

Census of India, 1911

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BURMA PART I.—REPORT

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powerful and widespread race is due to Indian immigration. Just as in the past the Burmese tribes assimilated what was essential and what was advantageous from the immigrant Indian, and evolved a highly individualised racial existence from the amalgamation, there is reason to believe that the present phase of Indian immigration is strengthening rather than weakening the hold of the Burmese on the province. It is true that they have lost for the time being a portion of its urban industry, but it has still to be demonstrated that the loss is more than temporary. It is more than compensated by the remarkable manner in which they have availed themselves of the opportunities afforded by the colonisation of its available wastes. The dispersal of the Burmese population over its unoccupied portions is a far sounder basis of future permanence and stability than would have been obtained by a larger concentration in its towns for the purpose of sharing in its urban and industrial development. In the course of the discussion on urban population in Chapter I of this report, it was demonstrated that the increase of the Buddhist or indigenous population has been tending towards agricultural pursuits, the percentage of town dwellers diminishing from 67 to 61 per cent. between 1901 and 1911. There is perhaps no more stable form of population than a peasant proprietary firmly established on the land. In the meantime, the Indian immigrant has been concentrating in the towns, more than a half of the Indian population being town dwellers in the main portion of the province comprising the natural divisions of the Central Basin and the Deltaic Plains. It would be contrary to experience to anticipate that a comparatively small town population with a disproportionately large number of males will succeed in affecting to any considerable extent the racial existence of a widely dispersed rural community. It is interesting, in view of the concern now being generally felt as to the continued existence of the Burmese race, to consider the view, previously obtaining, that it would be to the mutual advantage of both Burma and India to colonise the unoccupied areas of Burma by the surplus population from the most congested districts of India. A brief review of the previous policy and its results is of considerable importance not only in indicating its marked divergence from the present point of view but also in estimating the future possibilities of Indian immigration and its effects on the population of the province.

76. Assisted Indian Immigration.—For some time subsequent to the annexation of Pegu by the British in 1852, the policy of the Government was to intervene actively to promote the migration of cultivators from India to Burma. It was considered to be a mutual advantage to relieve the congestion of the most densely populated districts in India, and to introduce new crops, new methods of cultivation and much needed population into Burma. Repeated attempts were made to encourage such migration by direct action, but they were all unsuccessful. The whole subject was reconsidered by the Famine Commissioners in 1888, and their recommendations were embodied in the Circular of the Government of India in the Revenue and Agriculture Department, No. 96F.—6-59, dated the 19th October 1888. While adhering to the general principles of relieving specially congested tracts in India by transferring the indigent population of those parts of Burma, and of promoting the wealth of Burma by developing the cultivation of tracts lying waste and unproductive, it was considered that such attempts should in future be made by private capitalists, as personal supervision and continuity of effort were essential to success. Rules were framed and published in Revenue Department Notification of the Government of India, No. 521R., dated 24th July 1889, to carry out the recommendations. Only two estates were formed under these rules, as follows:—

- (i) a lease expiring in 1953 of 27,506 acres to Mr. Mylne at Kyauktaga in the Pegu District with an option of renewal for 63 years at a rent equal to two-thirds of the ordinary revenue on land cultivated and of similar renewals in perpetuity,
- (ii) a grant of 15,000 acres in 1894 to Rai Jai Prakash Lal Bahadur, C.I.E., at Zeyawaddy in the Toungoo District, the revenue after 1994 being two-thirds of the ordinary rate.

In the meantime the attitude of the Local Government towards Indian immigration was rapidly changing. The extraordinary extensions of cultivation effected by the Burmese emigrants from Upper Burma in the delta districts, demonstrated that it was not essential for the progress or prosperity of the province to colonise its waste areas by means of settling Indian immigrants upon the land. Indian labour was required, but rather in the direction of preparing the crops for

export after they had been reaped, than in introducing new crops or in extending the area under cultivation. It was determined that the system of agriculture most suited to the province was that of the peasant proprietor, in which the cultivator held his land direct from the State in small plots, sufficient for supplying the full requirements of family life, and not too large for cultivation by the members of the family without recourse to assistance by outside labour. The settlement of Indian labour on the land introduced new and complicated relations of landlord and tenant, contrary to the ideals towards which the efforts of Government were consciously directed. It attempted in a petty, cumbersome and ineffective manner what was being accomplished expeditiously, effectively and on the largest scale by the indigenous population. It was supplying an unfelt want partly by deflecting labour from where it was urgently needed. In 1908, the Local Government caused an enquiry to be instituted into the working of these estates, from which it appeared that the object of the concessions had not been realised to any considerable extent. In the case of the Kyauktaga grant, the grantee was no longer recruiting from the congested districts in India referred to in the circular, but was engaging for cultivation ordinary coolies who had come over, mostly from Madras to labour on public works, and who would have been more usefully employed, so far as Burma was concerned, if they had continued on such work. On both the grants, the immigrants were paying somewhat high rents to the grantee, and they did not appear in some cases to be living under ordinary sanitary conditions. They had introduced no new kinds of cultivation and had failed to adapt themselves to the climate and manner of life prevailing in Burma.

The total population settled on the two estates is less than 10,000. On the Kyauktaga grant the majority of the settlers are of agricultural castes from the

Grant or lease.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Kyauktaga ...	4,415	2,589	1,826
Zeyawaddy ...	5,065	2,800	2,265
Total ...	9,480	5,389	4,091

United Provinces, the district of Fyzabad supplying the greatest number from any individual district. On the Zeyawaddy grant the majority of the settlers are from Behar, the Shahabad District supplying 3,494 of the total. In both grants the immigrants live in self-contained Hindu villages, influencing but little, and influenced but little by, the Burmese life surrounding

them. They have maintained their caste system and rules with greater success than the majority of Hindu immigrants into Burma who are necessarily brought more closely into contact with the disintegrating influence of Burmese life and opinion.

77. Nature of demand for Indian immigration.—The results of these two efforts to establish an Indian peasantry in Burma confirms the opinion that the natural attraction of Burma for the Indian immigrant is not its agricultural possibilities. With the exception of the agricultural immigrants from Chittagong into the district of Arakan, few Indians come to Burma with the intention of embarking in agriculture. The economic demand of Burma is not for agricultural but for urban labour, not for the raising of a crop, but for its disposal, and for the supply of the agricultural population of the province with their general requirements. It is true that the extension of cultivation in the past has proceeded so rapidly that a large portion of the extended area has been necessarily mortgaged to pay the expenses of transformation of wild jungle into culturable land. Owing to this necessity, Indian money-lenders have obtained control of large areas of cultivated land. It is also true that the purchase of land is a favourite form of investment with Indian merchants and traders who have made their money in non-agricultural industries in the larger towns of the province. This possession of land by Indian

Agriculturalists by religions.	
Religion.	Percentage of total agriculturalists.
Buddhist ...	88.6
Animist ...	0.3
Hindu ...	1.1
Mahomedan ...	0.3
Total ...	100

landholders has stimulated to some extent the cultivation of the land by Indian cultivators. But the number of Indian agriculturalists among the total population is extremely small. Reference must be made to Imperial Table XVD and to Subsidiary Table No. VIII of Chapter XII of this report for a complete analysis of the impression made by the Indian on the agriculture of Burma. Hindus and Mahomedans combined do not amount to more than 3.3 per cent. of the total agricultural population, using the term in its widest sense. Or, putting the same facts in another way, the percentages

of the Hindu and Mahomedan populations of the province supported by agriculture

80. Seasonal migration between Chittagong and Akyab Districts.—

There are many reasons for a separate treatment of the migration between India and the Akyab District. It differs materially from the remaining immigration into Burma in that it comprises the only appreciable overland migration between Burma and India. Every year, there is a periodic migration of coolies from Chittagong to assist in agricultural operations in Akyab. The amount of migration fluctuates greatly, falling to very small dimensions after a good season, and rising considerably

after a bad season, in Chittagong. Only a comparatively small number remain permanently behind in Akyab, the majority returning to their homes in Chittagong after the reaping of the crops. The marginal statement shews a marked fall in the number of immigrants from India since 1909, due principally to a decline in the number of immigrants from Chittagong.

Immigration into Akyab District.			
Year.	From Chittagong.	From rest of India.	Total from India.
1911	30,521	13,278	43,799
1901	54,843	18,889	73,732
1891	54,731	6,421	61,155

The later date on which the Census was taken in 1911, the 10th March against the 1st March in 1901, must have had a considerable effect in reducing the numbers recorded. The first half of March is the period when the immigrants are returning to their homes in large numbers after the completion of harvest operations. A postponement of the record by ten days in the busiest portion of the emigration season would cause a marked reduction in the number of immigrants to be entered. But this could not account for the whole of the large decrease recorded, and the principal cause of the greater portion of the decrease is still to be considered. It is impossible to test the records of birth-place by any recorded statistics of actual migration. There are three main routes, one entirely by sea, by the steamers of the British India Company, one partly by land to Maungdaw, and thence by the steamers of the Arakan Flotilla Company, and the third entirely by land. No records of persons using the two latter methods of travelling are kept. Coming to Akyab, the majority of the immigrants travel by one of these two latter methods, not having sufficient means to pay for a passage by steamer direct to Akyab. On returning to Chittagong, the majority return direct by sea, partly because they have the means to pay for their passage, and partly because, if they have so far succeeded

in evading assessment to Capitation Tax, they are certain of escape, once they are on board. Accepting the figures for migration by sea as being a partial presentation of the total movement, it is seen that while the immigration for the past three years has remained stationary, emigration has largely increased. It would be perhaps too great an assumption to accept this tendency to increased emigration compared with immigration as typical of the whole. But the search for the cause of the increased emigration by sea has revealed a credible explanation of the general decline in the returns of persons in the Akyab District, recorded as being born in Chittagong. It is to be found in

Emigration by British India Steamers Between Akyab and Bengal.		
Year.	Immigrants.	Emigrants.
1901	11,783	17,130
1902	15,127	27,827
1903	14,355	20,807
1904	14,174	19,701
1905	16,243	19,683
1906	19,292	20,076
1907	23,135	33,650
1908	35,421	41,503
1909	39,717	49,885
1910	37,723	55,833

the following extract from the Land Revenue Administration Report for Burma, for the year ending 30th June 1907 :—

were assessed as married men at the higher rate of Rs. 5. The Steamer Companies, who do business between Chittagong and Akyab, complained with special reference to the system of assessment on arrival that their passenger traffic fell off. The Commissioner subsequently directed that the immigrants should not be assessed until they had been employed, and orders were also passed for the assessment of coolies whose wives were in Chittagong at the unmarried rate. The Deputy Commissioner remarks that these Chittagonian coolies come to Akyab, only when crops fail in Chittagong and work is scarce, and that changes in contemplation in Chittagong may provide them in a few years with sufficient work at home. Compared with the figures in Akyab, all other changes are insignificant."

In this extract, the decline and even the extinction of this migration is foreshadowed. Apart from the extra revenue received, the check on immigration resulting from the stringent assessment of the Capitation Tax is considered to have produced two beneficial results. It does not seem that any further explanations concerning the decline in the number of immigrants from Chittagong are needed. The migration is seasonal, and consequently the later date of the Census of 1901, at a time when the immigrants were returning to their homes, resulted in a smaller record; it is fluctuating, so that marked changes in numbers were to be anticipated; it has been subjected in the past few years to a heavy taxation from which it had hitherto been largely exempt; its diminution is considered to be productive of beneficial results by the local authorities, and the stringent assessment of the tax is stimulated by other than purely revenue considerations; its decline was foretold four years before the Census was taken; and finally, so far as the records of actual migration are available, they suggest that emigration is proceeding more rapidly than immigration. Apart entirely from a genuine decrease, it is probable that immigrants, fearing assessment to the tax, avoided being entered in the enumeration records.

81. Abnormal age and sex distribution of Indian immigrants.—In discussing the general influence of Indian migration on the province of Burma, it is necessary to draw attention to the remarkable disparity in the numbers of the sexes of the immigrants from India. A detailed discussion of the conditions and results of such disparity is, however, more pertinent to Chapters II and VI of this Report dealing with the "Movement of the Population" and "Sex", respectively. Reference should be made to these Chapters for a consideration of the disparity as it affects these phenomena, respectively. Similarly, the age distribution of the immigrants by which the population of the province between 15 and 45 years of age is unduly increased, can be discussed more suitably in Chapter V, specially devoted to a consideration of the ages of the inhabitants of the province, than in a Chapter dealing with the broad aspects of migration.

Persons born in India.	
Sex.	Numbers.
Male ...	423,169
Female ...	70,530
Disparity...	352,639

82. Chinese immigration.—Of the 88,626 persons recorded as being born in Asiatic countries other than India, 75,365 were born in China. It is possible by a combination of the figures recorded in Imperial Tables XI and XIII, to arrive at the number of Chinese immigrants, and the number of persons born in Burma claiming to be of Chinese race. The figures are approximate only, for it is not a fact that the Chinese in the province, not born in China, must necessarily have been born in Burma. Moreover, the crude figures from the Imperial Tables require modification to allow for extensions of census limits, and to enable the comparison to be made over identical areas for the years of comparison. In 1901, the inclusion of the Shan States was responsible for a small portion of the increase in the numbers of the Chinese recorded, and in 1911, the extension of Census limits to Kokang and West Manglun brought considerable numbers of Chinese on to the records. It is necessary to exclude the Specially Administered Territories if a comparison extending beyond the current census is to be attempted. Effecting this exclusion, it is seen that

Chinese Population of province.			
Year.	Total.	Born in China.	Born in Burma.
1911	122,834	75,365	47,469
1901	62,486	43,328	19,158
1891	41,457	23,060	18,397

Chinese Population of Burma Proper.			
Year.	Total.	Born in China.	Born in Burma.
1911	83,762	62,178	21,584
1901	57,780	40,216	17,564
1891	41,457	23,060	18,397

their small numbers. Their caste system is in a state of disintegration. More than a quarter of their numbers are casteless, to use a term which describes their condition better than the term "outcast." They are without a caste, not because they have been excluded from participation in the benefits of a caste organisation, but because caste has ceased to be a necessary portion of their social and economic equipment. If membership of a caste be considered as an essential condition of inclusion in the term Hindu, then large numbers returned as Hindus in Burma, are Hindus in name only. Indeed, the majority of the Hindus in the province are ripe for absorption by the indigenous Buddhist races. The process is continually

Hindus in Burma, 1911.

Males	...	366,760
Females	...	75,588

Disparity	...	231,112
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in operation, but it is being continually obscured by the large amount of immigration from India. It is not only the casteless portion of the Hindu community which is being assimilated. The excess males, numbering 231,112, are either temporary immigrants or are likely to intermarry with women of Burmese race. In the former case, they do not add to the permanent strength of the Hindu community, and in the latter case, though they may retain their outward adherence to Hinduism, the process of absorption, which may take two or three generations to complete, has already commenced. The continuance of Hinduism in Burma on any but the most limited scale is dependent on a high rate of immigration into the province. It has been seen that during the past few years, the flow of Indian immigration, or rather, the net gain to the province by immigration, has been reduced. Should any development occur by which the amount of immigration should continue to be reduced appreciably, the Hindu community in Burma is not established on a sufficiently stable basis to resist absorption by the Buddhist races. Buddhism arose as a protest against the Brahmanic system of caste, and experience in Burma demonstrates that it operates as a disintegrating influence on the caste of the members of the Hindu community settled in the province. But for the fact that Hinduism has in the past received constant additions to its strength from India, the processes of disintegration and absorption would have proceeded at a more rapid pace. Even fortified by immigration, Hinduism remains a passive rather than an active force in the province. Its numerical strength is far in excess of the real amount of vitality it possesses. Many of its members are Hindus in name only, some having no caste at all, and others claiming castes to which they are not entitled. "Hindu" in Burma is a general term used to denote those persons of Indian birth and parentage who do not belong to other religions, rather than to describe a person holding membership of a recognised caste. It is a negative, or a remainder category, comprising numerous elements not actively belonging to it, except in the negative sense that they can be more easily entered under the designation "Hindu" than under any other term of classification. As such its influence and importance are not proportionate to its numbers.

of the increase, it is certain that natural increase among the Mahomedans themselves and intermarriage with the Burmese have far more effect on the variation than is the case with the Hindus. Natural increase by the excess of births over death is greater because the disparity of the sexes is less. In 1901, there were 119,347 Mahomedan females in Burma compared with 48,544 Hindu females at that date, and the natural increase must necessarily have been greater among the Mahomedans, especially as they form a rural and an indigenous population to a greater extent than the Hindus. As for intermarriage with the Burmese, the greater excess of Hindu males giving opportunities for a larger degree of intermarriage, would suggest that of the increases of Hindu and Mahomedan populations by this contributory, that for the Hindus would be the greater. But this *a priori* deduction needs to be discounted by two facts. The first is that a very large proportion of the excess of Hindu males consists of temporary immigrants, who do not intermarry and do not contribute to the increase of population. The second is that of the children of such intermarriages, those of Mahomedan and Burmese parentage with very few exceptions go to increase the numbers of Mahomedans, while only a minority of those of Hindu and Burmese parentage are to be counted as Hindus.

Over 52 per cent. of the Mahomedan inhabitants of Burma dwell in the districts of the Coast Ranges where they form 14.72 per cent. of the total population. This high percentage is principally due to the number of Mahomedans in Akyab (186,323) where they comprise 33.66 per cent. or over one-third of the population of the district. Indeed, in this one district, 44 per cent. of the Mahomedans of the province are congregated. Mergui and Amherst Districts also show the comparatively high proportions of 8.81 and 6.22 per cent. of their total population as being Mahomedans. In the Deltaic Plains, only Rangoon, with 18.62 per cent. of its population returned as Mahomedan, rises above the provincial percentage of 3.47. In the Central Basin, the two districts of Mandalay and Yamethin contribute half the Mahomedan population of the whole division. The increase in the Mahomedan population varies from 17 per cent. in the Coast Ranges to 37 per cent. in the Deltaic Plains, with a provincial increase of 24 per cent. This is about double the natural rate of increase. However, it is difficult to use the term natural rate of increase with respect to a population comprising a large excess of males, who intermarry readily with the women of another community. It is possible by utilising the statistics of the Zerbadi community to demonstrate the large effect produced by intermarriage with the Burmese, on the increase of the Mahomedan population. It is responsible for nearly a half of the total increase for the decade 1901—1911. The remaining increase must be distributed between immigration, and the natural increase of the Mahomedan population not affected by intermarriage. It is impossible to estimate their respective proportions, but it is obvious that compared with the part played by immigration in the increase of the Hindu population, it occupies but a subordinate place in the increase of the Mahomedans of the province.

In considering the distribution of the Mahomedan population between urban and rural areas, it is necessary to consider separately the figures for the province when Akyab district is included, and when it is omitted. The effect of its large

Mahomedan population.					
Year.	Population.	Percentage of total population.	Increase.		
			Actual.	Per cent.	
1891 ...	253,640	3.33	...	...	...
1901 ...	339,446	3.28	85,806	34	...
1911 ...	420,777	3.47	81,331	24	...

Mahomedans in Burma.		
Sex.	1901.	1911.
Males ...	220,099	271,428
Females ...	119,347	149,349
Disparity...	100,752	122,079

Zerbadis in Burma.		
Year.	Number.	Increase.
1901 ...	20,423	...
1911 ...	59,729	39,306

Distribution of Mahomedan population.				
Area.			Actual numbers, 1911.	Increase per cent., 1901-11.
Province ...	...	...	420,777	3.47
Central Basin ...	...	...	61,927	1.51
Deltaic Plains ...	...	...	127,043	2.93
Northern Hill Districts	...	...	7,575	1.14
Coast Ranges ...	...	...	221,010	14.72
Specially Administered Territories.	...	...	3,202	.21

Actual variation in Mahomedan population, 1901-1911.	
Increase of Zerbadis.	39,306
Remaining increase.	42,025
Total increase ..	81,331

Mahomedan rural population is so great, that, if included, the rural exceeds the urban population, the latter being only 35·15 per cent. of the total Mahomedan community. If excluded, the urban population is the greater being 58·35 per cent. of the whole. Apart from Akyab district, the Mahomedans dwelling in rural areas do not even amount to one per cent. of the total rural population,

Urban and Rural distribution of Mahomedan population.					
Area.	Actual population.		Percentage of		
	Urban.	Rural.	Urban to total Mahomedan population.	Urban Mahomedan to total Urban population.	Rural Mahomedan to total Rural population.
Province ...	147,907	272,870	35·15	13·11	2·48
Province (Akyab excluded).	132,376	94,489	58·35	12·14	·90
Central Basin ..	33,669	28,258	8·00	8·84	·73
Deltaic Plains ...	80,138	46,905	19·05	13·90	1·24
Northern Hill Districts.	3,348	4,247	·80	11·12	·66
Coast Ranges ...	30,752	190,258	7·31	21·73	14·60
Specially Administered Territories.	...	3,202	..	...	·21

but if Akyab be included the percentage rises to 2·48.

93. Comparison of Hindu and Mahomedan Populations.—In his Census Report for 1901, Mr. Lewis makes the following comments on the respective rates of increase of the Hindu and Mahomedan communities in Burma:—

"The Hindus have increased within the past ten years at the rate of no less than 63 per cent., and of every ten thousand persons inhabiting Burma Proper, 303 on an average now profess the Hindu faith. The rise of 63 per cent. is lower than that which took place during the preceding decade (77 per cent.), and when compared with the 1872—81 figures (140 per cent.), dwindles into comparative insignificance. As it is, however, it is nearly double the Mahomedan rate of growth during the same decade. Everything points to the fact that the Hindus are gradually asserting their vast numerical superiority, and that, when their prejudices against sea voyages have been overcome, they are bound to outstrip all other competitors. In 1872 the number of Musalmans in British Burma was nearly three times as great as that of Hindus. Year by year during the past thirty years the disparity has been reduced; Census after Census has shown that the Hindus were creeping up. They are still behind the Mahomedans in number, and, so far as one can judge at this

stage, they are not likely to have passed them even at the next decennial enumeration, but there seems to be no question that, unless the resources of the country first give out, they will in the end out number them."

Hindus and Mahomedans in Burma.					
Year.	Hindus.		Mahomedans.		Excess of Mahomedans.
	Numbers.	Increase.	Numbers.	Increase.	
1891 ...	173,432	...	253,640	...	80,208
1901 ...	285,484	112,052	339,446	85,806	53,962
1911 ...	389,679	104,195	420,777	81,331	31,098

The marginal statement indicates that the same tendencies noted by Mr. Lewis are operating,

though with reduced intensity. The Hindu and Mahomedan populations are both increasing at a slower rate than formerly, but the Hindu increase still maintains its lead both absolutely and relatively. It has diminished the superiority of the numbers of Mahomedans, but is still 31,098 behind. It is at present highly questionable whether the same tendencies will continue for the ensuing decade. The changes in migration observable during the past few years, if continued, will affect the Hindu population adversely to a much greater extent than the Mahomedan population is likely to be affected. The Hindu community is less firmly established. Its increase is more dependent on a continuation of a highly abnormal distribution of population which is rapidly being modified. It is more liable to adverse external influences and to internal disintegration. Now that the era of rapid transition succeeding the annexation of Upper Burma has closed, and a period of more steady progress set in, it is probable that the rate of increase of the adherents of the two religions will tend to approximate, and even that the Mahomedans may increase at a more rapid rate than the Hindus. Unless conditions change, it is not probable that the Hindus will be equal to the Mahomedans in numbers by the date of the next census.

94. Christianity.—The number of Christians in Burma on the date of the census was 210,081, an increase of 42 per cent. on the number returned in 1901. This rate of increase is nearly double of the rate of increase for the previous decade.

CHAPTER XI.

Caste, Tribe and Race.

CASTE AND INDIAN IMMIGRATION.

256. Caste, Tribe or Race.—In India, Caste is of outstanding importance as compared with Race, and indeed caste is the form which ethnical distinctions assume over the greater portion of the Indian Empire. But in Burma caste is relatively unimportant. It has no existence among the indigenous population, and it appears among the immigrant population in a form showing many signs of disintegration. Consequently it attains but a subordinate place in a branch of census enquiry devoted to ethnical classification. In the opinion of four generations of Census Superintendents in Burma the records of caste are both useless and inaccurate. The claims of uniformity throughout a unified empire have succeeded in retaining caste as a subject of record in Burma, but in the course of tabulation it is treated as a matter of subsidiary importance. Tribal and racial divisions, in Burma matters of the utmost complexity, naturally take the place of a consideration of caste, and it is to an analysis of such divisions that the greater portion of this chapter will be devoted. Imperial Table XIII contains the data from which the material for the analysis is obtained, and Subsidiary Table I of this Chapter enables an estimate to be made in the magnitude of the various indigenous racial groups since the first census was undertaken in 1872. The gradual extension of census limits has been a more potent factor than natural movements in producing the variations exhibited. An attempt will be made in the course of the treatment of each individual tribe to attribute the degree of variation to each contributory cause.

257. Definitions of Caste.—According to Sir Herbert Risley's definition, a caste is said to be—

"A collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, which usually denotes or is associated with a specific occupation; claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine; and professing to follow the same traditional calling. A caste is almost invariably endogamous, in the sense that a member of the large circle denoted by the common name may not marry outside that circle. But within that circle there are usually a number of smaller circles, each of which is also endogamous. Thus it is not enough to say that a Brahman at the present day cannot marry any woman who is not a Brahman; his wife must not only be a Brahman, she must also belong to the same endogamous division of the Brahman caste."

Mr. Gait in his Census Report of 1901, in order to differentiate a caste from a sub-caste defines it in the following terms:—

"A caste is an endogamous group, or a collection of such groups, bearing a common name who, by reason of similarity of traditional occupation and reputed origin, are generally regarded, by those of their countrymen who are competent to give an opinion, as forming a single homogeneous community, the constituent parts of which are more nearly related to each other than they are to any other section of the society."

The three important constituents of a caste, according to both definitions, are the practice of endogamy, the association with a traditional occupation, and the belief in a common ancestry or origin. Whichever of the three criteria be adopted, it is apparent that the definition cannot be applied to the greater portion of the indigenous population of Burma. So far from the tribes and races of the province showing any general preference for associating in endogamous groups they are most catholic in their practice of intermarriage both with each other, and with immigrant races. The Karen tribes furnish the only instances of tribal endogamy but they are quite free from any of the other essentials of caste. So far from following any traditional occupation an individual will frequently pass through numerous changes

of occupation in the course of his career. Hereditary occupations in which a son naturally follows the occupation of his father are common, but there are no limitations or prohibitions which would bring the persons following any such occupations into a caste group. The belief in a common ancestry is frequently found among the more primitive tribes of the province, but they comprise but a small proportion of the total population. Wherever found, the belief has no connection with any idea of the nature of caste. So far as the people of Burma are concerned caste is an alien institution which has made no progress whatever among its indigenous inhabitants. Isolated instances of the elements, which combined, constitute the phenomenon of caste, may be found, but caste itself in its complete form is only to be found among immigrants from India.

258. Caste among Indian Immigrants.—But even among the Indian immigrant races, caste in Burma stands on a very different footing from caste in India. The very facts of leaving his native village and crossing the sea to a distant country have violated some of the essentials of the caste of the immigrant. On arrival in Burma, he finds that his predecessors, instead of attempting to continue unimpaired their caste customs and traditions in their new environment, have treated them with neglect. There is no public opinion to bind him to the strict observance of his caste rules. There is nothing to prevent him from assuming with impunity a caste designation to which he would not be entitled in India. The economic basis of caste, serving to preserve a minimum standard of livelihood and to prevent unrestrained competition, in a country where population presses hardly upon the means of subsistence, are found to be hindrances in a country of scanty population where an opening is available to anybody astute enough to avail himself of it. The overwhelming preponderance of the male element among Indian immigrants is also a potent force in the disintegration of caste. In so far as caste depends on the observances and customs of every day family life, it is impossible for the great majority of Indians in Burma. They either live in overcrowded barracks or lodging houses where facilities for caste ceremonial are lacking, or they intermarry with Burmese women who have no conception of the idea of caste, except that it is an artificial creation of meaningless forms and prejudices. The fundamental social and economic conditions for the preservation of the caste system do not exist in Burma. In a few restricted instances, among the members of an Indian regiment, among the Brahmans who are retained by the Burmese for consultation concerning religious, social and ceremonial functions, and even among homogeneous groups of Indian immigrants massed together in large towns, attempts at the preservation of caste are made with some success, in the face of great difficulties. But such attempts are the exception rather than the rule. In the great majority of instances the Indian in Burma either disregards his caste entirely; or nominally belonging to a caste, not necessarily his true one, allows himself great liberties in the observance

designation. His record has to be made in a language peculiarly unsuited to the transliteration of foreign sounds. He makes a phonetic representation of a name in a character notorious for its disregard of phonetic methods of spelling. Beyond a few of the more widely distributed and better known castes it is impossible to prepare and publish standard transliterations of caste names. The amount of work entailed in such a task would be disproportionately beyond the utility of its resulting advantage. In due course, the caste names as recorded in Burmese have to be transliterated again into English by a different staff from that which made the original record. In the Bengal Census Report for 1901 it is stated that caste names are often spelt so similarly that it is almost impossible to distinguish between them. If this is the case where caste is a familiar phenomenon, and where the names are recorded directly in the vernacular, the difficulties in Burma, where caste is an alien institution with foreign designations, can be faintly estimated. The final results are obtained after two doubtful transliterations of an extremely doubtful set of original statements.

260. Treatment of Caste in previous and present Census Reports.—

In 1881 no attempt was made to prepare a return for caste in Burma. Imperial Form XII prescribed for the return of caste was submitted without any entries as it was considered impossible with Burmese enumerators to attempt to record Hindu castes or Mahomedan tribes. In 1891 the question of the return of caste was left open until the Census Commissioner and Census Superintendent could consult together. It was finally determined to attempt a record of caste. In paragraphs 226 and 227 of the Census Report of 1901, Mr. Eales discussed the question of a caste record in Burma. He considered such a record to be of very doubtful value and gave his opinion that it was more than probable that a record of caste would not again be attempted at another Census. However, when the question was again considered in 1900, it was determined that it was necessary for Burma to conform with the practice prescribed for the rest of India and to do the best with the material available. In paragraphs 156 and 157 of his report, Mr. Lewis dwells at great length on the difficulty of recording caste in Burma and on the possibility of misleading answers and errors in transliteration. He concludes his discussion in the following terms:—

"I may seem to have dwelt at somewhat undue length on this aspect of the caste returns in Burma. No one, it may be said, is likely to place any great reliance on the caste figures collected in Burma. That this has been the case in the past is, no doubt, true. I submit, however, that since the 1891 Census the body of caste folk in the province has increased so largely and has now reached so substantial a figure, that, unless some disclaimer such as the above is made, the public may be moved to think that the familiarity with and knowledge of caste has grown to an extent proportionate to the growth of the Hindu population, and to treat the data with the same respect as that with which they treat the returns compiled for castes in their locality or origin. With the assurance that if they do so they are doomed to disappointment, I pass on to the consideration of the castes that are found in Burma."

seem as if there had been concerted action on their part to refuse to give their correct caste designation. A very large number of the members of this caste were entered at the current census as Christians. Another instance both of the power of suggestion and of the unreliability of the caste returns is contained in the figures for the Sudra caste for the years 1901 and 1911. In 1901 the Sudra caste was chosen to be entered in the specimen schedule issued to enumerators as a guide to the method of making the various entries of the Census Record. The number of entries for this caste then totalled 49,421. In 1911, the Sudra caste was omitted from the specimen schedule and other castes substituted, the total number recorded for the caste fell to 26,860. This variation in the figures, so contrary to any probable variation in the facts they purport to represent, indicates the nature of the influences which affect the figures for caste in the census returns, and the necessity of the warning issued by Mr. Lewis against placing too much reliance on the figures for the separate castes in Burma.

Another feature in the record for caste is the remarkable increase in the numbers of Hindus who gave no caste return whatever. In 1901, 58,073 Hindus failed to give their caste. This number has now risen to 99,710. The great majority of these entries simply consisted of the word "Hindu." The next in numerical order were blank entries the knowledge that they referred to Hindus being obtained from the column relating to religion. Despite emphatic warnings in the instructions issued, such names as Madrassi, Bengali, Hindustani, Tamil and Telugu were repeatedly entered in the column for caste. The fact that out of a total of 389,079 Hindus in the province, 99,710 failed to give any clear indication as to their caste is in itself a fact which destroys confidence in the record. It may be that the default is in the enumerator, rather than in the person enumerated but a classification, in which over a quarter of the items to be classified are indeterminate, is of very little value, whatever may be the cause of the failure to obtain more definite results.

262. Figures for eleven Hindu Castes in Burma.—The numbers recorded for the eleven most important Hindu Castes in Burma are given in a marginal statement. It is probable that

the contrary movements of the Chattri and Chetty castes are due to a confusion in the entries of the two castes respectively, but it is impossible to tell whether the confusion was more marked in 1901 than in 1911. The decrease in the number of Manipuris is partly due to their ready assimilation with the Burmese and partly to an omission to treat Manipuri as a caste name. The name of the Palli caste is one

Caste.	1901.	1911.	Increase or Decrease.
Brakman	21,170	15,722	+ 5,248
Chattri	10,747	1,544	- 2,512
Chetty	14,369	6,508	+ 7,858
Kaper	12,904	11,114	+ 3,750
Mali	21,248	15,532	+ 2,726
Manpuri	3,383	11,132	- 7,779
Padayach	11,808	5,817	+ 5,991
Palli	5,501	13,359	- 7,389
Sudra	20,860	49,421	- 22,615
Uria	10,411	5,035	+ 5,376
Vellala	6,012	6,663	- 48
Total	115,941	159,335	- 9,394

readily leading itself to confusion with that of other castes. The difficulties of obtaining a correct record of this group were explained at length by Mr. Lewis in paragraph 157 of his report. The decline in the entries for Sudras is due principally to the fact that Sudra was the caste chosen in the specimen schedules for 1901 and was omitted in the schedules for 1911. Where the possibilities of error in the original record are so great the power of suggestion exercised by the choice of a specimen has peculiar opportunities for operation. In considering these figures, I can only repeat the warnings of several generations of Census Superintendents in Burma. The ignorance of the fundamental conception of caste is so great, and the possibilities of error in the original statement in the original record, and in the processes of transliteration and compilation, are so wide, that the results are not to be treated as possessing any degree of accuracy. Of far greater utility and of far greater reliability are the figures for the Hindu castes as a whole. The accurate recognition of Hindu subdivisions is beyond the capacity of the census machinery of the province, but a high degree of accuracy can be assigned to the figures of the total Hindu community. The ethnical significance of caste distribution is but slight. No caste of itself is of such outstanding importance that it is likely to leave any permanent mark on the races of the province. But the total effect of all castes combined cannot be ignored as being ethnographically unimportant. It is a question of extreme importance to the future development of the province. It is a

matter for congratulation that where the figures are inaccurate they are from a provincial point of view ethnically insignificant, and that where their significance is of great importance their accuracy attains a higher degree of reliability.

263. Hindu Castes.—The total number of the members of the Hindu community in Burma has increased by 104,195 to a total of 389,679, this representing

—	1911.	1901.	Increase or Decrease.	
			Actual.	Per cent.
City of Rangoon ...	108,350	82,994	+ 25,356	+ 3'55
Hanthawaddy ...	57,137	39,529	+ 17,608	+ 44'54
Pegu ...	34,350	18,602	+ 15,748	+ 84'65
Amherst ...	23,864	25,348	— 1,484	— 5'85
Total (four Districts) ...	223,701	166,473	+ 57,228	+ 34'37
Rest of Burma ...	165,978	119,011	+ 46,967	+ 39'46
Provincial Total ...	389,679	285,484	+ 104,195	+ 36'49

36'49 per cent. for the decade. The distribution of the Hindu immigrants over the province is most unequal. It will be seen that 223,701 or 57 per cent. of the total are located in four districts, the remainder being spread over 33 districts and four territories under special administration.

But it is difficult to exhibit the true distribution of the Hindu population by district figures. They congregate mainly in the cities and towns of the province, and in the larger villages on the railway system and on the banks of the Irrawaddy. Apart from a few districts in the delta Hindu immigration has made no impression on the rural population of the province. The Hindu is conspicuous in Burma because he is in evidence on all the main routes of communication. The actual increase is trifling if the vast extent of immigration is considered. Of the total population of the province the various Hindu castes form but a small and not rapidly increasing proportion, having advanced from 2'28 per cent. to 3'21 per cent. in the past twenty years.

The general question of the effect of Hindu immigration on the ethnical character of the country will be considered in connection with the wider problem of Indian immigration generally.

264. Musalman Tribes.—Just as the Hindu castes are congregated unduly in four districts, so the majority of the members of the Musalman tribes are to be

—	1911.	1901.	Increase.	
			Actual.	Per cent.
Akyab ...	178,647	154,887	23,760	15'34
City of Rangoon ...	54,390	42,873	11,517	26'86
Total (two Districts) ...	233,037	197,760	35,277	17'83
Rest of Burma ...	184,253	133,538	50,715	37'97
Provincial Total ...	417,290	331,298	85,992	25'95

found in the two districts of Akyab and Rangoon, which contain 56 per cent. of the Musalmans of the province. In Akyab they are indigenous and enter largely into agricultural occupations. But in the remaining districts of the province they are principally an urban population engaged in industrial and

commercial pursuits. They form a larger, more united and more influential body than the aggregation of Hindu castes to be found in Burma, but their increase is less rapid. In twenty years they have advanced from 3'33 per cent. to 3'47 per cent. of the total population.

Percentage of Musalmans to total population.	
Year.	Percentage.
1891	3'33
1901	3'28
1911	3'47

The apparent set back in the proportion between 1891 and 1901 was due to the inclusion within census limits of the Specially Administered Territories with an almost exclusively non-Musalman population. It is doubtful if much more reliance can be placed on the figures for the separate Musalman tribes than on those for the separate Hindu castes. The comparison of the numbers of Shaikhs and Zerbadis for the years 1901 and 1911 is obviously of but little value. In Burma, tribal

distinctions tend to disappear or to be modified considerably by the environment. The great majority of the 100,842 persons classed under "Other Musalman Tribes"

were recorded merely as Musalmans, Mahomedan being entered in the column for religions, and Musalman in the column for caste, tribe or race. There are possibilities of many cross categories especially among the Zerbadis, who may either enter themselves under this designation, or enter the tribe of the father. The large number of Zerbadis now recorded is significant as indicating the extent to which intermarriage between the Burmese and Musalman races is proceeding. Such intermarriage tends to obliterate tribal as apart from racial distinctions; the Mahomedanism generally remains, and any such racial distinctions as Afghan or Pathan remain, but designations such as Shaikh or Saiyed are gradually dropped except where there is a very strong Mahomedan community. The Malays are found along the coast of Mergui District. They invariably engage in seafaring occupations of which fishing, pearl-diving and the coasting trade are the principal. In the interior of the district can be found a small number of Musalman agriculturists, Burmese in their language and general characteristics, who are the result of intermarriage of the indigenous population with the Musalmans of the coast.

Musalman Tribes.				
Designation.	Population.			Increase or Decrease.
	1911.	1901.		
Shaikh	237,568	269,042	— 31,474	
Zerbadi	59,729	20,423	+ 39,306	
Saiyed	6,871	8,970	— 2,099	
Pathan	8,041	9,224	— 1,183	
Malay	4,239	3,983	+ 256	
Other Musalman Tribes	100,842	19,656	81,186	
Total	417,290	331,298	+ 85,992	

Malays.			
1911 ... ..	...	...	4,239
1901 ... ..	...	...	3,983
Increase ... ..	...	...	256

265. **Indians and Indigenous Populations compared.**—It is a fundamental article of belief with the majority of Europeans in Burma, that the Burmese race is doomed and is bound to be submerged in a comparatively short time by the hordes of immigrants who arrive by every steamer from India. There are many facts which appear to provide good grounds for this belief, but it is entirely unsupported

	1911.	1901.	Increase.	
			Actual.	Per cent.
Hindu Castes	389,679	285,484	104,195	36.49
Musalman Tribes	417,290	331,298	85,992	25.95
Other Indians	31,601	16,445	15,156	92.16
Total Indian Population	838,570	633,227	205,343	32.42
Burmese Proper	7,479,433	6,508,682	970,751	14.91
Burmese Racial Group	7,986,327	7,097,248	889,079	12.52
Indigenous Racial Groups	11,125,014	9,612,397	1,512,607	15.73

by the census returns, and a consideration of the true circumstances with regard to the effect of Indian immigration into Burma would appear to be necessary. Statistically the question belongs to Chapter II (Movement of Population) or to Chapter III (Birth-place) of this report, rather than to the chapter devoted to ethnography. But it possesses an ethnical significance, and what is perhaps the most living racial problem in the province should not be ignored in a general review of its racial components. Statistically the problem is presented in a marginal statement showing the relative figures for 1901 and 1911 and the corresponding increases for certain racial units. The total increase of the Indian population, Hindus, Mahomedans and all other classes of Indians combined, is 205,343 or 32.42 per cent. Against this increase, Burmese proper can show an increase of 14.91 per cent., the Burmese racial group of 12.52 per cent., and the indigenous races of the province of 15.73 per cent. It might appear that races showing an increase of 32.42 per cent. must in the long run prevail over races and groups with increases varying from 12 to 16 per cent. But the higher percentage is based on much smaller aggregate figures, and there is every indication that with an increase in the aggregate figures a decrease in the percentage will follow. For instance between 1891 and 1901 the increases in the Hindu and Mahomedan populations were 63 and 33 per cent. respectively. Between 1901 and 1911 on higher aggregate figures the percentages of increase have respectively diminished to 36.49 and 25.95. Putting percentages aside, as fictitious guides when comparing figures of greatly disproportionate magnitude, the increase of 205,343 in the Indian population is seen to dwindle into

insignificance in comparison with the increase of 970,751 persons who entered themselves in the record as Burmese, or with the addition of over a million and a half to the indigenous races of the province. An increase of two hundred thousand persons is not appreciably near to effecting the submergence of a race showing an increase approaching a million persons, even though the former does assume a percentage of 32 while the latter appears as a percentage of less than 15.

266. Causes of Slow Increase of Indian Population.—There are numerous causes to explain the comparatively slow increase of the Indian population

Hindu and Mahomedan sex numbers.			
Religion.	Sex.	1901.	1911.
Hindu ...	Males ...	236,930	312,650
	Females	48,554	77,029
Mahomedan ...	Males	220,99	271,438
	Females	119,347	149,349

of Burma. Considering the enormous amount of immigration, the greater part of it is seasonal, and the majority of the immigrants return to their native countries after a longer or shorter sojourn in the province. In one year (1908) the shipping returns actually showed a larger number of emigrants departing from the port of Rangoon than of immigrants arriving. This was of course an exception, but the net gain by immigration is a small proportion only of the total num-

ber of immigrants. The second factor in keeping down the number of Indian inhabitants in Burma is the extremely slow rate of natural increase. Indeed, it can

Excess of deaths over births in Rangoon 1901—1911.	
Births ...	43,204
Deaths ...	96,949
Natural Decrease	53,745

be said that there is no natural increase whatever among them. The overwhelming preponderance of males leads to an excess of the death-rate over the birth-rate. The latter, depending on the number of marriageable women, is exceedingly low compared with the total population. This can be best exemplified by a comparison of the number of births and deaths for the decade 1901 to 1911 in Rangoon, where the Indian population is in a majority. As a result of this decrease a large proportion of the net gain by immigration is necessary to keep their numbers

in a state of equilibrium. It is only after the natural decrease has been compensated that the tendency to increase begins to operate.

But this excess of immigrant males has another effect so far as the Hindus are concerned. They intermarry largely among the Burmese, and the children of such marriages in the majority of cases are brought up as Burmans, adopt the dress, manners and customs of the Burmese, and in course of time are incorporated into the Burmese race. This is not invariably the case. Among wealthy Hindus of high caste, the children are generally brought up as Hindus and not as Burmans, though after one or two generations of residence in Burma the caste feeling decreases and the tendency to the adoption of Burmese customs, speech and race gradually grows stronger. Neither is it the case with the children of mixed Mahomedan and Burmese parentage. These form a separate Mahomedan tribe called the Zerbadis, who though Burmese in some of their characteristics generally retain their Mahomedan religion and are not entered as Burmans. But even allowing for the children of mixed marriages of Burmese women with wealthy Hindus and with Mahomedans, there still remain very large numbers of children of Indian male parentage who go to swell the numbers of the Burmese race. These affect the relative numbers in a double sense. They detract from the potential increase of the Indian population and they add to the actual increase of the Burmese population.

It would be possible to multiply reasons why the number of Indian inhabitants in Burma does not increase at a greater rate. They are not homogeneous. They come from different countries, speak different tongues, have different customs and religions, and are almost as foreign to each other as they are to the Burmese. A united, single-minded, highly-civilised body of equal numbers might make a much greater ethnical impression on the province. But a heterogeneous collection of people collected from all parts of India, many of an inferior stage of civilisation, all incapable of unified action, incapable even of acting alike in similar circumstances, cannot produce a result commensurate with its numbers. The diversities of the various indigenous races of the province sink into insignificance compared with the diversities of the members of its Indian population. The Burmese people are not confronted with an invasion from a single, united and highly-civilised race. They are merely subjected to incursions from numerous and diverse quarters

each one insignificant in itself, possibly disquieting in the aggregate, but assuming a fictitious aspect of menace owing to the massing together under one designation of incongruous and disunited elements.

267. Economic aspect of Indian immigration.—Another aspect of the immigration of Indians to Burma is worthy of notice. The Indian comes to Burma to supply an economic demand which the Burman has failed to supply. The Burman has been so occupied in filling up the waste places of his country that he has never competed for a large number of town and city occupations. In so far as the demand for Indian labour is a demand for cheap, docile, disciplined labour, the Burman has not yet needed to enter into competition with the contract labour from Madras. It is true that there are higher forms of skilled industry, the mechanical, the engineering, the building, the transport, the distributive and the commercial, which the Burman has abandoned largely to foreign hands. But there is no certainty that such an economic phase is lasting. It has already been noticed how a demand for cheap labour for the rubber industries in the Federated Malay States has affected the rate of immigration into Rangoon. It has still to be discovered how the gradual occupation of the culturable portions of the province and the ultimate forcing of the Burman into urban occupations will affect the demand for Indian labour in Burma. The abstinence of the Burmese from a greater participation in urban industries is no self-denying ordinance. It merely expresses the fact that the race has found more congenial and profitable occupation in other directions. But when the opportunities in other directions begin to fail or to grow less attractive, then a much more strenuous competition on the part of the Burman for a share in the urban life of the province may be anticipated.

268. General conclusions as to the effect of Indian immigration.—Summing up the discussion on the racial competition between the Indian and the indigenous populations of the province, it is seen that current economic conditions have created a demand for labour in certain directions which the Burman has failed to supply. This has led to a large immigration from India to Burma. This immigration is to a great extent neither instinctive, nor natural, nor permanent. It is an artificial enhancement of the labour supply in a sparsely populated country. It looms large in the public eye because the resulting population has settled in the most conspicuous lines of observation, the large towns and villages on the main lines of communication. But its resultant ethnical effect is insignificant. The additions to the Burmese population or to the indigenous population of the province during a decade exceed any additions to the immigrant population several times over. The immigrant races, so far as existing tendencies can indicate, may modify, but can never submerge, the Burmese population. The Burmese race was created through the absorption of Indian immigrants by the nomadic tribes of the Irrawaddy valley. It has attained its present position and numbers by a process of absorption continued throughout centuries of its history. It is absorbing at the present time the descendants of a large proportion of the immigrants who settle permanently in the province. When it can provide a labour supply adequate to the demand, a time which in the opinion of some observers is not far distant, it will continue the process by which it attained its being. When the easily culturable waste places of the province have all been occupied, and Burmese expansion, now distributed widely over the country, is forced into the towns, it is possible to anticipate fresh conditions leading to a continued supremacy of the Burmese race, modified and probably greatly strengthened by the absorption of the Indian races, the members of which will no doubt continue to arrive in considerable numbers.

INDIGENOUS RACIAL GROUPS.

269. Ethnical Classification in Burma.—An accurate estimate of the numerous tribes and races found within the province of Burma is a matter of extreme difficulty. The physical characteristics of the northern portion of the country have induced innumerable differences in customs, language and tribal distinctions. But it is not only in the number of categories to be considered that the difficulty lies. The distinctions between them are neither definite, nor logical, nor permanent, nor easy to detect. They frequently depart from the lines of linguistic differences, and are subject to local variations impossible to estimate. They are unstable from generation to generation, the racial designation of a