tibba. Some cloth merchants from Ghanauli, also visit the village on bicycles. Cloth is purchased mostly on credit. The *Chamars* generally go in for cheap varieties of cloth, the average price ranging between one and 1¼ rupee per yard.

Clothes are stitched either by women themselves or by Muni Chand who owns a sewing machine and knows the art of tailoring clothes. Some women in Manjholi also work as tailors. Their tailoring charges are lower than those obtaining in towns.

The poor families generally possess two suits of clothes for each member, while the comparatively well-to-do families possess three to four. One suit of clothes is specially kept for wearing on festive occasions.

The well-to-do and respectable elderly persons wear a white turban, a white *kurta* and a white *chadra.* Married girls are free to wear any type of clothes they like, but the unmarried ones are not allowed to wear glossy silken dresses which are the exclusive privilege of the former. It is customary for women to put on white dresses while attending mournings. Details of various items of dresses in vogue in Mahsa Tibba are given in Appendix 'D'.

ORNAMENTS

Ramdasia males and females cannot afford costly ornaments. Even the women have to toil hard in the fields and forests to earn their livelihood and they find little time and security for bodily decorations. Ornaments are purchased at the time of marriages only and generally the same set of ornaments is successively used at marriages of a number of sons. In many cases ornaments have to be disposed of to pay old debts or to purchase some articles of necessity. Males wear few ornaments except a gold *chhap,* i.e., a finger-ring, *kara,* i.e., an iron bangle, and a *tavit,* i.e., a gold or silver amulet worn round the biceps or the neck. Some old persons wear *mundran,* i.e., gold ear-rings, not because of their decorative value but because they can prove helpful in an emergency. In daily life women wear *balian, kantas, teeli* and *koka. Teeli* and *koka* are generally made of gold while *balian* and *kantas* may be of gold or silver. Women also wear round their necks *tavits* known as *miran-bibian* made of silver. Another amulet made of silver and iron beads and worn by women is called *sing tavit.* These amulets

are given by faith-curers to women to be worn at the time of marriages as a protection against the evil influences of ghosts and spirits. Similar necklaces of coins and beads stringed together are put round the neck of children to guard them against the witches. At the time of marriage a bride gets some gold and silver ornaments from her parents as well as from her father-in-law. *Gussal-patti* is a silver ornament worn round the ankles and presented to the bride by the father of the bridegroom. This ornament is not used in daily life. *Ghari-choori* is the name given to silver bangles presented to her at the time of marriage. The bride must wear a pair of *phuls,* conical gold or silver ornaments worn on either side of the head, sent to her by her father-in-law at the time of betrothal. *Dhaga,* a betel-leaf shaped gold ornament suspended at the breast with the help of a black thread; *har,* a silver necklace, glass bangles and *chhap* are the other ornaments worn by women.

Ornaments are generally purchased from the goldsmiths at Rupar and Nalagarh. Cheap ornaments like finger-rings, ear-rings, and bangles are purchased at different fairs. Amulets and finger-rings are also supplied by *Bazigar* women who visit the village occasionally. Young boys are particularly fond of buying finger-rings whenever they attend a fair.

Details of different ornaments are given in Appendix 'E'.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

The meagre resources of Ramdasias permit them to acquire only the most essential articles of utility for daily use; comforts and luxuries are beyond their reach. Most of the articles are the products of their personal labour and skill which is a more common feature of village life than of town life. So far as the articles of furniture are concerned most of the material is locally available at nominal cost, and carpenters are paid in kind at every harvest who have been rendering help and fashioning these articles. Villagers purchase goods of cheap variety from the market because they can afford neither to purchase costly articles nor to maintain them carefully in the midst of rough and rugged daily life they lead. Some details of the important articles of furniture and utensils commonly possessed by a household in the village are given in Appendix 'F'.

Binna is a circular or a rectangular low stool made of bagasse or *munj* or *parali.* It is about one inch thick and has a one-foot broad base. It is locally made by the villagers themselves. It is very comfortable to sit cross-legged on a *binna.* A *binna* lasts about a year and costs about four annas if purchased from the market. *Patra* is a substitute for *binna.* It is made of wood. It is about 1½ feet long and ½ foot wide block of wood resting on the wooden supports each 3 inches high. It is made by the carpenter at Manjholi. *Peerhi* consists of a wooden frame knitted across with strings of *baggar* or *san* grass resting on four legs. Its seat measures 1½ feet square and is about 9 inches high. A *peerhi* costs about one rupee. *Binna, patra* and *peerhi* are the traditional articles of furniture owned by every household. It is considered a social obligation to offer one of these to a guest or a visitor to sit on. A household which does not bother to offer a seat to a guest or even a casual visitor is socially condemned. Three households in the village possess chairs and as many of them have tables. Four

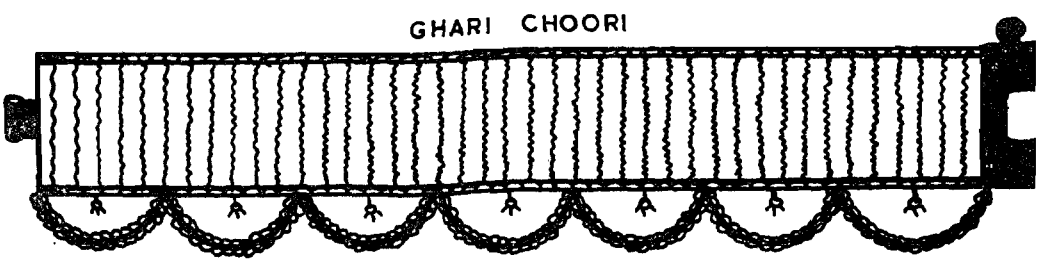
ORNAMENTS



KANTA

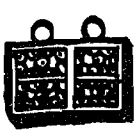
BALI

GHARI CHOORI





KOKA

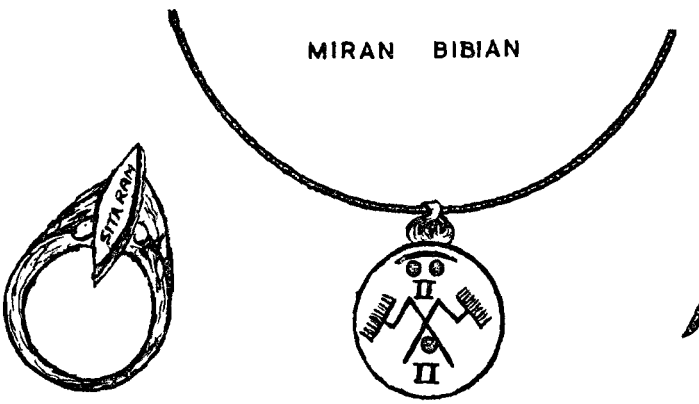


TAVIT



TEELI

ORNAMENTS



MIRAN BIBIAN

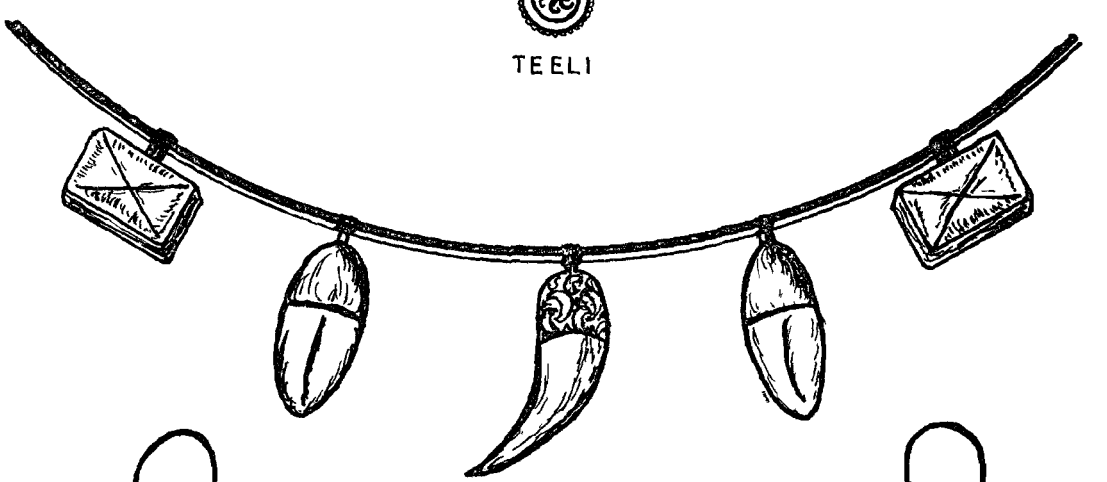
FINGER RING



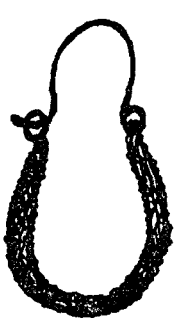
FINGER RING



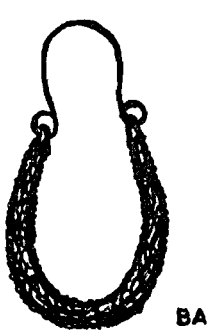
TEELI



SING TAVIT



BALI



BALI

households own benches, and stools are also owned by four households. All these articles have a rough look and have been prepared by the local carpenter. Chairs and tables are owned only by the comparatively well-to-do families though the younger generation as a whole deems it a matter of prestige to possess these articles of wooden furniture. Every household possesses a number of cots known as *manjas*. A *manja* consists of a wooden rectangular frame supported on four legs, knitted across with thick strings known as *ban* of *munj* or *baggar* grass. A *khidoloo* is an important item of bedding. It serves as a thick bed-sheet and is a sort of indigenous cushion used by the poor people. *Khidoloo* is a distortion of worn out pieces of cloth stitched together. *Khes* is a cotton plaid used both as a bed-sheet and a cover during the summer season. *Razai*, a quilt stuffed with lint, is used during winter. Women consider it a matter of prestige to possess *durries* and cotton sheets embroidered with floral patterns to be used by guests.

Utensils in an ordinary kitchen include *kauli*, a deep brass dish, used for putting pulses and vegetables; *thali*, a shallow brass plate used for keeping *chapatis; glass*, a brass tumbler; and *garvi*, a deep water container. A *glass* can contain half a seer of water but a *garvi* can hold twice as much quantity. *Dabba*, a brass bowl, covered with a lid is owned by the well-to-do families and is used for carrying tea, milk, *lassi*, etc., to the fields. *Prat* is a large, comparatively deep brass plate in which flour is kneaded. Most of the households own wooden *prats*, specifically used for kneading maize-flour. Maize-flour requires hard pressing which a brass *prat* cannot stand. Moreover it is believed that the flour kneaded in a wooden *prat* makes more tasty *chapatis*. *Pateela*, a deep brass pot, is used for cooking vegetables and pulses, while *tauri*, an earthen pot, is specially kept for cooking *sag* and *mash* pulse. *Tauri* is owned by every household. It is believed that *sag* and *mash* pulse cooked in a *tauri* give better taste. Similarly, *dudhooni* is an earthen pot used for boiling milk. It is covered with a *jharni*, a perforated earthen cover so that the milk does not boil out. *Dudhooni* is placed in the *hara*, an earthen circular oven in which dung cakes are burnt. *Karchhi*, a large wooden or brass ladle, is used for stirring vegetables and pulses. Wooden *karchhi* is specially used for stirring *sag*. *Tawa*, an iron girdle, is owned by every household. It is used for baking *chapatis*. *Chakla* (pastry-board) and *belna* (pastry-roller) is made of wood and is used for shaping *babbrus*, *pooris*, *mathis*, etc., prepared on festive occasions. *Chakla-belna* is not possessed by every household. It is generally shared with others. *Chimta*, a pair of tongs, and *bhookna*, a blow-pipe, constitute other articles of kitchen. *Chimta* is made of iron while *bhookna* is made of wood or iron. Buckets and pitchers are important vessels used for storing water. An iron bucket with a *laji* (long rope) tied to the handle is an essential possession of every household in the village. The bucket is used for drawing water from the well. Earthen pitchers are supplied by the potter who visits the village at every harvest. Pitchers are also used for storing grains, *gur*, etc., in the household. To possess brass buckets and pitchers is the privilege only of a few in the village.

Other important articles of household use include *ghotna* (wooden

pestle) and *koondi* (earthen mortar) used for pounding spices, etc. *Moohla* and *okhli* are used for threshing rice grains. *Moohla* is a long heavy wooden pestle thin in the middle so that it can be easily handled at this point while *okhli* is a deep narrow mortar made of stone-slabs. *Moohla* and *okhli* are possessed only by a few families and can be shared by all in the village. *Chakki* is the traditional hand-driven grinding mill owned by the villagers. It consists of two heavy round stone-slabs with a wooden handle. It is used for grinding grains. The grains are introduced between the two slabs through a hole in the centre of the upper stone. The lower stone has a pivot to permit circular motion to the upper slab. *Chakkis* were popular with the previous generations and the *chakkis* possessed by the present generation have been inherited from the parents. Now-a-days these are not much in use as the villagers depend on water-driven grinding mills (*gharats*) which are quite common in the region.

In addition to the iron *pipas*, rough iron and wooden boxes and pitchers, *kothi* is an important device used for storing clothes and other precious articles. It is an earthen rectangular receptacle, about four feet high and three feet wide divided into two or three portions with wooden plates. A small wooden door is provided in the front wall of the *kothi*. *Bharola*, an oval-shaped earthen receptacle with a small outlet at the bottom is used for storing foodgrains. *Chhikka* is another important device used for protecting eatables from rats and cats. It is made of iron wires and generally hangs from the ceiling of the house. *Chapatis* left unconsumed are wrapped in a *pond*, a piece of cotton cloth, and placed in a *bohia*, a small basket made of bamboo sticks, or the *chhikka*.

Chati and *madhani* are the other important possessions of the villagers. These are used for churning curds. The curds are put into the *chati*—a circular earthen pot, with a broad mouth. The *chati* rests on a *gharonji*—a hollow square wooden frame. The churning is done with the *madhani*—a wooden stirrer. It is worked by pulling alternately both the ends of a string passing round the *madhani*.

A looking glass, *surmedani* (antimony container) and a comb are articles of make-up owned by women. They do not possess any other articles of cosmetics.

FOOD AND DRINKS

The staple food of the residents of Mahsa Tibba during summer is wheat and gram, while in winter it is maize, *jowar* and *bajra*. In addition, they consume different varieties of pulses like *masri*, *moongi*, *mash*, *arhar* and *moth* throughout the year though occasionally pulses are substituted by vegetables including potatoes, brinjals, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, turnips, tomatoes, and pumpkins purchased from vendors visiting the village on bicycles. *Mash* and potato preparations are the cheapest and the most favourite dishes. The Ramdasias as a community take non-vegetarian food. All families except that of a priest take meat, generally, once a month. Meat is purchased from Rupar and Nalagarh. Most of them also eat dead goats. Milk and *ghee* are consumed rather sparingly; the yield of milk being very low. Cooking is mostly done by women but men can prepare food with equal

skill when the housewives are indisposed. Dried logs of wood, branches and leaves of bushes and trees, grass and cow-dung cakes are used as fuel which is burnt in the fire place locally known as *chulha*. Different types of food and methods of preparing them are described in the following paragraphs.

Chapatis of wheat, *berara* or maize are consumed throughout the year and constitute the staple food. *Chapati* of wheat is called *phulka*, that of *berara* a mixture of wheat and gram-flour, *missi*, and that of maize, *manni* or *makki-di-roti*. For preparing *phulkas* some wheat-flour is kneaded into a thick dough in a *prat* and a small quantity of it is rolled in some dry flour and given a circular shape either with hands or with *chakla-belna*. It is then transferred to a hot iron girdle placed over the *chulha*, and is finally baked on glowing charcoal. A *chapati* is about 9 inches in diametre and weighs about ½ chhatak. The maize-*chapatis* are also cooked in the same fashion the only difference being that *chakla-belna* is not at all used and the flour is kneaded in instalments for each bread. Maize-flour changes into a thick mass after hard pressing and mixing. The job of shaping maize-*chapatis* is difficult and requires training. Wheat-*chapatis* can be prepared even by young girls, but only an experienced housewife can prepare maize-*chapatis*. *Manni* is of the same diametre as the *phulka* but it is thicker and weighs about 2 chhataks. Some more preparations from kneaded wheat-flour e.g., *rote* and *pooras* are prepared on religious and festive occasions. *Rote* is a big sweet *chapati* weighing 1¼ to 5¼ seers prepared as an offering to the *Gugga Pir* or *Bawa Haripurwala*. *Pooras* are sweet thin pancakes prepared from a loose paste of wheat-flour fried on a *tawa* in a small quantity of *ghee* or oil. These are offered to the goddess worshipped by villagers. *Pooris*, specially prepared on festivals, are small *chapatis* fried in *ghee* or oil. *Babbrus* resemble *pooris* but they are thicker and smaller in size and are fried out of kneaded flour which has been fermented. *Mathis* are prepared on the occasion of a marriage for distribution among relatives. These are a harder variety of *pooris*. These can be sweet as well as saltish. *Gulgulas*, small and somewhat hard fried balls of kneaded flour, are prepared on religious and festive occasions. *Gulgulas*, *mathis* and *babbrus* can be preserved and villagers continue to enjoy these for a week or a fortnight. And thus the material left unconsumed during marriage ceremonies is utilised in the house for a long time.

Pulses substituted to some extent by vegetables are taken with *chapatis*. *Dal* is prepared by adding to water boiling in a *pateeli* placed on the *chulha*, grains of pulse, a little amount of turmeric and salt according to taste. The mixture is allowed to boil till it forms a homogeneous liquid mass. Women taste a little of *dal* to check if the salt is to taste. In case it happens to be more than required, some kneaded wheat-flour is put in the *dal* to neutralise the effects of extra quantity of salt. Some green leaves of coriander and chillies are also added. *Dal* is rarely fried in *ghee* and treated with spices. Vegetables especially tomatoes, cabbage, brinjals, lady-fingers and peas, are prepared very carefully as they constitute dainty dishes. Potatoes are, however, as common as pulses and the

potato-dish is prepared in the same manner as *dal.* To cook a vegetable, *turka* or *masala* consisting of onion, garlic, of which they are very fond, *dhania,* and spices containing chillies, *methas,* etc., is prepared and added to oil or *ghee* heated to reddish-brown appearance in a frying pan. The *masala* is roasted for a while before being mixed with the vegetable-pieces and stirred with a *karchhi* for sometime. A small quantity of water, turmeric and salt are then added and the mixture is thoroughly cooked. The vegetables are generally made *taridar,* i.e., soupy, so that a big vegetable-dish is prepared from a small quantity of raw vegetables. *Sag* and *karhi* are two very common dishes. *Sag* is the most favourite dish of the villagers consumed during winter with *lassi* and maize-*chapatis. Sag* consists of green leaves of *sarson; sooh; bathu* and gram plucked by women from the fields, washed and cut into small bits with a sickle and boiled in a *tauri* which is an earthen pot specially kept for this purpose. Salt is added in the form of crystals. When the leaves have been thoroughly cooked some maize-flour is added and the mixture is thoroughly stirred with a wooden *karchhi* and is again boiled for a while. It is a common practice among the villagers to share the *sag*-dish with other families because it takes long to cook *sag* and therefore, it is always prepared in large quantities. *Karhi* is a very cheap dish cooked from a mixture of gram-flour and *lassi* treated with some quantity of *ghee* and spices. *Pakauras* are added to make the dish attractive. *Chholia* vegetable prepared by cooking green grains of gram is largely consumed when *rabi* harvesting is on.

Sweet dishes popular with the villagers include *dalia, karah,* and *kheer. Dalia* consists of pounded wheat-grains fried in *ghee,* boiled in water and sweetened with *gur.* It is offered to *Khawaja* and is also given to the patients as a light diet. *Karah* is often prepared on festive occasions and it is also offered as *karah-parshad* in the name of Sikh *Gurus.* To prepare *karah,* about ½ seer of wheat-flour is fried in about ½ seer of *ghee* and when the flour becomes reddish-brown in appearance a solution, known as *amrit* of one seer of *gur* dissolved in 1½ seers of hot water is added. The whole stuff is then thoroughly stirred so as to change it into a homogeneous thick mass. *Kheer* is prepared either by boiling rice in milk and adding sugar to the mass or by boiling rice in cane-juice during the cane crushing season.

Rice dishes are also consumed off and on for a change. Rice grains are boiled in sufficient amount of water which is later poured off. The boiled rice is taken with *dal, karhi* or *shakkar.* Dishes of *bhunwan chawal* and *khichri,* a hotch-potch of rice and *dal* are usually given to patients put on light diet. Eggs are taken either half boiled or fried in *ghee.* To prepare *jhatka,* pieces of meat are fried in *ghee* and treated with spices and then allowed to boil in water.

The utility of fruits is not fully known to the residents. Fruits are believed to be meant for the rich who cannot digest hard food. However, there are some fruits locally available which do not cost anything; important among these being, *aam, toot, jamun, ber, mallahs* and *amrood.* During the mango season, mangoes are used in different forms. Raw mangoes are used to make *chatni,* a sort of sauce, and *achar,* pickles.

Mahani or *malanji* is prepared by dissolving roasted mangoes in water and adding onion, chillies, salt and spices to the solution. This dish is particularly relished in summer. When the mango season is at its peak, ripe mangoes are eaten in large quantities. *Phuttan, kharboozas, amroods* and *hadwanas* are locally available at cheap prices and are popular with the people.

Food habits.—Chapatis are consumed with *dal* and vegetable dishes. The person sits on a *patra* or *binna* while taking meals and places before him *chapatis* in a *thali* and *dal* or cooked vegetables in a *kauli*. A small morsel of *chapati* is dipped into the *dal*, chewed and swallowed rather hurriedly. Normally, a grown-up man consumes 5 *chapatis* of wheat or 3 of maize and 4 chhataks of cooked vegetables or 2 chhataks of *dal* at one meal. Hands are washed and mouth is rinsed before commencing a meal and also after finishing it.

Women do not take much interest in the preparation of food as they are busy the whole day long doing sundry household jobs from collecting fodder to grinding flour. Food articles are prepared in lots but due to absence of proper storing these are generally exposed to dust and flies. Cleanliness in the kitchen is almost conspicuous by its absence. There are no fixed timings for meals. All the members of the family do not take their meals together. Women serve food to their men-folk and take their meals whenever they are free. Breakfast consisting of one or two *chapatis* and a tumbler full of tea is generally taken between 5 and 6 a.m., during summer, and 6 and 7 a.m., during winter. After taking breakfast males go to the fields or forest for collecting grass and females attend to cattle and dispose of cow-dung. The first substantial meal is taken at about 11 a.m., in summer and at noon in winter. It consists of *chapatis* of wheat or *berara, dal* or cooked vegetable and *lassi* during summer and *chapatis* of maize with *lassi, dal,* cooked vegetable or *sag* in winter. Tea is again taken in the afternoon. As a matter of fact, tea is a common beverage with them and is regularly taken twice a day. Dinner consisting of similar items of diet is taken between 6 and 7 p.m. On the whole the people are undernourished and do not have much variety. The approximate quantity of various items of food consumed by an average family of five members during one year are given below.

Item of food	*Quantity consumed*
Wheat and grams	10 maunds
Maize	10 maunds
Rice	10 maunds
Pulses	1 maund and 30 seers
Vegetables	2 maunds and 20 seers
Sag	30 seers
Ghee and oil	30 seers
Spices including chillies	5 seers
Milk	4 maunds
Meat	12 seers

Wine, generally illicit country-made liquor, is consumed in large quantities when people want to make merry on social occasions. No family in the village considers wine, a prohibited drink. Only one person in the village is addicted to snuff. All families except that of a *Sadh* take meat. Even women, except those initiated into Radhaswami sect, take it. Two households reposing their faith in *Panj Pir* and *Lalanwala Pir* are forbidden to take bacon, but the young people belonging to these two households no longer share the belief of their parents. A few households have openly reported that they take meat of a dead goat or sheep though gradually most of the people have

started condemning consumption of carrion. Cow is regarded as a very sacred creature and consumption of beef is totally forbidden.

CUSTOMS, BELIEFS AND PRACTICES CONNECTED WITH BIRTH, MARRIAGE AND DEATH

Beliefs and practices connected with birth.—According to the residents of Mahsa Tibba, the days immediately following the stoppage of the menstrual flow are the most fertile during which conception takes place. Conception, they believe, is controlled not by man but by God and takes place when the husband and the wife achieve orgasm simultaneously. When a woman starts missing her regular menstrual cycles and develops nausea she is believed to have become pregnant. Pregnancy is confirmed in the third month when the face of the expectant woman becomes pallid. During the first two months of pregnancy she avoids walking over uneven surfaces and carrying heavy loads to prevent abortion. A pregnant woman is not allowed to expose her person to the eclipsed sun, eat food from a house affected by ceremonial pollution and visit haunted places lest the foetus should be deformed. Expectant mothers generally chew different types of earth such as *gachni* and chalk-pencils.

Delivery is expected to take place during or at the end of the ninth month of pregnancy. As the woman becomes big with a child she attends only to light work to reduce strain. Parsinni, an old widow, acts as the midwife and manipulates delivery. Should the delivery be difficult, she gently massages the belly of the expectant mother and also gives her gruel of dry grapes, aniseed and dry ginger. The umbilical cord is cut with a sickle and is buried under ground near the bed of the mother. The new born baby is bathed and a drop of honey or sweet water is put into its mouth. For a day or two following birth, the infant is given *janam-ghutti*, a solution of *ajwain* and *saunf*. On the second or the third day a virgin puts some *khabbal* grass in the water contained in a *garvi* and washes the mother's breasts with it. She gets one rupee for doing this. After this ceremony the infant is made to suck milk from its mother's breast. For some days following delivery the woman in confinement takes hot milk treated with *ghee*. She is forbidden to take drinks like *lassi* and wind-producing eatables like rice and pulse of *mash*. She is also given *dabra* to help recoup her health. *Dabra* consists of about two seers of indigenous substances having medicinal value, two seers of *ghee*, one seer of wheat-flour and three seers of jaggery. The substances used for their medicinal value are : *kamarkas, nagoori goond, palah goond, sundh, soas, saunf, pathani, mithi saranj; maror phali, maju,* seed-grains of *kharbooza; kheera; kaddu* and *hadwana, supari, chhawara, khopa, badam; dakhan; bhonkhra* thorns, *metha, dhabi* flowers and *sarnah* leaves.

On the 5th or the 7th day following delivery the mother takes her bath and prepares *karah-parshad* which is distributed in the name of *Gurus* and ancestors. After this she resumes her normal work. Ceremonial pollution among the *Chamars* lasts 40 days during which period the mother is considered to be very much susceptible to the spell of *toonas*. She stays away both from mourning and religious functions. At the end of the pollution period *Khawaja* is worshipped by offering him *dalia*

oblations which are also offered to fire burnt near a well. *Dalia* is distributed among children.

For about a year, the infant is fed mainly on its mother's breast. During the second year, the breast-feeding continues but it starts taking a little bit of food also. During the third year, the child is put on light diet and there is rarely a case of breast-feeding. In case the mother be ill or suffering from some infectious disease, the infant is spoon-fed on a cow's, buffalo's or goat's milk from the very beginning. The mothers feed milk to the children whenever they cry. In order to wean away a child his mother applies *rasont,* a liquid having a bitter taste to her breast. The body of a weak child is massaged with *ghee.* When he is about a year old he is taught to stand on his legs and pronounce some common words. Whenever a child suffers from *jhank,* i.e., he gets up all of a sudden as if frightened by someone, his mother moves five or seven chillies over his head and throws them into the fire. If the pungent smell of burning chillies does not temporarily induce cough, the child is believed to be possessed by a ghost and in that case a faith-curer is called to free him from the evil influence. If a child goes on crying and appears to be in pain, 5 or 7 small *chapatis* of wheat-flour known as *tikkis* are baked on an iron girdle only on one side. These are then made to be touched by the child and fed to a black dog. This ritual, it is believed, relieves the pain of the child and makes him stop crying. It is considered a good omen if the child cuts teeth in the lower jaw first. If, however he cuts teeth in the upper jaw first, it is considered a bad omen adversely affecting the interests of his maternal uncle who is, therefore, called to perform some magic rites. The mother with her child goes and sits at the boundary of the village. The maternal uncle of the child approaches them but does not talk with his sister. He touches the teeth of the child seven times with seven pice coins which are put in a *kauli* one after the other. The *kauli* containing the coins is then buried under ground. The mother and the child come back home and the maternal uncle returns to his village. Yet another precaution taken to immunise the child to the influence of evil spirits, is to make him wear an amulet and an iron bangle.

Ramdasias do not observe any elaborate name-giving ceremony. Elderly female relations give a name to the new-born child. Some of them do so after consulting the *Sadh,* the village priest, who opens the holy book of *Granth Sahib* at random and reads out the first two letters of the first word on the first page before him and prescribes that the name to be given to the child must begin with these two letters.

The villagers have heard of the existence of contraceptives but they do not approve of artificial prevention of conception. The use of contraceptives is regarded as immoral and against religion. Women do not feel the need of family planning. According to villagers a potion capable of inducing abortion includes, kernal of coconut, dry date palms, currants, empty covers of cotton cobs, which are boiled twice or thrice in the water and taken. This prescription is known to most of the people though none has stated having ever used it.

Barren women generally perform *toonas* to become fertile. It is

believed that if a barren woman removes a lock of hair from the head of a child whose tonsure ceremony has not yet been performed and takes bath over it, the child dies and his soul migrates to her womb and she is later on blessed with a son. Barren women frequently consult the faith-curers who advise them to go to the cremation ground without looking backwards and take bath there without being observed by anybody. They must carry back some ashes from the cremation ground and mix them with some *kheer* which is to be fed to a bachelor. It is believed that the boy who takes this *kheer* dies and the woman who performed the *toona* gives birth to a son. Barren women are always looked down upon with hatred and suspicion and children are never allowed to visit their homes especially on the *Diwali* day on which they are particularly susceptible to the evil effects of *toonas*. Similarly, a new-born baby is protected from the gaze of a barren woman lest he should die.

Still-births and infant-deaths are attributed to *toonas* performed by issueless women. It is believed that if a pregnant woman happens to step over the charmed articles of *toona* the child in her womb dies. Similarly, an infant may die if he happens to pass over the *toona*. Again, if a pregnant woman happens to pass close to a haunted place she is believed to be struck by a witch and her pregnancy ends in a still-birth.

Marriage customs.—The practice of early betrothal was a common feature of the Ramdasia community in the past. Elderly persons including Rirku, Bhambu, Rulia and Hari Ram were so young that they do not even remember having been betrothed. It has been reported that the average age for betrothal for males was 10 years and for females 7. At present boys and girls are betrothed at the age of 14 and 10 years, respectively. Both Hari Ram, *Panch*, and Dia Ram, Priest, having a son each 16 years old and studying in the 7th class are being pressed to solemnise the engagement of their sons but they are not quite willing as they want that their sons should be properly educated. Betrothals are negotiated through relatives and friends. There has been no change in the age for the effective marriage; it is about 18 years for boys and 14 to 16 years for girls. The marriage ceremony is solemnised earlier but the *muklawa* ceremony after which the bride actually starts living with the bridegroom takes place after the attainment of puberty. Ramdasias constitute an endogamous caste though their four *gots*, namely that of the father, mother, grandmother and maternal grandmother, are exogamous for every person. Rules of exogamy are strictly observed and the man breaking these is castigated by the Community Panchayat. Among Ramdasias, marriage with father's sister's daughter, mother's sister's daughter, mother's brother's daughter and father's brother's daughter is prohibited but both levirate and sororate marriages are allowed. Legitimate sexual relations are recognised only between the husband and the wife. No woman, married or unmarried, can under any circumstances mate with any person of her free choice. A woman is expected to be faithful to her husband and *vice versa*, irrespective of the fact whether marriage does or does not result in giving them an issue. Monogamy is the only form of marriage prevalent among Ramdasias. Polyandry

is not at all allowed though married women may have extra-marital relations with the brothers of their husbands. There is no social ban on polygamy but none can afford it. There is no man in the village having more than one wife.

Practice of levirate prevails in the village. Widow remarriage is always approved by the village community. Both senior levirate and junior levirate are allowed in the village. Of the two, junior levirate is preferred. A *Chamar* family is always anxious to retain the widow in their own house. A widow has to live with the younger brother of her deceased husband even though he may be much below the marriageable age. If there is no younger brother, the widow may start living with the elder brother. Asa Devi was first married to Kirpu on whose death she married his cousin Sarwan Singh. Generally, a widow is free to settle with any person of the community not belonging to any of the four *gots* regarded as exogamous. The widow Seeta of the *Dandrata got* has settled with Gian Singh, *Sarpanch*, a refugee Ramdasia of village Bairampur though they were not related previously. Widow remarriage takes place according to the ceremony known as *karewa*. The *bradari* is assembled and in their presence a scraf or a *chadra* is put on the widow and her new husband who are seated together. The new husband serves the *dham*, a community meal, to the *bradari*. Sometimes even these rituals are not performed though the community frowns upon a widow remarriage without *karewa*.

Divorce is not at all prevalent among the Ramdasia community. In Mahsa Tibba there has been no legal case of divorce so far. Men cannot afford to divorce their wives, firstly, because the latter greatly augment family income by contributing labour and secondly, because the former does not generally have enough money to contract a second marriage. Misunderstandings and dissensions between the husband and the wife are generally resolved through the good offices of the Community Panchayat. If, however, both the husband and the wife are willing to separate, the wife goes to stay with her parents and later on takes another husband while the husband is free to take a new wife. It would seem that the wishes of the wife have greater importance than those of her husband because there is no remedy against her refusal to live with him. One case of long separation has occurred in the village. The separated woman is staying with her son while her husband is staying at another place and is reported to have negotiated a *karewa* with a widow.

Adultery is not socially approved; in fact, it is severely condemned. In actual practice, however, adultery is detected, known and put up with. It has been gathered that extra-marital relations exist between many men and women in the village. There are a few fairly widely known instances of continuing adultery in the village. The general attitude towards adultery demands that whereas the daughter of a person belonging to the village must not be molested, it is not a grave offence if a person has illicit relations with his brother's wife. Young persons confide in one another the extent and nature of adultery committed by them.

Early marriages are still prevalent to some extent in the Ramdasia community. The orthodox parents regard it as a *punya* or a

sacred act to get their daughters married at an early age. Some of the residents regard the act of not getting their daughters married between the age of 10 and 16 years as positively sinful. On the other hand, if the parents of a boy refuse to accept a bride for him they are decreed as arrogant and vain. The virgin offered as a bride is looked upon as *Lakshmi,* the goddess of wealth, who must not be rejected for fear that a second offer may not come up. Moreover, living on a subsistence economy male and female members of the family have frequently to move outdoors in pursuit of economic activity and the chances of rape or molestation of the young unmarried girls are great. To eliminate these, the parents are anxious to get their daughters married as early as possible.

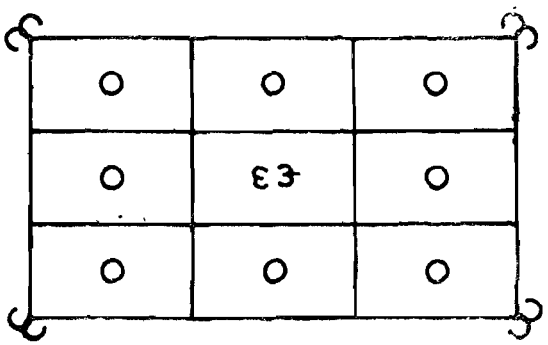
Marriage ceremonies.—Usually a *bachola,* i.e., a go-between, who is related to either of the parties negotiates the matrimonial alliance. Either party having given its consent, the betrothal ceremony, known as *mangna,* is performed on a mutually acceptable Wednesday without consulting any Brahman or priest. The parents of the girl visit the house of the boy, apply a *tilak* to his forehead and give him some money. *Shakkar* is distributed among the relatives and the *bradari* present on the occasion. The parents of the boy send to the would-be bride some presents consisting of five seers of *laddoos,* a suit of clothes consisting of a *chunni,* jumper and *salwar;* a pair of sandals and a *suhag-patari* containing *mehndi, parandi,* nail-polish, lux toilet soap, looking glass, *kanghi, datan, surma, surkhi, nala* and a pair of silver *phuls.* After his engagement the boy cannot visit the house of his fiancee, though his parents and other relatives can. An auspicious date for the celebration of the marriage two or three years after betrothal is fixed in consultation with a Brahman or the *Sadh.* Ramdasias prefer to celebrate marriages during the month of *Baisakh* when the harvesting is over and they have acquired some money.

The ceremony following *mangna* is known as the sending of *sahe-di-chithi. Sahe-di-chithi* is an invitation-letter written in the *Gurmukhi* script by the *Sadh* on behalf of the girl's parents. The letter is sent along with five seers of *shakkar* through the intermediary to the boy's father on an appointed day. Relatives and the *bradari* are collected on that day and the letter is opened by the *Panch* of the village community and read out by the *Sadh.* The *shakkar* is distributed among all present. The *Nai* is sent out as a messenger to different persons who are invited to accompany the marriage party. If the person approached by the *Nai* accepts a piece of *mauli* given by him, he is supposed to have consented to attend the marriage.

On the same day as the date for marriage is settled, a piece of *mauli* and some coins and shells are tied to the right wrist of the bridegroom and the ceremony is known as the tying of *kangna.* After *kangna* has been tied, the boy generally stays at home. He is also expected not to sleep on the floor and undertake hard jobs but this custom is now dying out as the younger generation does not find any meaning in observing this practice.

For a couple of days preceding the marriage day the body of the bride as well as that of the bridegroom is rubbed five and seven times, respectively with a paste, called *batna,* prepared by hixing and heating together turmeric, *sarson* oil and gram-flour.

The bridegroom is seated on a *chaunki* placed over a square piece of ground plastered with cow-dung and having on it the following pattern traced with wheat-flour :—



Two girls hold above his head a *chadra*. *Batna*, the paste, is then applied by his mother, sisters and sisters-in-law to the accompaniment of ceremonial songs. At the end he is served powdered-sugar, *boora* treated with *ghee*. A similar *batna* ceremony is performed for the bride.

On the marriage day, the boy is seated in the panchayat and dressed in clothes specially brought by his maternal uncle. The dress includes a turban, a vest, a *pyjama*, a *kachha* and a *sehra*. Bridegroom is also given a *chhap* by his maternal uncle who also defrays the expenditure incurred on arranging a band of musicians. In the presence of the assembled *bradari*, relatives and friends give to the bridegroom *neonda* or *salami* which consists of a present of one or two rupees and a piece of cloth two yards long. If 'A' got a *salami* of rupees two at the time of his son's marriage from 'B' the former would give a *salami* of rupees three to the latter if it is intended to continue the practice of mutual exchange of *neondas* and *salamis*. The community is served a meal known as *brahmbhoj*. Before the marriage party proceeds to the bride's village; the bridegroom is conducted by women to the well. They put *dalia* and *dhoop* over burning charcoal placed at the well. The boy invokes the blessings of *Khawaja* by making this offering, bowing and sometimes by pledging 1¼ rupee in the name of the *Guru* to be offered at the *gurdwara*. The parents of the bridegroom carry with them suits of clothes known as *vari* and *suhag-patari* to be presented to the bride. They also carry some ornaments including a pair of *phuls*, *gussal-patti*, a pair of *kantas*, a pair of *balis*, a *tavit*, a pair of *ghari-chooris* and a *har*. In the past, the bride's parents used to specify their demand for ornaments for their daughter but now this practice is fading out. The bridegroom dressed in gaudy clothes, crowned with a *sehra* and holding a sword in his hand, takes his seat in a bullock-cart and the marriage party consisting of about 40 persons leaves for the village of the bride. On arrival the marriage party is accommodated in a *dera* and is served refreshments. Another round of ceremonies begins at the bride's house. First of all the *bachola* offers one rupee and some *shakkar* to the bridegroom on behalf of the bride's parents. This ceremony is known as *piala* ceremony. The bridegroom's father performs the *quar-vari* ceremony by sending a suit of clothes, a pair of *phuls* and *suhag-patari* through the *bachola* who puts these articles in the lap of the bride. Another ceremony preceding the actual marriage ceremony is known as *un-jani-jorna*. It consists in tying the *chandoa*, the red cloth wrapped round the bride,

to the *parna* of the bridegroom. *Pheras,* the actual marriage ceremony, generally take place at about 4 a.m. The girl takes a bath before the *pheras* but the boy need not do so. A *vedi,* an improvised canopy of *beri*-wood is set up and a *chaunk* is traced on the ground. Mango-wood is burnt. *Samagri* consisting of *shakkar, ghee,* sesamum and barley is collected. A *chaunki,* a low wooden stool, and *khara,* a basket, are placed beside each other. The bridegroom sits on the *chaunki* and the bride on the *khara.* The father and the maternal uncle of the bridegroom as well as the bride throw *samagri* into the fire and the *Sadh;* the priest is paid 1¼ rupee by each party. The father of the bride performs *kanya-dan* by saying that he is giving away his daughter in charity. The relatives of the bride put a pice or two into the *garvi* which is passed round. The amount thus collected is known as *kanya-dan* and is later on made over to the *Sadh.* Then the bride's mother offers *salami* to her son-in-law by giving him a two-yard long piece of cloth, one rupee and a *bheli* of *gur.*

Ornaments, clothes, dry-fruits and coconut are presented to the bride on behalf of the parents of the bridegroom and this ceremony is known as *bari-bihar.* At the following meal the bride's father presents to the bridegroom's father one rupee and a *chadra* as *milni.* At the farewell ceremony at the house of the bride, *khat* consisting of suits of clothes, utensils of household use, ornaments and cash varying between 21 and 101 rupees to be given to the bride are exhibited before the *bradari.* The mother-in-law offers *salami* to the bridegroom. Her maternal uncle puts the bride in the bullock-cart and the two *kurams,* i.e., bride's father and the bridegroom's father embrace each other and exchange cloves and cardamom.

When the marriage party returns home the mother of the bridegroom accompanied by other women receives the couple. She lights a *chaumukha deewa,* an earthen lamp having four wicks, in a *thali* and carries some sugar. The lamp is passed over the heads of the couple thrice. Similarly a rupee coin is passed over their heads and given to a virgin. The sisters do not allow the bridegroom to enter the house unless he pays 1¼ rupee to each one of them. The next morning the couple is taken out for a ceremony known as *chhatian-khelna.* The husband and the wife gently beat each other with mulberry sticks. *Pipal* or *simbal* tree, a well and the ground are then worshipped. Probably this custom survives from the old practice of nature worship. Seven threads are tied round the *pipal* tree and seven *babbrus* are placed near it and the couple bows before it. Returning home after this ceremony the couple is given a test in cleverness by putting a one-rupee coin and a four-anna coin in a *prat* containing turmeric solution and silver bangles. The bride and the bridegroom compete with each other in picking up the rupee coin and the four-anna coin. There is a lot of amusement. At the end the rupee and the four-anna coins are made over to some virgin. After a stay of two days at the house of her parents-in-law the bride returns to her parents. The *muklawa* ceremony after which the couple settles down to a regular married life takes place generally when the boy is 18 and the girl is 16 years old.

In all marriage ceremonies the villagers are observing the established

Sanatanist Hindu custom of *pheras*. Only one marriage, that of Bhajan Dass belonging to the priest family, has been solemnised according to the Sikh custom of *Anand-Karaj*.

Wine is taken in large quantities at marriages and is a major item of unproductive expenditure. On the average, expenditure on the marriage of a son and a daughter amounts to 1,200 and 1,000 rupees, respectively.

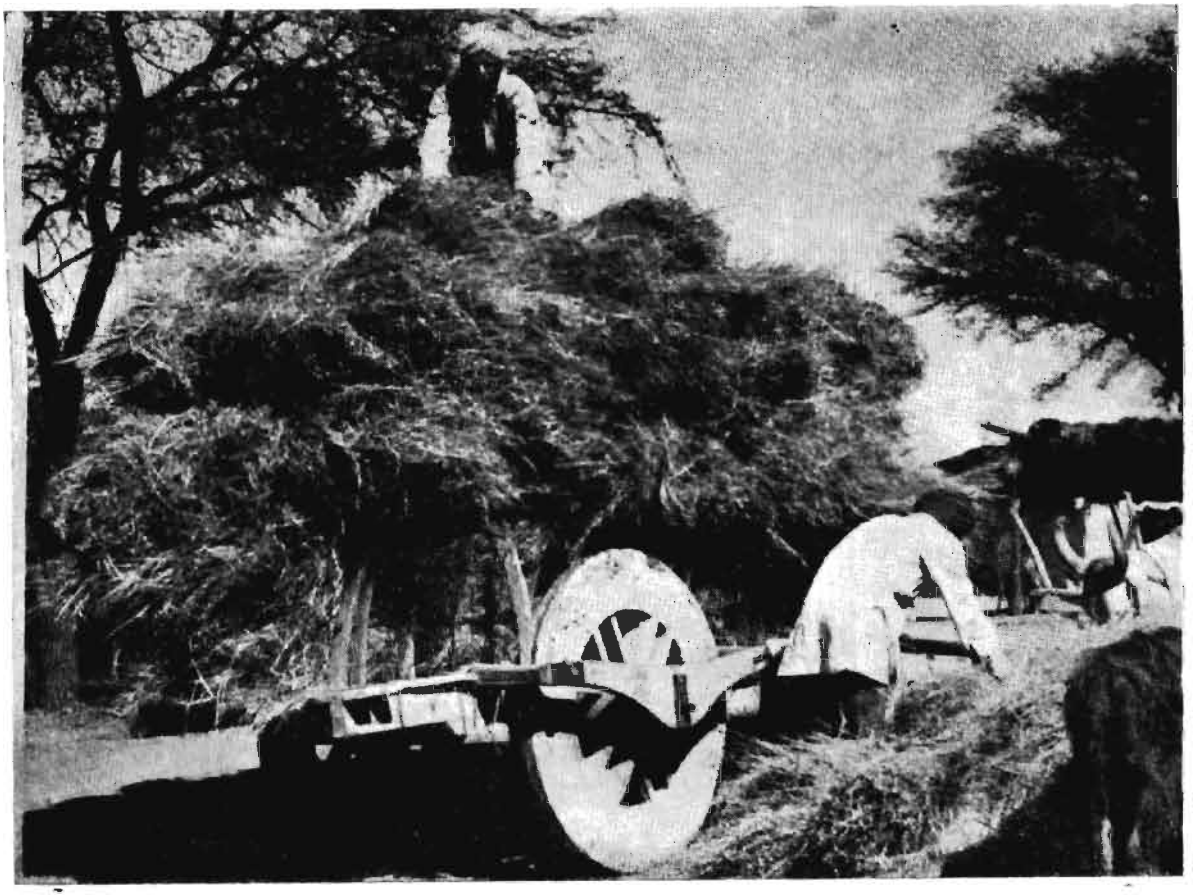
Beliefs and practices connected with death.—The phenomenon of death is an insoluble riddle for Ramdasias. The fate of man, they believe, is pre-ordained and the *Bidhi Mata*, the goddess of fate, will direct human affairs as she likes. The god of death is known as *Yamraj* who sends out messengers to release the soul from the body of a man when his existence in this world must come to an end. Some old women narrate horrifying stories of how they were frightened by the messengers of *Yamraj* at night and were given to understand that their days in the world were numbered. A story is told of an old woman who is supposed to have regained her senses half-an-hour after she stopped breathing and who, on being presented before *Yamraj*, was declared to be the wrong person and ordered to be returned to the earthly world.

The villagers firmly believe that a woman dying in her confinement gets transformed into a ghost. It is stated that a *Koli* woman of village Bir Plassi who died during her confinement has been wandering about as an un-redeemed *churel*, the ghost, and haunted Chotu Ram. who happened to pass by the Plassi Fort. Barren women are also believed to be wandering as evil spirits after death.

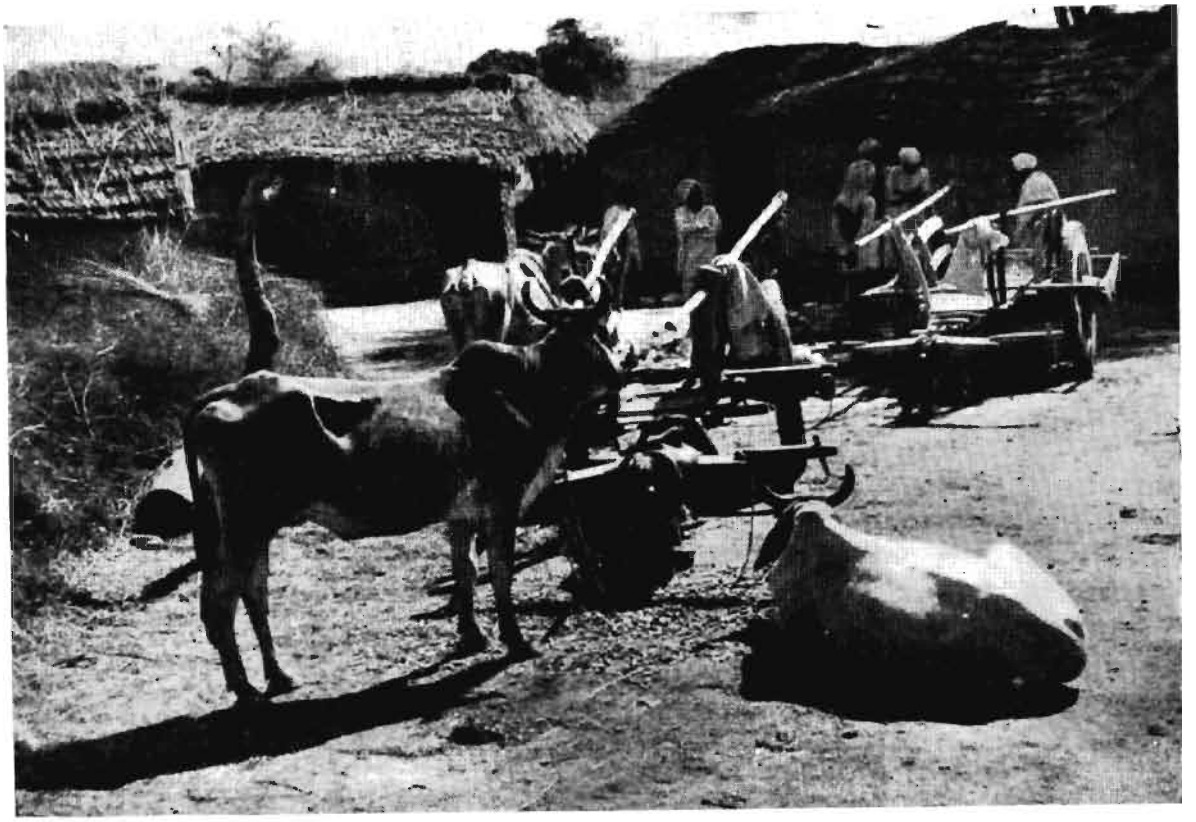
Ramdasias cremate their dead except children below the age of 8 years who are buried. The corpse is put on a plank of wood placed over a small ditch and given the last bath so that the water collects in the ditch. It is then wrapped in new clothes and placed over a bier made of bamboo poles. A silver coin is put into the mouth of the dead person. Ramdasias do not cremate their dead after sunset; a person dying late in the evening is cremated the next morning. A small round ball of wheat-flour known as *pind* is placed on the ground before lifting the bier which is carried by four persons. The *bradari* and relatives join the funeral procession. After covering half the distance to the cremation ground the *adhmanak* ceremony is performed by placing the bier on the ground, offering a *pind* to the accompaniment of recitation of holy sermons by the *Sadh*. The pall-bearers known as *kandhis* inter-change positions and the feet of the deceased person are made to point towards the cremation ground. A pitcher full of water is broken near the head of the corpse by the son or some close relative of the dead person. The funeral march is then resumed and the corpse carried to the bed of the Sirsa stream, half a mile away from the village.

A pyre of wood is prepared. Every person including even a passer-by considers it his religious duty to add at least one log of wood to the pyre. The dead body is placed on the pyre with the head pointing to the north and the feet to the south. Some mango-wood and cotton sticks are especially thrown into the fire by all persons. After the corpse has been largely consumed by the fire, the son or the brother of the deceased performs *kapal-kriya* by striking the skull of the corpse thrice with a

bamboo-pole. People believe that the soul or the breath of the dead person remains locked up in the skull and must be freed by breaking the skull. The moment a person dies in a house all the earthen vessels are emptied of water and are re-filled only after his cremation. The persons carrying the bier sleep on the ground for two days. On the third day they are fed on rice and they throw the water into the ditch over which the corpse was bathed and cover it with earth. On the third day following death, the bones and ashes of the dead person are collected by his near relatives and placed in a red-coloured small bag away from the house. These are later on consigned along with some coins to the waters of the Sirsa *nadi* at Patalpuri (Kiratpur) or the Sutlej at Rupar. The *Sadh* attending this ceremony makes a lamp of flour float into the water and chants some holy verses for which service he is given 1¼ rupee. An earthen lamp is kept burning near the ditch during the following nine nights. On the tenth day *dasnahi* ceremony is performed by men and women taking bath and washing their clothes at the Sirsa *nadi* and feeding virgins and the *Sadh*. The performance of this ceremony is believed to prevent relatives from being haunted by the dead person. Mourning at the death of a man and a woman continues in the house for 16 and 13 days, respectively. Relatives visit each other and offer condolence. Women perform *siapa* by weeping, and beating their breasts rythmically when one of them announces loudly some words complimentary to the dead person. Visits to mourn the dead are paid only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The *terah* ceremony of a dead woman takes place on the 13th day following her death. The *Sadh* is invited to place thirteen pitchers and perform some *puja*. The water is then offered at a tree and the pitchers are distributed. The *chargi* is served meals and offered *sehja* consisting of articles used by the deceased, clothes worn by her and a few utensils. A *solah* ceremony in the case of the death of a male performed on the 16th day marking the end of ceremonial pollution resembles in all essentials to *terah* ceremony. The *chabarkha* ceremony, i.e., making offerings to the dead person on his fourth death anniversary is rarely performed. However, the Ramdasias consider it their duty to make mortuary offerings to their ancestors at Pehowa. Almost every year some persons from the village visit Pehowa, a town in the Kaithal Tahsil of the Karnal District on the day of *Chet-Chaudash*.



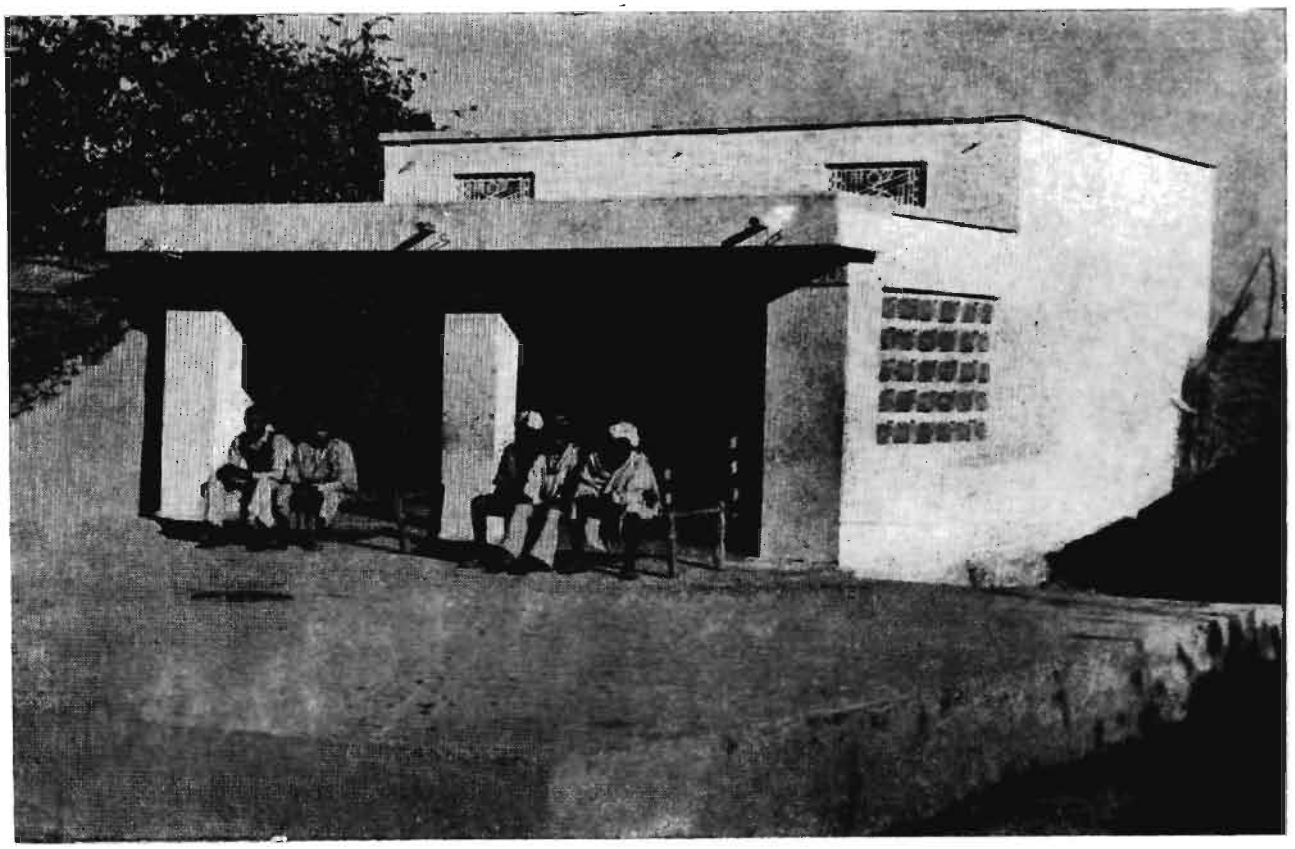
Bullock-cart laden with grass



The market-place for grass



Grass-selling operation in progress



The Common Facility Centre

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY

According to the Land Utilisation Statement (1940-41 to 1960-61), as copied from the village *Lal-Kitab* and given in Appendix 'G', the total area of the village has remained constant at 1,238 *bighas* or 231 acres, out of which 97 acres, i.e., 42 per cent of the total area, is classified as uncultivable waste-land under *abadi*, village paths, ponds, streams, graveyard, etc., 35 acres of land or 15 per cent of the total area is categorised as cultivable waste and 99 acres or 43 per cent of the total area is under cultivation. The area reserved for paths, ponds, graveyard and *abadi* is 3½ acres, 1 kanal, 3⅓ *bighas* and 6½ acres, respectively. About 90 acres of the village land are rendered uncultivable by the Kanahan *nadi* which flows close to the *abadi*. The course of the sandy bed of the stream has widened to a great extent during the last 50 years—half a century ago it was a mere five feet wide streamlet but now its sandy bed near the village is as wide as 30 feet. An old well has also been submerged in the bed of the stream.

There has occurred a minor decrease in the area of uncultivable waste-land—one acre of land was reclaimed in 1945-46 and another one acre during 1954-55. This area was rendered fit for cultivation through the efforts of the inhabitants and not due to any scheme of land reclamation carried out by Government.

The figures under the column 'current fallows' show big fluctuations. Shifting courses of hill torrents and the uncertainty of rainfall aggravated by the lack of irrigational facilities are responsible for this phenomenon to a great extent. For 1947-48, this figure is very high and it is attributed to the displacement of Muslim *Gujjars* who were the cultivator-owners at that time. About 300 *bighas* of land in the village were allotted to refugee immigrants from West Pakistan who took up residence in the neighbouring village, Berson. Some of the refugees have started business in cities and the land is generally leased out to Ramdasias of village Mahsa Tibba on cash-rent. Thus, the element of absentee landlordism in the village economy is also partly responsible for wastage of land.

According to fertility and quality of land, the cultivable land in the village is divided into six parts—*Lehri, Talla I, Talla II, Changar I, Changar II,* and *Banjar*—and the land revenue assessment per *bigha* on these types of land is 62, 56, 27, 23, 15 and 9 Naye Paise, respectively.

LIVESTOCK

Bullocks, cows, buffaloes and goats are owned by most of the residents. The cattle are of a very poor quality. The bullocks are of *pahari* breed, short-statured and lean. Milk yield of a cow varies between 4 and 6 seers, that of a buffalo between 6 and 8, and that of a goat between 1 and 2 seers. In March, 1962, thirty-seven bullocks

were owned by 18 households, 13 cows were possessed by 8 households, 12 buffaloes were owned by 10 households, 19 goats were owned by 10 households, while one household owned one cock and one hen.

Ramdasias generally purchase young cattle at a small cost and after feeding and tending for sometime sell them at a profit. Sometimes, the people are forced to sell cattle to meet their domestic needs. Some households share bullocks with others. Sometimes two families may keep one bullock each and use the two as a pair turn by turn.

There is only one Persian-wheel in the village located in the plot of land below the hillock. It is exclusively owned and used by Bhajan Dass to irrigate his 30 *bighas* holding. Six persons in the village possess bullock-carts which are used for transporting grass from the forest in the vicinity of the village. These bullock-carts are small-sized and can be easily pulled by bullocks over the rough and sandy terrain. A bullock-cart generally transports a load weighing about 15 maunds.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE VILLAGE

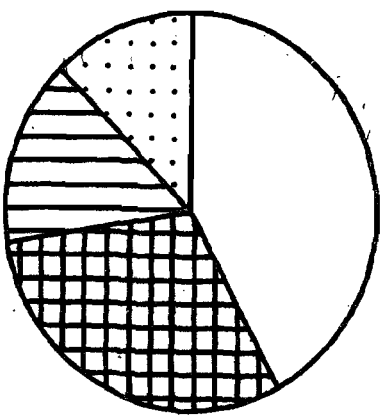
Land reforms.—The land reforms including the abolition of *zamindari*, guarantee of the share of share-croppers, imposition of ceilings on land-holdings, special concessions to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the consolidation of land holdings, etc. sponsored by the Government in the post-Independence period have been welcomed by the people. Ramdasias are mainly landless agriculturists and all agrarian measures in favour of the tenants and against the landlords find favour with them. Actually, however, no material gain has accrued to the residents. Abolition of *zamindari* or fixation of ceilings on land holdings has resulted in no gains to the landless Ramdasias. In spite of the fact that a *batai* tenant is entitled to get a two-thirds share of the total produce, it has never been possible for him to get it. The land-owner refuses to lease out his land to a man who is bent upon the enforcement of this law. Faced with the choice between penury and small remuneration, the tenant inevitably succumbs to the terms of the lessor.

The legislation designed to protect the eviction of the tenants has in practice operated to their disadvantage. It entitles a tenant, who has acquired permanent tenancy rights on the basis of his continuously cultivating a piece of land for five years, to purchase land under his cultivation by paying an amount equal to two-thirds of its price. But the land-owners keep on changing their tenants so that no person in the village has acquired permanent tenancy rights in this manner. On the other hand, frequent change of tenants militates against the improvement of land as the tenant being uncertain of retaining the same plot of land for the next year hesitates to make any investment on it. The village economy suffers due to insecurity and discontentment among tenants.

A number of Ramdasias in Mahsa Tibba have improved their economic status in the wake of Government policy to allot surplus land to the landless *Harijan* families. Out of 202 *bighas* and 5 *biswas* of evacuee land vesting in the Custodian, 104 *bighas* are being cultivated by Bhajan Dass, Bhunda and Hari Ram on a total cash-rent of Rs. 270: the share of each being Rs. 100, 80 and 90,

MAHSA TIBBA

LAND USE : 1961



CIRCLE REPRESENTS TOTAL AREA

UNCULTIVABLE

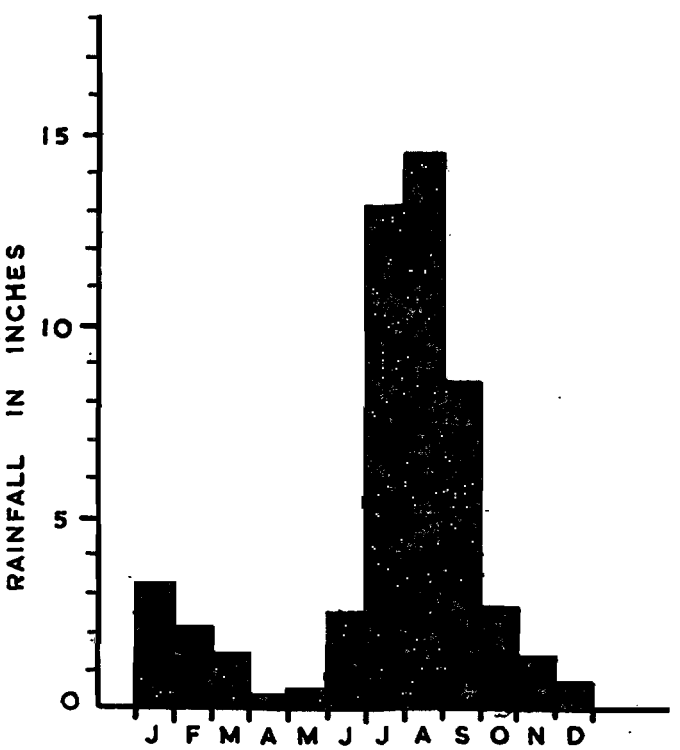
CULTURABLE WASTE

NET SOWN

CURRENT FALLOW

MEAN MONTHLY RAINFALL

NALAGARH TAHSIL



respectively. Again, 42 *bighas* of evacuee land at a place, Barotiwala, outside the village have been sold to 16 residents of Mahsa Tibba for a sum of Rs. 900. During the Second Five-Year Plan the Welfare Department of the Punjab Government launched the "Land for Harijans" scheme according to which a scheduled caste household was to be supplied land worth Rs. 5,000 on the condition that it invested an amount of Rs. 2,500 in land. A scheduled caste household could raise a loan of Rs. 2,500 by purchasing a share worth Rs. 205 in the Land Mortgage Bank, Jullundur. Sadha Singh of Mahsa Tibba purchased the shares in 1959 and was allotted six acres of land in the village Makauri near Ghanauli in April, 1963. Two more scheduled caste households belonging to the Nalagarh Tahsil have also been benefited under this scheme.

Means of Transport and communication.—Improvement of communications has greatly influenced the economic life in this village. The metalling of the Rupar-Nalagarh road has been a very significant event. Before 1948, this road was *kachcha* and extremely slushy in the rainy season when it paralysed vehicular traffic. Now the villagers make frequent visits to Rupar and Nalagarh all the year round. Mahsa Tibba has been connected with the metalled road by a jeepable *kachcha* road, and cycles, bullock-carts and heavy vehicles can easily reach the village. This factor has greatly facilitated the transport of grass in bullock-carts and in trucks to Ghanauli and Rupar, and cutting and selling of grass has become an important subsidiary occupation of the residents of Mahsa Tibba which has become a market for the sale of grass. Trading in grass is preferred to casual labour outside the village because in the former case the worker feels a sense of comparative freedom and females can also render assistance in increasing the output of grass. Moreover, agriculture, shoe-making, and grass-cutting can be easily combined as the place of work is the village itself. The income from the sale of grass has not only compensated the people for the decline in their customary income as menials but has also enabled them to achieve a somewhat higher standard of living.

Marketing.—No new market has developed in this area during the last decade. However, development of the means of transport and communication has made the already existing markets at Rupar and Nalagarh easily approachable and the number of transactions in these markets has gone up. Four persons have opened shops at Nalagarh. Previously, hides were sold or purchased in the neighbouring villages but now they can be disposed of or bought at Nalagarh or Rupar. Similarly, surplus produce can be disposed of or deficiency made up by purchases due to the easy accessability of the market.

The Rajpura Co-operative Agricultural Service Society Limited is the most important source of agricultural finance for this area. This society was registered as the Rajpura Co-operative Credit Society Limited, Rajpura in 1924. In March, 1956 the membership of this society was 32 and Mahsa Tibba did not have even a single member. On June 16, 1956 it was converted into a Rural Co-operative Bank with the amalgamation of 18 Co-operative Credit Societies. In March, 1961 its total number of members was 656, twelve of

whom were from Mahsa Tibba. Hari Ram, *Panch* was the first person from the village to acquire the membership of this Bank on the 18th January, 1957. This institution has so far extended loans amounting to 1,800 rupees to the residents of Mahsa Tibba. The loans are advanced only for agricultural purposes. Normal rate of interest is 8 per cent and the penal rate of interest is 9¾ per cent. The latter is charged if the borrower fails to return at least the interest and some part of principal after one year. After two years the borrower can be forced to return the entire loan through the court. But in actual practice, legal action is rarely resorted to. The Community Development Block is an important Government agency which, besides other functions, advances loans and grants to the people. During the Second Five-Year Plan a grant of rupees 500 has been advanced to five families for the construction of cemented tanning-pits outside the village and another sum of Rs. 2,500 has been given to five persons for starting shoe-making and leather industry on a commercial scale. The rate of interest is 5½ per cent and the loan is repayable in five yearly instalments. Cloth-merchants of Ghanauli who have settled there after the Partition provide yet another source of finance. They provide short-term credit generally for a period ranging between 3 and 6 months. The villagers purchase cloth from Ghanauli on credit terms.

Urban influences.—The comparatively easy life in the towns and cities has a great lure for the villagers. The elderly persons of the village are content with their traditional occupations because they know that a change at such an advanced age is not possible. Similarly, the middle-aged persons while continuing in the existing occupations try to acquire additional land to become agriculturists. But the young persons in the village are always in search of an opportunity to get employed as peons, watchmen, and forest-guards. They are also keen to join the police and the army. The apprentice shoe-makers belonging to the younger generation would always prefer to learn the art of making boots and *gurgabis*, i.e., pump-shoes, and open shops in the towns, partly because the towns provide a regular market for their products and partly because they want to escape the hard and boring life in the village. Three young boys, Arjun Singh, Baldev Singh and Ujagar Singh belonging to this village have received training in the art of making shoes, boots and *gurgabis*. Two of them have already established shops at Nalagarh and the third person also proposes to shift there. Two young men are already in the army and two more have joined during the present emergency.

Increasing contact with the towns due to the opening up of channels of communication is resulting in the betterment of standard of living of the people. The new generation prefers a dress of machine-made cloth to hand-spun *khaddar;* boots and *gurgabis* to the old *desi*-shoes; and vegetables to pulses. Every family considers it a matter of prestige to own at least a few China-cups and dishes, a table and a chair, a cycle and a watch, and a brick-built *pucca baithak*. The villagers feel hesitant to offer tea in a brass-tumbler to a visitor from the town and they suffer humiliation for offering nothing better than a *khidoloo* as bedding. In short, the distant charm of town-life is attracting the imagination of Ramdasias.

LIVELIHOOD CLASSES

TABLE 3 gives classification of the village population into workers and non-workers by broad age-groups.

Out of a population of 133 persons: 71 males and 62 females, 66 persons including 42 males and 24 females have been recorded as workers. All female workers, except one *dai* who falls in the age-group 35—59, are in the age-group 15—34. In addition to household duties they are engaged in casual agricultural labour. Children in the age-group 10—14 mainly tend cattle. There are only three male non-workers in the age-group 15—34, two of whom are studying in the seventh class in a school at Nalagarh while the third one is mentally deranged. The solitary male non-worker in the age-group 35—59 is reported to be physically handicapped and, therefore, unfit to do any work. Only one female in the age-group 35—59 has been classified as a worker; she is the village *dai*. All the *Chamar* women aged more than 15 years can, in fact be called workers as they help their men-folk in fields and forests in addition to their household duties. Details of workers according to different occupations in which they engage themselves throughout the year are given in TABLE 4.

Seventeen persons are in agriculture, 29 including 23 women take up casual and agricultural labour, seven are in Government service, four practise priesthood, one is a midwife and the remaining eight sell shoes either in the village or at Nalagarh. Persons employed in Government service include Bhambu, who is an illiterate *Chowkidar;* Surjan Singh and Paras Ram, both of whom are serving in the army away from home and can read and write Punjabi; Mast Ram who is also in the army but is illiterate; and Amar Chand, a Wireless Operator who is a Matriculate. The *Sadhs* live on customary dues and charities received from their *jajmans* on socio-religious occasions. Their *jajmans* are distributed over a wide area. It is not necessary that a village should be the exclusive domain of one priest but some households remain in the *jajmani* of a particular priest family generation after generation. On the average, a priest visits 120 households during a year. Details of livelihood classes in Mahsa Tibba at the time of 1951-census are not available. But all the four persons have opened shops at Nalagarh after 1951 and all the persons in service except Bhambu, *Chowkidar,* joined Government service only recently. It has been observed during the recent survey that two more boys who were previously running shops at Nalagarh have joined service. Arjun Singh, son of Hari Ram who had received education up to middle standard has joined army, while Baldev Singh, son of Rirku who was an under-Matriculate has joined the Postal Department as a Postman.

Land is one of the most important economic resources of the village community. The pattern of ownership of land as found in 1962 was as follows:—

	Acres
Land owned by residents of Mahsa Tibba (Ramdasias) ..	14
Nagar Panchayat Deh ..	115
Land belonging to the Provincial Government ..	1
Evacuee land ..	38
Land belonging to refugee allottees and others ..	63
Total ..	231

Fourteen households have less than one acre of land each. Land holdings of two households ranged between 1 and 5 acres. One household has more than 6 but less than 10 acres of land and five households did not own any land.

Before Partition, Muslim *Gujjars* were the chief land-owning community in the village and Ramdasia *Chamars* owned only a few *bighas* of land. After the Partition, the ownership of land not held by *Chamars* was transferred to the Custodian, the Gram Panchayat and the refugees who were allotted land in the village. A small fraction of the village land was purchased by a few Ramdasia families also. Before 1948, Bhajan Dass did not own any land, but now (30th March, 1962) he holds 30 *bighas* of land. Rirku owned 2½ *bighas* of land previously but owns 16 *bighas* of land now. Hari Ram holds 10 *bighas* of land as against 2½ *bighas* owned previously and Bhunda's holding has increased by 6 *bighas*. The remaining households have not purchased any land in the village though 16 families have jointly purchased 42 *bighas* of evacuee land at Barotiwala for a sum of Rs. 900. The names of persons heading these families are : Hari Ram *Panch*, Rirku, Bhunda, Sadha Ram, Chhotu, Amin Chand, Faqiroo, Ram Kishan, Bhambu, Dialu, Dia Ram, Puran, Punnu, Ganga Ram, Rulia and Surjan. These families are not related to each other. They were allotted land keeping in view the interest of all sections of the village population. There is only one irrigation well owned by Bhajan Dass. Bullock-carts are owned by seven households and fodder-cutting machines by four families. The following Table gives the nature of the main and subsidiary occupations followed by different households:—

Occupation	Heads of households in the occupation	*Heads of households whose subsidiary occupation is*			
		Agriculture	Shoe-making	Casual labour	Cutting of grass
Agriculture	12	..	6	2	4
Shoe-making	4	2	..	..	2
Priesthood	3	1	..	..	2
Military service	1	..	..	..	..
Casual labour	2	1	..	..	1

The main occupation of 12 households is agriculture, of 4 shoe-making, of 3 priesthood, of 1 military service and of 2 casual labour. It may be noted that nine households out of 22 follow grass-cutting as a subsidiary occupation. The following Table depicts the change of occupation from the father's generation to the present generation.

Occupation	Heads of households in the occupation	*Heads of households whose father's occupation was*		
		The same as their's	Shoe-making	Service
Agriculture ..	2	1	1	..
Casual labour ..	2	..	2	..
Shoe-making ..	4	4	..	..
Priesthood ..	3	3	..	..
Batai-tenancy ..	10	2	8	..
Military service ..	1	..	..	1

The fathers of nine heads of households out of 12 working as owner-cultivators and tenants were shoe-makers. But as shoe-making is considered inferior to farming, the Ramdasias want to shift from the former to the latter. The fathers of the four cobblers were also shoe-makers and it shows the tendency of least resistence in adopting the hereditary occupation. And another example of this phenomenon is provided by three *Harijan* priests whose parents were also priests. Two households have shifted in the present generation from shoe-making to casual labour. The trend of aspiration in the field of occupation among the present generation is obvious from the following Table:—

Occupation	Heads of households in the occupation	*Number of heads of households who want their sons to be in*		
		The same occupation as their's	Agriculture	Service
Agriculture ..	2	2	..	..
Casual labour ..	2	..	1	1
Shoe-making ..	4	..	3	1
Priesthood ..	3	1	2	..
Batai-tenancy ..	10	..	3	7
Military service ..	1	1	..	..
Total ..	22	4	9	9

It is evident that all parents want their sons to adopt either agriculture as an occupation or join Government service because by doing so alone can they achieve better economic status and security. The traditional jobs like repairing shoes, lifting the dead cattle and tanning hides are being steadily given up in favour of Government service and agriculture supported by cutting and selling of grass on a commercial scale as a subsidiary occupation.

PRACTICES CONNECTED WITH AGRICULTURE

Farm economy in the village is entirely dependent on the vagaries of nature. Much of the village land is spoiled by sand and stones. Except one Persian-wheel which irrigates about 30 *bighas* of land, there is no means of artificial irrigation. Output depends on rainfall. In times of excessive, untimely or inadequate rainfall, the yield is too small to adequately reward the farmers for their labour. The period of ploughing and sowing of crops is also determined by the whims of weather. The operational holdings of cultivator families are small. Out of 12 families which are mainly dependent on agriculture, 3 cultivate from 15 to 20 acres of land, while the rest of them cultivate only between 5 and 8 acres.

The Ramdasias cultivate land both according to the cash-rent and the *batai* system. However, the incidence of cash-rent farming is large because

most of the landlords live away from the village and find it convenient to collect money rather than grains. The negotiations for lease begin in the month of *Baisakh*, but the actual possession of land is transferred after the *rabi* harvest, that is, after the month of *Jeth*. Generally land-owners demand in advance half the amount of the cash-rent mutually agreed upon. But the lessees make the payment in two instalments, first after the *kharif* and the second after the *rabi* harvest. Most of the land-owners complain of delinquency on the part of the Ramdasias in the matter of payment of cash-rent. Under the *batai* system the prevailing rate of rent is one-half of the total produce. The tenants are aware of the statutory provisions restricting rent in kind to only one-half of the total produce but cannot get these enforced. When the rent is to be paid in kind, one-half of the cost of manuring the fields is shared by the landlord whereas the entire quantity of the seed is supplied by the tenant. It is the duty of the tenant to transport the landlord's share of the grains and chaff to his house.

Eversince the enforcement of provisions to protect the rights of tenants, the landlords lease out land only for one year in the first instance and continue renewing it from year to year. Lease contracts under the *batai* system are not reduced to writing but those under the cash-rent system are formally executed in writing. Most of the land is cultivated on *chakota* or cash-rent basis. Every cultivator cannot afford to possess all the agricultural tools and implements. There is only one family in the village following cultivation of land as a wholetime occupation. All other families engage themselves in other subsidiary occupations like shoe-making, flaying, grass-cutting and casual labour during the agriculturally slack period. Techniques of farming are backward. Wheat, gram, *berara* (gram and wheat mixed), *masri* and *taramira* are the main *rabi* crops; maize, *chari, jowar; groundnut, moth,* cotton and sugarcane are the important *kharif* crops. The approximate seed-rate and output per *bigha* for each crop are given below.

Crop	Seed per *bigha*	Yield per *bigha*
Wheat ..	5 to 7 seers	3 to 4 maunds
Gram ..	3 to 5 seers	2 maunds.
Sugarcane ..	12 to 15 Mds. of sugarcane roots	10 maunds of gur
Maize ..	3 seers	7 to 10 maunds
Mash/moth ..	1 seer	1 to 2 ,,
Masri ..	1 ,,	1 to 1½ ,,
Til ..	½ ,,	1 maund
Groundnuts ..	4 seers	5 maunds
Kapah ..	3 ,,	4 ,,

Cropping Pattern.—Jinswar Statements for *rabi* and *kharif* crops for the years 1941 to 1961 are given in Appendices 'H' and 'I'. From these statements it will be noticed that wheat, gram and *berara* are the principal *rabi* crops of the village and during the years 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956, and 1961, 100,92,97,98 and 100 per cent respectively of the total sown area was devoted to these crops. *Masri, taramira,* tobacco, fodder and vegetables are the other *rabi* crops, but they covered only a very small percentage of the sown area. Among *kharif* crops maize, *chari, jowar,* groundnut, *kangni, cheena, moth,* sugarcane and cotten are prominent and

86, 75, 67, 58 and 55 per cent of the total sown area was devoted to these crops during the years 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956 and 1961, respectively.

Area that did not mature, (*kharaba*) either because of draught or excessive rains has been shown in brackets. This area is almost equal in both the *rabi* and *kharif* crops.

Total area sown under *rabi* crops is slightly more than the area under the *kharif* crops. Under the *kharif* crops, cultivation of *kangni* and *cheena*, was almost regular during the period from 1941 to 1947: the acreage under these crops for each year being 5, 4, 8, 6, 5,6, and 5, respectively. After 1947, the cultivation of *kangni* and *cheena* was stopped altogether. It was popular with the *Gujjars* as it suited their food habits.

From 1941 to 1948, acreage under groundnut was nil, but in 1949, about 6 acres were devoted to this crop, and thereafter more or less, it has become a regular feature as the villagers found the sandy land of the village very suitable for this crop. Among the *rabi* crops acreage under *masri* was nil, but from 1948 onwards this crop is being sown regularly as the villagers consider it as an important item of household consumption now.

On the whole, it can be concluded that emphasis is laid on the cultivation of food crops. Cropping pattern lacks sufficient variety partly for want of irrigation facilities and partly because of the particular food crops which are considered to be essential for household consumption.

CALENDAR OF AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The farmers are generally engaged in the following agricultural operations in different months of the year:—

Month		*Activities and Operations*
Chet	..	Ploughing and preparing fallow land for sowing maize or *bajra*; weeding sugarcane crop; harvesting gram crop by the end of the month.
Baisakh	..	Preparing fallow land for sowing maize. Harvesting wheat; threshing and winnowing wheat by the end of the month.
Jeth	...	Fields ploughed for sowing maize, if it rains; weeding of cotton, onions, and tobacco, if sown.
Asadh	..	Sowing of maize and groundnuts.
Sawan	..	Sowing of *chari, moth, bajra, gawara;* weeding of maize and groundnuts.
Bhadon	..	Preparing land for sowing wheat; weeding of maize and groundnut crops.
Asuj	..	Preparing land for sowing wheat or *berara;* harvesting maize crop.
Kartik	..	Sowing of wheat; harvesting of *chari, moth, bajra and gawara.*
Maghar	..	Weeding of wheat crop.

Pos	..	Weeding of wheat crop; harvesting sugarcane crop and preparing land for planting sugarcane.
Magh	..	Land prepared for planting sugarcane.
Phalgun	..	Planting of sugarcane.

Agricultural implements.—Plough is the most important agricultural implement used to till land. A plough consists of the following parts:—

(i) *Hal,* a straight wooden bar about eight feet long with one end fitted into the *munna* and the other end tied to the *panjali* at the time of ploughing.

(ii) *Munna,* a wooden bar about 1½ feet long, the upper end of which is used as a handle at the time of ploughing while *patha* is fitted at its lower end.

(iii) *Kant,* a thick iron-plate weighing about 1½ seers fitted over the *patha* with *chichri,* a small iron nail to make it durable.

(iv) *Phalli* is a plough share weighing 2 to 3 seers according to the strength of the bullocks, fitted over the *kant* and kept intact with the *patha* by *kunda,* an iron ring. The *phalli* is used for making furrows in land;

Phalli, kant and iron rings are purchased from Rupar, but the wood required in making the plough is mostly locally obtained. The plough is made and fitted by the carpenter at Manjholi.

Panjali or the yoke is the complement of a plough. It is a rectangular wooden frame consisting of two parallel and four vertical rods. The four vertical rods are fixed over the necks of the bullocks to keep the yoke in position.

Narka, a leather thong of the yoke, and *jot,* the leather strap intervening between the yoke and the bullock's neck are two important items of a plough. *Panjali* is made by the carpenter at Manjholi.

Other important agricultural implements are described below.

Suhagi.—It is a heavy rectangular wooden plank weighing about one maund used for crushing *dallas,* the clods. One end of each rope is tied to the *kannas,* small wooden pegs or iron rings fitted into the *suhagi,* and the other to the yoke. The man who drives the bullocks stands on the *suhagi.* The wood for the *suhagi* is obtained locally and it is made by the carpenter at Manjholi.

Suhaga.—If there are hard and big clods to be broken, the *suhaga* is used. It is exactly similar to *suhagi* but somewhat heavier and bigger. A *suhaga* weighs about 2½ maunds and is pulled by four bullocks with two persons sitting on it. Only Bhajan Dass owns a *suhaga* from whom it is borrowed by other cultivators also.

Salangha.—It is a double-pronged wooden implement with a straight wooden handle used mainly for carrying thorny bushes of *garna* and *ber* used for fencing the fields. It is

used also for spreading sheaves on the ground for threshing. *Salangha* is made by the carpenter and the wood is locally available. *Char-sutta* is a four-pronged wooden implement used for spreading out the chaff in the *pirh* at the time of threshing.

Similarly, *tangli*, a multi-pronged wooden implement, is also used for spreading chaff. In the initial stages *salangha* is used for spreading the corn-sheaves. *Char-sutta* is used at the intermediary stage and the *tangli* is used at the final stage when the chaff becomes very fine. *Sabbar-katta* is a wooden spade with a wooden handle used for collecting and scattering chaff in the *pirh*. *Kassi* consists of an iron blade fixed to a wooden handle and is used for digging earth. *Karah* is used for levelling undulating ground. It consists of a sharp iron blade weighing about seven seers fixed below a number of wooden planks joined together. Ropes tied to the two iron rings attached to the wooden planks are further tied to the yoke. The *karah* is kept in position by means of a wooden handle. *Dandrali* consists of a number of iron teeth fixed below a wooden frame driven by bullocks and is used for sweeping and collecting straws in the fields. *Janda* is a thin flat iron plate fixed to a wooden plank provided with a wooden handle and two iron rings to which the ropes are tied. One man pushes the *janda* through the field with the help of the hand and the other drags it by means of ropes. *Janda* is used to make *kiaras*, i.e., small bunds to divide a field into sub-plots to preserve its fertility. *Bari* is an iron implement four feet long and one inch in diameter used for digging holes in the earth.

Gandhala consisting of a wooden handle fixed to a sharp iron blade is also used for the same purpose. *Chhaji* is a winnowing basket made of *sarkanda*-reeds purchased from *Chuhras* who sell these during the harvesting season. *Khurpa* consisting of a wooden handle attached to a sharp flat iron blade is used for removing weeds and grass from the fields. *Kohali* is a wooden hoe used while standing. *Datti* or sickle is used for cutting grass and harvesting crops. Sickles are of two types : *pathi* and *dandal*. The iron blade of the *pathi* sickle is plain-edged while that of the *dandal* is teeth-edged. The approximate cost and durability of different implements are given below.

Implement		Cost (including the cost of the wood) (Rupees)	Durability (Years)
Plough	..	15.50	3 to 5
Panjali	..	6.50	3
Suhagi	..	4.00	4
Salangha	..	1.50	1
Tangli	..	2.50	1
Char-sutta	..	1·75	1
Sabbarkatta	..	1.25	2
Datti—Dandal	..	1.50	1
Datti—Pathi	..	1.00	1

Implement		Cost (including the cost of the wood) (Rupees)	Durability (Years)
Karah	..	13.50	5
Dandtali	..	2.50	2
Suhaga	..	11.50	5
Khurpa	..	1.50	2
Kohali	..	1.00	1
Kassi	..	6.00	5
Janda	..	2.50	3
Chhajj	..	1.25	1
Bari	..	8.00	7
Gandhala	..	1.50	2

Except for sickles and *khurpas* used by all households because they are always required for cutting grass, all the implements are not owned by any one household. These are always shared with others. The practice of sharing tools and equipment is very common amongst the Ramdasias. Each family cannot own all the implements. Their resources are limited and in many cases a family is forced to sell a few implements out of the inadequate stock already available with it. Most of the families do not stick to agriculture regularly. If during a particular year a family cannot get sufficient land on lease, it concentrates on some other occupation and disposes of a part of its agricultural equipment. Only three families, those of Hari Ram, Rirku and Bhajan Dass own almost all the equipment. Other families borrow from these families or share the implements among themselves. No fixed terms and conditions regulate the sharing of implements, though the borrower is obliged to contribute manual labour. The wood used in all the implements is mostly available in the village lands. Iron parts are purchased from Rupar. The implements are made by carpenters and *lohars* at Manjholi who are paid at the rate of two sheaves of corn at each harvest.

VILLAGE HANDICRAFTS

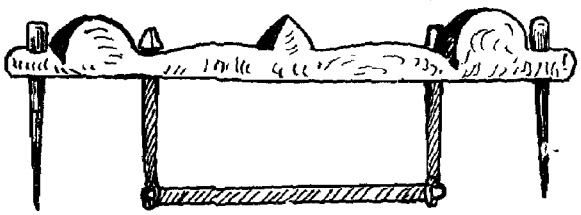
Shoe-making is the only handicraft practised in this village. It is the traditional occupation of the Ramdasia *Chamars*. At the time of the first settlement, the *Chamars* were entitled by customary rights to get 16 seers of grains against every five maunds of grains produced in the village during a year and were in return required to render *begar*, repair shoes of the other communities and remove their dead animals. The *Chamars* had an exclusive right to the hides of the animals which were tanned in the village itself. The *jootas* prepared by them were sold both in the village and outside.

Out of 22 households, 4 households follow shoe-making as their main occupation and 6 as their subsidiary occupation. Six persons are engaged in shoe-making in the village and 2 have opened shops at Nalagarh. The fathers of 15 heads of households out of the present 22 were also shoemakers. Apparently, there is a tendency to change this occupation. The

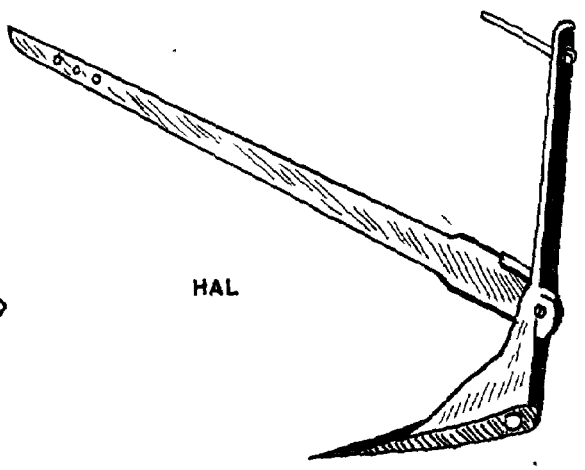
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS



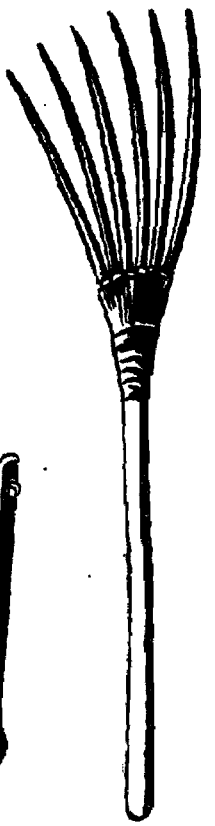
GANDHALA



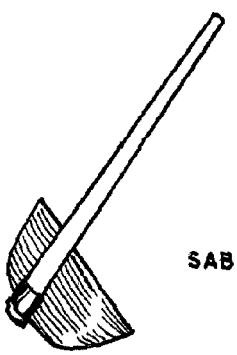
PANJALI



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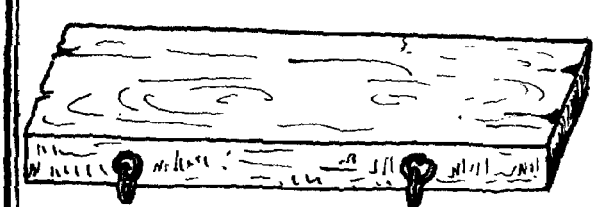
TANGLI



SABBARKATTA



KHURPA



SUHAGA



DATTI - PATHI

TOOLS & IMPLEMENTS

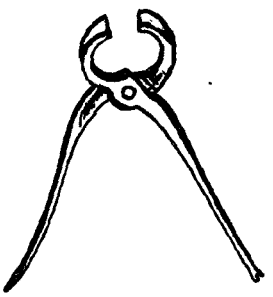
OF A CHAMAR



KUNDI



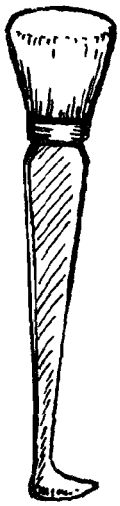
AAR



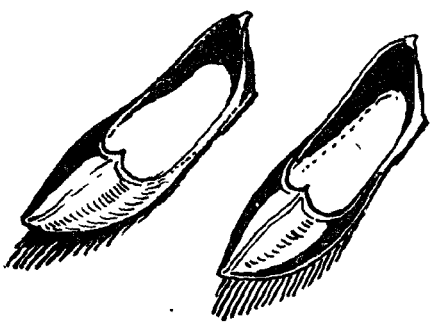
JAMOOR



TAKNA



RAMBI



SPECIMEN OF A JOOTA



KHURPI



KOONDA



MOGRA

present generation prefers to start shoe-making business in the towns rather than in the village. Young entrants to the shoe-making occupation prefer Nalagarh as the place of work. The town of Nalagarh is only five miles from Mahsa Tibba and a worker from Mahsa Tibba can conveniently go there in the morning and return in the evening on a bicycle. Shop rents are not very high there. Repair work and the demand for new shoes in the village can be met easily by the old hands who do not want to leave their homes. For the young persons, cities are more attractive than the villages. There they can also avoid the chidings and constant vigilance of their parents and need not disclose their earnings entirely to them. Moreover, a boy working in a town has a better social status and has better prospect of marriage. He has a regular income in cash which the household greatly requires. Two young boys, Baldev Singh and Arjun Singh, who have received training in shoe, boot and *gurgabi*-making, have started shops at Nalagarh. Of the six shoe-makers in the village, none wants that his son should follow the hereditary occupations. All of them have a preference for Government service and agriculture. Reasons for the aspiration to change occupation are economic as well as social. About two decades ago when the means of communication had not developed, the village provided the principal market for the locally made shoes and the *Chamars* were able to live by shoe-making. Muslim *Gujjars* were very fond of country-made shoes and there was a good market for these in the adjoining villages of Manjholi, Berson and Chandpur, because very few people would go to Rupar or Nalagarh to purchase shoes, but now with the facilities of transport and development of means of communication, villagers can easily visit towns and buy different varieties of shoes at competitive rates. Moreover, as ready-made shoes are available, there is no need to waste time in getting these made to order. Socially, there is a strong tendency among Ramdasias to give up shoe-making and lifting and flaying of cattle in preference to cleaner jobs in the field of agriculture and Government service. Previously, hides used to be tanned in the village itself but now these are mostly purchased from Rupar and Nalagarh as the Ramdasias cannot stand the foul smell involved in the process. For Ramdasias, a rise in the social status is possible only if they give up their traditional occupation.

Shoe-making is generally practised by individual households. The verandah in front of the house serves as the workshop. Different tools and implements used by shoe-makers are described below.

Rambi consisting of a wooden handle fixed to a long iron blade is used for cutting leather. *Aar* also consists of a wooden handle and a long iron blade but is shaped differently and is used for making holes in leather at the time of stitching. *Kundi* consisting of a wooden handle attached to an iron blade punched in the side is used to draw in the string while stitching shoes. *Takna* is used for smoothening the rough surface of leather. *Khainch* consisting of a rectangular wooden piece with a round wooden handle at the upper end is rubbed over the piece of leather, both to straighten out folds and to stretch leather. *Mogra* is a wooden or iron pestle with a small handle and a flat head for beating

leather. *Pathri* is a heavy rectangular stone-slab used as a base for cutting leather on. *Phali* is a long rectangular wooden mould fitted into the shoe to loosen it and to make the leather soft. *Farmas* and *sanchas* are the designs of the various parts of the shoes according to which they are fashioned; and *koonda* is an earthen water receptacle placed beside the shoe-maker for wetting the leather in it. Sketches of these tools have been given separately. The approximate cost of each tool and the source from which it is purchased are shown below.

Tool	Cost (Rupees)	Source of purchase
Rambi ..	1 25	Rupar or Nalagarh
Aar ..	1 25	—do—
Kundi ..	1 00	—do—
Takna ..	1 25	—do—
Khainch ..	0 75	Local carpenter
Mogra ..	2 00	—do—
Pathri ..	3 00	Nalagarh
Phali ..	2.00	Local carpenter
Farmas and *Sanchas* ..	2.00	Rupar
Koonda ..	1.00	Local potter

Technique of shoe-making.—To make a shoe to order the shoe-maker first of all draws an outline of the foot on a paper and then selects a *sancha*, i.e., a foot-measure made of cardboard, out of his stock. The *sancha* is then placed on the piece of leather which is cut with a *rambi* to form the *tala*, the sole of the shoe. The *tala* is dipped in water for some time to make the leather soft. One or two pieces of leather are fixed with nails at the back of the *tala* to form the *addi* or the heel. *Tala* and *addi* are generally made of *Manjha*, the buffalo-leather. *Panna* or the upper part of the shoe is then cut according to the size of the footwear and is fitted over the sole. Stitching is done with cotton threads which are rubbed in wax so that they may not break easily. *Magzi* or lining of goat skin is generally provided at the open end of the *panna*.

With the change in style, *jootas* have yielded place to western type shoes and *gurgabis*. The elderly *Chamars* are, of course, sticking to their old designs. But the Community Development Block Agency, realising the necessity of training young Ramdasia boys in the art of making *gurgabis* and western style shoes, opened a leather training centre at Mahsa Tibba on the 22nd January, 1961. Every trainee was given a stipend of one rupee per day and he was to work with the material supplied by the Government. Fifteen persons were trained in a period of nine months. Three boys of the village have started earning their livelihood, two of them have opened their shops at Nalagarh while the third one sells shoes in the village.

Raw material required for making a shoe is purchased at Rupar or Nalagarh. The hides are either tanned in the village or purchased ready-made from the market. The material for a pair of shoes, costs Rs. 4.25 nP. It includes expenditure on leather, which is about Rs. 2.50 nP., chrome leather for the upper which is about rupee one; wax, nails, rings, laces. and cotton-thread which is about Rs. 0.75 nP. This is exclusive of labour charges. A pair of shoes is generally sold for Rs. 5.75 nP. On an average, 1,200 pairs of shoes are purchased from this village in a year. The total net earnings from this handicraft during one year amount to Rs. 1,800. Shoes are made in individual households on demand. Sikh Jats and Sainis of neighbouring

villages, who are mostly agriculturists, constitute the clientele but the demand for shoes in the village-market is gradually declining due to change in fashions and readily available shoes from the market in towns. Skill of shoe-making is transmitted from one generation to the other. Sometimes, a young man may have to act as an apprentice to an expert not belonging to his own family. The children are first of all trained in cutting card-board pieces according to the size of various parts of shoes. The child beginning his training at the age of 12 becomes a skilled shoe-maker by the time he has attained the age of 17 years. As already mentioned, the village of Mahsa Tibba is also one of the beneficiaries under the Government scheme to help boost up rural crafts.

Production of shoes on a small scale does not require large finances. The tools and equipment are generally handed down from one generation to the other and in most cases need not be purchased. But where these have to be purchased, the cost does not exceed twenty rupees. The investment in hides and skins is made in instalments, the sale-proceeds offsetting the value of the instalments.

The country shoe-maker has no fixed hours of work. When there is a great demand for his products he may work from dawn to dusk but when the agricultural season is in full swing he may suspend his work altogether. Normally, he works at noon when he is free from other engagements.

Tanning of hides.—Now-a-days hides are rarely tanned in the village because it is a lengthy and a dirty process and is economical only if carried on a large scale. No family in the village likes to be entirely dependent on the tanning industry. Only a few families who lift the dead cattle specialise in this industry.

The process of tanning consists of a number of stages. The pelt has to be in a pliable form before it is taken up for tanning and as such the dry hides are soaked in water for two or three nights and allowed to soften. They are next washed and cleaned in ordinary water. In case the dry hide be contaminated with dirt, a small quantity of caustic soda is added for cleaning. The first regular process is of liming when the pelts are soaked for a few days in a large pit containing a solution of lime in water. As a result, the pelt becomes plump and the upper skin containing hair and fleshing portions are loosened. The hair and the fleshings are removed by scrapping with a *khurpi*. The pelts are then de-limed by washing in fresh water and thrown in vats containing a mild solution of tanning liquor transferred from the tanning pits. After some interval the pelts are made into bags which are hung on a stand. Dry powdered *kikar* bark is filled in these bags and water is also poured in them. Water liberates tanning liquor from the bark and percolates through the pelts and in this process makes them impermeable and imputrifiable. The water oozing out of the bags is collected in a pit below from which it is transferred again and again into the bags. After two or three days the pelts get completely tanned, a rough and ready indication for which is that if a small piece is cut off from it the cross-section shows a regular light brown colour and there is no streak of white in the middle. The bags are then removed and allowed

to remain in the soaking pit containing the tanning liquor for some time so as to receive the maximum amount of tanning. These are then washed in water. The stitches of *munj* are cut off and the sheets are spread on ropes to dry. When semi-moist they are spread on a platform and a mixture of common salt and rice husk powder is rubbed on their fleshy side. Sometimes a little tallow is also applied on the hairy side of the leather to impart lustre and extra strength. When dry, the leather is ready for any type of manufacture.

The Community Development Block Agency has distributed grants and advanced loans in the village for encouraging tanning and shoe-making industry on a commercial scale. Five hundred rupees were distributed among five families as grants for constructing cemented tanning-pits outside the village and Rs. 2,500 were advanced as loans to another five families for the same purpose. These grants and loans were given in 1961 but so far only two tanning-pits have been put up near the dung-pits by the stream. The villagers have not shown any enthusiasm for putting up the tanning industry on a commercial scale.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Animal husbandry used to be a favourite occupation of the Muslim *Gujjars* who were fond of maintaining quality breed buffaloes as is signified even by the name of this village—Mahsa (*Bhainsa*) Tibba. But with the departure of *Gujjars*, Ramdasias could not pick up their occupation because it requires large funds and the risk of loss is great. Ramdasias, however, keep bullocks, cows, buffaloes and goats for agricultural and domestic uses only. Children in the age-group 8—15 and old males and females in their sixties graze the cattle. The graziers take out the cattle at about 8 a.m. after taking their breakfast and return at noon when the cattle either drink water at the well or sit in the village-pond. The second shift of cattle-grazing beginning at about 3 p.m. ends at sunset. Besides being grazed on stubble and wild growing grass, the cattle are fed on *banwah* grass consisting of *dhalla, jhewry* and *salara* straws mainly from October to April. The other fodders on which the cattle are fed are *sonkha*, a weed infesting maize-crop, *khabbal* growing in abundance during the rainy season, *tandas*, maize-sticks available after *kharif*-harvesting, *dilla*, a weed infesting maize-crop, which is a *kharif* fodder crop, *toori*, i.e., wheat-chaff and *chari*. Milch cattle, especially buffaloes, are also given dozes of *masala* consisting of half a seer of cotton-seeds, 2 chhataks of *soas*, 4 chhataks of *sooh taramira* and 1 chhatak of salt. The *masala* does not constitute a regular diet but is given occasionally to increase the yield of milk. When the bullocks are over-worked they are fed on *dair* consisting of *sooh, alsi, ajwain, gram, gur*, and salt, the daily dose being 1½ seers. Goats are fed mainly on the leaves of *garna, basuti, beri* and mulberry plants.

The methods of tackling cattle-diseases are indigenous. A cattle suffering from a simple pain in the abdomen is given *sarson* oil, caster-oil, and *soas*. A disease, known as *malma*, is common among buffaloes and it renders a buffalo weak and dries out its milk. The animal stops perspiring. To treat this disease, the body of the buffalo is thoroughly

rubbed with powdered ginger mixed with mustered oil and it is pricked at different points so that some blood may ooz out. *Chapla* makes the cattle foam at the mouth. Their noses bleed and they stop eating grass. To treat this malady, *kikar*-bark is boiled in water and some salt is added to the solution which is then applied to the body. The disease is supposed to spread among all cattle in the village due to the curse of some deity. A *chela,* or a faith-curer is approached to perform some *toona* to cure the cattle. He fixes a day on which none is allowed to cook food in the kitchen or go out of the village or enter it. A string is tied at some place and *guggal-dhoop,* an incense, is burnt near it. All the cattle are then made to pass under this string. A *rote* is then offered by the residents in the name of the family deities. They fervently believe that the performance of this *toona* checks the spread of disease and cures the animals already suffering from it. Another disease, known as *gal-ghotu,* causes swelling of the throat and renders breathing difficult among cattle. It is treated by administring *ghee* and oil by the mouth.

The cattle owned by Ramdasias are mostly of the inferior *pahari*-breed. The price of an ordinary buffalo, a cow, a pair of bullocks and a goat is Rs. 300, 90, 400 and 50. respectively. Money for such purchases is generally borrowed from friends and relatives; sometimes the sale-proceeds of one animal are used to finance the purchase of a new one. The yield of milk is low, hardly enough to meet domestic needs. Milk is never sold out of the village though it may occasionally be sold in very small quantities to some other households in the village.

COLLECTION AND SALE OF GRASS

Actually, there is no forest in the village lands but the forest area begins across the Kanahan *nadi* at a distance of about one mile from the village. *Banwah* grass is an important produce of this forest. After Partition an important change in the occupational pattern of Ramdasias has been an increasing dependence on earnings from this grass. In the pre-Partition days the Muslim *Gujjars* used to purchase and feed it to their livestock. The Ramdasias used to cut grass for them on wages. But now with the improvement in the means of communication, transport of grass to Rupar or Ghanauli has become easy. The Ramdasias have set up sale-depots for grass in the village. The season for grass-cutting extends from October to April. After that the forest is mostly denuded of grass. Although during the rainy months of June and July there is an abundant growth of grass yet during these months there is a slump in the fodder market since wheat straw (*toori*) is then available with every farmer. To cut grass is a very hard job and only the young males and females undertake it. In early stages, grass is available in places comparatively easy to approach, but later they have to go far to steep slopes and deep ravines. In the initial stages, therefore, women and children can assist but in the later stages only the stronger men are left to pursue the job. The only implement required in the operation is a sickle. Grass is tied into small *poolas* weighing about five seers and then into a *bhari,* a big bundle consisting of 8 to 12 *poolas.* The grass-*bharis* are transported partly on human heads and partly in the bullock-carts. A man, generally, carries 1 to 1½ maunds and a woman

only 20 to 30 seers of grass. A bullock-cart pulled by two bullocks transports about 15 to 20 maunds of grass. For the most part it has to be pulled through the sandy bed of the Kanahan *nadi*. Six persons in the village namely Rulia, Amin Chand, Faquir Chand, Hari Ram, Rirku and Punnu own bullock-carts. Sometimes the cart and the bullocks are shared by two or more families. The grass is stored at the depot in the village from where it is carried away by grass-merchants who are mostly Sainis of Ghanauli. Sometimes they give advance money ranging between 5 and 10 rupees to the *Harijans* for the purchase of grass which is sold on the average rate of 1¼ rupee per maund. Grass-merchants bring their own bullock-carts to carry away grass. An efficient grass-cutter can cut and transport 2 to 3 maunds of grass a day if working alone but the output increases if he gets the assistance of females and children and also facility of a bullock-cart. A male adult working with his wife and a young daughter can earn about 8 rupees if he devotes the entire day to cutting grass. But if he were to render casual labour for the same period he would not be able to earn more than two rupees because in this venture the female members of his family would not be able to assist him.

The plots of grass auctioned every year are purchased mostly by *Gujjar* and Saini residents of the neighbouring villages and are further sub-let to *Harijans* at the rate of 5 rupees per sickle for a year and for 15 to 20 rupees per bullock-cart. The rate of 5 rupees per sickle entitles a single person to cut with his sickle and transport on his head during one year as much grass as he can; similarly, payment of money per bullock-cart entitles him to transport in his bullock-cart as much grass as he can during one year. Apparently, there appears to be no limit to the quantity of grass that can be cut from the forest but in reality it is not so. A single person cannot cut and carry more than 3 maunds of grass daily; similarly, not more than 20 maunds of grass which is gathered by three persons can be transported in a bullock-cart in one day. Then again, the work of grass-gathering cannot go on every day because of the need for rest and other demands of household duties.

Harijans can also directly purchase the plots of grass but generally they do not do so due to lack of finances. In 1961, a plot of grass measuring about 100 acres was purchased jointly by four Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba for 100 rupees and the approximate return amounted to Rs. 1,500. On an average, grass worth Rs 500 is exported out of the village every year and ten families in the village mainly concentrate on this business.

INDEBTEDNESS

Economically the residents of Mahsa Tibba are not very poor but still at the time of the survey, 13 households out of 22 were under debt. As a matter of fact some enterprising families had been borrowing money for the purchase of bullock-carts, cattle, land, etc. Out of 9 families which are not in debt 3 belong to *Sadhs* and the head of the fourth family is in the army. Two families having set up shops at Nalagarh have regular income and the remaining three families have not acquired any capital assets and do not need to incur

any debt. Out of the total outstanding debt of Rs. 8,301, a debt amounting to Rs. 2,900 was repayable to the money-lenders, at Manjholi, Nalagarh and Berson, Rs. 1,136 to the co-operative society, Rs. 1,885 to the Government agency, Rs. 1,110 to the *zamindars* and Rs. 1,270 to relatives and friends. Thus, the percentage share of the money-lenders in the total debt was 34.9, of the co-operative society 13.7, of the Government agency 22.7, of the *zamindars* 13.4, and of the relatives and friends 15.3. (TABLE 7). Evidently, the money-lenders are the biggest financiers. The money-lenders at Manjholi and Nalagarh charge an exorbitant interest at the rate of 19 per cent on money borrowed to defray marriage expenditure but the well-to-do landowners of Berson and Manjholi lending money to finance agricultural operations generally, neither charge any interest nor bind the borrower to render free labour. Actually however, Ramdasias do render free labour to their agriculturist creditors out of a sense of obligation. Details of various purposes for which debts were incurred, the amount of debt for each purpose, and the number of indebted households are given in TABLE 8.

It is encouraging to note that 64.47 per cent of the total debt was incurred for meeting productive expenditure—22.43 per cent for purchasing land, 14.76 per cent for purchasing cattle, seed, bullock-carts, etc., and 27.28 per cent towards leather-industry. Debt of 8.07 per cent incurred for construction and repair charges of houses is also not altogether a waste, but it is disturbing to note that a community struggling to raise itself above the starvation level still continues to incur about 20 per cent of the total debt for defraying unproductive expenses on marriage and other social ceremonies.

The rate of interest charged by the money-lenders varies between 18 and 24 per cent while the Co-operative Bank at Rajpura charges interest at the rate of 8 per cent. Relatives and friends do not charge any interest and the local *zamindars* also advance money without charging any interest in cash. The rate of interest charged by the Community Development Block Agency varies from 5 to 5½ per cent. The cloth-merchants and shop-keepers sell articles on credit, perhaps on a higher price, but do not charge any interest. All loans except those taken for buying cloth, and cattle are taken in cash. Payments for cloth purchased on credit are made after six months at the time of every harvest. Similarly, a bullock may be purchased from a local *zamindar* on credit. Loans are advanced on the general credit-worthiness of the borrowers. They are not required to offer any tangible security. No loan-documents are prepared except by the Government agency and money-lenders. If the borrower does not repay his debt within three months, the money-lender executes a fresh document.

CO-OPERATIVE SERVICE

There is no co-operative society in Mahsa Tibba. The most important co-operative society in the area—The Rajpura Co-operative Agricultural Service Society Limited, is at Rajpura near Nalagarh in the Ambala District. This society was originally registered as the Rajpura Co-operative Credit Society Limited, Rajpura on the 1st

July, 1924. On the 16th of June, 1956 it was converted into a Rural Co-operative Bank with the amalgamation of 18 co-operative credit societies. Again, on the 27th June, 1961, it changed its bye-laws and assumed its present name. In March, 1956, membership of the society was 32 while on 31st March, 1961 it stood at 656. Out of the total number of 181 scheduled caste members 10 belonged to this village. Loans are advanced for agricultural uses only. The normal rate of interest is 8 per cent and the penal rate of interest is 9¾ per cent. The total debt outstanding against its members amounts to Rs. 92,388.16. This includes a debt of Rs. 947.71 nP., against the 10 members belonging to Mahsa Tibba. Details of debt against each of these 10 members are given below.

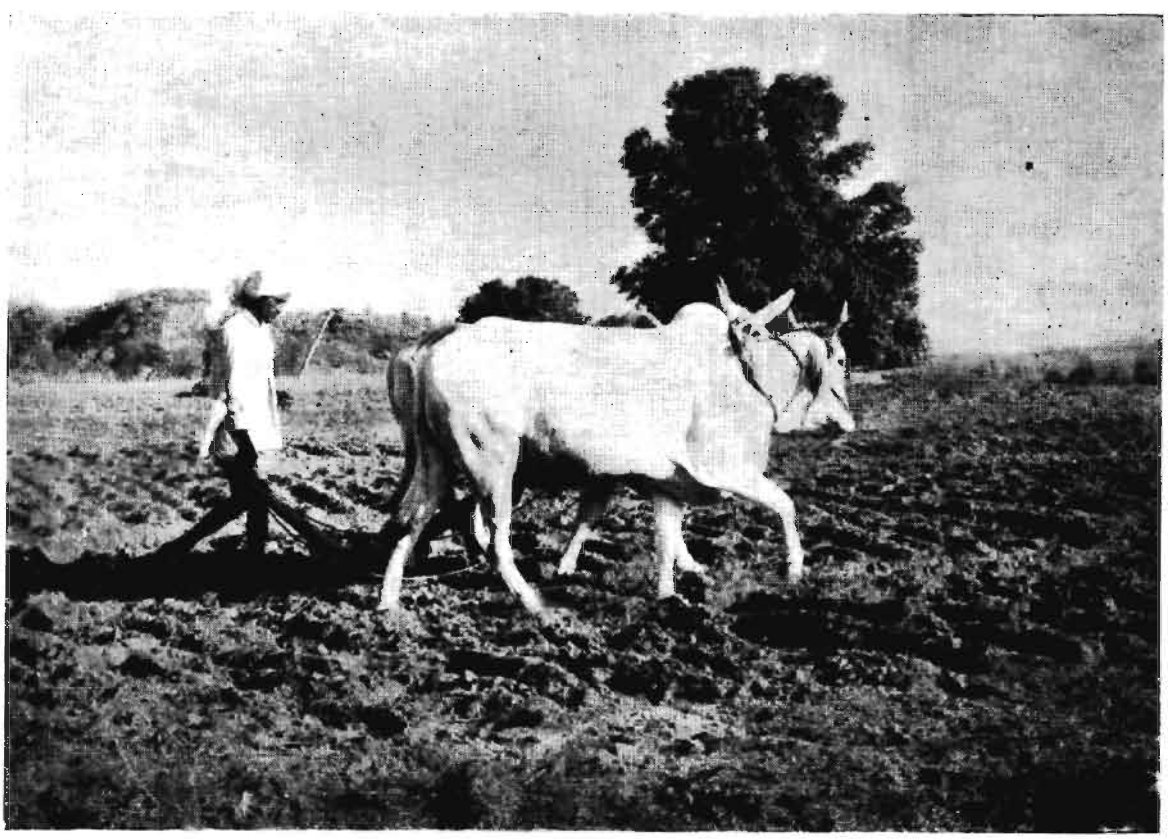
Name of the member	Date of admission	Loan obtained (Rs.)	Date on which obtained	Debt outstanding (Rs.)
Hari Ram	18-1-1957	200	18-3-1957	104.67
Dia Ram	19-1-1957	..	..	..
Rulia	19-1-1957	125	6-5-1958	11.32
Bhambu	21-1-1957	200	18-3-1957	190.50
Bhunda	21-1-1957	..	..	..
Faqiroo	24-1-1957	400	8-3-1957 15-7-1958 29-3-1960	100.00
Punnu	19-2-1957	150	18-3-1957	137.00
Puran	9-2-1957	150	18-3-1957	129.22
Sadh	14-5-1957	150	17-8-1957	150.00
Amin Chand	30-6-1959	125	18-2-1960	125.00
Total		1,500		947.71

During the last five years the residents of Mahsa Tibba have purchased 10½ tons of fertilizers and two ploughs from the Rajpura Bank. However, it has been observed by the villagers that these ploughs are useful only if the bullocks are strong. The villagers like the ploughs very much but all of them cannot purchase these ploughs because limited number is available on subsidy basis. Without subsidy the price of a plough is Rs. 21.25 which the Ramdasias cannot afford. Meston plough is useful for removing the grass from the land, while the soil-stirrer is helpful in deep ploughing.

Chemical fertilizers also find favour with the Ramdasias and every household which can afford to purchase would prefer to use them. But according to the people the chemical fertilizers are no substitute for the indigenous dung-manure. The former are useful only if used to supplement the latter.



Rirku Ram *Chamar* making shoes



Bhajan Dass—a *Chamar* farmer at work



A village belle



The village urchins

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION

TABLE 1 gives the age and sex composition of the population in the village.

Out of the total population of 133 persons, 53 persons including 26 boys and 27 girls are bleow 15 years of age. 19 boys and 22 girls are aged less than 10 years. 57 persons including 33 males and 24 females fall in the age-group 15—44. In all, there are 18 persons including 10 males and 8 females aged more than 50 years out of whom only 11 persons including 6 males and 5 females are on the wrong side of sixty. Out of 71 males, 26 are aged less than 15 years, 33 fall in the age-group 15—44, six belong to the age-group 45—59 years and 6 are aged more than 60 years. Similarly, out of 62 females, 22 are aged less than 10 years; 5 are in the age-group, 10—14 years, 24 are in the reproductive age-group of 15—44 years and the remaining 11, including 5 aged more than 60, have crossed the age of 45 years.

VITAL STATISTICS

During the period 1956—1961, excluding the year 1958, when there did not occur any death in the village, the total number of deaths was 14 which were equally distributed between males and females. Out of 7 children who died during this period, 4 were infants, 2 died at the age of four years each and one died in the seventh year of his life. Fever and cough claimed 8 lives, while pneumonia 2, dysentery 2, typhoid, and cramps and erodes one each. During the same period 31 persons, including 14 males and 17 females were added to the village population. Males in the age-group 20—25 and females in the age-group 17—22 begot 7 children, males in the age-group 25—30 and females in the age-group 22—27 gave birth to 10 children, and 6 children were born to males in the age-group 30—35 and females in the age-group 27—32. Males in the age-groups 35—40 and 40—45 and females in the age-groups 32—37 and 37—42 bore two children each. Again males in the age-group 45—50 and females in the age-group 42—47 gave birth to 3 children but only one child was born to a male above 50 and a female above 47 years of age. Thus it would seem that the period from 17 to 32 years of age in the case of females and 20 to 35 years of age in the case of males is the most fertile.

Indigenous system of medicine is generally followed. Out of 22 households in the village 15 have faith in the Ayurvedic system of treatment, 6 go in for Allopathic treatment and only one believes exclusively in the faith-curers. It is a common practice to consult elderly men and women whenever anybody falls ill and adopt an indigenous prescription. The Health Department of the Government is running a small dispensary in the neighbouring village of Manjholi but this facility is occasionally availed of by the residents. In case of serious illness the patient is removed to the

Civil Hospital at Nalagarh. Last year 2 persons suffered from swellings and one each got an attack of pneumonia and malaria. There has occurred a perceptible improvement in sanitation during the last decade. Dung-pits have been constructed outside the *abadi*. Early in the morning the dung is removed from the house-yards and stored in the pits, which were so well kept as to have earned a prize for the village from the Block authorities. The mouth of the drinking water well has been provided a covering of concrete to keep out foreign matter. The statutory panchayat has forbidden leather-tanning and cattle-flaying near the village habitation. The Development Block has given grants and loans to Ramdasias for setting up cemented tanning-pits away from the main settlement. Of course, there are no regular lanes in the village but due to the hard and slippery surface of land, water does not collect near the dwellings.

MARRIAGE STATISTICS

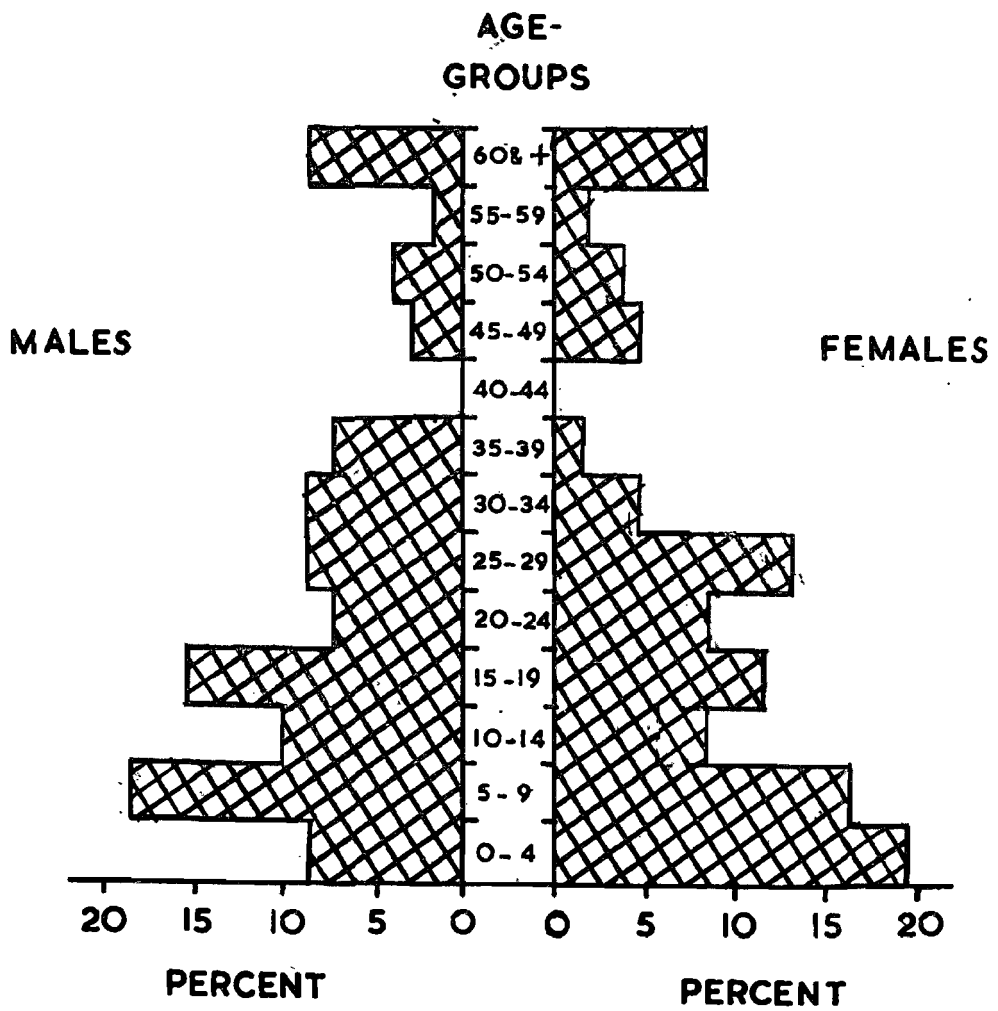
Out of 133 persons, 64 are married and 64 unmarried; 4 are widowed and one is separated. There are 3 widowers and one widow. One widower belongs to the age-group 25—29, one to the age-group 35—39 and the third widower is on the wrong side of 60. The widow is staying with her son. Among the unmarried persons are included 36 males and 28 females. There is no unmarried female above the age of 19 years while there are three such males : one of them in the age-group 25—29, the other in the age-group 30—34, and the third one in the age-group 35—39. The first two are financially poor and cannot get married nor have they any sisters to exchange for brides. The third one does not keep physically fit. Only 47 per cent of the married persons are aged more than 15 years but less than 30 years of age. There is only one male and one female who got married before attaining the age of 15 years. (TABLES 5 and 6).

EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

The village population is quite illiterate, the percentage of illiteracy among males and females being 80 and 95, respectively. There are 38 persons in the village who are more than 30 years of age but none of them is literate with or without any educational standard. Only one person out of 14 aged more than 25 but less than 30 years has read up to the Primary standard. The only Matriculate in the village falls in the age-group 20—24 signifying that some emphasis on education has come to be placed only since the last fifteen years. Three boys have attained the Middle standard, two of them being in the age-group 15—19 and the third in the age-group 20—24. In addition to this number, 7 males and three females have read up to the Primary standard. Some parents start teaching their children at home : for example, there are two boys in the age-group 5—9 who are literate without any educational standard. Increasing interest in education is a result of awareness of special concessions granted, particularly in the services, to the members of the Scheduled Castes. A Primary School was started at Manjholi in 1952 and was upgraded to the Middle standard in 1962. A Government High School at Nalagarh is also easily accessible. (TABLE 2).

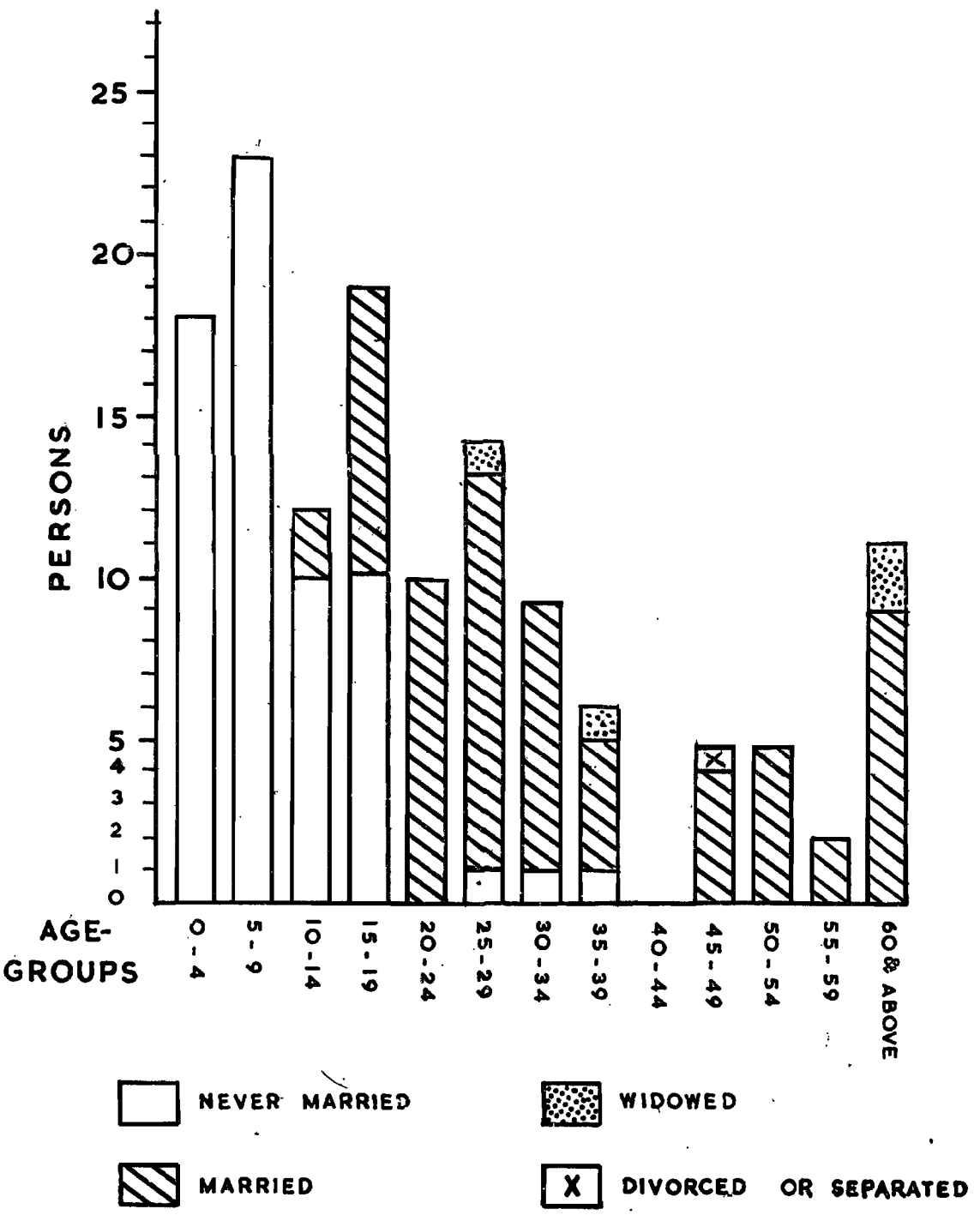
MAHSA TIBBA

AGE RYRAMID



MAHSA TIBBA

MARITAL STATUS



TYPES OF FAMILIES

In March, 1962, out of 22 families 11 were simple; 4 intermediate and 7 joint. In a simple family, a couple lives with unmarried children, an intermediate family is composed of a couple living with unmarried brothers, sisters and one of the parents and the joint family consists of a number of couples living together. The most common feature of a Ramdasia family is that sons stay with their parents as long as they are unmarried, but set up a new household after marriage. Even in a joint family living in the same house and sharing household goods a separate kitchen must be provided for each couple. Hari Ram *Panch*, is the head of a household happily living as a joint-family. His family consists of 3 married and 2 unmarried sons. Agriculture is the main occupation of the family and it can be better managed under a joint-family system. Moreover, Hari Ram effectively manages household affairs and wields personal influence with every member of his family. Another joint-family is headed by Bhambu *Chowkidar*. His 3 sons living with him and his wife, are all widowers. The authority and position of the head of the household is the main factor responsible for successful functioning of the joint-family system. If he cannot reconcile divergent interests in the household, the members fall apart and the joint-family disintegrates, successively into intermediate and simple families. Paucity of accommodation and petty quarrels among women usually result in the breaking up of joint-families. Similarly, a father finding his son to be an economic burden or *vice versa* sets up a separate home for him. Worldly belongings among the Ramdasias being few, family partitions do not create any complicated problems.

INHERITANCE OF PROPERTY

According to the custom prevalent in the past, all sons used to get an equal share in ancestral property. If a person died issueless, his brother's son inherited his property. But now there has been some change in the attitude towards inheritance of property. In the absence of a son, a daughter is considered competent to inherit property of her father. A widow has been empowered by custom to claim maintenance from her brother and if he refuses it, she can get a portion of her father's property. Out of 22 persons interviewed, only 3 knew that recently there have been some changes in the Hindu Adoption Act and that an issueless person is now free to adopt any male or female person he likes even if the latter is not connected with his lineage, but 19 persons were aware of the amendments of the Hindu Succession Act which has entitled daughters along with their brothers equal share in ancestral property. Most of the persons have learnt about the changes in the Hindu Succession Act from the platform of political conferences held by the opposition parties in the State to influence the discussion of the Bill in the Parliament. There has not been any case in the village of the modified provision of either the Hindu Adoption Act or the Hindu Succession Act having been availed of. All households except one, according to which a daughter and a wife is also entitled to a share in a person's property, have reported that sons alone can share patrimony. No household, except one, is in favour of daughter's share in parental property, equally with the brothers.

LEISURE AND RECREATION

Life in the village is a routine of exhausting hardwork followed by recouperative sound sleep. The young

and the middle aged persons are busy throughout the day variously with agricultural operations, casual labour and collection and transport of grass. They sweat in the fields and the forests but have no time to stand and stare. Always striving hard to earn their living, they cannot afford the urge for any systematic and regular relaxation. If on any day light labour spares them the time and the strength to seek any social diversion, they collect together, indulge in gossip and the unmarried among them share their sexual urges, frustrations and experiences. Occasionally, the young boys form a group, allow themselves the luxury of a bottle of wine merrily consumed and wind up their festivities by seeing a cinema show at Rupar. The old folk may not be able to undertake strenuous exertions but are never idle. In their spare time they narrate experiences and adventures to the young boys or just fondle with their grand-children. After every one or two years, they go on pilgrimage which simultaneously relieves their boredom and satisfies their religious instinct. Females are rarely free from their duties inside and outside the home but they do punctuate the rigours of their work with intervals of gossips, back-biting and grumbling. They sing songs and make merry at the time of marriage, birth and other social functions. The only occupation of children below the age of 10 is to roam about bare-headed and bare-footed in the village streets. The only game they seem to know is hide-and-seek. In the cool evenings they usually play about on the sand and build houses.

Folk songs and dances, which are characteristic features of rural folk, do not seem to be very much popular with Ramdasias. Their males display a conspicious lack of taste in artistic activities while the expression of artistic aptitude of their females stops short with the delineation of flowery patterns and mural pictures of *Kali Mai.*

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

In daily routine Ramdasias provide for and get little recreation but they do get some diversion by attending fairs and festivals held in the neighbouring towns. The villagers attend a fair to affirm their religiosity, indulge in fun and frolic and buy articles of domestic needs.

A temple of *Sitla Mai* is located at Nalagarh where a festival is held on all the four Tuesdays falling in the month of *Jeth.* Women-folk offer *thumb* at the altar of *Sitla Mai* and invoke her blessings for the fulfilment of their worldly desires and protection of children against small-pox. A similar festival is held at Kurali on all the Thursdays falling in the month of *Chet.* In March, 1963, fifteen persons including 3 adult males, 8 adult females and 4 children attended this fair. Jagiro spent Rs. 2.43 nP., on buying the following things:—

Article		Price nP.
Glass tumbler	..	25
Glass *kauli*	..	25
Finger-ring	..	50
Cloth	..	62
Laddoos	..	25
Dori	..	25
Bangles	..	31
		Rs. 2.43

Parsinni, another visitor to the fair spent Rs. 5.37 nP., on purchasing

an iron *karahi* for Rs. 2.75 nP., an under-wear for Rs. 1.25 nP., an iron bangle for Rs. 0.37 nP., and a cup and tumblers for Re. 1.00.

Ramdasias attend the *Baisakhi* fair held on the 1st of *Baisakh* every year either at Kiratpur or Rupar. In 1955-56, nine male adults, 3 boys and 2 female adults attended the fair at Kiratpur. The three males attending this fair enjoyed wine. Almost all the households prepare *karah parshad* on the *Baisakhi* day. *Hola* fair held at the seats of Sikh *Gurus* at Kiratpur and Anandpur Sahib is also attended by the residents to pay obeisance to the Sikh *Gurus* and get recreation. Everybody visiting this fair offers *karah parshad* in the *Gurdwara*. No person except Sital Singh *Granthi* who has attended this fair four times during the last five years, goes to Anandpur Sahib regularly. Eleven persons including three persons in the age-group 15—20, four in the age-group 20—30 and four in the age-group 45—50 attended this fair in 1962-63. Two women who attended this fair were more than 20 but less than 30 years of age. The number of persons who attended the *Hola* fair at Anandpur Sahib or Kiratpur during the last seven years is as follows:—

Visitors from Mahsa Tibba

Year	persons	Males	Females
1955-56	7	5	2
1956-57	9	7	2
1957-58	13	8	5
1958-59	15	10	5
1959-60	5	3	2
1960-61	7	5	2
1961-62	10	8	2

It is obvious that the number of males attending this fair is almost double than that of females On the *Lohri* day, in the month of January a fair is held at a place called *Pirthan*, the *Gaddi* of *Lakh-Datta*, the Muslim *Pir*, two miles away from Nalagarh. This fair lasts three days. In January, 1963, sixteen persons belonging to this village whose ages ranged between 8 and 34 years went on foot to attend this fair. No woman went there. Ram Kishan, aged 20 years spent 12 nP., on a finger-ring, 37 nP., on *pakauras*, 31 nP., on tea, 88 nP., on underwear and 62 nP., on sweetmeats; his total expenditure being Rs. 2.31. Ujagar Singh, a youth aged 17 years purchased 3 finger-rings for 75 nP., brassiers (a gift) for 75 nP., toys worth 25 nP., and a ribbon and a flute for 25 and 30 nP., respectively. In all he spent Rs. 2.37 nP. Mangal Singh, another young boy aged 15 years spent 12 nP., on a finger-ring, drank tea worth 31 nP., and enjoyed sweetmeats worth 37 nP. All persons except old people, who go to make offerings to the *Pir*, attend the fair for recreation. The village youth have a liking for finger-rings and they spend most of their money on taking sweetmeats and drinking tea. In addition to these fairs, males, females and children from this village also attend *Dussehra* fair at Rajpura, Nalagarh and Rupar.

Observance of two festivals of *Jhakra Barat* and *Karva Barat* by women provides them some diversion. *Jhakra Barat* is observed to propitiate *Kali Mai* and it falls in the month of *Asuj* or *Kartik*. The women have a hearty feast on dainty dishes at dawn and fast for the day. In the evening a number of small pitchers, known as *Jhakras* along with an equal number of sugarcane sticks, corresponding to the number of sons in the family are

placed before the portrait of *Kali Mai.* Incense is burnt and members of the family bow before *Kali Mai. Jhakras* are distributed among children. The women break their fast at moon-rise. *Karva* fast is also observed in a similar manner. The villagers believe that this *Barat* is observed by women to humour some ghost who haunted a girl going for her *muklawa.* The ghost got hold of the bride and let her go only on the condition that she would remember him at least once a year. On the day of *Karva Barat* women get up early in the morning, put on new clothes and feast on sweetmeats and specially prepared dishes. They observe fast for the day, assemble at a place, dance and make merry. They break their fast after moon-rise.

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Legends about Ramdas or Ravidas.—The Ramdasia *Chamars* are the followers of *Guru* Ramdas or Ravidas. All elderly persons in the village and those living in the neighbouring villages believe that there is no difference between Ramdasias and Ravidasias. The word 'Ramdasia' is the corruption of the word 'Ravidasia'. They regard Ramdas or Ravidas as the preceptor of the community. The *Chamars* who have immigrated from West Pakistan call themselves Sikh Ramdasias. The Sikh Ramdasias command a higher social status than the *Chamar* Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba because the latter still make shoes and lift dead cattle while the former do not. The following legends about Ramdas or Ravidas are prevalent among the residents.

Once Brahma asked Narda to go round the world and report as to which community was the most distressed. The latter advised the former that the lot of the *Chamars* was the most miserable. They were untouchables and were condemned to live away from the settlement of the clean-castes. It was against the religion of the clean-castes to enter the habitations of the *Chamars* and whenever any cattle died they would announce the fact by beating drums. Physical touch with a *Chamar* caused pollution which could be purged only after taking a bath in the river Ganges. The *Chamars* were debarred from attending religious congregations and if a *Chamar* read the holy scriptures he was punished by persons of higher castes.

When Brahma came to know all this he directed Shiva to take birth in a *Chamar* family. And Shiva took birth as Ramdas or Ravidas in the house of Bawa Santokh in Banaras. The baby refused to suck milk from his mother's breast until Brahma and Vishnu accepted water from the hands of his parents. When Ravidas was about 3 years old, he started worshipping God in the manner of Brahmans. He used to sound the *Shankh* and apply *tilak* on his forehead. The Brahmans were enraged with Ravidas who being a *Chamar* was not entitled to observe such practices. But Ravidas was not discouraged. Many a time he humiliated the Brahmans by showing miracles.

Once Ravidas insulted the Brahmans by making his *pathri,* the stone-slab used by shoe-makers, float in the river Ganges while the cotton balls of the Brahmans sank down. Again, during a community worship golden cows were given in charity to the Brahmans. Ravidas made the cows disappear and argued with the Brahmans that the lifeless golden

cows were the property of a *Chamar* and not that of the Brahmans. Later on, he returned the cows after berating the Brahmans. Once a Brahman was going to the Ganges. Ravidas gave him a *damri*, a quarter pice, and asked him to offer it to the mother Ganges if she appeared in human form to accept it. The Brahman thought that Ravidas was a fool. How could mother Ganges appear in human form to accept a *damri* from a Chamar ? But when he reached the Ganges he was surprised to find that she out-stretched her hand and accepted the offering. She gave a golden bangle in return and asked the Brahman to hand it over to Ravidas. The Brahman, however, became dishonest and gave the bangle to his wife. The queen of Raja Nagar Mall once saw the bangle and was so much fascinated by it that she ordered the Brahman to bring a similar bangle failing which he would be punished. The Brahman was in a fix. He could not get another bangle without the help of Ravidas. So he came to him and narrated the whole story. Ravidas took pity on him. He removed his *pathri*. The Brahman was surprised to see that the Ganges was flowing beneath it and heaps of bangles were lying there. He got one bangle and took it to the queen. When King Nagar Mall, came to know of this happening, he summoned Ravidas to his court. Even then the Brahmans doubted his spiritual powers. But the Brahmans and the king were stunned with wonder when Ravidas tore open his chest and exhibited the sacred threads of the four *yugas*.

Many legends of this type are narrated by the elderly persons of the village. All of them are woven round the same theme depicting clashes between Ravidas and the Brahmans. Ravidas shattered the age-old beliefs and convictions of the Brahmans that the *Chamars* were inferior by origin and that they were ordained by God not to read the holy scriptures and undertake the worship of gods.

Phenomenon of Conversion to Sikhism.—From the physical appearance and manners of the *Chamars* of village Mahsa Tibba it is quite evident that they are increasingly adopting Sikh ways of life. Except 9 male adults—Ram Asra aged 55, Chhotu aged 30, Arjun aged 22, Mangal aged 18, Joginder aged 18, Ram Kishan aged 20, Lachhu aged 35, Bhambu aged 50 and Masta aged 22 years—all of them keep long hair and beards as ordained by the Sikh religion. This practice started among the last two generations. *Sat-Sri-Akal*, the Sikh way of greetings, is the common form of salutation among men, women and children. The word *Satgur*, an appellation used by Sikhs, is recited to invoke the benediction of God in adversity. Again, almost all men, women and children wear *kara*, an iron bangle which is also a symbol of Sikh religion. Thus, the preference among the *Chamars* for Sikhism is obvious. The religious places of Ramdasias are called *Gurdwaras*. There is one *Gurdwara* of Ramdasias at Nalagarh. The only holy book in the village is a copy of *Guru Granth Sahib*. It has been recently acquired by Sital Singh, son of Dia Ram, *Sadh*. Sikh *Gurus* are held in great reverence by the residents and they visit some of the holy places of Sikhs : Anandpur Sahib, Kiratpur Sahib and *Darbar Sahib* at Amritsar.

The present generation is passing through a period of transition and conformity to Sikh tenets is not yet

complete. There are many practices prevalent amongst them which distinguish the *Chamars* from the Sikhs. A Sikh Ramdasia is expected neither to smoke nor handle carcasses. He commands a higher social status than the *Chamar* Ramdasias but the residents of Mahsa Tibba fail to fulfil these conditions. They smoke heavily, remove the dead cattle and work in hides. Most of them even eat the meat of a dead goat. These practices make them socially inferior to the Sikh Ramdasias who are agriculturists and have given up inferior callings. However, the winds of change have started blowing even in this direction. Most of the families have given up the job of removing the dead cattle. There are only five families which still do this job while the others have given it up partially or wholly. Smoking is also condemned on religious and economic grounds and, generally, respectable persons like Hari Ram and Rirku Ram, the *Panches* and the *Sadh* do not smoke and they are often heard exhorting young boys to give up smoking and shaving off their heads and beards. Hari Ram and Rirku Ram might have been smoking in their youth but being the village elders they cannot afford to set a bad example particularly when they grow long hair.

The residents solemnise their marriages according to the traditional ceremony of *pheras*. Only one marriage—that of Bhajan Dass—has recently been solemnised according to the *Anand Karaj* ceremony. Bhajan Dass belongs to a priest family. His marriage also took place in a priest family. He is mainly an agriculturist and does not follow the traditional occupation of *Chamars*. The elderly persons regard *Anand Karaj*. the marriage rite among Sikhs, as inferior to the Hindu ceremony of *pheras*. But the new generation favours the former. Generally, the Sikh Ramdasias like to celebrate their marriages according to *Anand Karaj* but if the parents of the bride are orthodox (e.g., the father-in-law of Surjan Singh who is in army and does not approve of it), there is no choice but to arrange *pheras*.

The predilection for Sikh religion is the result of many factors. The *Chamars* have been treated as out-castes by the Hindus but the Sikh population comprising Sikh Jats, Sainis, *Lohars* and others do not show such rigid contempt for them. The age-old fear of entering the temples and thereby invoking the wrath of the clean-castes still lurks in the minds of the *Chamars*. In contrast the *Gurdwaras* are accessible even to the lowliest of the low castes. Revulsion to the humiliating treatment meted out by the caste Hindus down the ages coupled with the appreciation of the liberal and accommodating attitude of the followers of the Sikh religion results in a *Chamar* embracing Sikhism. Moreover, the simplicity of the Sikh religion as contrasted with the tangled complexity of Hindu rituals does not elude the grasp and strain the imagination of the illiterate *Chamars*. Simple dogma evokes a readier response among simple folk than the metaphysics of the *vedanta*. The faith in the *gurus* and the offering of *karah parshad* in their name is enough to satisfy their religiosity and give them spiritual security. The *Chamar* community is caught up in the change affecting its fortunes and the aspiration of its members to be recognised as Sikh Ramdasias is part of the wider desire to raise their social and economic status by abandoning traditional occupations and adopting agriculture as the main occupation.

Worship of gods and goddesses.— The worship of *Devis* in various forms is an important part of the religion of the *Chamars*. These goddesses are held in great awe and most of the mis-fortunes befalling them are attributed to their wrath.

Bhaira Devi is worshipped on any Tuesday in the month of *Chet*. On Monday night the housewives prepare *thumb* consisting of *gulgulas*, small fried balls of sugar and wheat-flour or *pooras*, sweet *chapatis* of wheat-flour, and on the morning of Tuesday *kallar*, i.e., earth, is worshipped. A square piece of ground is cleaned and plastered with cow-dung to prepare a *chauka*. Five or seven *gulgulas*, cooked rice and *dhub* grass are placed on the *chauka* and *dhoop* is also burnt there. Women hold scarfs round their necks, bow before the *chauka* and pray to the goddess to end their worries and usher in prosperity. This ritual is also known as the worship of *Chhoti-Mata*. *Chhoti-Mata* is specially propitiated to ward off *loondhras*, a kind of skin-eruption accompanied by pimples all over the body.

Bari-Mata, the *thaans* of which are at Kurali, nearly twenty miles away from the village, is worshipped to cure a case of smallpox as the villagers believe that smallpox cannot be cured by medicine, *Bari-Mata* is worshipped on any Thursday of the *Chet* month. *Thumb* consisting of *gulgulas* is prepared on Wednesday evening. On Thursday morning it is taken to Kurali and offered at the altar of the *Mata*. Obeisance is paid and blessings are invoked. Some portion of the *thumb* is brought back to the village and distributed among the community.

Phoolma Mai or *Dhassalwali Mata* is believed to cure the *dhassal* disease in which small pimples appear all over the bodies of children (measles). This goddess is worshipped on any Tuesday in the month of *Chet*. *Thumb* of *pooras* is prepared and offered at the *chauka* of the *Devi* inside the house and later on taken by the family members only. It is believed that *Phoolma Mata* gets offended if her *thumb* is either distributed among outsiders or scattered on the ground.

Kali Mai is worshipped to ensure that no harm comes from one's enemies. Moreover, a woman overcome by hysteria is also supposed to be haunted by *Kali Mai*. The *Bhagats* of the *Mai* are consulted and prescribed offerings are made. The *Mai* is stationed at Kalka where she is worshipped during *Navratras* in the *Chet* month, mainly by those who are pledged to make offerings in return for fulfilment of some wish or cure of hysteria. The offerings consist of *deg* worth rupees 1¼, 2½, or 5, a red scarf and a lamb having completely black ears.

Sitla Mai and *Naina Devi* are commonly worshipped by the people as by doing so, they believe, they can realise their worldly desires, lead a happy married life and beget a son. The temple of *Sitla Mai* is at Nalagarh where a fair is held on every Tuesday in the month of *Jeth*. Housewives prepare *thumb* of *gulgulas* on Monday night. On the morning of Tuesday males, females and children take the *thumb* and offer it at the altar of the *Devi*. They also carry with them some grams for feeding donkeys brought there by the potters. It is believed that the *Devi* is pleased if the donkeys are fed. *Naina Devi* is stationed in the Bilaspur

District of the Himachal Pradesh. She is worshipped during *Navratras* in *Chet* every year. *Naina Devi* is worshipped in the same manner as *Sitla Devi.*

The main motive which inspires the people to worship these goddesses is the spread of certain human and cattle diseases which are beyond their comprehension and which cannot be cured by the indigenous methods known to them. Prolonged illness makes people impatient and they consult some *Bhagat* or priest who tells them that the illness is due to some *khote* of a particular god or goddess whom the family used to worship and had now forgotten. Relations of the patient pledge offerings to the goddess and undertake their worship at appropriate times. The worship of *Devis* is also undertaken for the fulfilment of certain cherished desire, e.g., the birth of a son or the marriage of a son. Offerings are pledged and visits are paid to the temples of *Devis.*

Last year, during the month of *Chet* an infectious disease spread in this village and it took a toll of eight children and one old lady. The number of persons who suffered from the disease was still higher. Sudden spread of this disease created panic in the village and a series of deaths following it in spite of medical care convinced the people that the curse of gods had befallen them. Six persons from the village consulted a *Bhagat* of the goddess at village Togan near Chandigarh. The *Bhagat* gave them enchanted *guggal-dhoop, illaichies* and some enchanted ashes. *Guggal-dhoop* was to be burnt in the house beside the patient. *Illaichies* were to be eaten by the patient and the ashes were also partly to be eaten and partly applied to his body.

Besides this, they were asked to offer *Teholi-ki-Karahi* for the *Devi. Gur*, flour and *ghee* were mixed in equal proportions and kneaded to prepare *pooris,* fried sweet *chapatis.* They put the *pooris* in a *chhabra* along with 12 eggs, 14 black *chooris* and one black *dori* or *prandi* used by the ladies. At about sun-set, all these articles were carried to the adjoining Kanahan *nadi.* Some *guggal-dhoop* was burnt there and the members of the family bowed before it and prayed to the *Devi* to forgive them for their faults and lapses. They returned after placing the basket near the fire. It was an offering to please the *Devi,* but all their offerings failed to please her and the disease was not checked. The same persons again went there on the eighth day. They took offerings consisting of *gulgulas* and salted *pakauras* with them. This time the *Bhagat* removed some flesh from the *kalgi* of a white cock and threw the blood at *Mata.* Each one of them offered rupees 1¼ and a red scarf to the *Mata* at the *Bhagat's* house. The *Mata* spoke through the *Bhagat* who again gave them *dhoop, illaichies* and ashes and instructed them to attend the *Chala* of *Naina Devi,* falling in the same month. At the altar of *Naina Devi* each person offered a *karahi* worth rupees 1½, a red scarf and rupees 2½ in cash. A he-lamb was also jointly offered there by all the six persons.

The disease, however, continued and the villagers were convinced that the god *Bali,* whom their ancestors used to offer sacrifices and who is considered the protector of the village might be angry with them. (There

is a small stone-slab, about nine inches high fixed in the ground in the middle of the village. It represents the god *Bali* who is supposed to protect the village. Occasionally, sacrifices are made by the villagers to please the deity and the remains of the sacrifices consisting of head, feet and bowels of the animals are buried beneath the slab. No villager can dare dig these out). They atonce pledged a he-goat for *Bali* called *Bali-ka-Dahaja.* It is believed that the disease started subsiding when they did so. They had offered no *dahaja* during the last ten years.

On Sunday the *Nachars* danced and sang in praise of gods and goddesses to the accompaniment of music. They were Ramdasia *Chamars* hailing from village Palli. A he-goat with black ears was procured and a man from village Bhasot cut its head. It is believed that if the he-goat shivers before being killed, the offering is acceptable to god. The *Nachars* carried some blood in a vessel round the village and made hand prints with this blood on every wall. The head and feet, etc., of the he-goat were buried beneath the traditional stone-slab, known as *Bawa Bali-ka-Gandha* situated in the middle of the village. The *Gandha* was removed by the *Nachars* after duly pleasing their gods, and again set in the same position. The he-goat was then cooked and distributed as *parshad* among the villagers.

Besides worshipping goddesses, the residents pay obeisance to many other deities and saints. The mode of worship differs with the subject of worship. *Lakhdata* or *Lalanwala Sarvar Pir* is worshipped by the *Chamars* of the *Garang* and *Dandrata* sub-castes. *Lalanwala* is a Muslim *Pir* who is believed to have been born in the Tarapur Village of the Nalagarh Tahsil. His domain extends over an area of nine hundred miles from *Nalagarh* to Multan in West Pakistan. *Lakhdata* appears at different places through his chosen devotees and the place of appearance is known as *nigaha*, i.e., the temple of *Lalanwala Pir.* One such *nigaha* is situated at *Pirthan* a place two miles away from Nalagarh on the Nalagarh-Kalka road. Recently, *Lalanwala Pir* is reported to have spoken through the medium of a Hindu *Gujjar* of the Khole Beli Village, about two miles away from Mahsa Tibba, and the residents of this area now visit the *nigaha* there. The *Lohri* festival is celebrated every year at the *nigaha* at *Pirthan.*

The devotees of *Lalanwala* are known as *Panj-Pirias* and they are forbidden to eat bacon. The Ramdasia *Chamars* worship this Muslim *Pir* not because of any inclinations towards Muslim faith but because they believe that he can fulfil their desires. A barren woman can pledge offerings to *Lalanwala Pir* and beget a son. One of the residents who has recently got employment on a permanent basis has remitted thirty rupees to his parents in the village with the request that five rupees out of these may be offered at *Lalanwala's nigaha* at Khole Beli. *Panj-Pirias* from Mahsa Tibba visit the *nigaha* at *Pirthan* at the birth of a son and that at Khole Beli at marriage. It is thus the worldly failures and successes which motivate the people to pay reverence to *Lakhdata.* They derive no spiritual pleasure out of this worship. *Lakhdata* is propitiated on Thursday by burning a *chirag* and distributing *choori*, i.e., maize *chapatis* and *gur* pounded together. A somewhat more

elaborate proeedure of worship is followed when a major desire is fulfilled. Three years ago a widow got her desire fulfilled and offered *sukhna,* i.e., pledged offerings at the *nigaha.* On the day of worship she arranged a drum-beater to beat the drum against remuneration of 1.25 rupees. She also served fried rice to all the members of her community. Thereafter the devotees set out on the journey to the *nigaha.* The drum-beater was in attendance. After crossing the village boundary the party of devotees sat down to take rest. Taking rest like this is konwn as *chaunki-lagana.* At this stage the drum-beater was given rupees 1.25. The party then resumed the journey and after crossing the Sirsa *nadi* made an offering of rupees 1.25 to *Khawaja,* the water-god and gave this amount also to the drum-beater. At the *nigaha* the *Manjoor,* i.e., the Muslim priest was given rupees 1.25 each in lieu of a he-goat and a sheep. One rupee was offered at the *nigaha* to the *Pir.* The offerings over, the party returned to the village the same day.

Guru Ram Rai has a following among the *Chamars* of the *Guru* subcaste who are the earliest settlers in this village. *Guru* Ram Rai's *gaddi* is stationed at Dehra Dun. He was the brother of Bhai Gur Ditta whose *gaddi* is at Kiratpur and migrated to Dehra Dun on account of certain family dispute. The present generation of *Guru Chamars* is not at all clear about their association with *Guru* Ram Rai, but they have reported that they repose considerable faith in him because their ancestors did so. The seat of *Guru* Ram Rai at Dehra Dun is even today a place of pilgrimage for the *Guru Chamars* and a visit there is considered by them to bring religious gratification.

Gugga, the snake-god and *Khawaja,* the water-god are worshipped by all people including *Chamars.* The snake-god is believed to protect the people against the poison of reptiles and other crawling insects. If a person sees a snake or dreams about it or is haunted by it, it is at once concluded that curse of the *Gugga Pir* is upon him. Offerings consisting of *rote,* coins, or salt are pledged to the deity and offered at the *Gugga* shrine at Nalagarh. The *Khawaja Pir* is supposed to protect village habitation against the on-slaught of floods and other calamities. The construction of a well or a house is commenced after *Khawaja Pir* has been duly worshipped. *Dalia,* i.e., porridge pudding, is prepared and some of it is added to the fire burnt near the well before which the devotee bows and prays. The remaining *dalia* is distributed as *parshad.*

Bawa Jawahar Singh whose seat is at Haripur in the Nalagarh Tahsil is also believed to possess the supernatural power of fulfiling the desires of his devotees. Recently, a *Chamar* youth who had appeared in the Matriculation Examination had pledged *laddoos* worth rupees 1.25 to be offered to *Bawa Haripurwala.* He passed the examination and made the pledged offering.

In this village the families of Bhunda, Puru and Dia Ram *Sadh* are the followers of Radhaswami sect. They were initiated into this sect at Beas after they got the *gur-mantra* from the present *Guru* of the Radhaswami sect. Men and women alike recite *shabads* in praise of the *Guru* and each one of them secretly recites the *gur-mantra.* The residents believe that in the Radhaswami sect it is

forbidden to take liquor and meat and that women-folk are forbidden to indulge in back-biting or to talk ill of others. Despite these beliefs the Radhaswamis in the village do not strictly follow these teachings but are content to hope for salvation through a mechanical recitation of the *gurmantra.*

The community worship is very rarely performed in the village and when it is performed as was done last year to please God *Bali,* the Community Panchayat arranges the whole ceremony. The expenditure is borne jointly by all the households though the contribution is not compulsory. In religious matters the illiterate people follow the commands of the elderly people with blind faith. *Guru Granth Sahib* is the only religious book in this village and is possessed by Giani Sital Singh, son of Dia Ram the *Chamar* priest. On the day of every *Sankrant* he recites verses from the *Granth Sahib* and distributes *karah parshad.* He finances the ceremony himself though he gets customary charities from his *jajmans* on social and religious occasions. Individuals and groups of individuals undertake pilgrimages to various religious places. Four case-studies of pilgrims in different age-groups from 20 to 60 years reveal that Pehowa, Kurukshetra, Haridwar, *Darbar Sahib* at Amritsar, and Anandpur Sahib, Kiratpur Sahib, Naina Devi, Beas, Dehra Dun and Kartarpur are the important places of pilgrimage for the residents of Mahsa Tibba. Religious beliefs of the *Chamars* are based on certain fears about gods and goddesses, and faith in their supernatural powers. Pilgrimages to holy places and the seats of these gods and goddesses are looked upon as inalienable aspects of their religious obligations. A bath in the Ganges at Haridwar or in the holy pool at Amritsar, Kurukshetra and Pehowa would purge them of all sins and mechanical repetition of the *gurmantra* would earn them salvation. Their belief is simple and un-encumbered with any philosophical issues.

VILLAGE ORGANISATION

All the 22 households except one of Bhajan Dass who has put up his homestead on a deserted hillock are living in a compact locality mid-way between the villages of Berson and Manjholi on its west and east, respectively. Before Partition, the village consisted of two clearly demarcated hamlets one belonging to Muslim *Gujjars* residing on the hillock and the other to Ramdasia *Chamars.* However, with the departure of the *Gujjars* the Ramdasias have not only become independent but have also shaken off the mantle of menials. The solitary family of a Ramdasia-farmer residing on the hillock is independent in all respects of the main Ramdasia community, which is quite homogeneous.

In this area, Manjholi is a very influential village. It is a comparatively larger village and the presence of a number of *pucca* houses speaks of its prosperity. Its population is composed, besides *Harijans* of Brahmans, Khatris, Sikh Jats, *Lohars, Tarkhans* and Muslim *Gujjars,* all of whom are more progressive and better off than the Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba. The Ramdasias have been dependent on these castes in the past and even now are socially and economically inferior to them. The importance of Manjholi can be gauged from the fact that the headquarters of the statutory panchayat, a Government Middle School and a dispensary are located there. The

Public Relations Department arranges free cinema shows in this village. Besides, there are a number of shops in this village. The Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba have frequent contacts with the residents of Manjholi.

No village in this area is dependent on Mahsa Tibba either for implements or for supplementing income but on the other hand the residents of this village are dependent on the neighbouring villages for obtaining land for cultivation. They supply casual labour and sell grass besides lifting dead cattle even in neighbouring villages. For rendering these services they receive a customary payment of two maunds of grains at every harvest. The Ramdasias get agricultural implements made by *lohars* and *tarkhans* at Manjholi and they obtain their earthenware from Shadi Lal potter in the village of Ghanauli whom they pay ten seers of grains during a year. Winnowing-baskets are purchased from the roaming *chuhras* and *dheas* against payments in cash. Three *Sadhs* living in the village function as priests and Parsinni, an old woman, acts as the midwife.

Factions between residents of different villages are not at all common. Ramdasias of this village are humble folk. In matters of money and land they are dependent on their neighbours with whom they cannot afford to quarrel. They are too busy eking out their subsistence to find time to form blocs and indulge in factionalism. Hari Ram the chief spokesman of the village, alone can spare some time to participate in deliberations of the statutory panchayat. He contested the *Lambardari* rights against Gian Singh Saini of Berson and despite opposition from the land-owning classes of neighbouring villages, he is reported to have got conferred upon himself the *Lambardari* rights. In the elections to the statutory panchayat also Ramdasias took a stand against the other communities. Elections to the present panchayat were contested on communal basis and out of six members three are Ramdasias two of whom belong to this village.

Ramdasias of Mahsa Tibba keep social and cultural relations with only Ramdasias of other villages. Dealings with other communities are formal and almost entirely regulated by economic considerations. Ramdasias frequently visit other villages but the residents of other villages visit their settlement either to purchase grass or to get shoes repaired or contract casual labour. Recently the contacts of Ramdasias with the neighbouring villages have greatly improved. Ramdasias work together with other castes in the Community Panchayat and command great influence and they also mix freely with other communities at village shops and tea-stalls. Children of all communities receive education together at school and all persons irrespective of their caste enjoy entertainments like cinema shows arranged by the community. Thus it would seem that social intercourse between different communities has very much increased during the last decade.

STATUTORY PANCHAYAT

Mahsa Tibba along with fifteen other villages falls under the jurisdiction of the Gram Panchayat, Manjholi. It has six members and one Panchayat Secretary, who maintains accounts of seven panchayats. The panchayat was first established in 1956. The elections to the present

panchayat were held on 15th May, 1961, when four *panches* were elected unanimously and a lady member from Mahsa Tibba was nominated. The office of the *Sarpanch* was contested by three persons. Gian Singh, Ramdasia of village Bairampur, Amar Singh, *Tarkhan* of village Manjholi and Lachchman Singh, Sikh Jat and a *Lambardar* of village Guguwal. The voters got together and voted on the basis of caste and there being a majority of Ramdasia *Chamars* in his panchayat constituency, Gian Singh Ramdasia of village Bairampur was elected as a *Sarpanch*. The name, age, caste, education, occupation and economic status in relation to land of each panchayat members are given below:—

Name	Age	Caste	Standard of literacy	Occupation	Economic Status
Gian Singh	40	*Ramdasia* Sikh	*Urdu* (Primary)	Agriculture	Cultivating 6 *bighas* of owned and about 60 *bighas* of leased-in land
Hari Ram	50	*Ramdasia*	Nil	—do—	Cultivating 10 *bighas* of owned and about 60 *bighas* of leased-in land
Nisa Ram	50	*Jat*	Nil	—do—	Cultivating about 90 *bighas* of owned land
Daulat Ram	40	*Rajput*	*Urdu* (Middle)	—do—	Cultivating 150 *bighas* of owned land
Dasaundhi Ram	40	*Saini*	*Urdu* and *Hindi* (6th)	—do—	Cultivating 40 *bighas* of owned land
Parsinni (female)	55	*Ramdasia*	Nil	Dai	Indigent

It is to be noted that all panchayat members, except the nominated member who is a widow aged 55 years, are in their forties. Half of them are illiterate and the others can read and write Urdu. All of them, except the *Dai*, are agriculturists being either owner-cultivators or owner-cultivators-*cum*-tenants. Obviously, economic status with respect to land appears to be the governing consideration in becoming a member of the statutory panchayat.

During the year 1962-63 the village panchayat had a total income of Rs. 8,069 and incurred an expenditure of Rs. 1,754. Almost 37 per cent of the total income accrued from the *shamlat* including the sale of *bajri*, grass, wood and stray-cattle. The main item of expenditure is contribution to the National Defence Fund amounting to Rs. 685. (Details are given in Appendix J). The statutory panchayat has so far constructed the building of a Government school at Manjholi at a cost of Rs. 30,000, culverts in the villages Manjholi, Berson and Bela at a cost of Rs. 2,000, *Janjghar* in village Bela at a cost of Rs. 767 and a *chabootra* at a cost of Rs. 769. The panchayat has not so far undertaken any developmental work in the village Mahsa Tibba.

During 1962-63 the panchayat heard 11 cases including 4 civil, 5 criminal and 2 revenue cases. All the 4 civil cases were compromised. Three criminal cases were likewise compromised in the panchayat but two had to be referred to the court of Sub-Divisional Magistrate. Both the revenue cases instituted in the panchayat were also compromised. None of these cases related to Mahsa Tibba. The meetings of the panchayat are held in the building of the Government school at Manjholi which was constructed by it.

According to Parsinni, the woman-member of the panchayat from Mahsa Tibba, the most important function of the village panchayat is to maintain the *shamlat*. Hari Ram, another *Panch* from this village believes that the primary duty of the panchayat is to ensure justice to all. Gian Singh, *Sarpanch*, who is also a Ramdasia hailing from the village of Bairampur, has reported that the functions of the statutory panchayat are to settle disputes, maintain *shamlat* land, undertake works of village uplift, construct village lands, open training centres in sewing, dispensaries and schools, look afer common interests, take care of village sanitation and build culverts.

COMMUNITY PANCHAYAT

Ramdasia *Chamars* have their own Community Panchayat under the aegis of which they settle their intra-family and inter-family disputes. The Community Panchayat is a voluntary organisation aiming at regulating the social life of the Ramdasias. It has neither any elected office-bearers nor any political, economic or religious programme. No record is kept of its activities. It derives its authority from the unanimous support of the members who believe in settling their disputes with the help of elderly persons instead of fighting them out in law courts.

Theoretically, every person in the village is a member of the caste panchayat but actually the number of active members is very small. In Mahsa Tibba Rirku Ram and Hari Ram are unanimously regarded as the heads of the Community Panchayat. Rirku Ram aged about 60 years belongs to the *Guru got* which is the majority sub-caste in the village population. He is considered to be honest, wise and capable of admonishing the quarrelling parties by quoting apt religious anecdotes and episodes. He commands the confidence of the villagers. He is also comparatively a richer person owning 16 *bighas* of land which he has purchased himself. He has also educated his son up to the Matriculation standard though the latter could not get through the examination. Rirku Ram has reported that so far he has attended about 40 panchayat meetings held at different places in the erstwhile Nalagarh State. Hari Ram also belongs to the *Guru got*. He is aged 50 years and is the head of a joint family having five sons, three of whom are married. He can easily spare some time to represent the community in different matters and at different places. He appears to be neither clever nor talkative but is regarded as honest and sincere capable of shouldering responsibility. He has been a member of the statutory panchayat for the last ten years. Recently he has been able to secure the office of the *Lambardar* which has so far been held by a Saini of the village Berson. Hari Ram owns about ten *bighas* of land. Other persons in the village take little interest

in the activities of the Community Panchayat. Those who are in their thirties consider themselves to be too immature yet to participate in the proceedings while the older members are indifferent and lack qualities of leadership.

Broadly speaking, the main function of the Community Panchayat is to preserve social norms and safeguard the interests of the community. The Community Panchayat ensures that no endogamous marriage takes place. It is reported that about three decades ago, a Ramdasia belonging to the village Dadhi contracted *karewa* with a widow belonging to the same *got* as his maternal grandmother without the prior approval of the panchayat. The *bradari* viewed the matter very seriously and the Community Panchayat assembled in the village Dadhi. Rirku Ram from Mahsa Tibba also attended this meeting. The panchayat unanimously decided to ostracise that person by imposing punishment of *hukka-pani-band* and *nari-kuri-band*. In other words, none would smoke and dine with him and none would give him or take his daughter in marriage. Six months later the offender confessed his guilt and petitioned the Community Panchayat for revoking the punishment. He was severely admonished by the panchayat. Some water was sprinkled over him and he was offered a smoke signifying his admission into the brotherhood.

On all marriages, except *karewa*, the presence of important members of the Community Panchayat is essential. Recently a widow belonging to this village settled with a Ramdasia belonging to another village without informing the brotherhood. The Community Panchayat has frowned upon this action and has decided to regard the issues from this union as bastards. A marriage is socially recognised only if it takes place with the approval of the community and the customary rituals are performed in the presence of prominent representatives of the brotherhood.

Any deviation from the accepted norms of married life is severely condemned. Recently Mrs. X and Mr. Y were tried by the Community Panchayat for committing adultery. Both of them were put to shame and administered a severe admonishment. Through the efforts of the Community Panchayat a limit has been imposed on the amount of cash and ornaments to be demanded by the parents of the bride at the time of marriage. A meeting of the Community Panchayat attended by some 500 persons was held at the village Chandpur Dakala of Rupar Tahsil about 40 years ago when this decision was taken. Rirku Ram of Mahsa Tibba had attended this meeting. Good offices of the Community Panchayat are also used in settling cases of divorce or separation.

The Community Panchayat also prescribes the pattern of behaviour of the brotherhood like inter-dining and inter-smoking with the other communities. Some years ago a meeting of the Community Panchayat which was attended by Rirku Ram was held at the village Retar of Nalagarh Tahsil in which it was considered whether the Ramdasia *Chamars* in the erstwhile State of Nalagarh should act as menials to *Chanals* or *Kabirbansis* as the latter had an origin lower than that of the former. After deliberations it was decided that the *Chamars* would not lift the dead

cattle or carry palanquins of, or dine or smoke with *Chanals* and *Kabirbansis*. One *Chamar* who carried the palanquin of a *Chanal* in disregard of this decision was boycotted. He was admitted back to the brotherhood only after he had tendered a proper apology and arranged *dham*, the community meal. Besides settling these social disputes, the Community Panchayat also intervenes in cases of theft, breach of contract or dispute over land and property. *Chamars* cannot afford litigation and therefore, try to settle cases among themselves with the help of Community Panchayat.

The jurisdiction of the Community Panchayat does not extend to any definite area. It varies according to the nature of the dispute and the villages involved in it. Generally, the cases of village Mahsa Tibba are settled in the village itself but if a case is serious involving a number of villages a larger panchayat is convened. Practically the whole of the area included in the erstwhile Nalagarh State falls under the jurisdiction of Community Panchayat of Ramdasias.

The caste panchayat in Mahsa Tibba gives effect to the decisions of the statutory Gram Panchayat in so far as they relate to this village. If the village is given any grant by the Gram Panchayat, Hari Ram and Rirku Ram form a sub-committee with two or three members and devise ways and means to obtain and utilise the amount. When the Welfare Department decided to construct a colony of ten houses in this village the list of persons to be benefited under this scheme was drawn up by the Community Panchayat of the village. Similarly, the Community Panchayat arranges rituals and sacrifices to ward off diseases and other evil events. Last year, the sacrifice of a he-goat was arranged in the name of god *Bali* to end the disease which had spread in the village.

Rirku Ram, who has been attending the meetings of the Community Panchayat for the last 40 years has reported that the working of this organisation has undergone a great change during the last two decades. The institution of boycott as a punishment has almost been completely abandoned and the influence and power of the Community Panchayat has declined. The people are fully aware of the functions of the police and the law courts which they think are better authorities for imposing punishments. The only utility of the caste panchayat at present, according to Rirku Ram is to bring about compromises and prevent the disputants from engaging in litigation.

FAMILY PLANNING

Among the recently introduced reform measures the situation in the field of family planning has been studied. A family planning clinic is functioning at Rupar and some facilities for family planning are also available at the Health Centre, Nalagarh. Nothing, however, has been done in this village to popularise family planning measures. The villagers are not at all aware of the need for planned parenthood. The birth of a child is believed to be an act of god and adoption of measures to prevent it is regarded as an offence against nature. The villagers fear that the use of contraceptives would spoil their health and undermine fertility among women. If the Government cannot

cause a son to be born to a barren couple, the ignorant villagers argue, it has no business to stop babies from being born to those who beget them. The argument that restricted size of the family would raise their standard of living does not appeal to them because they advance the counter- argument that if they are allotted cultivable fallow lands or custodian lands or provided with other alternative means of employment they would be able to support not only their present but even bigger families. Thus they are against the use of contraceptives and deliberate measures to check the size of the family. But the desire to have additional children differs with the duration of marriage. Out of 11 persons interviewed who married more than 20 years ago only three want more children while the remaining eight do not want any more. The other eight persons who married less than 20 years ago want more children. Out of 17 persons having 1-3 sons, nine want more children while the remaining eight do not want any more issues. Two persons having no son each have a desire for more children. Out of eight persons having no daughters two want to have more children but six do not have any such desire.

Thus the couples who have no male issues are very much anxious to beget more children. A son is a symbol of strength. He earns his own livelihood and is not a burden on his parents. Therefore, the more sons a person has the luckier he is. Correlating the attitude towards family planning with the age of the married males, it is to be found that none of the six persons aged more than 50 years wants to have another child whereas three persons out of five in their forties want more children. No male married person below the age of 30 years is willing to restrict the size of his family. Similarly, no woman except one aged more than 40 years, wants to have any more children whereas none below the age of 36 is willing to stop bearing any more issues.

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

The Community Development Block and the Welfare Department have undertaken a number of development activities in this village. The most important gift of the Welfare Department to this village is the construction of a colony of ten model houses. The Department has sanctioned a subsidy of Rs. 750 per house and each beneficiary in return will have to contribute labour worth Rs. 200. Twelve households out of 22 already possess sufficient accommodation. Six new houses under this scheme were complete by March, 1962. With the completion of this project the accommodation problem will be fully solved. In this respect Mahsa Tibba is the most favoured village because no such scheme has been launched in any other village of the Nalagarh Tahsil. The same department launched a 'Land for *Harijans*' scheme during the Second Five-Year Plan under which the Government would make a matching contribution of Rs. 2,500 for purchase of land for a *Harijan* worth Rs. 5,000. Up to March, 1962 only seven members had availed of this scheme in this Tahsil. Sadha Ram has acquired six acres of land in village Makauri. The Welfare Department has given interest-free loans amounting to Rs. 3,900 during the last five years for development of handicrafts like shoe-making and weaving, but no person in this village has received

any loan. The Community Development Block has constructed the Common Facility Centre for imparting industrial training to the villagers at a cost of Rs. 2,500 and a platform around a tree was constructed at a cost of Rs. 250. A *ban*-training centre was started in this building in December, 1960. The course lasted three months and every trainee was given a stipend of twelve annas per day. The raw material was provided at the expense of the Government. In all, four women and six men received training in *ban*-making, but none of them has adopted the profession of *ban*-making after the completion of training. A leather centre was started in the same building on 22nd January, 1961 to impart training in boot-making. Fifteen persons underwent the training for nine months. The Government provided the material and a stipend of rupee one per head per day. Three persons in the village have been able to augment their income from shoe-making as a result of the training received by them.

The Block Development Agency has also given a grant of Rs. 500 to five shoe-makers, 100 rupees each, for repair and improvement of leather-tanning pits but so far no tanning-pit has been commissioned because *Chamars* prefer to bring tanned hides from Rupar or Nalagarh. The village has also received a grant of Rs. 175 for providing a cemented cover over the drinking water well. A loan of Rs. 500 bearing interest of 3 per cent advanced to five persons for investment in the shoe-making industry has not so far been utilised by anybody. The Industrial Extension Officer has recently organised a society named "The Mahsa Tibba Shoe-Makers and Tanners Society" consisting of 12 members with a share of Rs. 25 per head and a maximum credit limit of Rs. 1,200. The society has not yet started functioning as the members have not paid their shares. A compost-pit competition was arranged by the Block Agency during the Second Five-Year Plan. In March, 1961 the village Mahsa Tibba was awarded the first prize of Rs. 100 for maintaining compost-pits in a proper manner.

The Block Agency, distributes seeds of the improved variety, fertilizers and agricultural implements. Demonstrations are given to popularise improved methods of cultivation. A fodder-cutting machine was given to this village four years ago free of cost to demonstrate its utility. Insecticides are distributed every year to help kill rats and other insects damaging the crops. About ten bags of fertilizers each weighing one Cwt., and five maunds of improved varieties of wheat seeds, namely, C-250 and C-286, are sold in the village every year. During the Second Five-Year Plan one Meston plough and bar harrow were given for the purpose of demonstration. According to the Agricultural Extension Officer during the period 1954-61 the following improved implements were distributed among the villagers in this Block:—

Meston Plough	83
Soil Stirrer	25
Hindustan	38
Bar Harrow	12
Tarphali	6
Maize Dibbler	11

The following varieties of improved seeds were also distributed:—

Wheat	1372 maunds
Gram	87 "

Jhona (349)	174 mds.
Basmati (370)	65 "
Cotton	57 "

Pora, Kera, Chhatta and drill methods of sowing crops are frequently demonstrated for the benefit of villagers. An agricultural farm for seed multiplication has been started at Manjholi which is very close to Mahsa Tibba. 562 tons of nitrogenous fertilizers have been distributed and a sum of Rs. 121,720 has been given as loan for wells and pumping-sets and a subsidy of Rs. 96,720 has been advanced for constructing *kuhls* during the period, 1954-61. The village of Mahsa Tibba has benefited a lot directly as well as indirectly from the activities of both the Development Block Agency and the Welfare Department of the Government.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the era of planned socio-economic development a study of the *Chamar* community is a very useful exercise. The *Chamars* are fully conscious of the treatment guaranteed by the Constitution to the Scheduled Castes in India. They are jealous of their rights and privileges which they enjoy and exercise to full effect.

The *Chamars,* particurlarly those of the younger generation who have attained adolescence and maturity after the country became free, are gradually holding their heads high by shaking off the age-old complex of survality and subordination to the clean-castes. For example, whereas in the past the meanest Government official, he may be a Constable, a *Patwari* or a *Lambardar* symbolised nothing less than terror for the poor *Chamar,* now he gets no more deferrence than is actually his due. Today a *Chamar* knows that practice of untouchability is a penal offence; that special status has been accorded to his community by the fundamental law of the land; that he can no more be forced to perform *begar;* that he is an equally precious citizen of the country, and that the Government is implementing measures to raise his political, economic and social status. All this fills him with confidence and a sense of elation. He looks to the future with hope.

Improved as the awareness among the *Chamars* is, it can not be denied that it is not as good as that to the other communities. In Mahsa Tibba, there is no radio-set and no body ever buys a newspaper. No literate person has been found to read any pamphlet or other reading material. All news regarding current happenings and events are gathered at tea-stalls or from persons of the neighbouring villages visiting this village. No doubt, with increasing contact with towns, the sphere of consciousness is widening but as yet the *Chamars* of Mahsa Tibba harness the ear rather than the eye for gathering information and knowledge.

The *Chamars* are keen to educate their children to acquire land and to improve their diet and dress. In Mahsa Tibba every household is looking forward to acquire a chair, a table, a cycle and a watch, articles which according to the villagers are a necessity for a literate person. Coincident to the urge to educate themselves is the desire to substitute agriculture or Government service for their traditional occupation of lifting dead cattle and making shoes. As yet, due to their newness to the venture, agriculture is not a wholetime occupation and is to be subsidized by shoe-making, grass-cutting and casual labour, but if the trend continues, as it appears it will, agriculture may soon become a fully remunerative wholetime occupation.

Government and semi-Government agencies including the Community Development Block, the Welfare Department and the Rajpura Co-operative Bank are playing a very useful role in the social and economic life of the

villagers. Through these institutions, the village has acquired a Common Facility Centre and a colony of 10 houses and continues to obtain agricultural credit.

The study of the *Chamars* in Mahsa Tibba reveals that the community is on the move. The fact that two members of the present statutory panchayat are *Chamars* of this village; that 10 residents are members of the Rajpura Co-operative Bank and that the present *Lambardar* of this village is a *Chamar* for the first time in its history leaves no doubt that the *Chamars* fully comprehend their rights and privileges and are eager to grasp the available opportunities.

APPENDIX—A

Temperature recorded at Chandigarh Observatory : 1960

Month	Mean maximum (C°)	Highest (C°)	Mean minimum (C°)	Lowest (C°)
January	20.4	25.1	6.4	2.2
February	23.3	29.8	10.3	5.5
March	27.0	30.6	13.0	8.2
April	33.4	38.9	18.8	13.4
May	39.7	42.8	23.8	17.8
June	40.5	44.2	26.2	20.0
July	33.7	39.2	24.5	21.9
August	32.9	36.7	23.8	21.3
September	34 0	35.7	22.3	19:0
October	32.3	37.0	16.7	11.6
November	27.5	30.7	9.7	6.2
December	23.9	27.8	6.3	2.4

APPENDIX—B

Rainfall recorded at Nalagarh from 1951 to 1961

Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
1951	1.37	1.25	3.33	0.27	0.50	0 46	14.32	9.57	5.79	0.17	5.52	..	42.55
1952	2 00	1.90	1.49	..	..	5.36	11 91	24.10	..	..	..	0.41	47.17
1953	5.17	0.70	..	0.80	..	5 54	11.27	7.20	2.69	..	0.23	..	33.60
1954	4.10	7.76	0 48	..	0.32	0.97	16.38	13.19	16.78	1.64	..	..	61.62
1955	3.86	0.17	1.83	0.72	0.89	1.77	13.33	18.63	16.23	9.68	..	..	67.11
1956	1.31	0.95	3.48	..	..	2 88	16.19	14.90	2.36	8.97	8 97	0.33	60 34
1957	5.34	..	1.61	0 63	0.95	1.49	15.49	4.46	14.25	1.63	0.51	2 09	48.45
1958	0.87	..	0.42	..	0.20	1.69	13.46	15.41	10.97	1.86	..	0.64	45.52
1959	2.53	1.23	0.46	0.10	0.61	2.00	8.88	13.30	17.74	3.86	..	..	50.71
1960	2.56	..	1.45	0.32	0 73	3.15	8.16	20 16	0.58	..	..	2.36	39.47
1961	5.68	8.45	..	..	..	1.29	14.92	18.90	6.81	1.50	0.75	0.85	59.15
Total	34.79	22.41	14.55	2.84	4.20	26.60	144.31	159.82	94.20	29.31	15.98	6.68	555.69
Average	3.16	2.04	1.32	0.26	0.38	2.42	13.12	14.53	8.56	2.67	1.45	0.61	50.52
Percentage for each month	6.26	4.03	2.62	0.51	0.76	4.79	25.97	28.76	16.95	5.27	2.88	1.20	1.00

Note :—The figures are in inches. *Source* :—Tahsil Headquarters Nalagarh.

APPENDIX—C

Accommodation per Household

Name of the head of the household	Number of rooms used as residences	Size of the family	Number of couples
Bhajan Dass	2	7	2
Bhagtu	2	6	1
Dialu	1	3	1
Bhunda	2	6	2
Muni Chand	1	6	1
Sadha	2	7	1
Amin Chand	1	5	1
Faqiroo	2	8	* 1
Puran	1	6	1
Rulia	2	3	** 1
Babu	1	6	1
Chhotu	1	4	1
Surjan	2	3	1
Hari Ram	5	15	5
Punnu	1	4	1
Riṛku Ram	3	9	3
Bhambu	4	13	† 1
Ram Kishan	1	3	* 1
Ganga Ram	2	4	1
Ram Asra	2	3	1
Ram Kishan	1	7	1
Dia Ram	3	5	1

*With widow mother **With widower father †With 3 widower sons

APPENDIX—D

Various Items of Dress in vogue in Mahsa Tibba

Item of dress		Quantity of cloth consumed (Yards)	Type of cloth	Tailoring charges (Rupees)	Total cost (Rupees)
Kamiz	..	3	*Khaddar*/poplin	0.75	4.50
Pyjama	..	2¾	*Khaddar/pata* (with coloured lining)	0.50	3.50
Turban	..	5	Muslin	..	5.50
Chadra	..	2½	*Khaddar*/silk	..	3.00/5.00
Kachha	..	1¼	*Khaddar/pata*	0.25	1.50
vest	..	1	*Khaddar*	0.25	1.00
Jumper	..	2¾	*Khaddar* (printed)/silk	1.00	5.00/7.00
Salwar	..	3½	*Khaddar*/silk	0.75	4.50/6.00
Chunni	..	2¼	*Khaddar*/poplin/silk	..	2.50/4.00
Bandi	..	1½	*Khaddar*	0.25	1.50
Chadar	..	2½	Cotton-spun yarn	..	3.00
Khesi	..	2½	—do—	..	6.00
Kambal	..	2½	Cotton and wool (mixed)	..	10.00
Coat	..	1½	Woollen *patti*	5.00	20.00

APPENDIX—E

Ornaments

Ornament		Part of the body decorated	Metal used	Approximate weight (Tolas)	Approximate cost (Rupees)
Gussal-patti	..	Ankles	Silver	25	60
Ghari-choori	..	Wrist	Gold	2	300
Phul	..	Temples	Silver/Gold	2	5/300
Dhaga	..	Neck	Gold	½	55
Har	..	Neck	Silver	10	30
Koka	..	Nose	Gold	1/32	4
Teeli	..	Nose	Gold	1/48	2
Balian	..	Ears	Gold	½	70
Kante	..	Ears	Silver	1½	7
Chhap	..	Finger	Silver/Gold	½	1/75

APPENDIX—F

Household Goods—Furniture and Utensils

Name of article	Material used	How acquired	Approximate cost (Rupees)	Approximate useful life (Years)
FURNITURE				
Binna ..	*Munj/parali*/bagasse	Made by women at home	0.25	1
Patra ..	Wood	Made by carpenter at Manjholi	0.50	5
Peerhi ..	*Bagarsan* ropes (*ban*) and Wood	Frame made by carpenter and knitting done at home	1.00	3
Chair ..	Wood	Made by carpenter	8.00	15
Stool ..	Wood	—do—	2.00	15
Table ..	Wood	—do—	8.00	15
Bench ..	Wood	—do—	15.00	20
Cot ..	Wood and *ban*	Frame made by carpenter and knitting done at home	5.00	5
UTENSILS				
Kauli ..	Brass	Purchased at Rupar or Nalagarh	1.00	10
Glass ..	Brass	—do—	1.25	10
Garvi ..	Brass	—do—	3.00	10
Thali ..	Brass	—do—	4.00	10
Dabba ..	Brass	—do—	7.50	10
Prat ..	Brass	—do—	10.00	10
Pateeli ..	Brass	—do—	5.00	10
Karchhi ..	Brass or wood	—do—	1.50	10
Tawa ..	Iron	—do—	1.25	10
Chakla-belna ..	Wood	—do—	1.00	2
Chimta ..	Iron	—do—	0.50	10
Tauri ..	Earth	Supplied by the potter	1.00	1
Balti ..	Iron	Purchased at Rupar or Nalagarh	4.00	10
Ghara ..	Earth	Supplied by the *Kumhar*	0.50	½
Valtohi	Brass	Purchased at Rupar/Nalagarh	15.00	15
Dudhooni ..	Earth	Supplied by the potter	0.50	½
Chati ..	Earth	—do—	1.00	1
Jharni ..	Earth.	—do—	0.12	½
Hara ..	Earth	Made by women	0.50	5
Madhani ..	Wood	Purchased at Rupar or Nalagarh	2.00	5
Koonda ..	Earth	—do—	1.00	1
Ghotna ..	Wood	Made by carpenter	0.75	5

APPENDIX—G

Land Utilisation Statement

(in acres)

Year	Total area of the village	Uncultivable waste land	Cultivable waste land	Cultivable area	Current fallows	Area cultivated	Total cropped area
1940-41 ..	231	99	36	96	2	94	103
1941-42 ..	231	99	36	96	13	83	92
1942-43 ..	231	99	36	96	5	91	97
1943-44 ..	231	99	35	97	3	94	103
1944-45 ..	231	99	35	97	1	96	109
1945-46 ..	231	98	37	96	6	90	104
1946-47 ..	231	98	37	96	5	91	99
1947-48 ..	231	98	37	96	19	77	43
1948-49 ..	231	98	37	96	2	94	95
1949-50 ..	231	98	37	96	3	93	118
1950-51 ..	231	98	37	96	13	83	97
1951-52 ..	231	98	37	96	5	91	114
1952-53 ..	231	98	37	96	14	82	90
1953-54 ..	231	98	37	96	9	87	97
1954-55 ..	231	97	35	99	10	89	99
1955-56 ..	231	97	35	99	14	85	98
1956-57 ..	231	97	35	99	19	80	96
1957-58 ..	231	97	35	99	19	80	102
1958-59 ..	231	97	35	99	16	83	102
1959-60 ..	231	97	35	99	36	63	88
1960-61 ..	231	97	35	99	27	72	80

APPENDIX—H

Jinswar Statement—Rabi Crops

(in acres)

Year	Wheat	Gram	Wheat and gram	*Masri*	*Taramira*	Tobacco	Fodder	Vegetables	Misc. crops	Area matured	Area which failed to mature	Total area sown	Total area
1941 ..	4	5 (1)	36 (5)	..	..	..	..	..	..	45	(6)	51	231
1942 ..	24 (4)	2 (1)	12 (2)	..	3 (1)	..	..	..	..	41	(8)	49	231
1943 ..	8 (1)	5 (2)	32 (2)	..	1	1	1	..	..	48	(5)	53	231
1944 ..	9 (1)	10 (3)	38 (1)	..	..	..	..	..	..	57	(5)	62	231
1945 ..	4 (1)	7 (5)	39 (1)	..	..	1	4	..	..	55	(7)	62	231
1946 ..	7	13 (4)	34 (5)	..	2	..	..	..	..	56	(9)	65	231
1947 ..	5	10 (2)	36 (1)	..	1 (1)	1	..	..	..	53	(4)	57	231
1948 ..	..	..	36 (4)	3	1	..	..	..	1	41	(4)	45	231
1949 ..	..	15 (12)	40 (3)	..	..	..	1 (1)	..	..	56	(16)	72	231
1950 ..	19 (17)	20 (3)	15 (13)	1	4	..	..	1 (6)	..	60	(39)	99	231
1951 ..	24	15	18	1	1	..	..	..	..	59	..	59	231
1952 ..	3	27	34	5	4	..	..	..	..	73	..	73	231
1953 ..	34	9	4	..	7	..	..	..	2	56	..	56	231
1954 ..	14	11	23	1	2	..	..	..	..	51	..	51	231
1955 ..	..	18	33	..	..	..	1	..	..	52	..	52	231
1956 ..	19	37	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	57	..	57	231
1957 ..	11	18	23	1	..	..	..	..	..	53	..	53	231
1958 ..	1	27	33	3	1	..	1	..	..	66	..	66	231
1959 ..	6	12	12	..	2	..	..	..	..	32	(20)*	52	231
1960 ..	1	20	38	..	..	..	..	..	..	59	(6)*	65	231
1961 ..	3	12	26	..	..	..	..	..	..	41	(5)*	46	231

Note.—Figures in brackets indicate *Kharaba*, i.e., the area that did not mature. Cropwise details of *Kharaba* figures marked with asterisk are not available.

APPENDIX—I

Jinswar Statement—Kharif Crops

(in acres)

Year	Maize	*Chari* and *Jowar*	Groundnut	*Kangni* and *Cheena*	*Moth*	Sugarcane	Cotton	Fodder	Misc. crops	Area matured	Area that failed to mature	Total area sown	Total area
1941 ..	16	7	..	5	6	..	10	6	1	51	..	51	231
1942 ..	9 (6)	7	..	2 (2)	5	...	7 (3)	18	2	50	(11)	61	231
1943 ..	13 (3)	5	..	5 (3)	3 (1)	..	6	12	2	46	(7)	53	231
1944 ..	14 (1)	1	..	4 (2)	.. (1)	..	7 (1)	27	1	54	(5)	59	231
1945 ..	13 (2)	6	..	4 (1)	2	..	7	13	1	46	(3)	49	231
1946 ..	13 (2)	5 (2)	..	2 (4)	5 (2)	1	7 (2)	13 (2)	..	46	(14)	60	231
1947 ..	19	20	..	5	..	1	1 (2)	..	2 (1)	48	(3)	51	231
1948 ..	15	..	..	..	..	..	9	11	3	38	..	38	231
1949 ..	9 (13)	1 (1)	6	..	3	..	1	16	3 (4)	39	(18)	57	231
1950 ..	10	..	..	..	6	..	1	11	5	33	..	33	231
1951 ..	14	..	4	..	7	..	1	9	4	39	..	39	231
1952 ..	5	..	3	..	5	..	..	15	5	33	..	33	231
1953 ..	9	10	2	..	7	..	..	13	5	46	..	46	231
1954 ..	5	1	3	..	11	..	1	20	6	47	..	47	231
1955 ..	8	..	..	..	13	..	1	14	5	41	..	41	231
1956 ..	9	..	..	..	13	1	2	16	2	43	..	43	231
1957 ..	10	1	2	..	5	2	..	14	2	36	..	36	231
1958 ..	9 (5)	..	..	..	6 (4)	.. (1)	2 (1)	19	2 (1)	38	(12)	50	231
1959 ..	8 (2)	..	1	..	.. (3)	1	1	7	..	18	(5)	23	231
1960 ..	14 (1)	..	1 (1)	..	1	1	..	14	1	32	(2)	34	231
1961 ..	11 (1)	..	1 (1)	..	.. (2)	1	..	13 (1)	2	28	(5)	33	231

Note.—Figures in brackets indicate *Kharaba*, i.e., the area that did not mature.

APPENDIX—J

Income and Expenditure of the Statutory Panchayat for the year, 1962-63

		Rs nP.
	INCOME	
Court fees	..	17.00
Income from *shamlat* land including the sale of *bajri*, grass, wood and stray cattle	..	2,946.05
Government grants	..	1,184.84
Tax (Cycle tax)	..	54.00
Miscellaneous (interest, etc.)	..	21.67
Previous balance	..	3,845.66
Total	..	**8,069.22**
	EXPENDITURE	
National Defence Fund	..	685.00
Wages	..	270.00
Miscellaneous	..	799.27
Total	..	**1,754.27**
Balance of Income over Expenditure	..	6,314.95

TABLE 1
Population by age-groups

Age-groups	Persons	Males	Females
0—4	18	6	12
5—9	23	13	10
10—14	12	7	5
15—19	18	11	7
20—24	10	5	5
25—29	14	6	8
30—34	9	6	3
35—39	6	5	1
40—44	...	...	...
45—49	5	2	3
50—54	5	3	2
55—59	2	1	1
60 and above	11	6	5
Total	**133**	**71**	**62**

TABLE 2
Education by age-groups

Age-groups	*Total population*			*Illiterate*		*Literate without educational standard*		*Primary*		*Middle*		*Matric*	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—4	18	6	12	6	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9	23	13	10	11	10	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14	12	7	5	6	2	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	..
15—19	18	11	7	3	7	1	..	5	..	2	..	..	..
20—24	10	5	5	3	5	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
25—29	14	6	8	5	8	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
30—34	9	6	3	6	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
35—39	6	5	1	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
40—44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
45—49	5	2	3	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
50—54	5	3	2	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
55—59	2	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 and above	11	6	5	6	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**133**	**71**	**62**	**57**	**59**	**3**	..	**7**	**3**	**3**	..	**1**	..

TABLE 3
Population by broad age-groups (Workers and Non-workers)

Age-groups	*Population*			*Workers*			*Non-workers*		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
0—14 ..	53	26	27	1	1	..	52	25	27
15—34 ..	51	28	23	48	25	23	3	3	..
35—59 ..	18	11	7	11	10	1	7	1	6
60 and above ..	11	6	5	6	6	..	5	..	5
Total ..	**133**	**71**	**62**	**66**	**42**	**24**	**67**	**29**	**38**

TABLE 4(A)
Workers classified by sex, broad age-groups and occupations

Age-groups	*Total workers*			*Agriculturists*		*Batai Tenants*		*Agricultural labourers*		*Casual labourers*		*Servants including Dai*		*Harijan Priests*		*Shoemakers*	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—14 ..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
15—34 ..	48	25	23	3	..	7	..	..	23	4	..	6	..	2	..	3	..
35—39 ..	11	10	1	2	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	1	1	..	3	..
60 and above ..	6	6	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
Total ..	**66**	**42**	**24**	**7**	..	**10**	..	..	**23**	**6**	..	**7**	**1**	**4**	..	**8**	..

TABLE 4(B)
Non-workers by broad age-groups

Age-groups	*Non-workers*			*Persons engaged in household work*		*Dependants, infants, children not attending Schools*		*Persons seeking employment*		*Full-time students attending Schools*	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—14 ..	52	25	27	..	..	22	24	..	..	3	3
15—34 ..	3	3	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2	..
35—59 ..	7	1	6	..	6	..	..	1	..	..	..
60 and above ..	5	..	5	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total ..	**67**	**29**	**38**	..	**11**	**23**	**24**	**1**	..	**5**	**3**

P—denotes Persons ; M—denotes Males; and F—denotes Females.

TABLE 5

Age at Marriage

Age-groups	Total married persons	Males	Females
0—10	31	10	21
11—13	13	8	5
14—16	14	8	6
17—19	6	5	1
20—22	5	4	1
23—25	..	...	...
26—29	...	...	...
30 and above	..	..	..
Total	***69**	**35**	**34**

*Includes 3 widowers, one widow and one separated woman.

TABLE 6

Marital Status by age-groups

Age-groups	*Total population*			*Never married*		*Married*		*Widowed*		*Divorced or separated*	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—4 ..	18	6	12	6	12	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9 ..	23	13	10	13	10	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14 ..	12	7	5	6	4	1	1	..	..	..	..
15—19 ..	18	11	7	8	2	3	5	..	..	..	..
20—24 ..	10	5	5	..	..	5	5	..	..	..	..
25—29 ..	14	6	8	1	..	4	8	1	..	..	..
30—34 ..	9	6	3	1	..	5	3	..	..	..	..
35—39 ..	6	5	1	1	..	3	1	1	..	..	..
40—44 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
45—49 ..	5	2	3	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	1
50—54 ..	5	3	2	..	..	3	2	..	..	..	..
55—59 ..	2	1	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
60 and above ..	11	6	5	..	..	5	4	1	1	..	..
**Total .. .. ..

TABLE 7

Outstanding Debt

The source from which obtained	Total debt outstanding	Percentage to the total debt for each source
	Rs	
Money-lender	2,900	34.9
Co-operative Society	1,136	13.7
Government Agency	1,885	22.7
Zamindar	1,110	13.4
Relatives and Friends	1,270	15.3
Total	**8,301**	**100.0**

TABLE 8

Indebtedness by causes

Purpose for which debt was taken	Amount of debt for each cause	Number of households indebted	Avergae debt per indebted family	Percentage of debt for each cause to the total debt
	Rs		Rs	
Marriage ..	1,504	5	300.80	18.12
Construction and repair of house ..	670	6	111.67	8.07
Purchase of land ..	1,862	5	372.40	22.43
Purchase of cattle, seed, cart, etc. ..	1,225	4	306.25	14.76
Domestic use ..	305	2	152.50	3.67
Financing of leather work ..	1,550	3	516.67	18.67
Setting up of tanning pits ..	715	3	238.33	8.61
Repayment of old debt ..	370	1	370.00	4.46
Medical treatment ..	100	1	100.00	1.21
Total	**8,301**			**100**

GLOSSARY

Aam	...	Mangifera indica.
Abadi	...	Village habitation.
Ajwain	...	Thymol (Caram copticum).
Alsi	...	Linseed.
Amrood	...	Guava (Psidium guava).
Anand Karaj	...	Marriage rite among Sikhs.
Arhar	...	A pulse (Cajanus indicus).
Asadh	..	June-July.
Asuj	...	September-October.
Bachola	...	A go-between.
Bagh	...	Panther.
Baisakh	...	April-May.
Baithak	...	Drawing room.
Baisakhi	...	An important seasonal festival held on the first of *Baisakh.*
Bajra	...	Spiked millet.
Bala	...	Rafter used in the ceiling of a *kotha.*
Bali	...	Ear-ring. Name of local diety.
Banjar	...	Barren land.
Banwah	...	A type of grass.
Bradari	...	Brotherhood.
Barat	...	A religious fast.
Basuti	...	Adhatoda vasica.
Batai	...	System of share-cropping.
Bathu	...	Chenopdium album.
Batna	...	Unguent.
Bazigar	...	A Scheduled Caste.
Begar	...	Forced labour.
Behra	...	Court-yard.
Berara	...	Mixture of wheat and gram.
Ber/Beri	...	Zizyphus jujuba.
Bhadon	...	August-September.
Bohar	...	Banyan tree (Ficus bengalensis).
Boora	...	Refined sugar.
Brahmbhoj	...	A community meal served at the time of marriage.
Chadra	...	A sheet of cloth wrapped round the waist by men.
Chakota	...	Cash rent.
Chandoa	...	Red cloth wrapped round the bride at the time of marriage.
Chari	...	Large millet (Sorgham vulgare), as green fodder.

Chaudhry ... A community leader.
Cheehl ... Pine (Pinus longifolia).
Chela ... A faith-curer.
Chet ... March-April.
Chhal ... Anogeissous latifolia.
Chhan ... A thatched dwelling.
Chauka ... A square piece of ground plastered with cow-dung.
Chaunki ... A low wooden stool.
Chowkidar ... Village watchman.
Chunni ... Scarf.
Dai ... Untrained midwife.
Dal ... Pulse.
Dalia ... A sweet-dish offered to the water-god as an oblation.
Damri ... An obsolete Indian coin.
Datan ... Bark of walnut tree.
Dera ... Rest-house for marriage parties.
Dham ... A community meal.
Dhania ... Coriander (Coriandrum sativum).
Dilla ... A weed infesting maize crop.
Diwali ... The festival of lights.
Dori ... Ribbon.
Dun ... A sub-montane tract.
Gachni ... A type of earth.
Gaddi ... Religious seat.
Garvi ... A round brass tumbler.
Garna ... Cariss diffusa.
Gawara ... Cluster-bean (Cyamopsis psoralioides).
Ghari-choori ... A bracelet.
Ghee ... Clarified butter.
Goh ... A big lizard.
Golu ... White-clay.
Got ... Sub-caste.
Guggal-dhoop ... An incense burnt to please the gods.
Gugga Pir ... The snake-god.
Gur ... Jaggery.
Gurgabi ... Pump-shoe.
Guru .. Preceptor.
Gussal-patti .. A silver anklet.
Granth Sahib .. Scriptures of the Sikhs.
Hadwana .. Water-melon (Cucumis vulgaris).
Har .. Necklace.
Jajman .. A client.
Jamun .. Black-berry (Eugenia jambolana).
Jowar .. Great millet.
Jeth .. May-June.

Jhakkra ... An earthen pitcher.
Kali Mai ... The goddess *Kali*.
Kanghi ... Comb.
Kanta ... An ear ornament used by women.
Kapah ... Cotton.
Kara ... An iron bangle.
Karahi ... Brass or iron cauldron.
Karewa . Remarriage without usual marriage ceremonies.
Kartik .. October-November.
Kat ... Rafter used in the ceiling of a *chhan*.
Kauli ... A deep brass dish.
Khabbal .. Low green grass (Cynodon dactylon).
Khajur ... Palm tree (Phoenix sylvestris).
Kharbooza ... Musk melon (Cucumis melo).
Kharif ... Autumn harvest.
Khawaja ... The water-god.
Kikar ... Acacia arabica.
Kotha ... A room.
Kuhl ... Temporary water channels made by raising bunds to divert the water of a stream.
Kuram ... Son's or daughter's father-in-law.
Laddoo ... A kind of sweetmeat.
Lakshmi ... The goddess of wealth.
Lal-kitab ... Village Note-book.
Lambardar ... Village headman.
Lohar . Blacksmith.
Lohri ... Seasonal festival falling on the 30th *Poh*.
Magh ... January-February.
Maghar ... November-December.
Mallahs ... Small-berry.
Mallair .. Berry-bushes.
Mangna/Mangni ... Betrothal ceremony.
Mash ... Black-gram (Phaseolus radiatus).
Masri ... Lentil (Ervum lens).
Mauli ... Multi-coloured cotton thread.
Mehndi ... Myrtle (Myrtus communis).
Methi Trigonella (Foenum-graecum).
Misl-e-Hakiat ... Record of rights.
Moth .. Phaseolus aconitifolius.
Muklawa ... *Gauna* ceremony.
Mungi .. Green-gram (Phaseolus mungo).
Munj ... Saccharum munja.
Nadi ... A small stream.

Nala ... Trouser-string.
Neonda ... Customary present made at the time of marriage.
Pahari ... A dialect.
Parna ... A scarf.
Parandi ... Braid ribbon.
Pathri ... A stone-slab used as anvil.
Patwari ... The village accountant.
Phagun ... February-March.
Pheras ... Perambulations of the sacred fire.
Phul ... Head-ornament.
Phulahi ... Acacia modesta.
Phuttan ... A spicies of long musk-melon which bursts open when ripe.
Pipal ... Ficus religiosa.
Pir ... A Muslim Saint.
Pdh ... December-January.
Poola ... A sheaf of grass.
Rabi ... Spring harvest.
Rasont ... Bitumen—A medicinal substance extracted from the wood and root of a hill tree called *dar hald*.
Sadh ... A priest.
Salwar ... Female trousers.
Samagri ... Incenses.
Sarpanch ... Head of the statutory panchayat.
Sarson ... Mustard (Brassica campestris).
Saunf ... Ani-seed (Foeniculum vulgare).
Sawan ... July-August.
Sèh ... Porcupine.
Sehra ... Wedding crown.
Shahtoot ... Mulberry (Morus alba).
Shakkar ... Cane-sugar.
Sitla Mai ... The goddess *Sitla*.
Sooh ... A weed.
Suhag-Patari ... A basket containing cosmetics for the bride.
Surkhi ... Lip-stick.
Surma ... Antimony.
Tavit ... Amulet.
Tahli ... Dalbergia sissoo.
Taramira ... Rocket (Eruca sativa).
Tarkh ... Hyena.
Tarkhan ... Carpenter.
Thumb ... Eatables offered at the altar of the goddess.
Tibba ... A small hillock.
Til ... Sesamum orientale.
Toona ... Charm.

Toori	...	Wheat chaff.
Toot	...	Mulberry fruit (Morus alba).
Vari	...	Garments presented to the bride.
Vedi	...	A canopy.
Yuga	...	Aeon.