

## CHAPTER I. IMMIGRATION.

### 1. Conditions at Home.

By far the majority of the Hindustanees on the Pacific Coast came from the districts of Hoshiarpur, Jellundar, Amritsar, Lahore, Ludhiana and Feerozepore of the Punjab. Dispersed among them here and there are to be found a few men from such other parts of India as Gujrat, Oudh and Bengal.

Practically all of these Hindustanees were born in the rural districts of India and are agriculturalists by occupation. Some of them were recruited by the British Indian Government for work either in the army or in the police force and were sent abroad for service. But the majority of them had remained in the country and were occupied with farming before their coming to America. Only a few of them were wage-earners.

The size of the farms which most of them owned, together with other members of their family, varied from 30 to 80 acres. The land was fertile but the methods of farming were rather primitive. The implements used were simple and for the most part antiquated. Among the crops they raised, the following were most important: wheat, corn, sugar-cane, barley, gram, peas, alfalfa, cotton, cantaloup and water-melon.

### 2. Arrival in Canada.

The Hindustanees who first came to Canada were soldiers or policemen in the service of the British Government at Shanghai, Hong Kong and other parts of the Far

#### 4 HINDUSTANI WORKERS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

East. During the Boxer War they came into contact with men of other nations and realized the importance of their service in the international struggle. Travelling abroad and crossing the ocean fostered in them a spirit of wanderlust and either at the time of their retirement from the service or while on leave of absence, some of them crossed the Pacific to Canada.

Besides these first arrivals, a number of the Sikhs, who, after the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee in Great Britain in 1897, travelled through Canada, realized the great opportunities offered by that country for industrial success. Some of them remained in the country, while others carried with them the message to their countrymen in India.

The number of both of these groups of the Hindustanees who arrived in Canada was very small. When their relatives and neighbors came to learn of their success, however small it might have been in the beginning, they began to come to Canada on a large scale. It was in 1905 that a considerable number of them arrived in Canada as immigrants and they were followed by still larger and larger groups in the following three years as shown below:

Table I

#### Hindustani Immigration into Canada.<sup>1</sup>

Fiscal Year	Number
1905	45
1906	387
1907	2124
1908	<u>2623</u>
Total	5179

After 1908 a new policy was adopted by the Canadian Government by which the immigration of the Hindustanees was practically stopped as shown below:

---

<sup>1</sup> Canada, Report of the Royal Commission, 1908, p. 75.

## IMMIGRATION

Table II

Hindustani Immigration into Canada.<sup>2</sup>

Fiscal Year	Number
1909	6
1910	10
1911	5
1912	3
1913	
1914	88
1915	0
1916	1
1917	0
1918	0
1919	0
1920	0
Total	118

It is thus seen from the above tables (I and II) that while 5179 Hindustanees reached the shores of Canada in the first four years, the number of such arrivals amounted only to 118 during the following twelve years from 1909 to 1920.

During practically the same period, a large number of them were also rejected at the Canadian ports as shown below:<sup>3</sup>

Table III

East Indian Immigrants Debarred from Entering Canada.

Year	Number
1906	18
1907	120
1908	218
1909	4

---

<sup>2</sup> The Canada Year Book, 1920, The Dominion Bureau of Statistics, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Canada, Rept. of the Sup. of Immigration for 1913-14, p. 76.

## 6 HINDUSTANI WORKERS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

Year	Number
1910	6
1911	0
1912	2
1913	8
1914	14
Total	390

It is thus seen from Table III that about 390 Hindustanees were rejected at the Canadian ports from the year 1906 to 1914.

During the same period several of them were also deported after admission into Canada. In the six years from 1908-09 to 1913-14, the number of those deported from Canada amounted to 29 as shown below.\*

Table IV

East Indians Deported from Canada.	
Year	Number
1908-09	24
1909-10	1
1910-11	1
1911-12	2
1912-13	1
1913-14	0
Total	29

### Causes.

The fundamental cause of the immigration of the Hindustanees into Canada was economic. Canada, especially British Columbia, with its rich natural resources and sparse population offered a great opportunity to the people of India where the population is dense, the resources comparatively rare, and the wages very low. Thus while a Hindustanee can earn only ten or fifteen cents a day in India, in Canada he can earn from two to five dollars a day. As to how the Hindustanees came to know of these economic opportunities in a distant country, there has been a good deal of controversy.

\* 9 months only.

According to the report of the Royal Commission of Canada appointed in 1907 to inquire into the methods by which Oriental laborers have been induced to come to Canada, the principal causes for the immigration of the Hindustani laborers into Canada are the following:<sup>5</sup>

- (1) The activities of certain steamship companies and their agents selling tickets in the interest of the Company.
- (2) The propaganda of certain business interests in Canada who in order to get cheap labor, distributed literature concerning industrial opportunities in Canada.
- (3) The activities of certain Hindustanees who wanted to bring their countrymen into Canada for exploitative purposes.

It might be remarked that as the investigation was undertaken with a view to restrict Oriental labor, and that protective measures were being contemplated beforehand, the results of the investigation were more or less liable to be colored by politics.

The most important cause which induced the Hindustani immigrants to leave for Canada was the letters of their relatives or neighbors in Canada who had already met with success and who informed them of the industrial opportunities of the new land. The spirit of wanderlust combined with the economic opportunities offered, induced them to immigrate into Canada for industrial enterprise.

The economic prospects were so bright that some of them even sold their property and mortgaged their homesteads in order to raise the money necessary for the passage. The usual rate of interest is very high in India, especially on small loans, and some of them paid as high as 15 or even 20 per cent interest for their money. But they expected to make money in a short time in Canada and pay off their debts.

Scarcely any Hindustanee came to Canada for the purpose of permanently making his home there. He came

---

<sup>5</sup> Canada, Sessional Papers, 1907-08, Vol. 17, No. 36 a, 1908, p. 8.

with the object of making money and going back to India after a few years. This is commonly found to be true also of the working people of Italy, Austria and some other European countries. After their arrival in Canada, some of them undoubtedly changed their minds and wanted to stay permanently in that country.

#### Restriction.

The arrival of the Hindustances in considerable numbers, especially in the years 1907 and 1908, renewed the hostile feeling of the Canadian people which had already been created against the Chinese and Japanese, and led to the investigation by a Royal Commission in 1907. This Commission recommended the exclusion or restriction of Oriental labor including the Hindustances. But before the adoption of any measures, Mr. W. L. Mackenzie-King, Deputy Minister of Labor, was sent over to Great Britain in 1908. The conferences and negotiations between the Canadian Government and the British Government, proceedings of which are among the confidential papers,<sup>6</sup> resulted in the practical prohibition of Hindustani immigration into Canada. The aims of the restrictive measures, according to the Canadian Government, were:

- (1) To prevent hardship to the Hindustances themselves due to the severity of the climate.
- (2) To avoid race friction with all its complications.
- (3) To protect Canadian workmen whose standard of life, family duties and civic obligations were of a higher order.

The specific measures adopted were as follows:

First, both the Canadian Government and the Indian Government deprecated the activities of the steamship companies who were in any way responsible for recruiting immigrants in India.

Second, Indian Government took special measures in prohibiting the distribution of literature giving glowing accounts of industrial opportunities in Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Canada, Sessional Papers, 1907-8, Vol. 17, No. 36 a, p. 7.

Third, the Indian Immigration Act of 1883 provided that the emigration of the Hindustani laborers under agreement to labor for hire in other parts of the *Empire*, except in Ceylon and the Straits Settlements, or in foreign lands, was not lawful except under certain conditions. Although this act was framed primarily for the prohibition of emigration of indentured laborers, yet the provisions of the act were invoked to prohibit Hindustani laborers from arriving in Canada.

Fourth, the amount of money which each immigrant was required to possess at the time of his arrival in Canada was raised by an act in Council from \$ 25.00 to \$ 200.00.

Fifth, and the most effective, was the application to the Immigration Act of a provision which required that any immigrant who came to Canada in any way other than by continuous journey from the country of which he was a native or citizen, and by ticket purchased in that country, might be excluded. There were no means by which the Hindustanees could conform to this provision of the Act. The application of this provision of the Act to their case practically prohibited their immigration.

That these measures effectively served the purpose of the Canadian Government may be seen by comparing the figures of Hindustani immigration for the year 1908, when 2623 Hindustanees arrived in Canada, with the figure for 1909 when the number of immigrants dropped to 6.

### 3. Arrival in the United States.

The census of 1900 reported the presence of 2050 East Indians in the United States. These were almost all students, business men and persons of other races born in India.<sup>7</sup> Even the first immigrant who arrived in 1899 was in the beginning a salesman and became a laborer

---

<sup>7</sup> The immigration is reported both by country and by race. The writer has collected the statistics by race as a large number of persons of other races is liable to be included in the list reported by country.

## 10 HINDUSTANI WORKERS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

afterwards.<sup>8</sup> For several years the number of persons arriving in the United States was rather insignificant and it was not until 1904 that Hindustani immigrants began to arrive in large numbers as shown in the table below:

Table V  
*East Indian Immigration into the United States from 1899--1907.*<sup>9</sup>

Year	Number
1899	15
1900	9
1901	20
1902	84
1903	83
1904	258
1905	145
1906	271
1907	<u>1072</u>
Total	1957

Table V shows that in the first nine years from 1899 to 1907, only 1957 East Indians or Hindustances arrived in the United States. During the same period a large number of them also departed, but no statistics are available of the number of such departures. It was in 1908 that both the arrival and departure of alien immigration began to be recorded as shown below:

Table VI  
*East Indian Immigration into the United States from 1908--1920.*

Year	Admitted	Departed
1908	1710	124
1909	337	48

<sup>8</sup> Mr. Bakshis Singh, now a resident of Astoria, Oregon. He has been back and forth several times and finally returned to this country in 1910 with his family.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1919--1920, pp. 180--181.

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1919-20, pp. 181--182.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 186--87.



## IMMIGRATION

1

Year	Admitted	Departed
1910	1782	80
1911	517	75
1912	165	164
1913	188	213
1914	172	143
1915	82	162
1916	80	91
1917	69	136
1918	61	154
1918	68	106
1920	160	162
Totals	5391	1658

It is seen from Table VI that during the period from 1908 to 1920, 5391 East Indians or Hindustanees arrived in the United States. The total number of the Hindustanees who were admitted into the United States during the period from 1899 to 1920, is, therefore, 7348, adding the figures from the last two Tables (V and VI). During the period as shown in the last table, 1658 Hindustanees also departed from this country. The table also shows that in the last few years more Hindustanees left the United States than arrived. In 1912, 165 of them arrived in the United States while 164 left the country. In 1913 the number of arrivals amounted to 188, while that of departures amounted to 213. Although the number of the admitted exceeded the number of departures in 1914, being respectively 172 and 143, beginning with 1915, the number of departures again became larger than that of the admitted. In the years from 1915 to 1920 the total number of those who left the country amounted to 811 as against 520 who arrived. The number of those who are prepared to return to India at present is still larger.

It must be mentioned that among the number of the above arrivals up to the years 1907, there was also a number of persons who were non-immigrants. It was not until 1908 that the "immigrants" and "non-immigrants" were classified. Since then the number of non-immigrant

Hindustanees is also increasing. They are mostly students, businessmen and tourists. The arrivals and departures of such persons are shown in the following table:

Table VII

Arrival and Departure of Non-Immigrant East Indians.<sup>12</sup>

Year	Admitted <sup>13</sup>	Departed <sup>14</sup>
1908	20	187
1909	113	55
1910	86	98
1911	58	177
1912	56	148
1913	45	122
1914	51	188
1915	53	256
1916	48	100
1917	50	52
1918	454	42
1919	471	30
1920	121	42
Totals	1626	1497

Table VII shows that during the period from 1908 to 1920, 1626 non-immigrant East Indians or Hindustanees arrived in the United States and 1497 departed. The difference between the number of arrivals and the number of departures of non-immigrant Hindustanees is only 129

### Rejection

While 5391 Hindustanees were admitted into the United States during the period from 1908 to 1920 as we have seen in Table VII above, a large number were also rejected at the ports. The number of the debarred is shown in the table given below: —

<sup>12</sup> Adopted from Table IV of the Annual Reports of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the years indicated.

<sup>13</sup> By Country. The Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1908, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> By Country. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

IMMIGRATION

Table VIII  
East Indians debarred from entering the United States<sup>15</sup>

Year	Likely to become public charge	Surgeon's Certificate of mental or physical defect which may affect alien's ability to earn a living	Dangerous diseases		Contract Labor	Polygamist	Geographically Excluded	Other Causes	Total
			Trachoma	Others					
1907 <sup>16</sup>	286	—	102	—	29	—	—	—	417
1908	286	107	192	1	20	—	—	—	606
1909	146	54	94	2	17	16	—	—	329
1910	200	16	161	7	7	18	—	—	409
1911	536	34	105	151	8	27	—	—	861
1912	58	5	7	22	4	3	—	—	99
1913	159	8	18	23	23	3	—	—	234
1914	115	6	19	4	11	2	—	—	157
1915	211	14	42	28	3	2	—	—	300
1916	36	3	2	1	1	1	—	—	44
1917	17	1	—	5	—	1	—	—	24
1918	4	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	17
1919	—	—	—	—	—	—	18	—	18
1920	2	—	—	—	—	—	22	4	28
	2056	248	622	241	123	73	53	4	3543
			906						

<sup>15</sup> Adapted from Table XVIII of Annual Reports of the Commissioner General of Immigration.  
<sup>16</sup> Table III. Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1907-08. pp. 16-17

From Table VIII it is seen that 3543 Hindustanees were rejected at the ports of entry of the United States during the period from 1908 to 1920. In other words, while 5391 Hindustanees were admitted at the ports, as shown in Table VI, 3543 were rejected. Of those rejected, 2056 or 58 per cent were barred on the ground that they were likely to become public charges, 906 or 16.7 per cent on the ground of having dangerous diseases, mostly trachoma, 248 because they were found defective by surgeons and might not be able to earn a living, 123 because they came under the contract labor system, 73 because their religious faith advocated polygamy, and 53 were barred because they came from an area which was outside the zone from which the immigrants were allowed to come by the Immigration Act of 1917.

#### Deportation.

Besides the persons who were barred from entering the United States, there were quite a few Hindustanees who were admitted at first but were deported afterwards. In the following table is given their number.

Table IX  
East Indians Deported from the United States.<sup>17</sup>

Year	Likely to be public charge	Entered without inspection	Entered from geographically excluded area	Other causes	Total
1907-08 <sup>18</sup>	—	8	—	1	9
1908-09	—	1	—	—	1
1909-10	—	4	—	—	4
1910-11	2	34	—	—	36
1911-12	1	4	—	6	11
1912-13	21	9	—	2	32
1913-14	25	6	—	11	42
1914-15	18	15	—	2	35
1915-16	14	23	—	1	38
1916-17	3	2	—	1	6
1917-18	1	1	—	—	2
1918-19	1	1	8	1	11
1919-20	2	—	19	1	22
	88	108	27	26	249

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from Table XVIII, Annual Reports of the Commissioner General of Immigration.

<sup>18</sup> Table III A. Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1907-08, p. 18.

From Table IX it is seen that 249 East Indians or Hindustanees were deported from the United States after their admission. Of these 88 or 31.3 per cent were deported on the ground that they might become public charges, 108 or 43.3 per cent because they entered the country without proper inspection. They came as sailors to this country and after landing did not leave the country. They were practically all in the eastern ports. 27 or 10.8 per cent of the deported immigrants came from that region which is excluded by the Immigration Act of the United States as mentioned before. 25 or 10.4 per cent were deported on various grounds, such as crime, disease and contract labor.

#### Causes.

The fundamental reason why the Hindustanees came to the United States is the same as that in the case of Canada. It was the prospects of industrial success which induced them to leave their native land.

A large number of the Hindustanees also migrated from British Columbia into the United States. They crossed the border and arrived in Washington, Oregon and California. The warm and congenial climate of California helped this southward movement. But there was a more important reason. They had been used to farming from their childhood. The farming opportunities in California offered an irresistible temptation to them. Moreover, practically all of them have been owners of farmland and homestead in India. The spirit of freedom gained from the ownership of land is a dominant feature in their life. When California offered the opportunity to them to lease land or even to buy it, they moved southward. Gradually most of them got located in the rice fields of Northern California and in the cotton belt of Southern California.

#### Restriction.

The rapid growth of the Hindustani immigrants from 84 in 1902 to 1710 in 1910 created a feeling against them. The Chinese and Japanese immigration had already given rise to anti-Asian agitation. The arrival of the Hindus-

tanees gave a fresh impetus for the continuation of that agitation. An association called the Asiatic-Exclusion League became very active. Due to their agitation the immigration officers became rather strict in their examination of the Hindustanees and sent back many of those who applied for admission.<sup>19</sup> As a result of this policy, the number of the Hindustanees who arrived in the United States fell from 1710 in 1908 to 337 in 1909. But the following year the policy of the Immigration Officers was somewhat modified and the number of immigrants rose to 1782 again. This rise in number led to fresh agitation by the press, the Asiatic Exclusion League and other organizations which protested against the Hindustani immigration to the Commissioner of Immigration at Washington, D. C. in 1910.<sup>20</sup>

The agitation had its desired effect. A much stricter policy was adopted and the number of the immigrants from India fell to 517 in 1911 and to 165 in 1912. After a slight increase in 1913 and 1914 when 188 and 172 Hindustanees reached the United States, the number fell to 82 in 1915 and continued to go down for the next four years, during which period only 278 entered the country. In 1920, there was a slight increase in immigration and 160 Hindustanees arrived in the United States.

In the meantime, after the proposal of various laws to bar future immigration from India, an Immigration Act was passed on February 15, 1917. A provision in section 3 of the Act was made to exclude all people from the so-called "barred zone", which consisted of India, Siam, Indo-China, parts of Siberia, Afghanistan and Arabia and most of the islands of the Malay Archipelago with an estimated population of five hundred million people.<sup>21</sup> The provision exempted such classes as travellers, students and officials. The act has been successful in excluding laborers from India.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration, for 1918-19, p. 59

<sup>20</sup> The San Francisco Call, June 29, 1910, p. 7, c. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for 1918-19, p. 60.

## CHAPTER II.

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

The most important ports at which the Hindustanees made their first landings were San Francisco and Vancouver. From these two centers they gradually spread over towards the south, east and north, reaching different parts of the Pacific Coast in the course of time.

According to the report of the census of 1910, the whole of the Hindustani population which arrived in the United States were distributed as follows:

California	2,742
Washington	1,414
New York	492
Oregon	208
New Jersey	131
Missouri	119
Rest	118
Total in U. S.	5,424
Hawaii	362
	5,786

From the above table it is seen that next to British Columbia where 5179 Hindustanees arrived in the four years from 1905 to 1909, Table I, Chapter I, California had the next largest number of Hindustani immigrants, 2,742 in all. Washington stood next with 1,414. A few of them arrived at Seattle but most of them came from British Columbia. In Oregon, most of the Hindustanees were located in lumber camps. The majority of the 492 Hindustanees in the State of New York were congregated in the City of New York where they arrived mostly as sailors. Some few, however, came for the purpose of trade. This is true also of New Jersey and Missouri where the Hindustani population numbered 131 and 119 respectively.

There has been a good deal of change in the distribution of the Hindustani population in the United States in recent years, most of them being now located in the following centers:

### 1. *The San Joaquin Valley.*

About 75 miles south of San Francisco lies the great valley of the San Joaquin comprising some of the richest counties of California. The soil is generally sandy loam to light sand and contains all the mineral elements of plant food. In the delta near Stockton, the soil is especially rich in humus, in some places to a depth of ten or twelve feet. The annual rainfall for the whole valley amounts to ten inches with a dry period from May to September. The temperature rises as high as 82 degrees F. in the summer and falls as low as 47 degrees in the winter. Apples, peaches, apricots, almonds, olives, figs, oranges, bean potatoes, corn and sugar beets are among the products of the valley.

Beside its agricultural wealth, the valley itself is charming and picturesque. Blue and clear skies with specks of white clouds floating lazily above, the half-clad and misty hill sides on the distant horizon, the never-ending vineyards interspersed here and there with orchards, and the tall and lusty eucalyptus towering over the groves and cottages are fascinating even to casual travellers. To those who desire to settle down, the San Joaquin Valley appears to be the "promised land".

It was not long after their arrival in America that the Hindustanes came to appreciate the resources and opportunities in the San Joaquin Valley. While working on railroads they had occasion to travel and get acquainted with the rich resources of the valley and were soon filled with a desire to secure employment on the ranches. It was in 1907 that the first Hindustanes appeared in the San Joaquin Valley. Gradually a large number of them settled around Stockton, Fresno and Bakersfield, and these three cities became the important centers of the Hindustani workers in the San Joaquin Valley.

Of the above three centers, Stockton naturally took the lead. A large number of the Hindustanes were engaged in the work of cultivating farms around Stockton and, while moving from farm to farm, they made it their headquarters. The other important places around Stockton in which they are located at the present time are Holt, Lodi



and Sando. Their second important center in the San Joaquin Valley is Fresno County. Fresno, the "Queen of raisins", has attracted perhaps the largest number of Hindustani settlers on the Pacific Coast. They are scattered around Lone Star, Conejo, Clovis, Madera and other places.

## 2. The Sacramento Valley.

The Sacramento Valley is another rich section of Northern California. In physical features, soil texture and composition, and climatic conditions, it is not essentially different from the San Joaquin Valley. Some of the products such as grapes and peaches are practically the same as in the latter, but there is one essential difference: Unlike the San Joaquin Valley, the Sacramento Valley has large tracts of swamp land which are especially fitted for the cultivation of rice.

The Hindustanees began to arrive in the Sacramento Valley about the same time as they did in the San Joaquin Valley. It was not long before the city of Sacramento became one of their centers. Like Fresno City, Sacramento is also a stopping point for the migrating Hindustani laborers. In the periods between the agricultural seasons in the rice fields in northern California and the orchards in the west and south, they rest at Sacramento and carry on their social activities there.

Besides the city of Sacramento, the Hindustanees in the Sacramento Valley are found congregated in two different sections: first, in the fruit growing sections of Folsom, Orangeville, Loomis and Newcastle; and second, in the rice growing districts of Marysville, Colusa, Tudor, Willows, Chico, Butte City, Nelson, Gridley and Briggs. It is in the last center that they have become very successful business men and control a large percentage of the rice production of California.

## 3. Imperial Valley.

Imperial Valley is a county in Southern California bordering Mexico. A large section of the valley is below the sea-level. It is about 60 miles long and 45 miles broad and had a population of about 43 000 persons in 1920.

The precipitation for the whole year does not amount to more than one inch. The air is dry all the year round. The temperature does not fall below 24 degrees in winter and rises as high as 115 or more in the shade in July and August. The soil is very rich. Agriculture is altogether dependent upon irrigation. Among the chief products of the valley might be mentioned grapes, cotton, alfalfa, milo, barley and cantaloups.

The Hindustanees began to appear in Imperial Valley about 1910 when the country was still undeveloped. The extreme heat of the summer does not attract many American settlers. Here the Hindustanees found a great opportunity for carrying on their industrial activities. In 1919 their number in Imperial Valley amounted to nearly 300 and although the failure of the cotton crop has driven out a large number of them, there are still about 200 engaged in agricultural operations near such cities as El Centro, Calexico, Holtville and Brawley.

#### 4. British Columbia.

British Columbia is one of the richest provinces of Canadian territories on the Pacific Coast, having an area of 372,630 square miles. Although mountainous and rugged, the soil near the coast and in the valleys is rich and productive. The climate is mild, and rainy on the coast. A large part of the region is adaptable to fruit-growing. In fact, the Fraser Valley is a "perennial garden" and produces some of the best fruits and vegetables found in any part of the world. Gold, silver, copper, zinc, mercury, coal and iron are among the minerals found in different sections of the Province. There is an abundance of fish both in the deep waters and in the rivers. Lumbering is one of the most important industries. Gold mining is extensively carried on in the Island of Vancouver. These various industries offered excellent opportunities to the Hindustanees upon their arrival at Vancouver some two decades ago.

Since their arrival, Vancouver has really become the largest center of the industrial activities and of the social and religious life of the Hindustanees on the Pacific Coast. There are more Hindustanees, especially Sikhs, in Van-

couver than in any other single city in either Canada or the United States. Next to Vancouver, Victoria is the city in which a large number of them carry on their business. From Vancouver they have scattered all around and at present are located at New Westminster, Fraser Mills, Duncan, Coombs and Ocean Falls.

### 5. Miscellaneous Localities.

Besides the above mentioned centers there are also several states and cities in which some Hindustanees are to be found.

States. Of the other States which offer inducement to them, the most important perhaps is Oregon. A number of them are employed in the lumber mills of Astoria, Tinton and Bridal Veil. About a decade ago over two hundred of them were employed in Oregon, but due to the depression in the lumber industry and in the migration of the Hindustanees themselves, the number has been reduced to about 100 at the present time.

In the State of Washington, some of them were formerly employed in different lumber mills such as those at Bellingham and Tacoma, but the number employed there at present is very insignificant. Among other causes which have reduced the number should be mentioned the "anti-Hindu movement" started by a few politicians and labor-leaders.

Several of them have also found their way into such states as Utah, Arizona, Nevada and South Dakota. During the war when the price of wheat went up, some of them bought land near Chandler in Arizona and began to raise wheat. Similarly, several of them have gone to Utah and started farming. There are at present about 15 Hindustanees who are engaged in agriculture near Brigham City, Utah.

Cities. Except in the cities of Vancouver and Victoria, B. C., and Sacramento, Cal., there are very few Hindustanees to be found engaged in industrial activities in the cities on the Pacific Coast. But in several cities on the Atlantic Coast and in the Middle West, such as New York, Chicago and New Orleans, some of them are to be found in different industrial activities.

## CHAPTER III.

### OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION.

#### 1. Transitional Occupations.

About the time when the Hindustances began to land on the Pacific Coast, the Western Pacific Railroad was under construction. The greater part of the Hindustani immigrants were employed in the building of that line. A number was also employed as section hands on the Southern Pacific and the Northern Pacific Railroads. Some of them later found work in an iron foundry at Oakland, California, and for a while that place became the center of distribution for the new immigrants. Some of them were employed even in quarries and pottery works.

Since practically all the Hindustances were agriculturists, railway work did not appeal to them. They, therefore, sought employment on farms. Woodward Island, a big ranch near Stockton, Cal., tried the first Hindustani laborers on the asparagus and beet fields. Their efficiency in this line of work soon attracted the attention of their employers and a new field of industrial opportunity was opened to the rest of them. On many farms the land-owners gave preference to the Hindustani workers and their jobs became more or less secure. Gradually they began to understand English and some of them, instead of working for others, leased land for themselves and began to operate their own farms. Such beginning was made near Holt, Cal., where potatoes, onions, celery and beans were among the crops first raised by them.

In the beginning their endeavor in agriculture did not meet with success. A number of their farming enterprises failed. But instead of giving up, some of them moved either south into Imperial Valley or north into the rice districts of the Sacramento Valley, where they were successful in the cultivation of cotton and rice.

While the Hindustances in California were gradually shifting from railroad work to agriculture, a change was also taking place among their country-men in British

Columbia. The Hindustanees there at first worked in lumber mills, logging camps and on the railroads, but gradually they discovered other industrial opportunities. A number of them became real-estate men and many others started independent business. Some of them even became mill-owners, and a few went into agriculture.

## 2. Farm Operators.

The majority of the Hindustanees resident on the Pacific Coast, especially in California, as mentioned before, are farm operators. They take the lease of a ranch either on the share or cash basis and operate it for a period varying from one to three years, at the end of which time they renew the lease or move to another farm.

The size of farms varies according to the nature of crops, the rent of land, and the financial ability of farmers. A vineyard or orchard can be operated economically when it is as small as 40 acres in size, but it is not economical at all to cultivate such a small-sized farm for cotton or rice. Modern implements or machinery cannot be fully utilized on such small farms. This economy in operation underlies the size of the farms which the Hindustanees operate in different sections of the country. In the vineyards and fruit orchards of the San Joaquin Valley, the size of their farms are often only 40 acres, though in some cases the size ranges as high as 80 acres. For raising grapes or other fruits 40 acres are sufficient for one man. In some cases two of them will buy a 40 acre farm and work on it for a part of the time, hiring themselves out to other farmers during their spare time. This arrangement is resorted to only in case one man is unable to furnish all the money to operate or buy the farm.

In the cotton district of Imperial Valley the average size of a farm is 160 acres, which is operated by one or two men, sometimes even by a greater number, the number of operators depending upon the financial ability and the necessity of raising sufficient money to operate the farm. Many of the farms in Imperial Valley are, however, of a larger size than 160 acres. There are some

farms averaging 320 acres. The size of farms in the rice districts is even larger, ranging from 500 to 1000 acres. These farms, according to their size, are operated by from two to eight men.

The amount of rent which the operators have to pay the landlord differs from time to time and from place to place. During the war the rent of the cotton fields in Imperial Valley went up as high as \$ 35.00 an acre while before the war it did not cost more than \$ 4.00 an acre. In 1921 the rent went down again and the general rate was about \$ 12.00 an acre. Besides the rent the operators have to pay for the use of water. When the rent is put on the crop basis instead of the cash, it varies from one fourth to one third of the crop. The vineyards and orchards are also rented either on the cash or crop basis. When paid on the crop basis, the rent is generally one third of the crop. The operator has also to pay for water. In the rice fields of northern California, rent is either on the crop basis or share basis or both. When paid on the share basis, it is one third of the crop plus one half of the price of the water used.

As mentioned before, the Hindustanees operate their farms on partnership. Generally all the members are equal shareholders and advance an equal amount of money for investment. The management of the farm is left to one man who might be called the foreman of the operators. It is he who negotiates with the landlords and transacts all the business in connection with the farm. He consults with all his partners before he decides matters. They are all equally responsible in case either of success or failure.

The duties and responsibilities of the different members of these enterprises are not clearly defined or fixed beforehand. These unbusinesslike arrangements have sometimes led to misunderstanding and litigation. On the whole, however, the partnership works very well and most of the enterprises have been very successful. Such a method of operating a farm eliminates the necessity for employing extra hands. All the workers have an equal interest in making the enterprise successful.

In financing the farms they have sometimes to borrow money from bankers. They pay the landlords part of the money at the beginning, about one quarter or one third of the total amount, and they give notes for deferred payments for the rest. This they do in the middle of the season or just before the harvesting period. The money is borrowed on mortgage of the crops and personal property. The rate of interest differs in different localities, varying from 7 or 8 per cent in northern districts of California to 10 per cent in Imperial Valley.

The nature of farming differs a good deal in different sections of the Pacific Coast. In Imperial Valley the Hindustani farm operators are chiefly engaged in raising cotton, milo and alfalfa. In the San Joaquin Valley they raise grapes, peaches, pears, apricots, almonds, beans, peas, corn, potatoes, celeries, asparagus and lettuce. In the Sacramento Valley they are engaged in raising peaches, pears, grapes and rice. In British Columbia they are largely engaged in raising vegetables and fruits. They supply milk also to such cities as Victoria and Vancouver. Some successful farmers are also engaged in raising high grade breeding stock, such as Jersey and Guernsey cattle.

### 3. Farm Laborers.

The second large industrial group to which the Hindustanees belong is that of farm laborers. Most of the Hindustani farm laborers are to be found in California. These workers may be divided into two groups, permanent workers and the casual or itinerant workers.

Some of the large American farmers employ the Hindustani workers as foremen or gang-masters. Such men have worked for a long time in one place and have gained the confidence of their employers. These foremen or gang-masters work by the year and are in charge of a gang of five or six men. In the agricultural season, they must recruit additional men varying in number from 30 to 60. Most of the Hindustani farm laborers are recruited by foremen or gang-masters in Imperial Valley, the San Joaquin Valley and the Sacramento Valley

Although the number of these permanent workers is small, they exert a great influence on the industrial and social life of the rest of the workers. First, they help in securing jobs for other Hindustanees. Second, the reliability and steadiness of these workers stand out as models for the rest.

The majority of the farm workers belong to the casual or itinerant class. They migrate in a group from one locality to another according to the agricultural seasons, which in the fruit-growing industry in Southern California are as follows: Pruning in December and January, irrigating in March, April and May, picking fruits in July, August, September and October. In the cultivation of the sugar beet, the agricultural seasons are: Thinning in February and March, hoeing in April and May, picking and loading in July and August. One group following the harvesting seasons from Imperial Valley to Fresno County or even farther north. Another group moves from the San Joaquin Valley to the Sacramento Valley. The former group divides work between the cotton crop and the grape and fruit crops, and the latter between the rice crop and the grape, fruit and vegetable crops.

#### 4. Mill Workers.

The third important group of the Hindustani workers is to be found in the lumber industry of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. There was a time when the largest number of the Hindustanees in the northern section of the Pacific Coast were employed in saw-mills and logging camps. The recent depression in the lumber industry and the departure of a great many of them for India, have gradually reduced this number. At present they are found employed in the lumber mills of Linnton, Astoria and Bridal Veil in Oregon, and of Victoria, Vancouver, New Westminster and Fraser Mills in British Columbia.

Besides those employed in the mills owned by the Americans and Canadians some of the Hindustanees are also employed in the lumber mills owned by their country-



men. Such mills exist at Duncan, Ladysmith, Coombs and Vancouver in British Columbia.

The significant point in connection with the work in lumber mills and logging camps in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, is that they became the training ground for many Hindustanees. They learned their work so thoroughly that in a few years some of them became very efficient in the lumber industry and earned recognition as such.

### **5. Miscellaneous Laborers.**

Only a few Hindustanees are employed in industries other than farming and saw-milling. Among those industries in which they are employed may be mentioned the following: Railroad work, building and repairing roads and streets, and iron and steel smelting. The number of the Hindustani laborers in industries other than the above mentioned is insignificant.

### **6. Farmers and Businessmen.**

Besides the classes of workers mentioned above, there is also a large number of the Hindustanees who have been engaged in business for themselves. Most prominent among them are lumber mill owners in British Columbia. In the last five or six years several of them have started lumber mills of their own such as the Tantor Lumber Company and the Mayo Lumber Company at Duncan, the Eastern Lumber Company at Ladysmith, the Virginia Lumber Company at Coombs and the Bharat Lumber Company at Vancouver.

In British Columbia they also started other industries such as the Bombay Trading Company with a capital of \$ 25,000 in 1910, and the Guru-Nanak Banking and Trust Company with a capital of \$ 50,000 in 1908. At present there are 7 logging camps, 2 shingle factories, 2 groceries, 50 fire-wood stores, 25 farms and 6 lumber companies owned by them.

As a rule these companies have been started on the partnership basis. There are generally from three to six partners, all of whom are active workers in the business.

Most of the mill owners have their own logging camps. They employ workers of all nationalities such as the Chinese, Japanese, Canadians and Hindustanees.

There are some Hindustanees who have business in real estate. There was a time when a very large number of them speculated in this business. But the great losses which most of them sustained during the war period caused them to change their occupation.

Dealing in fire-wood is a very profitable business and several Hindustanees are engaged in it. They make contracts with the lumber mills and buy outright all the waste wood of the mills at a certain sum per day. There is a good deal of speculation in this business and one must be thoroughly acquainted with the capacity of the mills as well as with the nature of the logs. Besides, the dealer must have one or more wagons and a storage place so that the wood may be held for an advantageous price.

In some cities of California, there are also to be found several Hindustanees in such small business as keeping hotels and running restaurants and grocery-stores.

Among the independent business men must also be included the farmers. Modern farming is a business organization devoted to raising crops for market rather than for home consumption.

It has already been pointed out that the Hindustanees entered into farm work at first as laborers. In a short time most of them became farm operators or tenant farmers. Gradually some of them began to buy land and own their own farms. The special interest which a farmer takes in his farm includes the general improvement as well as the preservation of soil-fertility. For these reasons the interest of the tenant-farmer becomes different from that of the farm-owner.

The exact number of Hindustani farmers is not known, as two or more persons sometimes band together to buy a farm; but the total acreage of land owned by them amounted to 2099 acres in 1920. Besides, 86,340 acres were under lease or contract.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> California and the Orientals, State Board of Control of California, p. 47.

## CHAPTER IV. EMPLOYMENT AND UNIONISM.

### 1. Method of Securing Employment.

It is the pioneer immigrant who helps his immediate followers to secure employment. This is as true in the case of the Hindustanees as of any other nationality. The Hindustanees who arrived here first were energetic and went around from ranch to ranch and presented themselves personally to employers and foremen. Their strong and robust constitution soon attracted the attention of employers in such industries as clearing land, building or repairing roads, and logging and lumbering. When one or two had worked in these industries and gained the confidence of their employers, they were naturally asked to recruit a gang of workers of their own nationality. These original workers in different industrial fields became gang masters or foremen. The majority of the Hindustanees in the early days thus secured their jobs through their countrymen. This method of getting work is to a certain extent in practice even to-day.

It is a common custom on the ranches, as in fact it is in many other industries, to entrust a particular work to a group or gang of laborers of the same nationality under the supervision of a gang-master. When one Hindustanee secures a job, he secures it not only for himself but also for many others. Whenever he requires extra workers for a season, he writes to his countrymen in different centers and engages them in advance of the time when they are needed. Often the same people are recruited for the same ranch for several years.

Sometimes the worker is recruited through recommendation. One employer recommends his Hindustani workers as soon as the work on his ranch is finished for the season to another employer needing help. Occasionally the entire gang is transferred from one farm to another at the request of employers.

Cases are known where a gang of the Hindustanees are engaged a year ahead. The workers who are em-

employed in such work as irrigation and pruning on a certain ranch have a contract to do the same work every year. The pruning and irrigation work of several ranches in the same locality are often undertaken by the same gang of laborers, who go from ranch to ranch fulfilling their contracts.

When they first came to the United States, the Hindustanees had considerable trouble in securing employment. The regular employment agencies refused to help them in any way. Nor at present even can they expect anything from the employment agencies. Even the state and federal employment agencies were not always sympathetic towards them. Their peculiarity of head-dress has been given as the reason for the difficulty of placing them. Racial prejudice of course lies at the bottom of such treatment. It was not long before they became conscious of their position and avoided, as much as possible, seeking jobs through the employment agencies, either private or public.

It happens, however, that a demand for Hindustani workers sometimes is made by the state and federal employment agencies. It is mostly for specific work. Whenever an employer seeks the service of the Hindustanees, he gets in touch with them through the employment agencies or approaches them personally.

It has been said that some of the Hindustani gangmasters or foremen employ their own countrymen for exploitation. While it may be true in solitary instances, this kind of practice does not prevail to an extent that would warrant any such general statement. There are reasons why such a practice could not very well succeed among the Hindustanees. First, almost all of the Hindustani workers belong to the same industrial class as their gang-masters or foremen who work side by side with them. And sometimes a gang is organized by workers themselves who elect a foreman. Although the wages of a foreman are a little higher, this difference in income is not so great as to give rise to any difference in social status. Any desire on the part of a gangmaster to exploit his men is strongly opposed by the workers them-

selves. Second, a large number of agricultural laborers are also farm operators. When there is nothing else to be done on their own farms, they hire themselves out to other farm operators. The economic independence on the part of workers itself is a check upon the exploitation by foremen.

## 2. Seasonal Unemployment.

Unemployment offers perhaps the hardest problem of the modern industrial organization. Yet there is scarcely anything definitely known about it. This is as true of the Hindustanees as of the workers of other races. Although the Hindustanees were at first engaged in several industries, their work consists at the present time largely of agriculture and lumbering. Lumbering is a more or less regular industry carried on almost all the year round in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. Due to heavy rains, logging may occasionally be held up for a day or two at a time. Sawing being carried on largely indoors is continuous throughout the year. But depression in the lumber industry, which was going on in 1920—1921 threw a large number of men, including the Hindustanees, out of work. Thus in Astoria, Oregon, where generally about 100 Hindustanees, were employed, there were to be found only 35 in 1921. The same was true of Linnton, Oregon, and Fraser Mills, Duncan and Victoria in British Columbia. How many Hindustanees were out of employment in 1921 in the lumber mills on the Pacific Coast could not be ascertained. There is no doubt that unemployment was one of the reasons why a good many of them went back to India in 1921.

There are, however, some reasons why the position of the Hindustanees cannot be said to be so unfavorable as that of others. First, in most cases, these workers are picked men and are kept employed because of their efficiency. As a rule they are the last persons to be laid off. Second, there are several lumber companies, owned by the Hindustanees, who are willing to keep their people on the job as long as possible.

It is still harder to gather data on unemployment in agriculture. The extensive nature of the work on the

farm can always accommodate a few more workers and thus decrease the proportion of unemployment on the one hand, while the seasonal character of the work always imposes a period of involuntary idleness on the other. The depression in the agricultural industries in 1920, especially the failure of the cotton and rice crops, have thrown out of work a large number of farm laborers. It, of course, affected the Hindustanees, but not to the same extent as the laborers of other races, for, as has been mentioned before, a large number of the Hindustani farm laborers are also farm operators.

Between the harvestings of different crops there is always a period of unemployment. This period of unemployment varies in proportion to the extent of crop. Generally speaking the Hindustani workers are unemployed about two or three months each year.

### 3. Trade Unionism.

The number of the Hindustanees who work for wages is rather limited, and may be grouped, as before, into three classes, namely, farm laborers, mill workers and miscellaneous laborers. The Hindustani farm laborers do not belong to any trade or labor union. Trade organization is itself a difficult task among agricultural workers and although several attempts have been made to organize them, especially in the hop fields on the Pacific Coast, no success has as yet been attained. Beside the difficulty owing to the nature of the agricultural industry, there are several social, economic and political reasons why the Hindustani farm workers have not been inclined to form trade unions.

First, trade unions among a class of laborers come into existence when there is a consciousness of their status and interests. Most of the Hindustanees having been born on farms, the desire to become independent farm owners is very strong in them. Consequently they feel little interest in labor organization.

Second, the prime object of trade unionism is to establish collective bargaining in regard to the question of conditions of work and rate of wages. Due to the

shortness of the season, it is not practicable to maintain regular and definite hours of work in agriculture. Although most of the Hindustanees have to take work on time or piece basis, their desire for a trade union does not become very strong at any time, as they prefer contract work on a large scale.

Third, the casual nature of their work is also opposed to class solidarity among them. Most of the Hindustani farm laborers are itinerant. They move from locality to locality, travelling sometimes hundreds of miles for seasonal work. This constant movement does not afford them an opportunity for the growth of special interest in any particular locality or for any trade.

Fourth, most of the Hindustani laborers are compelled to become only temporary residents in America and Canada. They cannot, therefore, feel a strong interest in any occupation or locality.

Fifth, racial prejudice which most of the American people have against the Hindustanees and other Asian people and jealousy which the American laborers harbor against the economic success of others, are also among the important reasons why the Hindustanees do not and could not feel much interest in affiliating themselves with the local labor unions.

Despite the fact that they are not members of a trade union, the Hindustanees have a mutual understanding for maintaining their standard of wages and working hours. They follow the local custom in bargaining for time and wages and always maintain their right to demand good treatment. If one of their fellow-workers is mistreated in any way, they will go to any limits to defend him. Thus it may be seen that there exists a feeling of solidarity among the Hindustani farm workers and they never do anything which is prejudicial to the interests of labor.

"As far as I know", writes Mr. Edward E. Brown, "there is no labor organization among the Hindus. There have been, however, instances where groups of Hindus will get together and appoint a leader who would interview the employers in the vicinity where that particular

group was employed and state that they desired a certain wage for their labor. When the employer refuses to meet their demand, the Hindus would move off the job silently without any show or antagonism. They have remained away from such jobs. Their system has been very effective as far as they themselves are concerned."

As in agriculture, so it is in the lumber industry. The Hindustanees do not belong to any trade unions. Some of the reasons why there has been no trade unionism on the farms are also applicable to the lumber industry. The workers in the lumber industry may be grouped into two classes.

First, there are those who work for their own countrymen. In these cases they generally live on terms of equality with their employers and eat with them at the same table. The employer was himself once one of the workers. There was, therefore, little chance for the development of the consciousness of class interest. Moreover, some of the workers still hope that they may accumulate enough money to buy a share in the industry.

Second, there are those who work for American or Canadian employers. They find difficulty in getting into trade unions owing to racial prejudice.

The Hindustanees who work for wages in other industries such as mining and smelting, become members of the local unions, whenever they get the chance.

In spite of their more or less compulsory aloofness, the Hindustanees have great sympathy for the labor movement and highly appreciate its aims and ideals. Moreover, they are willing to cooperate with labor organizations whenever possible. There are many instances in which they have taken active part in the cause of labor. If they have not shown eagerness to enter into labor unions, it is rather due to apathy of the labor organizers.

The labor organizations on the Pacific Coast from the view point of their attitude towards Oriental labor, might be classed under two heads. First, there are those who are bitterly opposed to any Oriental immigration. The underlying cause of such a feeling is race prejudice, but



naturally they are unwilling to admit this. They oppose Oriental labor on the pretext that they lower the standard of living. Led by the local politicians they always stand against the interests of the Oriental laborers including the Hindustanees. In many cases they have become the instruments of anti-Asian movements.

Second, there are those who have no ill feeling against the Oriental laborers as such. They are willing to admit Oriental laborers, especially the Hindustanees, into their organizations. As a rule the industrial unions are more or less sympathetic towards the Oriental laborers.

#### **4. Competition and Underbidding.**

One of the chief complaints against foreign labor, especially against the Oriental workers, is that they work for lower wages. This is really a serious complaint. The American laborers have established a certain rate of wages and a certain standard of living and they have a right to preserve these at any cost. But at present there is no occasion for bringing such a charge against the Oriental laborers, especially against the Hindustanees. It is not impossible to cite cases where they have in the past accepted lower wages. In the beginning they were not well acquainted with conditions in America and no doubt some of the employers might have taken advantage of such a situation. But although this situation existed, it did not last long, and at present there is scarcely any underbidding on their part.

The reasons why they do not underbid are very obvious. First, practically all of them are healthy and efficient workers. There is always a demand for their work in certain industries. Second, they have no families with them and are not confronted with the problem of meeting immediate expenses for their dependents. Fellow feeling is very strong among them and if there is anybody in need they assist one another financially. Moreover, they are very thrifty and can bear hardships. They are not, therefore, driven by any economic necessity to accept a lower rate of wages or an inferior position in the field of competition.

## 36 HINDUSTANI WORKERS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

The groups of people with whom the Hindustanees come into competition differ in occupations and in localities. In Imperial Valley, they compete with the Americans, Mexicans and Japanese in cotton and cantaloup fields. The Japanese mostly work for their own people, but occasionally they also hire themselves out to other people. In Fresno County, they come into competition with the Americans, Japanese, Armenians and some Mexicans in vineyards or on fruit ranches. In the San Joaquin Valley it is the Americans and Japanese who come into competition with the Hindustanees in vegetable cultivation and fruit growing. In the Sacramento Valley the chief competition lies in cultivating rice and the Japanese are the only other people who are engaged in the same business to any extent. In Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, the Chinese, Japanese, Hindustanees and the Americans or Canadians compete in the lumber industry. In all these fields of competition, the Hindustanees are equal to, if not better than, the workers of other races. There is, therefore, no reason, why they should underbid.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### CONDITIONS OF WORK.

The health and safety of laborers are affected by excessive hours and unsanitary and dangerous surroundings. One of the essential points in the study of the industrial life of a people is, therefore, the conditions under which they work.

#### 1. Hours of Work.

Just how many hours a farmer or farm laborer works is difficult to determine. Unlike factory work, agricultural work is seasonal and urgent and the length of the working day must, therefore, be indefinite. When the farm work is of a more or less regular and steady nature as plowing and cultivating, for instance, the number of working hours is fixed. The Hindustanees generally work nine or ten hours a day on farms all along the Pacific Coast.

One of the special features of their work in Imperial Valley is their adaptability to the climatic conditions. During the summer the temperature rises as high as 115° F. It is impossible to work during the heat of the day. So they start work about two or three o'clock in the morning and quit work about ten or ten-thirty A. M. About four or five o'clock in the evening they go to the fields again and work until sunset, thus adding two or three more hours of work in the afternoon. In the winter season the work lasts from 7.30 or 8 o'clock in the morning to five in the evening with an interval of rest for one or one and a half hours at midday. Practically the same number of working hours prevail in other agricultural districts.

During agricultural seasons, however, the hours of work are unlimited. Crops must be harvested, and cotton and fruit must be picked within a limited period of time. At this time the number of working hours may be extended to 13 or 14 a day. Especially is this true when they undertake work on a contract basis. They begin very early in the morning and work as late as possible. They

have wonderful power of endurance. It must be borne in mind that these long hours of work last only for a short period of time, generally for not more than a week or two at a stretch. The busy seasons are generally followed by inactivity and leisure.

As in factories, the hours of work in the lumber industry are more or less fixed. In the lumber mills of Linnton and Astoria, Oregon, eight hours is the working day, but in Bridal Veil, Oregon, and in the mills of British Columbia, the regular working day is ten hours.

## 2. Rest Periods and Holidays.

The period of rest differs in different industries and in different parts of the country. One hour at noon is allowed for rest and refreshment all along the coast. In Imperial Valley five or six hours of rest are allowed during the summer months in the middle of the day. At other times one hour is allowed. When the Hindustanees work for themselves, their rest period is extended to one and a half hours.

In the lumber mills the period of rest is generally one hour, but in several places such as at Linnton, Oregon, they close down the mills on Saturday afternoon, though they work 48 hours during the week. They allow, therefore, only 45 minutes at noon for rest and refreshment so that the four hours on Saturday afternoon is made up by working longer on other days.

This arrangement seems to be very satisfactory to the Hindustani workers. It affords them time for shopping on Saturday afternoons and also gives them an opportunity for recreation.

In regular work either on the farms or in the mills, Sundays and other legal holidays are always enjoyed by them as holidays. Such, however, is not the custom during busy agricultural seasons. During the harvesting seasons the work is carried on seven days in the week until it is completed. But the Sunday work, even in these periods does not last the whole of the day. Generally the men stop work about noon.

### 3. Health and Safety.

Health and safety have scarcely become problems of labor in agriculture. The work is carried on out of doors, the machinery and implements used on the farms are generally simple and the work is usually individualistic rather than collective. Heat and cold are natural phenomena and their effects have not as yet been realised to constitute a problem. Moreover, the people have been engaged in agricultural work for so many ages that it has never been regarded as involving any danger to health and safety.

Even in the lumber industry the problem of health and safety have not acquired any importance. Logging is, of course, out of door work and so, to a certain extent, is lumbering. Although a certain amount of saw-dust is bound to exist in the sawing department of the mill, it has not as yet been found to be injurious to the health of the workers.

Accidents due to the use of machinery and to the general character of the work are bound to happen in logging and lumbering. The lumber mills are worked under the provisions of the factory acts of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia and the provisions for safety are made according to the law.

Several Hindustanees have met with accidents but only a few of them have seriously suffered. Cases are recorded where they have lost a leg or an arm and have been invalids for the rest of their lives. In some of these instances the injured failed to obtain adequate compensation.

## CHAPTER VI. INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY.

Efficiency is the basis of economic success which is the aim of all industrial activities. The acquisition of efficiency not only assures a man a reasonable income but also develops in him those qualities which build individual character and leads to social progress.

### 1. Elements of Efficiency.

Efficiency depends upon physical health on the one hand and upon education and training on the other.

#### a. Health and Vigor.

Health and vigor are the fundamental basis of industrial efficiency. The majority of the Hindustanees on the Pacific Coast come from the Punjab where the people are tall in stature and robust in constitution. These qualities give them an initial advantage over men of some other races engaged in the farm work and in the logging camps where they generally find employment.

Their ages range from 25 to 45 years. Most of them are in the prime of life. Although they live in a foreign country where the natural surroundings, climatic conditions and even food habits are different, nevertheless they have succeeded in adapting themselves to their new environment and even thrive in it. Most of them enjoy good health according to the testimonials of the physicians, located in various places, such as Calexico, Brawley, El Centro, Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento and Marysville in California, and Astoria, Linnton, Bridal Veil in Oregon, and Victoria and Vancouver in British Columbia.

The diseases from which they suffer are those which are common to the localities in which they live, such as malaria and cardiorenal affections at Sacramento, Cal. Even in such localities they have been found comparatively free from the prevailing diseases. Typhoid, small-pox and measles are the common diseases in Holtville, but Dr. H. B. Graeser with a large practice among them did not have any patient suffering "from the above complaints". In spite of the prevalence of influenza, pneumonia and typhoid fever at Calexico, Cal., Dr.

Charles P. Engel found their health "excellent". "The general health of the community is good", writes Dr. W. Y. Corry, Vancouver, B. C. The experience of several physicians in other localities is practically the same.

A discordant note has, however, been struck by Dr. Chas. von Geldern of Sacramento, Cal. "In my experience, based on a number of carefully recorded case histories", says Dr. von Geldern, "many of these people are hypochondriacal, and neurosthenia and hysteria are common". Dr. von Geldern's experiences are, however, rare. In none of the places where a special inquiry was made into the matter, did the local physicians make mention of the above ailments.

#### b. Aptitude and Adaptability.

Most of the Hindustanees come from the agricultural districts of India and have a natural inclination towards farming. In the first few years of their residence on the Pacific Coast, they had to work in factories or on railroads. But as soon as they had opportunities, they gave up their former jobs and took to farming.

The agricultural methods in America are not the same as in India, but they nevertheless soon learned the new methods. They became familiar with the process of cultivating land with modern machinery, such as gang plows, mowing machines, double-row listers and 8 foot six horse disks.

The work in saw-mills was also a new venture to them, but here also they adapted themselves very rapidly and have become expert in many of the operations in a short time.

#### c. Regularity of Attendance.

Regularity of attendance is essential to efficiency in modern industrial organizations. It may be more indispensable in factories than on farms, but its importance in the latter case cannot be minimized. The gang system of work, the shortness of the harvesting season, and the unreliability of the climatic conditions make it necessary that even the agricultural workers should be regular especially during the busy seasons. The Hindustani workers stand very high in the estimation of their employers

on this score. Not only are they punctual but always steady in their attendance. Whenever they accept a job they stick to it until it is finished.

To a questionnaire presented to the employers, managers, superintendents and foremen all over the Pacific Coast to ascertain the regularity of their attendance, practically all the replies were — “good”, “very good”, “very favorable”, and “excellent”.<sup>1</sup>

#### d. Application and Endurance.

Application and endurance are two of the essential qualities in industrial efficiency. In order to be efficient in a line of work a man must apply himself to it and have the power of continuance. In both of these qualities the Hindustanees stand very high.

To the questionnaire on the subject of endurance presented to many employers and superintendents as mentioned before, most of the replies were to the effect that the Hindustanees were in this respect either “good”, “excellent”, “steady”, “reliable” or “industrious”. Such attributes have often been applied to them also by bankers and real estate men who had occasion to see them at work in the fields.

Perhaps their power of endurance is best shown when they undertake contract work. Fixed and regular hours of work cannot always be adhered to in farm work, especially during the harvesting seasons. One often

<sup>1</sup> Among the people who gave the above testimonies to this question are included Mr. A. E. Wray, Secretary-Manager, Growers' Distributing Agency for seasonal and steady labor, who had 4 years' experience with them in Fresno, Cal.; Mr. James J. Brennan, farmer at Loomis, Cal., who had 12 years' experience with them; Mr. Howard Reed, fruit grower of Marvsville, Cal.; Mr. Wiley M. Giffen, fruit grower at Fresno, Cal.; Mr. E. F. Toomey, fruit grower also of Fresno, Cal.; Mr. E. W. Kingsley, manager of the West Oregon Lumber Company at Linnton, Oregon, who employed 17 Hindustanees and had some 50 or 60 in his employment at one time, and has known them for 9 years; Mr. J. A. Rankin, manager of the Hammond Lumber Company, Astoria, Oregon, who had known the Hindustanees for 8 years and had 35 of them working for him in 1921, Mr. Gust Raptis, cantaloup grower in Imperial Valley; and Mr. Frank Waterman, a beet grower at Manteca, California.



wonders if they do not overwork themselves. Whenever harvesting is to be done in a short and definite period, they work almost incessantly with only a few hours off for rest and recuperation, and continue to work in this manner until the job is finished.

e. Speed and Dexterity.

While application and endurance add to the quality of work, speed and dexterity increase the quantity and are, therefore, essential for success in industrial enterprises.

The Hindustanees also enjoy a high reputation in regard to these qualities. In certain classes of work in farming, lumbering, and logging, they cannot be excelled by any other race. Whenever the Americans or Canadians have work of similar nature, they get the first chance for employment, because of their speed and dexterity.

It has been pointed out by some of the employers that the Hindustanees do not work as fast for others as for themselves. The same charge has been or can be brought against other workers. Of course, it is quite natural that a man is inclined to turn out more when working for himself than for others.

f. Skill and Ingenuity.

Skill and ingenuity are the most important components of industrial efficiency. Like energy and endurance, the ability to learn a process quickly and to perform it adroitly is necessary for industrial success. Of still greater importance, however, is the faculty to meet some difficult situation in a particularly productive process or even to invent some method for overcoming obstacles in order to achieve results.

In the different industrial activities in which most of the Hindustanees are at present engaged on the Pacific Coast, they are regarded as very skilful and ingenious. In clearing and irrigating land, pruning trees and picking fruits, they have acquired a high degree of proficiency. In the cultivation of such crops as rice, cotton and as-

paragus, they have become model farmers in their respective districts.

In Arizona, Gopal Singh and several other Hindustanees bought some land and started raising cotton. Speaking of their venture the "Chandler Arizonian" writes in the issue of May 14th, 1920, as follows:

"The 400 acres of cotton didn't receive a bit of water until May 12th. Seeds came through without water under a system of planting which Gopal learned from his father in far off India, where dire necessity in lack of water resulted in finding a way to bring up vegetation by attracting underground moisture." — Gopal Singh and his friends were really the first people to lead the way and show what could be done to make a project a financial success.

Mr. C. S. Gonnason of the Lemon, Gonnason Company, Ltd., Victoria, B. C., found them to be "energetic workmen, with a keen desire to learn." The Columbia River Lumber Company, Ltd., of Golden, B. C., employed about 100 Hindustanees in their saw-mills and lumber yards. "We have found them", writes the manager of the company, "to be steady workers, attentive to their work, quite intelligent and quick to learn." "Most of them (Hindustanees) are hard working and their farming is usually of high order", adds Mr. Gage. Mr. E. J. Walther says: "They are regarded as skilful workers in several special lines such as asparagus raising, tree growing and particularly as irrigators."

Mr. D. C. Cameron found them "quite expert in certain lines of work about the saw-mill." "Many of them", continued Mr. Cameron, "have shown extraordinary energy and resource in establishing saw-mill enterprises of their own." "They not only show perfect familiarity with the most advanced agricultural methods", writes Mr. C. H. Merry. "but in the disposal of their product give evidence of keen intelligence and thorough acquaintance with approved business principles." "My observation", further continues Mr. Merry, "is that they do best when operating upon their own account, and are possessed of the spirit of the initiative."

## 2. Comparative Efficiency.

It is a very difficult task to compare the efficiency of a race or a nation or even of a class with that of others. In the first place, different races have different stature and body-structure and they may not, therefore, be well fitted physically to do the same kind of work. The small-bodied Japanese, for instance, with his light and nimble limbs may be more efficient in certain operations, such as thinning beets than the large-bodied Hindustanee. On the other hand, the tall stature and large body of the latter is a decided advantage in irrigation work. In the second place, different nations and even different classes have different education and training and they cannot, therefore, easily adapt themselves to the same kind of work and do it with the same degree of efficiency. The Hindustanees, for instance, being born and raised in the very simplicity of an Indian village and being accustomed to agricultural work, find it rather hard to do the complicated work of a modern factory. In the third place, prejudice and discrimination, which are liable to play a more or less important role in the employment of different races, do not afford the same opportunity to all classes of workers. In the fourth place, there has scarcely been any scientific experiment made to test the comparative efficiency of different races and nations. Comparative efficiency is, therefore, a question of general impression rather than one of accurate measurement.

In the present study, a special attempt was made to ascertain the efficiency of the Hindustanees as compared with that of the other nationalities. Some of the results were verified by a large number of persons of different occupations, such as employers, superintendents, foremen and land-owners. With the exception of one or two unfavorable criticisms, the people generally spoke very highly of the efficiency of the Hindustanees.

A large number of the Hindustanees are themselves employers and they always prefer their own countrymen for their work and pay them higher wages. Mr. Asa Singh, a cotton-grower of Imperial Valley, for example, found it profitable to pay higher wages to the Hindus-

tances, and this opinion was almost universally shared by all the Hindustani cotton and milo-growers of Imperial Valley. In the rice growing districts of northern California, such as Colusa, Marysville, Willows and Chico, the same opinion was found to prevail among the Hindustani employers in regard to their own countrymen. Mr. Hakim Khan at Marysville, Cal., for instance, a Hindustani farm operator of over a thousand acres of rice land, would employ as many of his countrymen as he could get in preference to the workers of other nationality.

The statements of other Hindustani fruit and vegetable ranch operators in Fresno County, San Joaquin Valley and Sacramento Valley are practically the same. In the saw-mills and lumber camps in British Columbia, the Hindustani employers also think very highly of their own countrymen.

"I have some Hindustani workers", observed Mr. Soran Singh, manager of the Eastern Lumber Company, Ladysmith, B. C., "whose places cannot be taken by the Chinese or Japanese even if we put three men to one job."

Mr. Bal Mukunda and Mr. Lochman Singh, managers of the Virginia Lumber Company, Coombs, B. C., and Mr. Kapoor Singh, manager of the Mayo Lumber Company, Duncan, B. C., had the same faith in the high efficiency of their countrymen in lumber and logging industries.

This belief in the higher efficiency of the Hindustani workers by their own countrymen, it might be said, is more or less liable to be biased for the reason that they would naturally take more interest in the farm or factory of their own countrymen than otherwise. This has often been found to be true in the case of the Japanese who are said to work much harder for their own countrymen than for employers of other nationalities. It must be remembered, however, that the Hindustani employers are first of all business men and, as such, would care more for profit and self-interest than for patronizing their own countrymen, if they did not find them at least as efficient as the workers of other races. Moreover, their statements are partially corroborated by the experience of most of the

American and Canadian employers and observers. A few statements were, however, made to the effect that the Hindustanees were not as efficient workers as the Americans.

"Compared with the Japanese, the Hindu does not seem to take to intensive farming. He prefers to raise cotton, corn and barley on as large a scale as his capital will permit. As a result, his farm is likely to show more weeds than the farm of the Japanese. The Hindu does not seem to take to dairying or alfalfa raising.<sup>2</sup> He seems to compare favorably in farming methods with the farmer from the Southern States, but is not equal to the middle-western farmer", is the statement of Mr. Clarence E. Gage. "Their industrial efficiency I have found is not to be compared with that of the Americans", writes Mr. H. L. Miller, a former manager of the State Employment Office at Chico, California.

Says Mr. W. F. Toomey, fruit grower of Fresno, California: "Japanese and Hindus are about equal; Americans, regular ranchers, better than either Japs or Hindus; average man from city not as good as either the Hindus or Japanese; Mexicans and (American-) Indians slower than above-mentioned, and not as industrious as any of above races." "Comparing them (The Hindustanees) to other nationalities as to their efficiency, I can say that they are as good as or better in some cases than the Japanese worker, and far above the Mexican and Chinese workers. The Chinese are a slow class of workers and the Mexicans have to be watched all the time," is the statement of Mr. John A. Greene, manager of the Public Employment Bureau of the State of California, at Stockton, Cal.

"I consider them very efficient", writes Mr. Kelt Gould of Clovis, California, "really the best workers we have among the people other than Americans."

"I consider them (the Hindustanees) the most efficient foreign labor unit on our ranch to date", writes Mr. Miller of Delano, Cal., in recommending a Hindustani

<sup>2</sup> Some of the Hindustani farmers do, however, raise alfalfa.

Mr. Carson C. Cook of the Rindge Land and Navigation Company at Stockton, California, on the other hand, found the Hindustani farm worker as "capable as the average farmer of any race", while Mr. George E. Lemay, Secretary of the Fresno County Chamber of Commerce, Fresno, Cal., found them "as efficient as any of the other nationalities doing similar work."

"My opinion is", remarks H. B. Graeser, Holtville, Cal., "that the Hindu ranks well in intelligence with the American laborer and I have met a number who will rank much higher." "There are some classes of work", observes Mr. E. J. Walther, the Sacramento representative of the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, "which I believe they (the Hindustanees) perhaps do better than some other classes of labor, for instance, asparagus cutting which is tedious work."

According to Judge H. B. Griffin, Justice of the Peace and a rich ranch owner of Brawley, Cal., the Hindustanees are "excellent farmers". And Mr. Byron H. Bearce of the Tidewater Southern Railway Company says: "Their farms in that locality (Stockton, Cal.) have been used as models for other farmers."<sup>3</sup>

In the estimation of the employers and superintendents of the lumber companies in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, the Hindustanees rank very high in industrial efficiency. The West Oregon Lumber Company, Linnton, Oregon and the Hammond Lumber Company of Astoria, Oregon, as mentioned before, found them as efficient as the American workers and have always paid the same rate of wages to both. In comparison with the Japanese they think the Hindustanees are superior workers. They stated that they did not have any experience with either the Chinese or Mexican workers. In the Fraser Mills, one of the largest lumber mills in British Columbia, where more than one hundred Hindustanees were employed, the superintendent found them more efficient than the Chinese and Japanese and put them on

---

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Governor Stephens of the State of California.

a par with the Canadians. In reply to a question as to why in the Fraser Mills the Hindustani workers were paid lower wages than the Canadians, it was pointed out that this was due to their lower standard of living. A differential rate of wages was also common practice in the Cameron Lumber Company, Ltd., Victoria, B. C., where the Chinese and Japanese were paid lower wages than the Canadians, but due to the higher efficiency of the Hindustani workers their wages were the same as those of the Canadians.

"We have generally paid our Hindu employers", writes Mr. D. O. Cameron, Secretary-Treasurer of the Cameron Lumber Company, mentioned before, "about the same wages which have been paid to Canadian and American men doing the same class of work."

"We are large employers of the Hindu labor in connection with our railroad construction", remarked Messrs. Moore & Pethick, engineers and contractors of Victoria, B. C., "and at present have about one hundred and fifty of them working for us at Union Bay, and some forty to fifty at Osborne Bay. We wish to express our high appreciation of them in our work. They are infinitely superior to ordinary 'pick and shovel' white labor."<sup>4</sup>

From the above statements some idea may be had of the efficiency of the Hindustani workers as compared with that of the Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Americans and Canadians. In the first place, in comparison with the Mexicans, the Hindustanees seem to possess a very high degree of efficiency. Beginning with Calexico at the Mexican border in Southern California and passing up to the rice districts of the Sacramento Valley of Northern California, a large number of Mexicans are found to work either with or for the Hindustanees. It is the general opinion of the employers and the superintendents that as far as regularity of attendance, reliability of work, power of endurance, and skill and ingenuity are concerned, the Hindustanees stand on a much higher level than the Mexicans. Whether these Mexicans represent the aver-

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *India's Appeal to Canada*, p. 11.

age type of the people of their country cannot be ascertained. There is, moreover, a strong prejudice in California against the Mexicans. Of the two classes of people, Hindustanees and Mexicans, the employers prefer the former. In most of the places where investigation was made, the Hindustanees earned much higher wages than the Mexicans.

In the second place, it is not fair to compare the Chinese with the Hindustanees. Except in the lumber mills and logging camps of the North Pacific Coast where the Hindustanees and Chinese work side by side, there is no field of labor where they compete, so that no idea of their comparative efficiency can be obtained. There is, however, a general consensus of opinion among all classes of people on the Pacific Coast that the Chinese are very honest workers. They fulfill their contracts, and are steady and methodical, but "slow" and "spiritless" in their work. The Hindustanees, in addition to their steadiness and reliability also possess a good deal of speed and dexterity. Even when working long hours they remain energetic up to the last moment. For this reason the Hindustanees are preferred to the Chinese especially in the hard work of logging and lumbering. The earning power of the Hindustanee is invariably higher than the Chinese as pointed out later on.

In the third place, neither the Japanese nor the Hindustanees compete for the same kind of work except, as mentioned before, in lumbering and logging camps on the Northern Pacific Coast and in the rice fields of the Sacramento Valley. In Southern California a large number of Japanese are located in Imperial Valley but they generally do intensive farming, such as cantaloup growing, whereas the Hindustanees are engaged in extensive farming, such as raising milo-maize, cotton and alfalfa. There is, therefore, no possibility of getting any basis for comparison. The general opinion among the American employers and superintendents is that the Japanese are very hard and efficient workers. In the rice fields, however, the Japanese are engaged in the same kind of work as the Hindustanees, but unfortunately



no data have been available for comparison. In Oregon and British Columbia the Japanese and Hindustanes are found working side by side either for Hindustani employers or for American or Canadian employers. In the different operations of lumbering and logging the Hindustanes are given preference to the Japanese and the earnings of the former are much higher than those of the latter.

In the fourth place, the field of work in which the Hindustanes come into competition with Americans or Canadians is very much limited. In the lumber mills and logging camps the Hindustanes are reputed to be as efficient workers as the Americans or Canadians and, except in one or two cases, their wages are practically the same as those of the latter. In the rice growing districts of Northern California, the Hindustanes are regarded highly efficient workers. The Hindustanes and the Japanese are accustomed to this kind of work. Very few Americans grow rice, although some of them take employment under Hindustani or Japanese employers mostly as machinists. The Americans do not seem to possess any aptitude for work in the rice fields and there cannot, therefore, be any comparison between the Hindustanes and the Americans. But in raising vegetables and asparagus, the Hindustanes are regarded as being as good workers as are the Americans, if not better. In the cotton districts of Southern California, the Hindustanes show a much higher degree of efficiency than the native Americans. But Mr. Gage explains that these native Americans come from the Southern States. That may be true, but to say that the Hindustanes are in any way inferior to the farmer from the middle Western States is rather an assumption than a proven statement, as there is no field for comparison. If the Hindustanes in the grape districts of Fresno County lack any degree of efficiency in comparison with the regular ranchers of American birth, as pointed out by Mr. Toomey, it must be said in reply that the Hindustanes do not have the same opportunity as the native born Americans. First, most of the Hindustanes do not own any land, which is one

of the most important stimuli for increasing activities of agriculture. In the second place, most of the Hindustanees do not know the American language and are not familiar with the up-to-date methods of cultivation and marketing.

In spite of the difference of opinion as to the exact degree of efficiency we might say in conclusion that compared with other races and nationalities such as the Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Americans and Canadians, the efficiency of the majority of the Hindustanees is of a very high order in the different fields in which they are engaged.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### WAGES AND INCOME.

The prime object of all production, in fact practically of all industrial activities, is consumption. As consumption is determined by income, a consideration of wages and income is essential in understanding the welfare of a group of people.

#### 1. Basis of Rate Making.

The basis of rate making in both farm operations and lumber mills is the time element. There are, however, quite a few exceptions to this general rule. Even in the lumber mills at Bridal Veil, Oregon, there are quite a number of the Hindustanees at work on the piece basis. They earn much more at piece work than on the time basis. While piece workers may be few in the lumber industry, the number of such workers in agriculture and horticulture, especially in the latter occupation, is by no means small. In fact, they prefer piece work. In picking fruits or cotton, the general basis of rate making is the piece. For example, the rate of wages for picking 100 trays of grapes was \$ 1.75 in 1920. Similarly they pick peaches and other fruits on the piece basis charging a certain amount for each box.

Contract work is still another basis of rate making. Nothing is so welcome to the Hindustanees as contract work. All those who have been in America long enough to be familiar with the conditions of work prefer to enter into contract work. Generally one of the leading men who has a gang varying in number from 20 to 50 men, will undertake to accomplish a certain amount of work for a certain amount of money. The rate of wages for thinning beet fields, for instance, was fixed at \$ 7.00 per acre in 1920 in the neighborhood of Brigham City, Utah. Sometimes the picking of grapes or other fruits is contracted for a whole ranch.

The contract is only a modified form of piece work, but there are several reasons why the Hindustanees, in fact all enterprising workmen, prefer it. First, there is an element of speculation in contract work which is

stimulating to such instincts as curiosity. Second, there is a certain amount of freedom in the work. They can select their own time of attendance and the number of working hours. Third, it gives them an opportunity for better division of labor and distribution of time. Sometimes they contract for several ranches or orchards in the same neighborhood and can pick fruits or cotton very economically. Fourth, it is their best chance of making money. Even in the earlier days of their arrival in this country they took contracts for clearing land. They are confident that they can get the best of the bargain in contract work. In fact, they are most successful financially when working on this basis. Most of their money which they later on invested in different agricultural enterprises, was made in contract work.

## **2. Time and Mode of Payment.**

Since the workers have to depend upon wages for their daily expenses, the time of payment becomes an important item when their welfare is taken into consideration. Payment of wages at a regular time and at short intervals may enable a worker to make his purchases on cash which after all is cheaper than on credit.

The time of payment of wages depends upon both custom and agreement. In Imperial Valley, laborers are paid weekly during the time of harvesting cotton and fortnightly or every month during the rest of the season. Fortnightly payment for both time and piece work is also very common in the agricultural and lumber industry all over the Pacific Coast. This was found to be the case in the lumber mills and logging camps in Oregon and British Columbia. In the harvesting seasons the payment of agricultural laborers is made according to the contract. In piece work all payments are made at definite periods, such as a week or fortnight or at the end of the work. But in contract work, the payment is made upon the fulfilment of the contract; although small payments are sometimes advanced at certain stipulated periods.

One of the advantages the Hindustanees enjoy over the Mexican laborers in Southern California is that they can wait for their wages much longer than the Mexican

laborers. Most of the Mexican laborers are married and generally have large families with them. They camp on the ranches of their employers. They demand, therefore, the payment of their wages at short intervals, that is, at the end of each week. The Hindustanees, on the other hand, are usually single and often have money in the bank. When they know their employer, they will often leave their wages with him until the end of the harvesting season.

### 3. The Rate of Wages.

The Hindustanees are scattered over a vast area of the Pacific Coast and are engaged in different kinds of work so that their wages and income differ a good deal from place to place and from occupation to occupation. Moreover, there has been a great fluctuation both in wages and income during the last two decades during which they have lived in the United States and Canada. The exact data of the wages and income for the first few years of their residence in America are not available, but a fair idea of the rate of wages for the later years may be had from the following table:

#### I.

Wages of the Hindustanees from 1906 to 1920.<sup>1</sup>

Year	Occupation	Rate per hr. in cts.
1906—1907	Railroad or saw-mills	15 to 20
1908—1912	.. .. .	15 to 25
1913—1914	Farm Labor	20 to 25
1915—1916	.. .. .	25 to 30
1917—1918	.. .. .	35 to 40
1919—1920	.. .. .	40 to 60

Table I shows a gradual rise of wages for the Hindustani workers for 15 years. The figures have been collected from representative workers. In the beginning, practically all of the workers were engaged on railroads and the wages were more or less uniform for the men in the same gang. The rate varied from \$ 1.50 to \$ 2.50

Computed from data supplied by the workers.

per day for the first 7 years. As soon as they began working on farms, their wages began to rise. On farms they earned high wages varying from two to three dollars per day in the years from 1913 to 1916. In 1917 their wages began to rise rapidly when the payment was from 35 to 40 cents per hour. The greatest increase took place, however, in the year 1919 and 1920 when some of the workers were earning 5 to 6 dollars a day.

Due to the depression in industries and the falling of prices, their wages have also fallen in 1921 as compared with previous years. The present rate of wages in agricultural work may be seen from the following table:

## II.

Wages of the Hindustances in Agriculture in 1921.<sup>2</sup>

Locality	Rate in cents	Remarks
Brigham City, Utah.	35	10 hrs.
Loomis, Cal.	40	Fruit growing
Colusa, Cal.	35-40	Rice Fields
Stockton, Cal.	30-40	Fruit picking Irrigating etc.
Calexico, Cal.	40	Cantaloups
Marysville, Cal.	30-35	Fruit picking
El Centro, Cal.	35	Cotton fields.

Table II shows the rate of wages of the Hindustani farm laborers in different localities on the Pacific Coast. Most of the farm workers are located in California and British Columbia, but in the latter province practically all those engaged in agriculture work for themselves. There are only a few Hindustani farm laborers in such states as Utah and their wages are given separately.

It is seen that the rate of wages in 1921 varied from 30 to 40 cents an hour which, when calculated for a day of 10 hours, would amount to from \$ 3 to \$ 4. Although this rate is lower than that of the previous two years, there is a decided advancement over that of the year 1909, for which the figures are available, as shown below:

<sup>2</sup> Computed from data supplied by employers.

## III.

Wages of the Hindustani Laborers in Agriculture in 1909.<sup>3</sup>

Number of Laborers.	Rate in Dollars.
45	From 1.00 to less than 1.25
104	" 1.25 " " " 1.50
149	" 1.50 " " " 1.75
43	" 1.75 " " " 2.00
28	" 2.00 " " " 2.50
2	" 2.25 " " " 3.00
371	From 1.00 to 3.00

Table III shows that the rate of wages in agriculture for 371 Hindustanees in 1909 varied from \$ 1 to \$ 3. Those who received \$ 1.75 or over were either piece workers or bosses, while the wages of the average worker in 1921 were \$ 3 or over.

Next to agriculture is the lumber industry in which is engaged a large number of the Hindustanees. The present rate of wages in different localities in this industry is shown below:

## IV.

Wages of the Hindustanees in the Lumber Industry, 1921.<sup>4</sup>

Location.	Rate in Dollars.
Astoria, Ore. <sup>5</sup>	\$ 3.00 to \$ 3.40 a day (37.5 to 42.5 cents per hr.)
Linnton, Ore. <sup>5</sup>	\$ 3.20 to \$ 4.80 a day (40 to 60 cents an hr.)
Duncan, B. C. <sup>6</sup>	\$ .40 to .75 per hr.
Ladysmith, B. C.	\$ .30 to .40 per hr.
Coombs, B. C.	\$ .27½ to .50 per hr.
Vancouver, B. C.	\$ .26 to .35 per hr.

<sup>3</sup> Abstract of Report of Immigration Commissioner, 1911, 1 : 680.

<sup>4</sup> From the data supplied by employers.

<sup>5</sup> Eight hours work.

<sup>6</sup> Wages for 1920.

In Table IV is shown the rate of wages of Hindustani workers in the lumber industry on the Pacific Coast. There was a great depression in the lumber industry at the time the rates were collected. In fact, some of the largest mills were partly or wholly shut down. Some of the mills after having been closed for several months had just opened again for business in order "to keep men and machinery going", to use the words of the manager of one of the mills. The rate of wages, therefore, was low in almost all lumber companies in comparison with those paid during previous years. But the variations are easily seen for the different mills.

As a rule, the wages are higher in the United States than in Canada. The hours of work are also shorter in the United States as before stated. The variation in the rate of wages runs from 26 cents at Vancouver, B. C. to 40 cents at Linnton, Ore. The wages for Hindustani laborers at Vancouver, B. C. are very low, like those of other Oriental workers. It is an established policy in some of the mills in Canada to pay lower wages to all Orientals in comparison with the Canadians.

#### 4. Comparative Wages.

An interesting feature of the wage system in some of the mills and on some of the ranches under investigation is that it offers a basis for comparison. While it by no means leads to any general conclusion, as the industrial units are so few in number, they at least indicate some tendency in the rate of wages paid to workers of different nationalities.

In the agricultural industry the Hindustanees are sometimes found working side by side with the Americans and the Mexicans. The Hindustani farmers pay higher wages to their countrymen than to the workers of other nationalities. Mr. Asa Singh, a cotton grower in Imperial Valley, for instance, paid in 1921 \$ 2 a day to the Mexican laborers, \$ 2.25 a day to the American laborers, and \$ 90 a month to the Hindustani laborers. For the same kind of work the Hindustani rice growers in the Sacramento Valley also pay higher wages to their



countrymen than to the Americans. Several American ranch owners employ both Hindustani and American laborers. For the same kind of work they pay the same rate of wages to both classes. At a fruit ranch near Fresno, Cal., for instance, the American laborers were paid \$ 2 a day and board, and the Hindustani laborers \$ 3 a day without board. But in special work, such as pruning, irrigating, and picking cotton, the Hindustanees receive higher wages even from American employers.

In the lumber mills of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, a large number of Hindustani workers compete with the Chinese, Japanese, American, and Canadian workers. The rate of their wages gives a rough idea of comparison as shown below:

## V.

Comparative Wages in the Lumber Industry, 1921.<sup>7</sup>  
(In cents)

Location.	Chinese.	Japanese	Canadians.	Hindustanees.
Number of employees on which calculations are based	90	31	59	90
Vancouver, B. C. . . .	20—22	20—26	30—80	26—35
Coombs, B. C. . . . .	20—30	25—40	25—80	27 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> —50
Ladysmith, B. C. . . .	25—35	30—40	50—85	30—40
Duncan, B. C. (1921) . .	30—40	40—60	40—1 00	40—75
Variation . . . . .	20—40	20—60	30—1 00	26—75

Table VI shows the rate of wages of the Chinese, Japanese, Canadian and Hindustani workers in the lumber industry in British Columbia. The number of men in each group has been found by adding the figures supplied by four mills. It is seen that the rate of wages runs from 20 to 40 cents in the case of the Chinese, from 20 to 60 cents in the case of the Japanese, from 30 cents to one dollar in the case of the Canadians and 26 to 75 cents in the case of the Hindustanees. It must be remembered

<sup>7</sup> From the data supplied by the Hindustani employers.

that the lowest and highest wages in each group do not indicate the actual earnings of the group. It shows, however, the highest and the lowest rate of wages for the workers in each group.

The above data are too inadequate to warrant any general statement. But it is seen that first, the wages of the Canadians are higher than those of any other nationality; second, the wages of the Hindustanees are higher than those of the Chinese and the Japanese; and third, in the case of the Chinese and Japanese, the rate of wages of the latter are higher than those of the former.

It needs, however, further explanation. Among the Canadians are grouped such skilled workers as engineers and mechanics who, according to the Canadian law, cannot be drawn from among the foreigners. They generally receive higher rate of wages. But those Canadians who are employed in the same work as the Hindustanees earn the same rate of wages.

It can, therefore, be said that the rate of wages of the Hindustanees in the lumber industry is higher than those of the Chinese and the Japanese and compares favorably with those of the Americans and the Canadians

### 5. Annual Earnings.

What really concerns workmen is not the rate of wages paid per hour or per day but the amount of yearly income on which he has to live. The rate of wages does not, therefore, really indicate the welfare of a man. This is especially true in the case of laborers in agriculture which is an extremely seasonal industry.

Just what is the amount of annual income of the Hindustani laborer is hard to determine. It varies from year to year and from place to place as would naturally be expected. In Imperial Valley, the gross income of the average Hindustani worker has been put at \$ 800.00 a year. In Fresno County, the San Joaquin Valley, and the Sacramento Valley, there were found several farm workers whose annual income was from \$ 800.00 to \$ 1000.00. The range of income lies between \$ 600.00 and \$ 1200.00. The average income has been variously

estimated at \$ 900.00 a year. A decided advance is shown in the annual income of the Hindustanees in the past twelve years. In 1908, the average income of 53 Hindustanees amounted to \$ 451.00 for an average of 10.2 months in the year.<sup>8</sup> In 1921, the average income had risen to \$ 900.00. In the latter case the working period was from 9 to 10 months, and the average is for the total group of Hindustani farm workers.

The average annual income of the Hindustani workers in lumber and logging industries can be more easily determined from the rate of wages which is more or less steady. Taking 300 working days in the year and the rate of wages in Table III, it may be seen that the rate of wages varies from \$ 780.00 at Fraser Mills to \$ 1800.00 at Linn-ton, Oregon. The rate of wages at Duncan, B. C., ranged from 40 to 75 cents an hour in 1920. In that case the income was as high as \$ 2250.00. Taking the actual rate of wages paid in 1921 at Fraser Mills, B. C. and at Linn-ton, Oregon, we find that the average income would amount to the mean sum between \$ 780.00 and \$ 1800.00

In connection with the income of the Hindustanees as mentioned before, there are several points which must be taken into consideration.

First, although the average income of the Hindus-tanees has risen from \$ 451.00 in 1908 to \$ 900.00 in 1921, i. e., about one hundred per cent, the prices of food have also risen about one hundred per cent. But the years 1920 and 1921 were rather abnormal. Due to the depression in the agricultural industry the income has decreased. Second, comparing the income in the agri-cultural industry with that in the lumber industry, it should be remembered that the workers on farms do not have to pay any rent. Wherever they work they get free accommodations. The mill workers, on the other hand, have to pay some rent although it is not very much. Third, the number of Hin-dustanees who work on farms for wages is very limited, as mentioned before. Most of them cultivate land for

<sup>8</sup> Abstract of Report of the Immigration Commission, 1911, 1: 678.

themselves or are engaged in independent business. Even those who do work on farms generally take contract work and their income, although indefinite, is generally higher. Moreover, a large number of the farm workers are also farm operators. They have their own farms which they cultivate, but when they have nothing else to do, they hire themselves out for a short period to other farm operators. The income shown above in the case of agricultural workers or mill workers represents, therefore, only a fraction of the Hindustani workers on the Pacific Coast. The average income of most of the Hindustanees is much higher than \$ 900.00 per year.

---

## CHAPTER VIII. THE STANDARD OF LIVING.

### 1. Food.

The kind of food which people eat is generally determined by geography rather than by choice. Most of the Hindustanees on the Pacific Coast come from the Punjab which is a wheat-growing district. Their staple food is wheat. As a rule, they prefer whole wheat flour. Occasionally they also eat a small quantity of rice. Wheat and rice form thus the chief source of their carbohydrates. To this they add for proteid food, peas and beans of different kinds, both fresh and dried. These nitrogenous food stuffs are supplemented by such meat as beef, pork, chicken and mutton.

Religion has also some influence on their food habit. According to their religious faith they belong to three groups such as the Sikhs, the Mohammedans and the Hindus. The Hindus eat neither beef nor pork. The Mohammedans derive their religions from a section of the Semitic race and believe that pork is untouchable. The Sikhs, on the other hand, being closely connected with the Hindus, do not eat any beef.

Most of them are engaged in farm work and raise chickens and ducks, the eggs of which they consume in large quantities. Milk too is a very important item in their diet. Individual workers sometimes drink from one to two quarts of milk a day. Butter is the principal source of fat supply for them. They come from a section of India where neither vegetable oil nor lard are in common use. Instead they use large quantities of butter, amounting to at least 15 pounds a month per person.

Vegetables of all kinds such as potatoes, cauliflower, cabbage, eggplant, string-beans, squash, tomatoes and cucumbers are found on their menu. Fruits in season such as apples, peaches, pears, cherries and berries of all kinds form part of their diet. When fresh fruits and vegetables are not to be obtained, they make use of canned goods of all kinds. Tea and coffee form their chief beverages. Condiments of all kinds such as ginger, pepper, chillies,

bay-leaves, cloves, cardamoms and cinnamons are also kept on hand in all Hindustani kitchens.

**Purchase of Food Stuffs:** —\* The Hindustanees generally buy their food supplies in large quantities. When several of them form a dining club, it is easy for them to buy at wholesale prices. But even when only two or three of them board together, or in the case of a single family, they store up supplies for a month at a time. In some places, as in Victoria, British Columbia, the *Khalsa Diwan Society* runs a store, buying the food at wholesale prices and distributing it among the members at cost price plus operating and delivery charges.

**Quality:** — One of the essential points in connection with food is the quality. Food of good quality not only assures a wholesome diet but reflects on the cultural taste of a people. On investigation it has been ascertained that the quality of food purchased by the Hindustani workers is the best that can be obtained in the market. "The Hindus always buy good stuffs", was the emphatic reply of Mr. Stewart, grocer at El Centro, in Southern California, who supplies about 65 Hindustani customers with groceries and other provisions. The same reply was made by another grocer at Clovis, in Fresno County. Ashford Brothers, grocers at Tudor in Sacramento Valley, also found that the Hindustanees always demand the best.

"We have known these Hindustanes for fifteen years and they always buy the very best quality of high-priced groceries" writes Mr. Joe Lemma, proprietor of the Linnton Department Store at Linnton, Oregon. "They have always purchased the best quality of groceries" adds Mr. Jas. Jensen of Jensen & Co., grocers, also of Linnton, Oregon.

"As a rule they have bought a good class of groceries" was the statement of Mr. Driskot of Astoria, Oregon. Similar replies and statements were made by the grocery men of British Columbia.

**Preparation:** — As yet science has hardly entered into the domain of cooking. As an art, it is still determined by the custom of the country. The preparation of food is very largely a question of taste acquired by the

habit of a people. Most of the Hindustanees are grown-up persons when they come to America and retain, therefore, their native taste regarding food. Those who have been in America for a long time, or those who came when quite young, adapt themselves to American food. Practically all of them eat American dishes whenever necessary, but naturally they prefer their own preparation.

For example, one of the essential differences in the preparation of their food is in the making of their bread. When preparing the dough they add a large quantity of butter, shape the dough into cakes and bake it on a griddle on the top of the stove. This *Chapati* forms their daily bread and is served at every meal. To those who are accustomed to eating *Chapati*, the bread of other nations is flat and tasteless.

They use rice generally either boiled or in the form of a pudding. There is a third method of cooking rice which is very delicious. The rice is fried in butter to a certain degree, and then baked in the juice prepared from fish or meat to which condiments have been added. This is one of the most common methods of cooking rice in Eastern Asia. Generally, meat is prepared in the form of *curry*. Vegetables are usually fried in butter and then stewed and condiments added.

The variety of dishes prepared by them is not very large. This is largely due to the fact that most of them have no families and the men do their own cooking. Naturally they try to eliminate as much work as possible and cook only simple dishes that take very little time or trouble.

Service: -- In the manner of serving their food, the Hindustanees are probably the most deficient. However, it must be remembered that the people of Eastern Asia do not use tables or chairs in their houses. Neither do they use knives or forks in eating their food. Their food is served to them as they sit on a rug or carpet and the dishes are placed on a white cloth spread on the floor. In America and Canada, the Hindustanees use tables and chairs and usually knives and forks. Since their meat

is cut into small pieces prior to cooking, no knives or forks are really needed and usually a spoon is sufficient for their needs when it comes to eating it.

The dining-table of the Hindustanees is usually covered with oil-cloth and is neat and clean. Though a piece of white linen might add to the artistic effect of the table, it is scarcely ever used. Still, it must be borne in mind that most of them are workers either on farms or in mills and their dining-hall is generally nothing more than a camp in which they live temporarily. Since they are all men, they hardly feel the necessity of decorating or beautifying their surroundings. Nor do the camps of men of other nationalities differ in this respect.

**Dining Clubs:** — The dining organizations of the Hindustanees require some comments. When there are two or more persons together, they form a mess and manage the affairs in turn. When a large number of men work together, they establish clubs consisting of sometimes as many as twenty. The club is run on a democratic basis. Each member takes the responsibility of the club for a month; he buys the provisions, distributes the cost and collects the expenses of operation from each member.

When they work in the mills of their own people, the club is organized on the same basis except that the money is collected and the provisions are bought by the company. The management, however, is left in the hands of the members.

These dining clubs invariably hire a cook, generally one of their own countrymen. They pay the cook the same salary as they earn themselves. In one of the lumber camps at Linnton, Oregon, the cook was paid \$ 90 a month. At Fraser Mills, B. C., the cook received \$ 3 a month from each club member which brought his salary to about \$ 60 a month. In the lumber camps of Astoria, Oregon, and in other places, the salaries of cooks varied between \$ 60 and \$ 90 a month. Besides they get free board and lodge.

In some of the clubs it is customary to keep the expenditure for food at a certain level. Each member is allowed any amount of food of certain kinds, such as



chapati, dhal and curry. To this menu each member adds food of his own selection, which he himself buys and pays for. The fundamental idea of such a scheme is to bring to a common table all the people working in the same mill irrespective of their earnings. It affords an opportunity to the men earning low wages to enjoy the companionship at meal times of his countrymen who may be earning higher salaries. It affords also the means of regulating their expenditure for food according to the fluctuation in their earning power.

Cost of Food: — It is somewhat difficult to determine exactly the cost of food, especially in the case of a farming population who obtain a large part of their provisions from their farms. The cost, of course, varies in different parts of the country and among different classes of the people. From 30 to 35 dollars a month per member is the usual bill which a ranch owner near El Centro, Imperial Valley, pays to his grocer. Several ranch owners in Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento, Colusa, Marysville and other centers of Hindustani population in the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys furnished figures which would prove that the cost of food is from 25 to 35 dollars a month. In one or two cases, the cost was as high as 40 dollars a month. On the other hand, among the working classes the cost was as low as 20 dollars

The cost of food at a lumber company at Coombs, B. C., was found to be about 30 dollars a month. At Fraser Mills, B. C., the cost was only 18 dollars a month. Two other lumber companies, both owned by the Hindustanees, at Duncan, B. C., charge their workers 20 dollars a month for board. To the general cost of food must be added the cost of extra food, which each of them buys for himself according to his income. Although it is hard to estimate the exact expenses for extra food, it is probably 7 or 8 dollars a month on the average. There is one point which should not be forgotten in this connection: the food stuffs are generally bought at wholesale prices which help lower the cost. Thus the claim of practically all the Hindustanees that they spend "a dollar a day" for their food on an average seems to be justified.

In connection with the investigations it was possible to get hold of a bill which one of the Hindustani ranch owners came to pay to his grocer at Folsom, Cal. There were three members in this ranch household and one of them had been absent for quite a while. The grocery bill for this ranch from January 1st to June 30th, 1921, amounted to \$ 363.65, i. e., about 20 dollars a month for each member. To this, of course, must be added the butcher's bill which was not available. The ranch also supplies an amount of provisions: There are two cows on the ranch, one of them was giving about 15 quarts of milk a day. There were 100 chickens which furnished meat and eggs. Grapefruit, apples, pears, peaches and cantaloups which the ranch produces for market also formed a part of the menu. When the cost of these articles is taken into consideration and added to 20 dollars a month paid to the grocer, the cost of food for each member of the household could not have been less than 30 dollars a month.

## 2. Clothing.

Climate and custom are the chief determinants of dress. Although the mode of dress is different in India, the Hindustances upon their arrival in America, and some of them even before that, adopt American dress. There is only one exception to this: due to their religious customs, some of the Sikhs who form the majority of the Hindustances in America, still retain their turbans. This is the most important distinction between the dress of the Hindustani resident in America, and that of the Americans. A large number of the Sikhs, especially those who enter the country in their early youth, or those who have been in the country for a long time, do discard their turbans and use hats instead. In one of the saw mills at Linnton, Oregon, for instance, there were found only 3 out of 19 Hindustanees who still wore their turbans. In the lumber camps of Astoria, Oregon, and of Duncan, Coombs, Ladysmith and the Fraser Mills in British Columbia a considerable number of Sikhs were found wearing hats. The same may be said of the Sikhs on the farms in different parts of the country. Those Hindustanees

belonging to the Mohammedan and Hindu religions began to use hats as soon as they landed on the Pacific Coast.

Like climate, occupation also influences dress, especially while at work. In this respect the Hindustanees too follow the mode and adapt their dress to the requirements of their occupations. Whether on the farms or in the factories, their dress resembles that of the other workers in each occupation.

The style of dress is decided on a basis of social approbation rather than on one of actual necessity. The majority of the Hindustanees live by themselves and they are not in touch with the social life of the American people, and as there is absence of their own women-folk, they do not feel the desire for fine dress. Nevertheless, the dress of the average Hindustanee compares very favorably with that of other groups of workers of the same class, such as farmers and mill-workers.

As to the cost of their clothing, it is hard to get any definite figures or information. However, it is known that the Hindustanees spend at least as much for their clothing as the average American and Canadian of the same class.

### 3. Housing.

Like clothing, housing is usually determined by climate and custom. There are, however, three essential elements which add to the comfort and beauty of a house: ownership of the house by the occupant, permanence of residence and the presence of women. These elements play little or no part in the houses of the Hindustanees in America. Most of them are either itinerary farm workers or operators of farms which they lease from one to three years. There are very few who have bought farm-land or homestead. A large number of them are housed in temporary quarters in the lumber mills and logging camps where they work.

Buildings: — The Hindustani farm operators live in houses furnished by their employers or land-owners and these houses are just as good, or perhaps one should say, just as bad, as the other farm houses in the locality. In spite of many defects in these houses, they do not feel

inclined to put any money into improvement, since they may occupy the house for only a year or two.

In the few cases where they have bought farms and homesteads, their houses are of decidedly better quality than those they occupy on leased farms. Mr. James E. Dobbs in the issues of the *Canada-India* for March and April, 1917, says on this subject: "I visited the home of one Sikh family in Vancouver, who succeeded in getting into Canada after waiting for about 18 months in Hong-Kong before being permitted to proceed. This family consists of father, four sons and grandmother. Through the industry of the father a large lot was purchased, a neat cottage built, and the family life to-day would be a credit to any immigrant laborer establishing a home in a new country."

In Imperial Valley where the climate is warm all the year round and the air is dry, it is found more comfortable to sleep out-of-doors than in the houses. Most of the houses here are found to be of the bungalow type with screen-windows and large porches. The houses are used only for storing clothes and other possessions. Most of the people sleep on the porches and some were even found sleeping in the open under the trees. The same conditions exist in Fresno, Stockton and Sacramento Counties, with the exception that in winter the people in these places sleep in the houses, which accordingly are of better construction.

All over the Pacific Coast the farm laborers and farm operators are housed in shacks built of timber. As one travels from Imperial Valley toward the north, one notes the distinction between the farm houses in Southern California and the houses in the saw-mill sections of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. In the latter places the shacks are better built, and have glass windows and provisions for heating in the winter. They are built by the employers with the specific idea of renting them to the saw-mill employees, whereas on the farms in Southern California, the shacks are furnished the workers free of charge. In most cases these farm shacks are very small, in need of repair and improvement, and sometimes

do not even conform to the regulations of the Californian Commission of Immigration and Housing. Some of the Hindustanees who lease large ranches, anywhere from five hundred to a thousand acres, employ a large number of farm workers. Cases are on record where the houses furnished these workers failed to conform to the standard of sanitation fixed by the Commission of Immigration and Housing. They have no adequate system for the disposal of garbage, for example. While the Hindustani employers are responsible for keeping the quarters in proper order, the building of good, adequate and sanitary houses depends upon the owners who are mostly Americans.

The housing accommodations in the lumber camps vary a good deal in different places. A lumber company at Linnton, Oregon, for instance, accommodates its workers in separate groups according to nationality: Chinese in one camp, Japanese in another and Hindustanees in a third. For Hindustani workers they built a large frame house, in the basement of which was a kitchen. Rooms for more than 20 workers were provided and 19 Hindustanees were accommodated in this building at the time of investigation. Each man occupied a separate room which had outside windows. There was also a common sitting-room provided for them.

In another lumber camp at Astoria, Oregon, on the other hand, the men were housed in groups of four, two men sharing a bed-room. Here too a common sitting-room was provided. About 35 Hindustanees were thus housed in Astoria. In some cases two of the workers took a whole shack and lived more comfortably than was provided for by the regular accommodations.

In a lumber company at Bridal Veil, Oregon, the shacks are built for two persons. In these shacks there were a kitchen and a bathroom, besides separate sleeping-rooms.

The Hindustani employers in accommodating the different nationalities in the lumber camps follow the same method as the American or Canadian employers. They house their employees in groups according to nationality, such as Chinese, Americans and Hindustanees. For example, a Hindustani lumber company at Coombs, B. C.,

built shacks for the Chinese and Japanese. These shacks had each two rooms which were used as bed-rooms and a small anteroom which served as a sitting-room. Most of the saw-mills owned by the Hindustanees are newly built and although the shacks are of the same construction as those in other saw mills, they have better sanitary arrangements.

The accommodations furnished in a camp owned by the Hindustanees at Duncan, British Columbia, were of a very superior type. A great deal of attention was paid to sanitation and also to the comfort of the workers. There were about 32 cottages built on the one side of a board-road. All the cottages were painted green, each had a small porch facing the street and many of the houses were decorated with pots of flowers. Here the American, Japanese and Hindustani workers were housed in separate colonies. One defect found at this camp was that the employers had not thought it worth while to extend these better accommodations to their Chinese workers.

Perhaps the worst housing conditions were found in some of the saw-mills in British Columbia. At one of the mills, for instance, where a large number of workers were employed, the employees were housed in groups according to nationality. The shacks themselves were perhaps not worse than those found in other camps but were built close to the ground which, due to the excessive rainfall of British Columbia was very damp. One could feel the dampness in the air in these shacks which had low ceilings and were dark. Nearly 75 Hindustanees were at the time of the investigation employed at one of the mills.

Furniture: — The chief deficiency of the houses of the Hindustanees lies in the lack of furnishings. Most of the houses are poorly furnished. This is due to two reasons: In the first place, life among the Hindustanees in India is very simple; modern furniture is practically unknown there. In the second place, most of the Hindustani workers in America are only temporary residents in the houses they occupy and they have to get along as best as they can with the furniture which they find in the

rooms when they rent them. Naturally they do not like to invest any money in things which they cannot take with them when they move. It has, however, been found that some of the houses were supplied with modern furniture such as chairs, tables, paintings and bureaus, which were rather a novelty in camp life. Some of the studious-minded young men even had a large number of books.

The itinerant farm workers in moving from one district to another between agricultural seasons invariably pass through some towns or cities, where they reside in hotels mostly located in China towns. These hotels differ a good deal in character and quality. The Hindustanees make their choice of hotels according to the season of the year and the amount of money at their disposal. Between harvests when they have plenty of money, they generally patronize the better class of hotels. At other times they have, of course, to be satisfied with very ordinary accommodations.

In Sacramento, California, and also in Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia, as well as in other smaller places, some of the Hindustanees run hotels for their own people. As a rule, two men are accommodated in one room and the accommodations cannot be said to be of a high order. In places like Stockton and Victoria, where the Sikhs have their own temples, they allow some of their countrymen to live there free of charge. In these places the accommodations are superior to those in the hotels run by the Hindustanees.

Cost: — The cost of housing varies in different places as naturally might be expected. Whenever a gang of Hindustani laborers work on a ranch, they are provided with living accommodations free. The same is true in the case of the farm operators. In the lumber mills where the Hindustani owners employ their own people, they do not generally charge anything for the shacks. But where the Hindustanees work in lumber mills owned by Americans or Canadians, a charge is always made for housing.

A lumber company at Linnton, Oregon, for instance, charges \$ 1.50 a month to the Hindustani employees. Of

course, a similar charge is made to the employees of other nationalities. Another lumber company at Astoria, Oregon, on the other hand, charges \$ 5.00 for each shack irrespective of the number of people accommodated. As mentioned before, there is room for only four people in these shacks.

While living in the hotels in town, the Hindustani workers spend from 50 cents to \$ 1.50 per day, depending, of course, upon their financial condition at the time.

#### 4. Cleanliness.

One of the essential qualities of Hindustani life is personal cleanliness. Although the idea of cleanliness differs a good deal in the Orient as contrasted with that in the Occident, daily bathing is a common habit. Whether it is winter or summer, the first duty of a Hindustanee upon rising is to bathe. It is only extremely unfavorable circumstances which prevent him from doing this. He always washes his hands after returning from the toilet. As many of them do not smoke or chew, the rooms they occupy are generally free from expectorations. These were some of the points highly emphasized by some hotel owners.

The linens and underwear of the Hindustanees are always clean. They always clean their teeth with a brush which they make themselves out of the twigs of trees whenever possible. In towns, of course, they use modern tooth-brushes. After each meal they also cleanse their mouths.

The complaints which have been made against the Sikhs, who form the majority of the Hindustanees in America and Canada, are that they wear their hair and beards long and use turbans. True, it is not always possible to keep the beard quite free from dust while working in the saw-mills or on the farms. The turbans, often of white cloth, get soiled much more easily than hats. It is their dusty beards and soiled white turbans which sometimes give the impression that the Hindustanees are dirty in spite of their really scrupulous personal cleanliness. "I know some generous, warm-hearted people who have



been in close contact with the Sikhs throughout the Province of British Columbia and these people are free to speak appreciatively about the wholesomeness of Sikh living and thinking," says Mr. James E. Dobbs of Toronto, Canada.<sup>1</sup>

It must be pointed out that the Hindustanee does not dress himself with special reference to society. He may have taken his daily bath, washed his hair, brushed his teeth and donned clean underwear, yet he fails utterly to appreciate the idea that he must adjust his dress according to the social etiquette. His shirt though freshly washed, is frequently unironed; his suit though clean is often unpressed; his shoes, though costly, are unpolished, and these peculiarities make the Hindustanee look untidy.

Dr. S. H. Lawson, M. D. of British Columbia, Canada, says: "There is one phase of the Hindu question concerning which the majority of the public seem to hold most erroneous opinions. I refer to his personal habits regarding cleanliness, use of alcoholic liquors, etc. As ship surgeon on the C. P. R. steamer *Monteagle* and later the *Tartar* at the time of the greatest influx of Hindus, the majority of those people passed under my close observation. It was my duty to make a thorough physical examination of each immigrant at Hong-Kong, and although at first I was strongly prejudiced against them, I lost this prejudice after thousands of them had passed through my hands and I had compared them with the white steerage passengers I had seen on the Atlantic. I refer in particular to the Sikhs and I am not exaggerating in the least when I say that they were one hundred per cent cleaner in their habits and freer from disease than the European steerage passengers I had come in contact with. The Sikhs impressed me as a clean, manly, honest race. My more recent impressions as surgeon in mining camps among thousands of white men, where immorality is rife, has increased my respects for the Sikhs."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Canada and India. April 1917, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from India's Appeal to Canada, p. 11.

### 5. Comforts.

The craving for comforts is as strong among the people of the Orient as it is among the people of the Occident. In fact, it was the Orient where luxuries were first indulged in, although, due to the development of democratic governments and the rise of consciousness among the masses, the common people in the Occident have more access to the comforts and luxuries of life at the present time than the same class of people in the Orient. The Hindustanees on the Pacific Coast enjoy a good many comforts, such as silk shirts and turbans, scented oil and soap, and perfumery of all sorts.

The most important item among the comforts enjoyed by the Hindustanees, however, consists of the modern conveniences of travelling. While searching for jobs, they bought bicycles. After securing jobs, especially when they began to lease ranches, they bought horses and buggies. As they became successful in farming, they bought Ford automobiles. With still greater success in their business undertaking, they began to replace their Fords with the better types of automobile — Chandlers, Buicks, Dodges, Overlands, McLaughlins, Hudson Super-Sixes and other seven-passenger touring-cars.

With the depression of business and the failure of the rice and cotton crops within the last two years, many of them had to sell their machines. Quite a number, however, still retain them. Some of the best automobiles in Vancouver Island, British Columbia, are owned by the Hindustani mill owners.

One of the most important features in connection with the standard of living of the Hindustanees is that it is a very variable item in their lives. Whenever their wages and incomes are high, their standard of living also improves and they spend money freely. With the loss of their high wages or income, as happened in 1920, they would rather lower their standard of living than borrow money.

---