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ART. XIII.—*Two Lectures on the Aboriginal Race of India, as distinguished from the Sanskritic or Hindu Race.* By LIEUT.-GENERAL BRIGGS, F.R.S.

[Delivered 8th May, and 19th June, 1852.]

THE subject on which I propose to address you possesses a certain degree of interest, if it be only for its novelty. We have heard, it is true, for a series of years, of races of Hill-people in different parts of India; and latterly the accounts of them have crowded in upon us from many directions. Some have called them aborigines, without troubling themselves about their origin; while others have considered them Hindus expelled from their caste for some misdemeanour; but no one seems to have entertained the idea that the numerous communities which have been found spread over the surface of India, were the inhabitants of the country before the Hindus, or that those communities had one common origin. This idea appears to have occurred to no one that I am aware of till about six years ago, when I had occasion to refer to several papers on this subject in the Transactions of this Society, and those of the more ancient Society in Calcutta. When I began to compare the various accounts one with another, I did not fail to perceive the very close general analogies of their customs and their institutions. This led to fuller inquiries into their physiological, and eventually, into their philological peculiarities, till at length I arrived at the conclusion that all these various tribes were of one and the same race; and I shall endeavour to lead you to coincide with my sentiments on this interesting question. My opinion has not been hastily arrived at. Independent of my own personal acquaintance with these people for a series of years and in most parts of India, it has derived strength from the descriptions of others,¹ who have had similar oppor-

¹ Colonel Vans Agnew.

Dr. James Bird.

Dr. Bradley.

Colonel Dixon.

J. Elliot.

Sir Henry Elliott.

Walter Elliot.

Capt. Feuwick.

Dr. Buchanan Hamilton.

Bishop Heber.

B. H. Hodgson.

Capt. Hunter.

Sir R. Jenkins.

Sir J. Malcolm.

Capt. McIntosh.

Capt. Macpherson.

Dr. Müller.

Capt. T. J. Newbold.

Capt. Pemberton.

Professor Rask.

Capt. Rigby.

Dr. Rost.

Capt. Sherwill.

Dr. Stevenson.

Rev. W. Taylor.

W. Wathen.

Professor Westergaard.

Colonel M. Wilks.

Professor Wilson.

Parliamentary Papers.

tunities of seeing them, and whose notices of them are scattered over many published works, in the pages of our own Journal, and in those of the several Societies in the East with which this is connected, and in official and other reports.

I have before stated that it is only five or six years since my attention was particularly drawn to the singular coincidence of the uniformity of habits of all the wild tribes of India, and I was induced to give several lectures on the subject before the Ethnological Society of London. These have not been published, so that the matter I shall bring before you will, to the members of this Society, be in a great measure new; and, condensed in its present shape, will afford a subject for two evening lectures.

In order to prevent misconception, I may as well state here that when I use the term Hindu I allude to the race termed by Blumenbach *Caucasian*; by Pritchard *Iranian*, the section of which that invaded India being called by their sacred writers and legislators *Arian*; and which race brought with it the language of which Sanskrit appears the most polished type.

The points I desire to establish are—

1. That the Hindus entered India from a foreign country, and that they found it pre-occupied by inhabitants.
2. That by slow degrees they possessed themselves of the whole of the soil, reducing to serfage those they could retain upon it.
3. That they brought with them the Sanskrit language, a tongue different from that of the aborigines.
4. That they introduced into the country municipal institutions.
5. That the aborigines differ in every respect from the Hindus.
6. Lastly. That the aborigines throughout India are derived from one common source.

In dealing with this subject I beg to call your attention to the fact, that we have before us a vast field to explore; that India, according to Campbell's Statistics, occupies an area exceeding that of Europe, if we exclude Russia, Norway, and Sweden; and that its population, as compared with the same part of Europe, does not fall very short of it.

	Area.		Population.
Punjab	83,006	....	8,000,000
Saugor	17,543	....	2,143,599
Bengal, &c.	225,103	....	41,094,325
North-western Provinces	85,571	....	23,800,549
Madras	144,889	....	16,339,426
Bombay and Sind	120,065	....	10,485,017
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	676,177	....	101,862,916
Allied States	690,261	....	52,941,263
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	1,366,438		154,804,179
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	Area.		Population.
Europe	2,793,000	....	227,700,000
Russia, Sweden, Norway	1,758,700	....	60,518,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	1,034,300	....	167,182,000

In India, as in Europe, there are great national divisions of dialects, each of which extends over a population of several millions. The inquiry I propose commences at an epoch beyond that of Indian recorded history; and when I take that of the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, under Joshua, as a starting-point, I only avail myself of the feeble light which is afforded by the assumption that the Vedas were written in India about that time. How long before that period the Hindus had invaded the country must perhaps be hid from us for ever. That they found it pre-occupied by other inhabitants is distinctly stated in those works.

In the Introduction to the translation made by our learned Director, Professor Wilson, of the Rig Veda, we find him saying of the Hindus: "That they had extended themselves from a more northern site, or that they were a northern race, is rendered probable from the peculiar expression used on more than one occasion in soliciting long life, when the worshipper asks for a hundred winters—a boon not likely to be desired by the natives of a warm climate. They appear also to have been a fair-complexioned people, at least comparatively so, and foreign invaders of India, as it is said that Indra divided the fields among his white-complexioned friends, after destroying the indigenous barbarians." From the era of the Vedas, to the period when Kulluka wrote a commentary on the law of Menu, six centuries elapsed. The age of Menu is unknown. We find, however, that when that lawgiver wrote, the Hindus, according to his testimony, had not passed farther southward than the 22nd degree of north.

latitude. Beyond that line lies the still uncleared belt of forest as far as the Sâtpura hills, which seems, from its barronness and the numbers and hardihood of the indigenous tribes, to have opposed a serious barrier to the progress of the invading race. Menu describes the inhabitants of those parts in his time to have been "barbarians, living in forests, and speaking an unknown tongue."

We find no monumental remains of Hindus in the Dekhan earlier than the year of our Lord 450, about which period Jaya Sinha, of the Hindu race, ruled Guzerat. There have been discovered by Mr. Wathen, of Bombay, and by Mr. Walter Elliot, of Madras, several copper plates of that period, by which Jaya Sinha confers land on Brahmans in the Dekhan—a proof that he had the power of making such grants. These indications of the rule of Jaya Sinha extend about as far south as Bombay, in lat. 19°. The aborigines of the plains were retained in slavery as elsewhere; and in the capacity of village police, as they exist at this day. Some few of the original chiefs retained their mountain castles as late as the fifteenth century.

According to the imperfect accounts we possess, the Hindus were occupied from that period four or five hundred years ere they penetrated as far south as Mysore. There, according to Wilks, they encountered the Curumbas, in the tenth century, who had their seat of government at Talkad, forty miles east of the present capital. The Curumbas were expelled, and sought shelter in the forests of the western coast, in Canara, where they are now found in a wretched and degraded condition as cultivating serfs of that region.

While these conquests proceeded in the west, a simultaneous invasion took place on the east, when, according to Capt. Macpherson and Mr. Sterling, the Hindus entered the country of the Urias, in the year 437; and, keeping between the hills and the sea, subdued the inhabitants of the plain. Those in the hills continue all but independent at the present day.

They appear in the south-east, as elsewhere, to have lost their lands, which were distributed among the invaders, who, with their clansmen, still claim a descent of great antiquity. The eastern invasion also proceeded southward and westward, till it encountered the invaders from Guzerat. Battles ensued, and dynasties were subverted, of which we have but very imperfect accounts, till the Mahomedans, in the fourteenth century, reached the Dekhan. Up to that period the aborigines met with no consideration. They became everywhere serfs of the soil, or the outcast watchmen of villages. In the extreme south, where the Mahomedans never set foot, the soil is almost entirely cultivated by the aboriginal serfs,

of whom I shall speak more in detail hereafter. An aboriginal race also exists in the island of Ceylon, described by Knox, not different in their habits from some of the wildest tribes on the continent. The Rev. Dr. Stevenson, of Bombay, and others, seem to think it more than probable that colonies of Buddhists (a sect of Hindus) reached Ceylon by sea, and even landed on the southern extremity of the peninsula, whence they gradually extended themselves northward, while the Brahmanical sect of Hindus were making progress from the north. To enter at present on this subject, which possesses intense interest, and is still a desideratum in the ancient history of the Hindus, would lead me away altogether from that of the aborigines, to which I must confine myself.

Whatever may have been the state of the country when the Buddhists, the Jains, and the Brahmanical sects encountered each other in the south, one thing admits of no doubt, namely, that the aboriginal race was held in the condition of serfage everywhere; and that they remain in the same condition, though in a very mild form, under the British Government.

One cannot help being struck by the very slow progress the Hindus appear to have made in spreading themselves over the country. From the time of the Vedas they had not crossed the Vindhya range in six centuries and a half. Ten centuries more occurred ere they turned that barrier on the east and west, leaving the savage belt unsubdued, and Gondwana intact; and five centuries more passed ere they had reached the utmost limits of the Mysore country. This may be ascribed to several causes. First, the barren forests and wildernesses were not inviting. They held out no immediate prospect of advantage, and it was not till pressed by the increase of their population, perhaps, that the Hindus encroached on the neighbouring countries. Unlike the Mahomedans or the Christians, they were not bound to spread the doctrines of their faith, for, like the Jews, they received no proselytes. The proximate inhabitants possessed no wealth to induce the invaders to plunder them; nor do we know for certain that hordes from their original country followed and pressed them onward, as was the case in Europe, where circumstances were altogether different. Three things, however, seem certain: that the Hindus brought with them a language closely connected with those of Europe; that they reduced to serfage those they conquered, as did the Eastern invaders of Europe; and, that they established throughout India the same municipal institutions.

The Hindu legislator, Menu, has not left us in doubt what was ordained to be the fate of the subdued race, nor the relation they

were doomed for ever to bear with regard to their conquerors. In chapter x. of the Institutes, it is ordained that—

“ Their abode must be out of towns.
 Their sole property is to consist of dogs and asses.
 Their clothes should be those left by the dead.
 Their ornaments, rusty iron.
 They must roam from place to place.
 No respectable man must hold intercourse with them.
 They are to perform the office of executioner on all criminals condemned to death by the king. For this duty they may retain the bedding, the clothes, and the ornaments of those executed.”

Their condition is in every case one of perpetual slavery. In chapter viii. Menu says: “The Chándála or impure can never be relieved from bondage, though he be emancipated by a master. How can he, whom God has destined to be the slave of Brahmans, ever be released from his destiny by man?”

There are incontestible proofs of the aboriginal race having once occupied every part of India; and that, ere the Hindus came amongst them, they had made sufficient progress in civilization, so as to form large communities, to establish kingdoms, and to become extensive cultivators of the soil, and merchants.

There are distinct remains of works of art, in the shape of old castles, extensive excavations, and other monumental ruins. Several of their principalities have continued to the present day, and history has transmitted to us, from the earliest period of which any authentic records exist, occasional proofs of the power this race once possessed. They must have entered India at a very remote period, and probably occupied it, as man appears to have spread elsewhere, in successive hordes, under successive leaders—in some cases as hunters, in others as herdsmen. It seems likely that the former preceded the latter; because, in the first place, there always has been, and still continues, an inveterate hostility between the two branches of the same race, and because the latter certainly occupied and cleared the land, and established principalities; while the former mainly subsisted on the chase, and followed a much less civilized life.

The hunters occupied large tracts of hunting-grounds, to which the conquering Hindus gave names after the horde which they reduced to subjection; while the pastoral tribes, under the denomination of Ahirs, Abhíras, Gawals, and Pals—names applied to them by the

Hindus—assumed more settled habits, and finally assumed regal power.

The tract of country on the west of India, now known by the name of Ahirwara, and formerly Abhira, extends from the coasts of Cutch eastward as far as Central India. The forts of Asseer, Gyalgarh, Gya, Gwaliar, and others, proclaim at once the former existence of a pastoral race; while the Hindus of the Dekhan, in all parts refer the excavation and construction (not the ornaments) of ancient ante-Hindu relics, to the period of the herdsmen kings.

Other great tracts of countries retain the names of the hordes now occupying them. Thus we have—

The Bengies in Bengal,
 The Tirhus in Tirhut,
 The Koles (or Kolis) in Kolywara and Kolwan,
 The Malas in Malda, and Malpur,
 The Domes in Domapur, &c. &c.
 The Mírs in Mírwará,
 The Bhils in Bhilwara and Bbilwan,
 The Mahar in Maha Rashttra (Mahar-rashttra or Mahratta),
 The Mans in Man-desa,
 The Gonds in Gondwara or Gondwana,

besides others whose etymologies are not so evident.

I have already stated that there exist abundant proofs of the ancient, and in some instances, of the recent power of the aborigines in their normal condition. Of this the strongest is to be found in Gondwana, a region of 70,000 square miles, partially subdued at a very recent period by the Mahrattas, but containing a vast population, under their own chiefs, and retaining their primitive habits, physiognomy, and religion unmixed by connexion with the Hindus. In every part of India, where the soil has not yet been reclaimed, are found relics of the abnormal race more or less barbarous; while throughout the land, from Ceylon to Cashmere, they are met with in a state of slavery, consistent with the edicts of the Hindu law. In many of the provinces of Bengal, and in almost all the south of India, they are predial serfs, literally "adscripti glebæ;" and, where circumstances have favoured their emancipation as bondsmen of the soil, they continue in the condition of watchmen, cordwainers, and executioners of the law, living mostly in conical, but always in thatched, hovels, outside of Hindu villages and apart from the townsmen, having no property but their asses and dogs, and both

sexes with little or no clothing beyond what decency requires, and that for the most part in rags. In this condition, however, they perform the most important duties for the Hindu village communities. They constitute the rural police; and they are universally entrusted to convey the revenue to the chief towns of districts, in which duty they are never known to have proved otherwise than faithful. They enjoy lands tax-free, which they underlet, but seldom cultivate; and they receive a minimum portion of the produce of each field through the municipality appointed to receive and distribute it among the several official members of every commune. They have a general knowledge of all the police officers and men, in their districts and neighbourhood, and they act in singular concert and efficiency in the discovery of the perpetrators of crimes. In the performance of this duty they are usually disregarding of family ties, and are seldom known to screen even their own relatives if found to be principals or accomplices. They differ from the Hindus, inasmuch as the Hindus

1. Are divided into castes.

The aborigines have no such distinctions.

2. Hindu widows are forbidden to marry.

The widows of the aborigines not only do so, but usually with the younger brother of the late husband—a practice they follow in common with the Scythian tribes.

3. The Hindus venerate the cow, and abstain from eating beef.

The aborigines feed alike on all flesh.

4. The Hindus abstain from the use of fermented liquors.

The aborigines drink to excess; and conceive no ceremony, civil or religious, complete without.

5. The Hindus eat of food prepared only by those of their own caste.

The aborigines partake of food prepared by any one.

6. The Hindus abhor the spilling of blood.

The aborigines conceive no religious or domestic ceremony complete without the spilling of blood and offering up a live victim.

7. The Hindus have a Brahmanical priesthood.

The indigenes do not venerate Brahmans. Their own priests (who are self-created) are respected according to their mode of life and their skill in magic and sorcery, in divining

future events, and in curing diseases: these are the qualifications which authorise their employment in slaying sacrificial victims, and in distributing them.

8. The Hindus burn their dead.

The aborigines bury their dead, and with them their arms, sometimes their cattle, as among the Scythians. On such occasions a victim ought to be sacrificed, to atone for the sins of the deceased.

9. The Hindu civil institutions are all municipal.

The aboriginal institutions are all patriarchal.

10. The Hindus have their courts of justice composed of equals.

The aborigines have theirs composed of heads of tribes, or of families, and chosen for life.

11. The Hindus brought with them (more than three thousand years ago) the art of writing and science.

The indigenes are not only illiterate, but it is forbidden for the Hindus to teach them.

This epitome of the peculiar customs of both races, together with the comparison of their physiognomy, to which I shall allude hereafter, establishes beyond doubt their dissimilarity in every respect.

The aborigine is not more distinguished in his other habits than he is in his moral virtues from the Hindus. The man of the ancient race scorns an untruth; and seldom denies the commission even of a crime that he may have perpetrated, though it lead to death. He is true to his promise; hospitable and faithful to his guest; devoted to his superiors; and is always ready to sacrifice his own life in the service of his chief. He is reckless of danger, and knows no fear. At the same time, he is by profession a robber, levying black mail on all from whom he can obtain it, under the plea of his ancient right to the soil, of which more civilized men have deprived him.

The aborigines live principally by the chase, and learn cunning in pursuit of their game, and in their endeavour to secure it. It is their duty to attend on all travellers entering a village, to afford them every requisite information of the locality, to take charge of their valuable goods, if required to do so, during their sojourn, and to be guides on their journey throughout the boundary, till relieved by another guide at the next village. Thus they act in the double capacity of protectors and informers of any injury which the traveller may experience within the precincts of their townships, and as spies

in watching the traveller's proceedings, reporting their suspicions to the town magistrate.

Their habit of tracking game by their footmarks, from those of the lion and tiger down to the hare and fox, gives them the same advantage in tracing robbers, who usually go barefooted. When put on the track of one or more thieves, they measure the footmark accurately with a stick cut to the length and breadth, and they remark any peculiarity in the tread. It is this peculiarity (which they distinguish with great nicety) that enables them to perform wonderful feats.

We are indebted to mere fragments of Hindu history for the slender light it sheds on this subject. The Vedas indicate clearly the existence of a race antecedent to those fair people who, entering northern India, found there a nation of hunters, whom they destroyed, or more probably drove before them, and whose lands they divided amongst themselves. This is recorded at a period fifteen centuries before Christ. At a more recent period, in the eighth century before Christ, Menu indicates that the Arian race then occupied five great divisions of territory north of the Vindhya mountains, the rest of India being in the hands of barbarians, who had not cleared the soil. In the fifth century before Christ, Herodotus (book ii. *Thalia*) describes two distinct races of Indians, which can be none other than those into which I have ventured to divide them. Of the one he says—"We have little information regarding the people of the East. What we do know of them amounts to this, that the Indians nearest to Persia inhabit the great desert, and are composed of many tribes speaking various dialects. They consist of pastoral tribes, and others who dwell in the marshes of rivers, subsisting principally on raw fish, which they take from boats constructed of bamboos. Their only clothing is of matting, made out of rushes. They also raise some coarse millet, which they boil in the husk for food. The fishing tribe bears the name of *Padoii*, *Iladoi*. More remote from Persia, and farther north, there are Indians who dwell in cities whose habits assimilate to those who inhabit the region of Bactriana. These Indians pay annual tribute in gold to Darius."

Those who have seen the lower classes in India in modern times, without clothing, and their mat-hoods to keep off the rain, on all the great rivers, and on the sea-coast, will at once recognise in them the fishing tribes of Herodotus on the Indus. The earliest account afforded to any of the literary societies of India among ourselves, is dated in 1776, when the eastern portion of Bengal suffered from incursions made by a race of people entitled Garrows, who came from a hilly tract called after them the Garrow Mountains, bordering on the dis-

trict of Bhagalpur. For a considerable time, troops were employed against them, but to little purpose, as they retired into their woody fastnesses, and picked off their enemies day and night, by their silent but deadly weapon, the bow. At length, a young civil servant of the name of Cleveland tried to civilize them by conciliation, and in the course of a few years succeeded in his efforts. They took to cultivating the land partially, and carried on considerable commerce with the inhabitants of the plain. Some of them were finally embodied into a police corps, regularly disciplined, and they have lately been inspected and reported as one of the finest native regiments in India.

Captain Sherwill has lately discovered another tribe, called Sonthals. Of these, and of the hill race, he has made sketches of the heads and busts of several, and caused them to be lithographed in the last Calcutta Journal. The Sonthals are spread over the country from Cattaek, as far as Bhagalpur. In spite of their former uncivilized habits, they have become industrious cultivators, and land has been assigned to them by the government in the unreclaimed tract below the mountains, which, according to Captain Sherwill, embraces a boundary of 294 miles. In 1818, they comprised in that part forty villages, with 3000 souls. In 1851, they had established 1473 small villages, numbering 82,795 inhabitants, and paying a land-tax equivalent to 43,918 rupees. These facts are valuable, and shew what may be done by paying more attention to this class of people. Colonel Dixon's success in Mirwara, the report of which has lately been published, is another instance of a like nature.

As all the accounts of the aborigines very much resemble each other with regard to their habits, I shall say a few words on those of the Sonthals, which may be considered as rather a favourable picture. The men wear little or no clothing. The women wear a cloth, a yard wide, and from six to twelve yards in length, wrapped round the waist, carried over the left shoulder, and sometimes covering the back part of the head. It is then brought under the right arm, crosses the body, and is tucked in in front, having a very graceful appearance. This garment called *Sári*, is the uniform dress of the Hindu race throughout India. Both male and female wear massive rings of metal dependent from their ears.

Their religion enjoins bloody sacrifices, usually to an invisible deity; but which is often exhibited in the form of some large stone or shapeless log, besmeared with oil, and decorated with flowers. This would appear to indicate the spot selected for sacrifice rather than the representation of any divinity. On some occasions, I have

seen the log with a human head, or that of a tiger, carved on it in the rudest possible manner.

Captain Shorwill, in speaking of their religion, says, they pray to their deity to avert the evils of famine and disease; and to preserve them from wild beasts and venomous reptiles. They believe their gods can only be appeased or propitiated by living sacrifice; and the blood of the victim is eagerly gathered in small vessels retained for the purpose by the votaries.

Their priests are self-elected, and depend on their talents and sagacity for their maintenance.

Their weapons are the bow and arrow, formed of the bamboo or daman wood, and the string is made of the same material. Truth is held sacred among them; and if called on to swear, they do so on the skin of a tiger or on that of a live cat.

All their ceremonies, religious and joyous, are accompanied by feasting, drinking, and dancing. Four hundred women, with their hair highly ornamented with flowers, have been seen at one time, exhibiting in a ring, in long strings of dancers, in rows of twenty or thirty each from a common centre. They lay hold with one hand on each other's cinctures or waistbands, and keep time by striking their heels on the ground.

The musicians are men decorated with long peacock's feathers, who dance in front of the women, facing them; and exhibiting wild and fantastic attitudes, at the same time, regulating the figure of the dance. On such occasions, the musicians are usually intoxicated: not so the females.

In the same neighbourhood occurs the tribe of the Mallers or Mallis. They give names to Malda and Malipur.

To the southward and eastward, are the Sunktas and Kukis tribes, which closely resemble the Southals and Garrows in their national peculiarities.

Colonel Tod, Sir H. Elliot, and the Rev. H. Buchanan Hamilton, are my authorities for stating that the pastoral tribes (though they probably followed the hunting race) once held dominion over the greater part of Northern India. They are now scattered, but they were the rulers of Nípál in the beginning of the Christian era. They are mentioned in the Puránas (comparatively modern Sanskrit works) as having reigned in the west of Guzerat and Malwa, under the name of Abhíras. They were expelled by the Cattis, who took their place in the middle of the ninth century; and from them the territory of the Abhíras has received the name of Cattywar.

Having disposed in a summary way of the pastoral tribes, I shall

proceed to give in detail the information I have collected of the hunting tribes, and I shall first direct attention to those which are found still to occupy the regions where the Bengali, the Hindi, and the Urdu languages prevail. In these races, Sir Henry Elliot and Buchanan Hamilton continue to be my best authorities.

BENGIES.—The Bengies, who are found, from Bengala, as far north-west even as Delhi, probably gave name to the territory so called. They are of the lowest class of human beings, are occupied in the meanest offices, and they even consider the care of dogs (regarded by the Hindus as unclean) a privilege. In many parts they have embraced the Mahomedan religion, and affect some of the practices of the Hindus. They feed on all animal food, and are deemed outcasts. In the Mahomedan armies, they have exhibited great valour, and as indigenes they claim the honour of leading storming-parties in the attack of forts.

BIHAR.—Next in order come the Bbars. They are also called Raj-Bhar, Bharat, and Bharatputra. Tradition assigns to them the possession of the whole tract of Gorakpur, as far west as Bandelkand and Sagar. Many old stone forts, embankments, and caverns, between Allahabad and Azimgarh, ascribed to them, indicate no inconsiderable progress in civilization. The name extends as far west as Marwar, where they perform the most menial offices, and are employed in keeping swine. They retain still a few principalities in the hills eastward of Mirzapur, where they are styled Rajas. They are also found as far south as Cheinpur and Bijaygarh.

CHERIS.—The Cheris appear to be the aborigines of Ghazipur, a part of Gorakpur, the southern portion of Benares at Mirzapur, and are by some deemed to be a branch of the Bbars. Their features have a decided affinity to the aboriginal tribes of the Vindhya mountains. Though reduced in numbers to a few families, they cling to their ancient dignity, by installing the head of every small community of five or six families with the title of Raja, and of going through the ceremony of applying the *tilak*, a round spot of fresh blood on the forehead, as a token of royalty. This practice will be more particularly alluded to hereafter. They retained some power as late as the sixteenth century, when, according to Elliott, Mahouta, a Cheri chieftain of Behar, defended his castle for a lengthened period against Shere Shah, afterwards Emperor of Delhi. On this occasion, Shere Shah's army experienced a heavy loss, owing to the obstinacy with which the place was defended. Tradition says the Cheris were expelled from beyond the Jumna by the Rajpoots conquering eastward; and that the people of the same name in the neighbourhood of

Etawa, who are now the cultivating serfs, are the descendants of those who refused to quit their lands, though compelled to give the produce to their conquerors. This appears to have been frequently the case elsewhere.

KOLAS.—These are intermingled, in the north, with the Cheris, but farther south, they are wholly distinct. Their occupations are now of the most servile kind, while Saktisgarh, originally Kolwana, and the district of Kole Asla, in the district of Beuares, testify their former importance.

Sir H. Elliot thinks, from their similarity of habits and condition, that they have a common origin with the Kolis in the west. It is from this tribe the emigrants denominated Hill Coolies are derived, which supply labour to the Mauritius.

DIANUK.—This tribe is composed of fowlers and archers. They abound chiefly in Behar, but are found as far west and north as Delhi, and are of the aboriginal race.

DOMES.—The late Mr. Trail has left a valuable memoir of this tribe. They are undoubtedly an aboriginal race, with all the peculiarities that belong to it, and which differ so entirely from those of the Hindus. They once had considerable power in Kamaun; and the names of several forts called after them, prove their former importance. They are now reduced to the condition of serfs of the soil, both in Kamaun and as far away south as Cattack. Buchanan Hamilton believes they expelled the Tirhus from Tirhut, and were themselves expelled by the Bhars.

DNER.—Of this tribe, Elliot has only a few words to say. He calls them “a low caste, found in the Sagor territory. They eat all sorts of dead animals, and sell the skins to carriers and tanners.”

It is a remarkable fact that the Mahomedans who came from Hindustan give the same appellation to all the village serfs in the Dekhan, a name unknown to themselves, or the Hindus by whom they were enslaved.

I have now given some account of those tribes of the aborigines occupying the eastern portion of Upper India; namely, the Southals, the Garrows, the Bengies, the Bhars, the Cheris, the Tirhus, the Kolas, the Dners, the Dhanuks, and the Domes. Of these, numbers of the Southals, the Bengies, and the Cheris have embraced the Mahomedan faith; but they still intermarry with their own unconverted tribes. I shall now ask you to follow me to the westward, and proceeding thence to the south, and subsequently along the eastern coast northward, we shall arrive at the point from whence we started.

MINA.—The first tribe I come to is that of the Mina. Colonel Tod, who lived for many years in the country they inhabit, states that many of them had embraced the Mahomedan faith; but, with the exception of abstaining from swine's flesh, they adopt none of the Moslim customs or tenets. They everywhere retain their primitive habits; and when they cannot obtain a wife among the Mahomedan Minas, they marry one of the tribe not born in that faith.

In some places they are still serfs of the soil; in others they hold lands, for the use of which they pay heavy rents to the Hindu lords. Like all the aboriginal race, they claim to be the real proprietors of the land, and they remind each other of this right in the following distich:

“ Bhág-rá dhani Ráj ho,
Bhúm-rá dhani Máj ho.”

“ The Raja is proprietor of his share:
I am the proprietor of the land.”

The Minas occupy the districts of Ambir and Jaipur, and enjoy, even in their serfage, many highly valued privileges. Among others is that of the remarkable practice which takes place on the accession to the throne, by the Rajput Raja of Nerwar. On this occasion, a Mina is required to apply the “tika,” or “tilaka,” the red spot emblematical of royalty, on the forehead of the new sovereign. This is done by blood drawn from the toe of a Mina. In default of this ceremony, the recognition of the prince would not be complete on the part of the aborigines, nor could their loyalty be depended on. As it is, they are deemed so faithful, that they are selected to guard the palace and the treasury at Nerwar, and to form the only escort attendant on the princesses when they go abroad.

MIR.—Westward of the Minas, we arrive at the province of Mírwará, called after the aboriginal tribe of Mírs. The forts of Ajuúr, Jesselmír, and Combelmír attest their former power. A tribe of the same name is found among the population inhabiting the valleys of the Himalaya. The Mírs, like other tribes, have embraced the Mahomedan faith, but they preserve their original customs, and intermarry in their clans, whether Mahomedan or otherwise. They reside in and on the outskirts of the Aravali mountains, and extend from the desert as far south as the neighbourhood of Udayapur.

Colonel Dixon's report of this people has lately been published by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, and forms the fullest account of their former history, and their present condition, since they were brought under the British authority. The reform

which he effected in their civil habits, and the purpose to which he has made use of them as good soldiers, shows of what they are capable. According to tradition, they are much intermixed with the Rajput race. This they account for by stating that the latter, when hard pressed by the Mahomedan arms in early times, fled to the hills, and intermarried with the Mírs. These, as they now exist, therefore, assume the privilege of being considered true Hindus. The admission of Colonel Dixon, however, as to their habits, at once removes all claim to such pretensions. A similar title is by some set forth in a neighbouring and extensive tribe, of which I shall speak hereafter. The Mírs, according to Colonel Dixon (though claiming some Hindu affinity), "are perfectly regardless of all the forms enjoined as to ablution, the preparation of food, and other ceremonies. They offer sacrifices to several deities wholly unknown to the Hindus; among others is the personified goddess of small-pox and of other diseases. They partake freely of the flesh of all animals, not excepting the cow and the buffalo, and they drink copiously of spirituous liquors."

They perform festivals for the dead, on which occasion all clansmen are invited to join. Their widows marry the younger brother of their deceased husbands. They have no priests, excepting those who are skilful in witchcraft, in which art they implicitly believe. Before they were reclaimed, they made inroads into all the villages on the plains, and carrying off men and cattle, retained them till ransomed. They levied black-mail throughout their fastnesses, and in every respect followed the practices of the aborigines elsewhere.

They are at present remarkable for their fidelity, truth, and honesty; and, as has been before stated, have proved excellent and well-disciplined soldiers, attacking without remorse those who disturb the peace of the country; and, as Colonel Dixon vouches, escorting and guarding as prisoners even their own relatives when placed under their charge.

BHILS.—In close contact with the Mírs commences the tribe of Bhils and Naikras. The latter inhabit the hills between Dongarpur, Banswara, and Junagarh. They hold themselves superior to other tribes of Bhils, and are probably descendants of certain ancient Bhil chieftains. North of the Nerbudda the Bhils retain their original habits; but in the valley called Nimar many have become Mahomedans, exercising as much or as little Mahomedanism as suits their purpose. They extend over a very large space of country; commencing at Udayapur, on the north in Mowar they occupy the eastern watershed of the Western Ghats, as far south as Nassick. They form

the chief population of Nimar, from Rajpipla on the west, as far as Goudwana on the east; and inhabit all the branches of the western mountains running eastward, including the Vindhya, the Sâtpura on the north, and the Sahyâdri, south of the valley of Candesh. The practice of affixing the bloody spot on the forehead of princes, on their accession, is performed by a Bhil when a new Rana of Udayapur (the highest in rank of all the Hindu sovereigns in India) ascends the throne. One branch of this tribe is denominated Ujla, or the Fair Bhils. Their colour is accounted for by their having received among them, on the invasion of the Mahomedans, the refugee Rajputs who escaped the Moslim slaughter, which usually occurred on the storming of the Rajput forts. On such occasions, the Rajputs, when they lost all hope of further successful defence, rather than surrender themselves and their families to perpetual slavery and degradation, put to death their females and children, and awaited the result of the storm. At that time, with a short tunic round their loins, well girt up, and with their swords and shields in their hands, they bathed, and, dripping wet, rushed upon the enemy. In such cases most of them perished, but those who forced their way through the enemy's ranks, retired into the hills, and became amalgamated with that tribe now denominated Ujla Bhils: hence their dissimilarity in appearance from other tribes of the same race. The Bhils, under the denomination of Kirât, are mentioned in the ancient Hindu heroic poem, the Mahâbhârata, wherein it is stated a follower of the Bhil Chief of Maheswara, on the Nerbudda, slew with an arrow the demigod Krishna, on his retreat towards Guzerat, after the celebrated battle of the Kurus and Pandus, the period of which has not yet been fixed.

This race has been described by several authors (namely, Sir John Malcolm, Colonel Tod, Captain Dangersfield, and Captain Hunter) some years ago. The latter says of them: "The fidelity to their acknowledged chief, termed Naig, is very remarkable; and so strong is their attachment, that in no situation nor condition, however desperate, can they be induced to betray him. If old and decrepid, they will carry him from place to place, to save him from his enemies." Each clan is distinguished by their arrows having the feathers fastened on in a peculiar manner, and a message from one clan to another is known to be real when the bearer brings a chieftain's arrow with him. Colonel Tod mentions an instance of this sort. The wife of an absent chieftain afforded protection to one of the Colonel's messengers through the country by giving him one of her husband's arrows, the sight of which acted like a charm, and procured for him in the densest forests all his wants, and absolute protection.

I have already stated that, as they claim all the land, of which they say they have been forcibly dispossessed, they consider themselves at liberty to levy tribute or taxes on travellers passing through their country, and even for protection afforded to the inhabitants of the plain. Like the hill-tribes in the Khyber and other passes into Afghanistan, the Bhils require even armed bodies to pay them tribute in passing through their mountains. They have, in more than one instance, succeeded in plundering all the baggage of Mahratta armies; and in some cases have actually received money for a free passage. On the occasion of the return of the first and third divisions of the Madras army, under the Commander-in-chief, Sir Thos. Hislop, in the month of February, 1818, the Bhils of Nimar had the audacity to demand £20,000 to permit it to pass their mountains. This proposal was of course rejected with indignation, and the Bhils, to the number of several hundreds, lined the pass from one end to the other. The British cavalry and artillery passed on without molestation, but when the long line of baggage had fairly entered the defile, the marauders, like Clan Alpine's men described in *The Lady of the Lake*, rose from every bush, and behind each rock, and rushed down to the attack. Here they were warmly received by some troops dispersed among the baggage; but what was their surprise to find the crest and sides of the mountains already occupied by the greater portion of the British infantry, who, coming down upon them from above, compelled them to retreat precipitately, with the loss of from seventy to eighty of their number left dead in the pass. These same Bhils were afterwards reclaimed by firm but just measures of conciliation, and in a few months returned to the villages of which they were the hereditary watchmen, and proved the most faithful guardians of the treasure, and the most efficient police in the world; since when a portion of them has been entertained as a local militia, which has become a most useful and effective aid to the civil authorities in the province of Candesh.

Bishop Heber, in passing through the hilly tract of the Aravali, notices the wild habits of the Bhils. He was much struck with their open and manly appearance, with their bows and arrows, which reminded him of the description of the followers of Robin Hood in olden times in England.

KOLIS.—West of the Bhils lies the aboriginal race of Koli, probably a branch of the Koles of the eastern part of India. They occupy the country along the western side of the Aravali and Sahyádrí Ghats, as far south as Goa. They are, on the coast, expert boatmen, and tend all the ferries in the Dekhan. Their occupation is

that of fishermen; otherwise they are the menials of villages and towns, as are the aborigines elsewhere.

Under our government the aborigines meet with more consideration than under that of the natives. They are the porters and day-labourers on the sea-coasts; and it seems likely that the word "coolie" (now applied to persons of that description through India by Europeans in general) has been adopted from the employment of those of Western India before any other part of the coast was visited. In the Konkan, north of Bombay, are two tribes, denominated Waralis and Koralis, described by the Rev. Dr. Wilson, in the Journal of the Bombay branch of this Society. The latter extend as far north as the banks of the Nerbudda, where they are spoken of by Captain Rigby.

MHARS.—The Mhars are the aborigines and the village serfs of Mhar-rashtra (the Mahratta country), so called after them; and the

MANGS give name to a part of the same country south of the Bhima river.

These two tribes require no further mention than the bare fact of their existence in those localities. A great jealousy exists between them against encroachment on the territorial limits of each.

RAMUSIS.—When Sivaji, the founder of the Mahratta dynasty, first encroached on the Mogul power, he made use of the hill-tribes called Mawalis (the inhabitants of the *mawals*, or valleys and tablelands of the Sahyádrí mountains) to effect his purpose. At the same time, he invited the Hindu Zemindars (of whom he was one) of the neighbouring countries, to send into his service their village serfs. They willingly obeyed the summons; and these eventually became the active, steady, and faithful infantry that first obtained possession of, and afterwards retained for him, the numerous hill-forts which afforded him so many rallying points among his native fastnesses.

These tribes came from the provinces of Telingana on the east and Karnataka on the south. Not being attached to any of the Mahratta villages, they necessarily bivouacked in the open air; and being always in the field, they obtained the appellation of Ramoussi or Ramusis, or Foresters. Such is the history attached to their introduction into the Mahratta country. They are undoubtedly strangers, inasmuch as they are divided into two clans, denominated Barki and Halga; the former speaking the Telugu or Telinga language, and the latter the Canarese. Moreover, these are the names of aboriginal tribes in the two provinces from whence they came. To Captain (now Major) McKintosh, of the Madras army, we are indebted for very ample

details of the manners, habits, and religion of the Ramasis, which are to be found not only in our own Journal, but more especially in that of the Madras Literary Society. These accounts confirm fully the notion of their belonging to the aborigines.

BEDARS.—Proceeding south, we come to the Bedars, a tribe whose ancestors laid the foundation of the city of that name, and which extends throughout the territory wherein the Canarese language is spoken. They were not entirely subdued by the Hindus, nor even by the Mahomedans. The Raja of Sorapur, in the heart of the Nizam's country, still holds his patrimonial appanage, surrounded by his faithful tribe, claiming a descent of more than thirty centuries; and up till the middle of the last century, and even till the end of it, Bedar chiefs, with their clans around them, retained considerable power in Mysore and the districts east of it.

It was only about the middle of the last century that the several Bedar principalities fell before the arms of Haider Ali in Mysore. He had a high respect for their courage, and so great confidence in their fidelity, that a body of two hundred Bedar spearman ran beside him, whether on horseback or in his palankeen, and always guarded his tent at night. We shall have to speak of this tribe hereafter.

In many parts of the Dekhan, as well as in the south, these tribes, under the native governments, formed a local militia, and were remunerated by waste lands given up to them to cultivate. Where they formed the garrisons of hill-forts, the land within the range of the guns was allotted to these local troops, free of tax.

Quitting Mysore, we enter on the region of the slave tribes. They are still the predial serfs of the soil, and have attracted the notice of European philanthropists. They consist of the Cherumars of Malabar; of the Curumbas of Canara. In Cochin and Travancore are found both the Cherumars and Vedars, the latter extending into Ceylon, and the Marawas on the extreme south. Proceeding northward from thence we encounter in Tinevelly and Coimbatore the Kallars, or, as we call them, Colaries. In Tanjore, the Pullars. In the provinces of South and North Arcot, the Pallies and the Paries, or Parias.

The term Cherumar, in the Tamil language, implies "children of the soil," in the south, as does Bhumia, the common term in use for these tribes, in the north. The Brahmans even acknowledge them to be the first occupants of it, and hence recognize them as the aborigines, though with little acquaintance of their origin.

In the north, Buchanan Hamilton states that agrestic slavery prevails in the following districts of Bengal and Behar:—

Dacca. Jelalpur. Bakerganj. Silhot.		Rangpur. Dinajpur. Purniah.
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Sir H. Elliot speaks of the agrestic slavery prevalent in the district of Etawa, on the banks of the Jumna; Colonel Tod refers to it in central India; and in the south, the Parliamentary Returns exhibit the following numbers in the under-mentioned provinces of the Peninsula.

North and South Arcot	20,000
Tanjore	8,000
Travancoro	130,000
Cochin	12,000
Malabar	95,000
Canara	82,000
	347,000

This return does not include women and children, which, if we assume four to each family, would give 1,390,000 souls.

By an Act of the British Government, they are pronounced to be free; but of what use is the freedom, which, if claimed, would compel them to quit those lands cultivated by their ancestors from time immemorial, the produce of which has for agos been assigned to their conquerors?

As we proceed northward from Madras, we still continue to find aboriginal tribes, not recognised as serfs of the soil altogether, but as village servants. There are, however, some hill-tribes which merit our consideration. The Rev. Dr. Taylor discovered a tribe called Yenedy, in the neighbourhood of the Pulicat lake, twenty-three miles north of Madras. He states them to be extremely shy, living in the woods, and bartering game, honey, wax, and drugs for grain, which they do not cultivate. On reading his paper describing these people before the Literary Society of Madras, the President, Mr. A. D. Campbell, appended a note to it, when published, of considerable value. In it he states: "I am quite certain that this is an account of the wild people of the Pulicat lake, in the zemindari of Sri Hari-Kotah, whom I saw many years ago, caught like monkeys by the peons of the collector. The women could not count more than four or five, and said, with their infants at their breasts, that they (the mothers) were only three or four months or years old. They had no notion of time, still less of religion. I have no doubt they are similar to

the Bhils and Khonds, but they are certainly not, like the Khonds, cannibals."

The Rev. Dr. Taylor speaks of another tribe of aborigines, termed Chenchis: they were met with by him twenty miles from Madras, and skirting the hills of Mysore. Buchanan Hamilton also met them in the centre of Mysore, in 1800, and describes them; and Captain Newbold encountered the same people in the Nalla-Malla hills, lying between Cammam and Búdwal. He describes the encounter thus: "They inhabit clearings in the retired parts of the forest, one of which I unexpectedly entered while on a shooting excursion near Pacherlu, in the Nandi Cammama pass. The huts had walls of wickerwork, about three feet high, and conical roofs of straw, with a sort of screen thrown in the front of a low entrance. The men, nearly in a state of nudity, were lying outside here and there fast asleep, in the sun, tired probably with watching or hunting wild beasts during the night; while the women (rather more decently clad) were preparing their food, or nursing their children. A number of large dogs instantly attacked the intruder, but were kept at bay by the butt-end of a gun, till their masters awoke and came to the rescue.

"On questioning them as to their ideas of a futuro stato, they replied—'they know not whether there was a God or not; never having been instructed. Did not know what was to become of them after death, nor of any future rewards or punishments.'"

Besides the Chenchiwars of Telingana, there are other aboriginal tribes, such as the Kaniwars, Yelmiwars, Barki, Dondassi, Bandi pote, and Talliar. All these live more or less by thoft when in the woods; and when not attached to villages as police.

Gonds.—So late as 1817, very little was known of the various aboriginal tribes, for Sir R. Jenkins in his admirable Report on the Nagpur country, observes: "The Gonds are mentioned in the historical poems of the Hindus as being a powerful nation or tribe in early times: may they not have been one of the primitive people of India conquered by the Hindus, and the remnant driven to the hills?" His census of the whole population of Gondwana at that time gave 2,470,000 inhabitants, spread over a surface of 70,000 square miles, a great part of which is an impenetrable forest. This affords a population of only 40 to the square mile, and includes all classes of the subjects of the Raja of Nagpur, Hindu and Mahomedan. The Gonds are subdivided into seven or eight different clans. They differ in hardly any respect from the aborigines found elsewhere.

On the east of Gondwana, and intimately assimilated with its people, are the aboriginal tribes of Orissa (Uria-desa) the land of the

Urias. This territory lies between the eastern mountains and the sea-coast: having the Chilka lake for its southern, and the port of Pipla for its northern boundary. It is occupied by the Saurahs, the Baudarwas, and the Khonds. For whatever information we possess on the subject of these tribes, we are mainly indebted to the labours of Captain S. Chartres Macpherson, who has published largely on the subject in our Transactions; and who, at a late meeting of this society, read an interesting paper, going into further details.

He conceives that the Hindu race did not enter Uria-desa till about the year A.D. 473, nor did they attain the zenith of their power till the ninth century. They introduced their municipal form of government, as elsewhere, into the plain, but the aborigines were unsubdued, and continue so till this day. Professor Wilson, in vol. xvii. of the Asiatic Researches, p. 204, has a note, in which he observes: "It may be credulity or calumny, but the Bhils and other hill-tribes are constantly accused by Sanskrit writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as addicted to the sanguinary worship of Aghori, which required human sacrifices. The Vrihat Katha is full of stories to this effect, the scene of which is in the Vindhya mountains." Sir Richard Jenkins states, that human victims were sacrificed in some parts of Gondwana within a recent period; but the Hindu chiefs have now almost every where succeeded in abolishing them. It is beyond all doubt that human sacrifices are still practiced among the Khonds and the Sauras. They are made on the three following occasions:

1st—Annually, to propitiate the Earth God to favour agriculture. After the victim is slain, his blood and pieces of his flesh are distributed among the bystanders, to be strewed over their fields.

2nd—Whenever the health of the society is seriously affected, as in the case of small-pox or cholera, or in the event of murrain among cattle.

3rd—Whenever any sudden calamity affects the patriarch, his family, or estate.

On all these occasions, a human victim ought to be sacrificed; but if there is not one ready, then a goat must suffice. Captain Macpherson discovered, at a later period than when he wrote his first report, that there are two branches of Khonds, the one of which sacrifice human victims, and the other goats, the latter having been forbidden by the voice of a divinity from continuing their former practice any longer. There are still one or two tribes among the eastern hills of Bengal which retain the custom of offering human victims to the manes of their deceased chiefs; and it seems to me very likely that such

sacrifices were universal among the aborigines, before the western races of Hindus invaded the country and put them down.

The Khonds border on the Southals, and the latter merge into the Garrows, &c. Mr. B. H. Hodgson, who resided for many years as Resident at Nepal, has published several papers in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta* on the tribes inhabiting the valleys of the Himalaya, lying between the eastern provinces of Bengal and the great table-land of Thibet, so called by the western Moslems, but Bhutan by the Hindus. His first essay appeared in 1847, after which, till his arrival in England, he spared no pains to ascertain what relation these people bore to the Bhutias on the east, and to the Tamilian or aboriginal tribes in India. It is satisfactory for me to find that he arrives at the same conclusion with myself: namely, that from their physical attributes and creeds, customs and legends, as well as from their language, they are all closely affiliated, and are all of Thibetan or Bhutan origin.

He describes the physiognomy of the Hill Nepaulose to be generally and normally of the Scythic or Mongolian type according to Blumenbach, in some cases passing into the Caucasian; and the figure he has given in the *Journal* exactly resembles those of the Southals given by Captain Sherwill.

“Face large and wide; bridge of the nose depressed; nostrils broad and expanded; cheek-bones high; mouth large, with protruding lips; upper lip long; jaws large; moustache small; no whisker, nor hair on the chest.” This he considers the true Thibetan type.

Now the physiology of the Hindu, or Arian properly so called, differs in no respect from the Caucasian family of Blumenbach; that is to say, the present great European branch of the human family. It cannot therefore be by accident that the hill-races of India bear so strong a resemblance to the Scythian race. The Rev. Buchanan Hamilton, who saw specimens of this race, according to his own shewing, throughout Bengal and Behar, in the Vindhya Range, in Central India, and again on the Malabar coast, and to the east of Mysore, describes them all as “having high cheek-bones, broad flat noses, large lips, and faces inclined to roundness rather than oval.”

Mr. Elliot describes the Garrows “with flat Caffre-like noses, eyes generally blue, large mouth, thick lips, face round and short. Some tie their hair on the crown of the head in a loose careless way, others crop it close. They bore holes in the ears, into which they introduce heavy rings of metal, and which in time stretch the lobes several inches long.”

These peculiarities pervade the race wherever they are met.

Captain Rigby, who resided among the hill-tribes of Akraui and Nimár, lying to the north of Candesh, mentions three distinct branches; namely, the Katti, the Warali, and the Pauria Bhils. He observes of the most civilized of them, that their appearance differs from the Hindus—"the features being more flat, with low round foreheads, wide nostrils, and thicker lips." The British officers of the troops employed against them in 1816, came back with a notion that their features partook of the African negro, though they had long shaggy hair.

Captain Newbold, in speaking of the Chenchis, found by Buchanan Hamilton in Mysore, and by himself in the Nalla Malla hills, describes the men to be "rather low in stature, with small but animated features, having higher cheek-bones, flatter noses, and their nostrils more expanded, than the natives on the plain. Their eyes are black and piercing. Their hair, which they wear very long, and roll up in a knot at the top of the head, is not the frizzly hair of the Papuan or the Hottentot, but is more shaggy and straight than that of the Hindu."

Sir R. Jenkins, Colonel Vans Agnew, and Captain Fenwick, all three writing separately of the tribes of Gondwana in remote parts of the country, describe the Gonds to have the peculiar physiognomy of the other aborigines. "High cheek bones, broad and flat noses, thick expanded lips, long shaggy hair, but little or no beard." Captain Macpherson in his first report on the Khonds, the Sauras, and Bandarwas, remarks on their distinct physiognomy from the Hindus; and Captain Sherwill, speaking of the Sonthals so late as a few months ago, adverts to "their broad flat noses, and thick lips;" and in the figures he has given of them in the last *Calcutta Journal*, it will be perceived they have the decided Scythian features, which when once seen, can never be mistaken for the Caucasian or Iranian.

The existence of the Sanskritic race in India for three thousand two hundred years, has been already assumed; and it has been shewn that this people occupied the territory north of the Vindhya range for a period of nearly two thousand years ere they penetrated south. That the Sanskrit language then should have taken deep root in all the countries over which the Hindus held sway, is most natural, and the wonder is rather that any remains of the language of the aborigines should exist at all, than that traces of it should still be found.

Language is composed of two distinct elements—words, and grammatical constructions embracing idioms.

Sir W. Jones and Mr. Thomas H. Colebrooke, the former the founder of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, and the latter the founder of the

Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, were indubitably the most profound oriental scholars of their day. They divided the languages of India into northern and southern, pronouncing the former to consist of nine-tenths of words of Sanskrit origin; and the latter to be only intermingled largely with Sanskrit vocables, but having a separate origin from the languages of the north. These great philologists, however, never went so far as to trace the tenth portion of the non-Sanskrit words to their roots, nor to endeavour to account for the totally different construction of the northern languages abounding in Sanskrit words from the grammatical construction of the latter.

More than half a century has elapsed since the enunciations of the opinions of Sir W. Jones and Mr. Thomas H. Colebrooke; but our more intimate acquaintance of the languages of all parts of India now afford us an opportunity of examining this subject more closely.

Of those who have attended to the several vernacular tongues, we have, among lexicographers:

Gilchrist, Hunter, and Shakespeare,	in Hindi.
Reeves	in Karnataka.
Marshman	in Bengali.
Rottler	in Tamil.
Campbell	in Telugu.
Molesworth	in Mahratti.
Bailey	in Malayalam.

besides copious vocabularies in Guzerati, and in several other dialects. In the whole of these, we find traces more or less of words common to each other, but distinct from Sanskrit.

So little indeed are some of these languages indebted to the Sanskrit, that poems of pure Tamil still exist, according to Mr. Francis Ellis; while Oriental philologists in general speak of the various dialects of India partaking more or less of the Tamilian type.

As this is by far the most important part of the proof which belongs to the question of the aboriginal race, I shall be pardoned for demanding your indulgence on a subject rather abstruse than popular.

Of the persons who have made the analysis of these languages their study, none have been more zealous and more competent than the Rev. Doctor Stevenson of Bombay, and Mr. Hodgson of Nipal. The former admitted several years ago the propriety of Sir W. Jones' division of the northern group from the southern group of vernacular tongues. But the circumstance of the Sanskrit having taken such

strong hold on those of the north, has, I think, been well accounted for, in the fact of the Hindu race having possessed the country for more than thirty centuries, while again the comparatively more recent acquisition of the Dekhan, and the introduction of the language of the conquerors into the southern tongues, appear to be in the precise proportion of the length of time they have been under the Sanskritic sway. Hence we find a smaller amount of Sanskrit in the Tamil of the extreme south, than in the Telugu and Karnataka.

Dr. Stevenson, of Bombay, has taken great pains, in several numbers of the Journal of the Bombay branch of this Society, to adduce proofs of the total difference between the Sanskritic construction and those of the Tamilian family. He shows that the latter languages have sounds unknown to the Sanskrit, and unpronounceable by a Brahmin; that they have single words which represent compound terms in the Sanskrit and the European languages; that in the Tamilian languages prepositions are postpositions; that there are honorific terms for the same pronouns applied to different degrees of rank in persons, both in the singular and plural number; and, in short, that this peculiarity of grammatical structure pervades all the vernacular dialects of India from one end of it to another. Dr. Stevenson has, in the last number of the Journal alluded to, entered more fully than before on this subject, and has now traced not only the same non-Sanskritic words through the southern and northern dialects, but has exhibited similar words assuming a Sanskrit form. All his subsequent inquiries confirm a very early opinion which he ventured on this subject, in the following words:—"Such are the important particulars that my partial acquaintance with several of these languages has permitted me to observe, as running through the whole, or nearly the whole, of them; and they are surely sufficient to establish among them a strong family identity. This, too, when it is also remembered that for none of these characters are they indebted to the Sanskrit, it seems impossible to account for such a similarity in words and in grammatical structure in languages spoken by people having so little intercourse with one another as, for ages, the inhabitants of the north and south of India have had, unless we suppose it to arise from their being originally all of one family, and possessing one primitive language, the grammatical structure of which may be, in some measure or other, traced throughout the whole."

The same idea was entertained by Mr. Francis Ellis, the most erudite of our Tamil scholars, who somewhere terms that language a Tartar tongue. This notion seems now very commonly entertained by the philologists who have studied these aboriginal languages.

Dr. Rost, of Berlin, an excellent Sanskrit scholar, as well as versed in the languages of the south of India, finds them so closely allied to the Tartaric dialects of Thibet or Butan, that he does not hesitate to pronounce them to have a common origin.

Professor Westergaard, of Copenhagen, so late as 1846, writes to our valuable Assistant Secretary, Mr. Norris: "I never entertained any doubt of these languages (the dialects of India) being of Seythian origin, which term I adopt from Rask for the stock of languages usually called Tartar."

Professor Rask has distinctly stated the same opinion. I have myself gone through several vocabularies of languages picked up among the hill-tribes, both in the east and west of India, and have discovered numerous words in some having similar significations in others; *but not Sanskrit*.

The language of the Gonds so much resembles the dialects of the south, that the American missionaries speaking Canarese were understood, and conversed with the Gonds at Amar Kantak. The vocabulary of Dr. Bradley, supplied to the Bombay Branch of this Society, of the language of a hill-tribe at Gyalgarh, contains so many words in common with the Gondi and the languages spoken by the hill-people to the east of Bengal, that Dr. Bird (President of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society) has arrived at the conclusion that these two languages have a common source with that of the Garrows, the Blutias, and the hill-tribes of the Burmese.

Mr. B. H. Hodgson, of whom mention has been before made, obtained, through Captain Haughton, three vocabularies of the dialects of the Koles; two others from Chota Nagpur, through Colonel Ousely; one from Bhagalpur, through the Rev. Mr. Hurder; and another, from Colonel Sleeman, of the Jabalpur dialect. The five first he designates as dialects of the Great Koles, which he connects, on the one hand, without difficulty, with the Gonds, and, on the other, with the inhabitants of the Rajmahal Hills. Mr. Walter Elliot, of Madras, recognises in them affinities to the languages of Southern India, of which there can now be no doubt in the mind of any one examining these northern dialects who has a tolerable acquaintance with any of the southern tongues.

Since then, Mr. Hodgson has obtained other vocabularies of the aboriginal tongues, confirming fully the belief that they are all closely allied to each other, but are distinct from the Sanskrit.

Philologists regard grammatical construction as a more rigid test of the identity of language than mere words. In order to bring this discussion to that test, I have taken, hap-hazard, a sentence from the

Mahábháratá, a celebrated heroic poem in Sanskrit, and having caused it to be put into the order of prose, have caused the same to be translated into English, and into three out of the numerous vernacular languages of India which have all the same construction, viz.—

Urdu, in the extreme north;
 Mahratti, in the centre of India; and
 Tamil, in the extreme south;

to which I have added the Turkish, a purely Scythian dialect.

The whole sentence in the Sanskrit runs thus—

Never does friendship undecayed in the world in the heart of any one remain.
 Time surely it removes, anger or it changes also.
 Do not then decayed friendship cherish—the existent discard.

The idiom of the Indian languages hardly admits of a close translation of these three lines. I have, however, taken the first line as an example of construction, and which, on examination, will be found to exhibit (though rendered word for word) a construction of the Sanskrit form, differing altogether from the construction of the Indian languages, the latter coinciding not only with each other, but also with the Turkish. It will be seen, too, that the Urdu, spoken in the north, is made up of Arabic and Persian nouns; that the Mahratti is composed of Sanskrit nouns; and that the Tamil is devoid of Sanskrit, as completely as is the Turkish.

COMPARISON OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SANSKRIT WITH THE LANGUAGES OF INDIA, THE TURKISH, AND THE ENGLISH.

SANSKRIT	Na	sukhyam	njaram	loke	hridi	ksanyehit	tishthati.
	<i>Never (does) friendship undecayed in the world in the heart of any one remain.</i>						
URDU	Dunya men	dosti	kisi ke	dil men	kāim	kabhi nahin	rahti.
MAHRATTI	Prithvi t	snehe	kona cha	ehit ant	stir	kadhi nahin	rahtat.
TAMIL	Ulkat il	ulla uravu (that is)	yavan uda	nenjat il un	kedāmal (undecaying)	nillātu.	(remains not).
TURKISH ..	Dunya da	mahnabat	kinse nin	dil in deh	kāim	hiç deyil	dur.
ENGLISH ...	<i>The world in</i>	<i>the friendship</i>	<i>any one of</i>	<i>the heart in</i>	<i>stable</i>	<i>ever</i>	<i>not remains.</i>

Now can it be doubted after this, that all the vernacular dialects of India owe their origin to the Scythian tongues, rather than to the Sanskrit of their conquerors?

My task is now performed.

I have shewn that the Hindus from the west, at a very remote period, invaded India, bringing with them the Sanskrit language. That they found the country inhabited by another race which they

conquered, divided their lands among themselves, and enslaved the aborigines. That these aborigines still exist in vast numbers in all parts of India, some as rural or agrostic sorfs, in Hindu villages, while others retain their primitive habits in unreclaimed forests and mountains. That the Hindus introduced municipal institutions in their towns, and profess a faith distinct from the aborigines, who differ from them in appearance and in habits. Moreover, that all the aborigines have one common source, and that their language, their features, and their customs, point them out as a branch of the great Scythian family, which from time to time emerged from the Himalayan mountains on the east, and peopled India before the western or Arian race arrived and conquered them.

With the feeble lights afforded us by history, appearing at intervals of many centuries, it would have been impossible to have traced the origin of these two races, had it not been for the singular institutions of the Hindus, comprised in the rules of caste, which, while they preclude the admission of proselytes into their religion, at the same time prohibit intermarriage with any other people.

Before I conclude, I beg to be allowed to say a few words on the present and future condition of these aborigines. They still continue almost everywhere in a state of ignorance and bondage, the latter certainly of a very mild character, under a highly-civilized and Christian government. I have shown what is their doom according to the Hindu law, and under Hindu dominion. Is it fit or just that so vast a population should continue neglected under our rule? In their native forests, they are little elevated above the animals they feed upon, but still they have qualities which are highly appreciable in civil life. They are faithful, truthful, and attached to their superiors, ready at all times to lay down their lives for those they serve, and are remarkable for their indomitable courage. These qualities have been always displayed in our service. The aborigines of the Carnatic were the sepoy's of Clive and of Coote. A few companies of the same stock joined the former great captain from Bombay, and fought the battle of Plassey, in Bengal, which laid the foundation of our Indian empire. They have since distinguished themselves in the corps of pioneers and engineers, not only in India, but in Ava, in Afghanistan, and in the celebrated defence of Jelalabad. An unjust prejudice against them has grown up in the armies of Madras and Bombay, where they have done best service, produced by the feelings of contempt for them existing among the Hindu and Mahomedan sepoy's. They have no prejudices themselves, are always ready to serve abroad, and embark on board ship, and I believe no instance of mutiny has ever occurred among them.

It is to be regretted that separate regiments of this race are not more generally enlisted. While on this subject, I will take advantage of the moment to advert to a circumstance which has hitherto been little understood; namely, the source of the hostility which exists between the right and left hand castes, under the Madras presidency.

I have stated that in former times many of our troops were derived from the despised race of aborigines, who, proud of the consideration they met with from their European officers, did not hesitate on certain occasions to adopt the customs of the Hindus (their natural superiors). This was particularly the case when they performed marriage or other civil ceremonies. Then the bride and bridegroom rode on horseback, with an awning or umbrella carried over their heads, and they were attended by musicians preceding them in the marriage procession. To these processions, the artisans, being Hindus, were opposed, and desperate conflicts, accompanied by loss of life, ensued. That of greatest historical note occurred at Seringapatam, shortly after its capture, when so obstinate was the contest between the combatants, that the European soldiery and guns were actually employed, before they could be separated. Similar conflicts have since occasionally happened, and have not been put an end to without the interference of troops. The rule seems to be, now, that the low castes (as the aborigines are termed) may use what forms they please outside the town, but not bring their processions through its streets.

A similar prejudice, on the part of the Hindus, exists against the aborigines building permanent houses within or without towns, whatever may be their condition. At Nellore, several years ago, a riot ensued, in consequence of a Paria of wealth attempting to build an angular-shaped brick-house out of the town, the Hindus insisting on his dwelling being a round mud hovel, covered with thatch. In Candesh, within my own time, a Koli native officer made a complaint of a similar nature, and it was not without difficulty the matter was arranged.

But to return to the subject of their fidelity and self-devotion, I need only quote two of the remarkable instances mentioned by Wilks, the elegant historian of the South of India.

I have before stated that till a late period the Bedars enjoyed principalities in Mysore. They might (had they united at the dissolution of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar) have re-established a great Bedar sovereignty; but they were jealous of each other, and thus became an easy prey to the vigorous rule of Haider Ali.

Among other aboriginal chiefs in the south, was the Naig of Chit-

Chittledroog, who enjoyed a principality in the heart of Mysore, yielding a revenue of £10,213 sterling. On the invasion of Mysore, by the Mahrattas, under Madhu Rao Peshwa, in the year 1770, he was joined by a band of Bedars, under the Naig of Chittledroog. They used no missiles, but bore a spear from ten to fifteen feet long, and their invariable national weapon, the bill-hook. The Mahrattas, at the head of 70,000 men, were detained for three months before the small fort of Nijkul, into which Haidar Ali had thrown 3000 of his best soldiers. At length, the approaches were carried close to the walls, a practicable breach was effected, and the Mahrattas twice stormed, but were on both occasions repulsed. The Peshwa's brother was seriously wounded in the last attack, and Madhu Rao then resolved to head the storming party himself, and to carry the place, or die in the attempt. The Naig of Chittledroog, whose troops had been kept in reserve, now volunteered to lead the next storm with the Bedars, offering, in case of his own return without success, his head as the forfeit of failure. Wilks, who tells the story, says: "Bij-Katti-Verma, the Naig of Chittledroog, placed himself at the head of his brave Bedars, and on this occasion carried the place, on the 1st May, 1770, in a style of gallantry which excited the admiration of the whole army."

Haidar Ali never forgave this memorable instance of devotion towards his enemy; and this feeling became the ground of that hostility which ended in the destruction of the little independent state of Chittledroog, some years afterwards.

This strong and nearly impregnable hill-fort was besieged by Haidar in 1776. "The siege," says Wilks, "continued for three months, with more perseverance than skill on the side of the besiegers—on the part of the besieged with a mixture of enthusiastic fatalism which is strongly characteristic of the Bedar race. A temple, dedicated to the goddess who delights in blood, was erected on the summit of the Dûng (or hill-fort), 800 feet high; and as long as her rites should be duly performed, the Bedars believed that their fortress would be inaccessible. On every Monday, after performing their devotion to the goddess, the garrison made a religious sortie. This, after a few repetitions, was as regularly known in the camp of the besiegers as in the fort. A particular sound of the horn always gave intimation that they had finished their preparatory devotions, and were about to sally. Everything was known to the enemy, except the exact point of attack; and, notwithstanding all the advantages of preparation on the part of the besiegers, the Bedars never once returned without penetrating into the trenches, and carrying away a

certain number of heads to offer to the shrine of the deity. The heads were ranged in rows of small pyramids in regular order, in front of the temple of the goddess, to the number of about 2000." The siege was eventually raised; but the place was again attacked two years afterwards, and fell into Haidar's hands by the treachery of a Mahomedan saint, who had been sent for the purpose of establishing himself near one of the gates, which he was inadvertently permitted to do for several months before the second siege. The fidelity of the Bedar population towards their prince is forcibly illustrated by Wilks. "During the two sieges, Haidar had found the natives of the territory (chiefly Bedars) adhering to their chief with unconquerable attachment. No severity of military execution could restrain persons of each sex, and every age, from risking their lives with the constancy and exultation of martyrs, for the purpose of carrying to the besieged such supplies as an incessant succession of individuals could convey. To subsist his own army exclusively on the resources of the country, to consume all its provisions to the amount of nearly half a million sterling, was of no avail; and he was at length induced to sweep off the whole population, which now consisted only of those who had the patriotism to devote themselves to the service of their besieged friends, all the rest having long before sought refuge from the merciless Mahomedan soldiery in the woods or in other provinces. The number carried off amounted to 20,000 souls, who were all compelled to embrace the Mahomedan religion."

What might the British Government not expect from soldiers of this type, who have ever exhibited the same character in our armies; but who have, it is much to be regretted, been neglected as men of low caste.

Ignorant of the use of letters, outcasts from the rest of the population, without any religion but that of a sanguinary or demoniacal worship, having little or no idea of a future state, their minds are unshackled by any of the deep-rooted prejudices of either Hindus or Mahomedans; and if ever the efforts of the missionary are to be successful in the East, it is upon this race the attempt should be first made. The task has fortunately been begun, and both the Rev. Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Wilson, and others at Bombay, and the Rev. W. Taylor, Mr. Fox, and his colleagues, on the opposite coast, are gradually making progress among them. On the shores of Ava we find that several worthy American missionaries, male and female, have succeeded among the Karicns, an aboriginal and despised race, like those of India; while among the Buddhistic Burmese the pro-

gress of Christianity, as among the Hindus, is slow, and, on the whole, unsatisfactory.

Before I conclude this lecture, it seems proper I should mention, that it was not till a few days since I had an opportunity of perusing the series of papers on the same subject, published between the years 1847 and 1849, by Mr. B. H. Hodgson, the late Resident at Nipal; my own papers on the aborigines having been read before the Ethnological Society of London at a prior period. While I was culling from the Transactions of this Society, and other independent sources, proofs of my hypothesis of the aborigines throughout all parts of India being of one common stock, Mr. Hodgson was labouring on the spot, among the Himalaya Mountains, on the same subject, and arrived at a similar conclusion.

It is to me a source of singular gratification that my views should so entirely coincide with those of a philosopher who has devoted so much of his life in researches of this nature. He is of opinion that there is an identity, both in physiognomy and philology of the several aboriginal races of India, which, while it stamps them of one stock, distinguishes them from the Arian race. He declares his conviction that all the aborigines of India are Northmen of the Scythic stem; but he hesitates in pronouncing positively from which of the three great branches they are derived. His own opinion, however, inclines him to think that all those found to the east of the river Dhausri, in Assam, belong to the Chinese; while those to the west, which include all I have described, belong to the Thibetan branch. Of these he speaks decidedly. The aborigines of India are all of the Tamilian family: they are, he says, now for the most part British subjects. They are counted by millions, extending from the snows to the Capo [Comorin]. Yes, in every jungly or hilly tract there exist hundreds of thousands of human beings not materially different from the Germans as described by Tacitus. These primitive races are the ancient heritors of the whole soil, from all the rich and open parts of which they were driven by the usurping Hindus.

He speaks of his own labours, however, as mere fragments of a whole, which may yet be brought together by large and careful induction; concluding by this sensible reflection, that "modern ethnology has accomplished elsewhere still more brilliant feats than this, throwing upon the great ante-historic movements of nations a light as splendid as useful."

It is true that further materials may be wanting to render the inquiry more complete; but it must be admitted that there is already sufficient evidence to determine the ethnological question of the

aborigines of India being of a Scythian origin ; while, again, the Hindus come from the Caucasian stock from an opposite direction. Such investigations by our members evince the great utility of a Society like this, adding year after year additional knowledge to every branch of scientific research, and fulfilling the main object of the original Asiatic Society of India, which was intended to embrace within the scope of its inquiries whatever concerns the history of man or the products of nature in the region of Asia.
