

# CENSUS OF INDIA, 1921

Volume X

## BURMA PART I. REPORT

BY

S. G. GRANTHAM, I.C.S.

SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS, BURMA

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## CHAPTER XI.

### Race and Caste.

**145. The Appointment of Mr. Taylor.**—As already mentioned in Article 140 of Chapter IX Mr. L. F. Taylor, B.A., I.E.S., was appointed as Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations to assist me particularly with the work for languages and races, and made the tabulations of these matters his special province. I devised and am responsible for the instructions and arrangements for enumeration and for the form into which all the tables relating to races have been cast, and for the system of classification by peoples; but the classification of the indigenous races into groups and the compilation of all the figures in Imperial Table XIII was done entirely by Mr. Taylor with the aid of the section of the staff allotted to him. Mr. Taylor has also promised to write an appendix to this report dealing with indigenous races from an ethnological point of view; and this chapter will be abbreviated accordingly.

**146. Enumeration.**—The record of race was made in column 8 of the schedule under an instruction to "Record the *race* to which each person belongs, e.g. Burmese, Karen, Shan, Gurkha, Rajput, Pathan, Moghul, Zerbadi, Panthay, Scotch, etc." Two warnings were added against writing *Kala* for the race of Indians, and against entering again the religious description already shown in column 4, e.g. Hindu, Musalman. This instruction involved a departure from the practice of previous censuses and from the standard instruction of the present census of India by rejecting all record of caste; some notes on this point will be found later in this chapter (Article 163). For the record of indigenous races supplementary instructions were issued in conjunction with and similar to those relating to languages which are described in Article 136 of Chapter IX. Other supplementary instructions given to all supervisors to enable them to guide enumerators and correct their records were as follows:

**British.**—If anyone says his race is British ask whether he is English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh or Anglo-Indian; do not write *British*.

**European.**—If anyone says he is European ask him what kind of European, whether Anglo-Indian or French or Italian, etc. Do not write *European*.

Some persons whose father and mother belonged to different races have been brought up to belong to their father's race, following the religion and customs of that race and wearing its dress; others have been brought up to belong to their mother's race. Except in the special cases mentioned below the record for the race of such persons should be in accordance with the way they have been brought up. For small children ask the parents how they will be brought up.

A person who is partly of European and partly of Burmese or Indian descent is called an *Anglo-Indian*.

If the father is a Mahomedan of any race and the mother Burmese the sons and daughters are called Zerbadis or Burma Moslems. As it would cause confusion if two names were used you should always write *Zerbadi*.

Some persons who are partly of Hindu and partly of Burmese descent call themselves *Kalé*, some *Burmese*, and some take the same race as their father. Enter for such the race stated by the person or his (or her) parents: if they are in doubt record the race of the father or of the mother according to the customs in which the person is brought up.

Some persons who are partly of Chinese and partly of Burmese descent call themselves Chinese, some Burmese, while some say they belong to the *Baba* race. Enter for such the race stated by the person or his (or her) parents: if they are in doubt record Burmese or Chinese according to the customs in which the person is brought up.

Some notes on the records of *Kalé* are given later in this chapter (Article 161). No entries of *Baba* were found.

**147. Definitions.**—The term *Race* is used in current literature in various ways. For the purposes of the census however the question of its meaning is narrowed down to a consideration of the extent to which tribal or local subdivisions of groups of kindred people are to be separately tabulated; and throughout this report and the census tables *Race* must be regarded as the generic name of the classes tabulated in Imperial Table XIII or XVI which are not further subdivided there on racial grounds. Further knowledge about some of the indigenous races may show that they are too little differentiated from others

to justify separate tabulation; some of the races tabulated may similarly have to be divided into two or more distinct races when more is known about them.

**148. Race-Groups and Indigenous Races.**—Races which are associated particularly closely with Burma, even if a greater part of their people live elsewhere, have been regarded as *Indigenous Races*, and have been classified in fifteen *Race-groups* which correspond to the fifteen groups of languages; the classification in fact is chiefly linguistic though intended as a tentative ethnological classification. The groups are distinguished by the same symbolic letters A to O and the same names as the corresponding linguistic groups. The non-indigenous races have not been classified ethnologically, but only collected into the five convenient groups of *European, etc., Chinese, Indo-Burman, Indian, and Others*, the definition of these names except the first being given by the list of races tabulated under them in Part I of Imperial Table XIII. The term *European, etc.*, is used to include all the European and allied races tabulated in Imperial Table XVI and also Armenians and Anglo-Indians, the last-named, in accordance with the practice of the census in India, including all who are of mixed European and Asiatic descent. Some asked for the use of such terms as *Scoto-Burman*; but it was not possible to admit the enhancement of the difficulties of the census which would have been caused by this. Similarly amongst the Chinese only two races were admitted in the tabulation, namely, the *Yünnanese* and *Other Chinese*.

**149. Home Races.**—In Imperial Tables XXIIA and XXIIB which deal with the Special Industrial Census of Industrial Establishments, the term *Home Races* is used to include the Indo-Burman as well as the indigenous races. It is not perhaps a very happy term; but the term *Burma Races* seemed likely to be confused with the *Burma Group* of indigenous races; and no other suitable term offered itself at the time.

**150. Peoples.**—Chiefly for the purpose of the tabulation for occupations the population has been classified into thirteen *Peoples* on a basis which is chiefly racial but also takes account of religion and in some cases of birthplace. The classes included in each people are shown in Note 9 on the last page of Imperial Table XIII, and in Parts IV and V of that table a short name is given for each people which approximately describes it but generally must not be taken as the precise description of it. The appendices of Imperial Table XX give some further information of the races included in each people.

**151. Statistics.**—Imperial Table XIII is the table specifically devoted to statistics of race, but supplementary tabulations are given in Imperial Tables XVI and XX as well as in the subsidiary tables appended to this chapter. Imperial Table VIB is also a table of races, giving a classification by race of persons of each religion. Statistics of certain races by townships in certain districts are given incidentally in Provincial Table IV.

The classification of the whole population by separate races is given in Part I of Imperial Table XIII in which the indigenous races are arranged in the ethnological groups, and other races in the five artificial groups mentioned in the Article 148 above; the European and allied races are represented by a single total, the details for separate races being given in Imperial Table XVI. Part II of Imperial Table XIII gives the distribution of all race-groups by districts and also shows the population of each district classified by race-groups. Part III gives the distribution of some races by districts. Subsidiary Table I at the end of this chapter summarises Imperial Table XIII to show the distribution of some important groups of races amongst the natural divisions as well as the racial composition of the population of each of those divisions.

Part IV of Imperial Table XIII classifies the whole population of each district by peoples; one of the advantages of this system of classification is that the racial constitution of the whole population of each district can thus be seen at one opening of the tables. Part V of Imperial Table XIII exhibits the relation between a classification of the population by peoples and by religion. Imperial Table XX gives in the entries for *Total Supported by All Occupations* the distribution of each people by natural divisions and a classification of the population of each natural division by peoples. The appendices to Imperial Table XX give numerical statements of the relationships of races, indigenous races, home races

and peoples. Subsidiary Table II of this chapter shows the proportionate distribution of the peoples by natural divisions and the proportionate distribution of the population of each natural division by peoples.

NOTE.—The classification by race of the population of the Somra tract which

Races of the Somra Tract.		
Race.	Males.	Females.
Kuki-Chin ...	2360	2510
Tangkhu Naga ...	1130	1165
Parara ...	199	212
Larara ...	30	30
Total ...	3719	3917

is shown in the margin has been furnished by the Deputy Commissioner of the Upper Chinwin District; it was obtained by an estimate based upon the numbers of houses in the various villages. A classification for the estimated area of the Pakökku Hill Tracts has also been given in Appendix B of this report. Imperial Table XIII however excludes both these estimated areas as well as the estimated area in East Mang-lün for which no statistics by race are available.

**152. Accuracy of the Statistics.**—All the limitations and other considerations described in Article 137 of Chapter IX for Imperial Table X apply also to Parts I, II and III of Imperial Table XIII. In particular they have the limitation that persons of mixed races sometimes choose to describe themselves as of some other races. But the effect of this is not as serious as might at first be supposed. As already pointed out in Article 105 of Chapter VI, race in the census tables is not a purely biological matter; it is rather a matter of culture, in determining which descent is generally the most powerful but is not the sole factor. If people of a mixed race adopt the culture of one of the races which enter into their composition, there is no great error if they are assigned to that race. The Mendelian laws of heredity apply; but their action is obscured by the number of characters concerned, and by the influence of occupation and social status and even locality of residence in the selection of marriage-partners in every successive generation. Thus entries which are biologically correct may not always give census figures which represent most fairly the constitution of the population from a social point of view. In the case of some Anglo-Indian races the credibility of the entry for race was considered with reference to other entries in the enumeration-record for religion, birth-place, occupation and language, and for some persons the record of race was modified as noted in Article 162 below. Amongst other races who are not Christians there are often characteristic religious or social customs which determine a person's occupation and associates and often the street of the town or village in which he lives, so that commonly there is less room for mis-statement than appears at first sight. In spite of the common view that the language-record is less uncertain than that of race, I think there is probably little to choose between them; the few who deliberately mis-state their race probably mis-state their language to agree, and the residual errors from this source are probably not large in either case. The note on the probable error in the tabulation for the Pwo-Karen language which was made in the first paragraph of Article 137 of Chapter IX applies also to the figures for the Pwo-Karen race in Imperial Table XIII.

**153. Comparison of Statistics for 1911 and 1921.**—All tables of the 1921 census relating to race exclude all the areas in which the census was made only by estimate. In this respect they differ from Imperial Table XIII of 1911 in which estimates of the numbers of each race within the estimated areas of that year were included, and allowance must be made for this as well as for changes in the system of classification if any comparisons of figures for the two censuses are made. The only area for which the population was estimated both in 1911 and in 1921 was the Pakökku Hill Tracts; for any comparisons involving this a correction must be made either by subtracting 9,123 from the Chins of unspecified race tabulated in 1911 or by adding 8,756 to the corresponding figure of 1921; the former is the better way because the numbers of both years are then the results of actual enumeration. For the other areas in which the population was estimated in 1911 no correction is necessary as they were regularly enumerated in 1921 and are therefore included in the tables of both years. Allowance must however be made for the areas of the Myitkyina and Putao districts which were omitted from the census of 1911 and enumerated in 1921 and are shown in Note 8 on the title-page of Imperial Table II. (The Coco islands should strictly be allowed for too; but can be overlooked as their population was only 46 altogether.). As an example the number of Chins of 1911 will be calculated here as it is required for an explanation of the figures used for Chins in the next article. The number of



Chins tabulated in 1911 was 306,486; but this included 954 Daingnet, 79 Thet and 1,263 Naga who are no longer classified as Chins, as well as 9,123 persons in the estimated area. Subtracting all these 11,419 and adding 3,353 tabulated in 1911 as Manipuri and 527 tabulated as Taman, both of these races being included in the Chin group in 1921, a net result of 298,947 is obtained. The total number of Chins in the whole of the Myitkyina and Putao districts being 68 no allowance need be made for the extensions of the census, and 298,947 may be regarded as the total of Chins in 1911 comparable with the tabulated figures of 1921.

**154. The Number of Races.**—Omitting from the count the indefinitely described races tabulated as *Chin, Naga, Shan, Yang, or Karen of unspecified kind* the total number of indigenous races tabulated is 128. There are also the Yunnanese and 3 Indo-Burman, 29 European and 40 Indian races making a total of 211 races besides *Other Chinese* and Anglo-Indians and indefinitely described races of all kinds.

**155. General Distribution of Races.**—The general racial composition of the population of the province and of each natural division and subdivision, and the distributions of the more important races by natural divisions, as shown in Subsidiary Table I of this chapter, have already been considered in Part II of the Introduction to this Report where in particular it was shown that 91 per cent of the total population belongs to indigenous races, 7 per cent to Indian and roughly 1 per cent each to Indo-Burman and Chinese races. The same distributions are shown again in terms of peoples in Subsidiary Table II of this chapter.

Further details of the proportions of the total population which belong to the indigenous race-groups are given in Marginal Table

1. The Burma group thus outnumbers all others. Even if only the races particularly closely allied to the Burmese are considered,—namely the Burmese, the Arakanese, Yanbye and Chaungtha, and the Tavoyans and Merguese—the percentage of the whole population included is 64, while if the Shan States and Karenni are excluded it is 72. The increase in the number of persons of the whole Burma group since 1911 is 8.8 per cent and of the Burmese and closely allied races mentioned just above is 7.8 per cent. The increase of the whole population in the same period has been 8.5 per cent; but it is not permissible to argue therefore that the Burmese and their closest allies are losing ground; such a proposition would require investigation of the age-distributions on something like the lines adopted in Chapter V as well as statistics of the relative losses by influenza. The Karen group has increased by 11 per cent and the Tai (or Shan) group by 2 per cent. The number of Chins has fallen by 10,000 from 299,000\* to 289,000; of this about 750 occurred in the Hill District of Arakan, while the Chin Hills showed a decrease of nearly 9,500 which was partly neutralised by an increase of 2,500 in the Pakōkku Hill Tracts. Further enquiry shows that the decrease in the Chin Hills is confined to the Haka subdivision, the other two subdivisions showing small increases. The causes have been influenza, which was very severe in the Chin Hills, and the disturbances connected with the rebellion in Haka Subdivision, and also the migration of about 7,000 to Assam on account of these disturbance: and alleged oppression by their tribal chiefs. There have been decreases of the Palaung-Was and the Kachins. For the latter the decrease is 22,000. But the present Northern Shan States includes such a part of the Ruby Mines district of 1911, that a large part of the Kachins recorded there for that district must be transferred and added to the figures of the Northern Shan States for comparison with 1921; then it is found that nearly all the decrease of Kachins has occurred in the Northern Shan States. Probably the reason is a tendency of the Kachins, who are recent immigrants in the Shan States, to move on into China. Part of the difference may also be due to errors in the number of Kachins tabulated in 1911 for those parts of the Northern Shan States in which only an estimate of the population was made. Further information on the point will probably be found in Appendix B of this report. Rather unexpectedly the Talaings show a slight increase since 1911; but part of this is

1. Percentage of total population in certain race-groups, 1921.		
Race Group.		Per cent.
Burma	...	66
Karen	...	9
Tai (Shan)	...	8
Talaing	...	2.5
Chin	...	2
Palaung-Wa	...	1
Kachin	...	1
Others	...	1
Total	...	91

\* This number was explained in Article 153.

probably due to a growing racial consciousness which leads more Talangs to describe themselves as such although they speak Burmese.

The numbers of some indigenous races and race-groups have already been tabulated beside the numbers of speakers of the languages of those races in Article 139, where also some notes on comparisons of such numbers have been made. For a more detailed account of the census of indigenous races Mr. Taylor's appendix should be consulted; the present chapter will deal only with matters which do not fall within the scope of that appendix, and with the non-indigenous races. The treatment given will generally be purely statistical; for descriptions of the customs of the various races reference should be made to the monographs specially written about them. Since the census of 1911 four such monographs noted in the margin have been prepared under Government's

Race.	Author.	Year of publication
Kachin ...	Revd. O. Hanson	1914
Shan ...	Revd. W. W. Cochrane	1915
Talaing ...	Revd. R. R. Halliday	1917
Karen ...	Revd. H. I. Marshall	...

auspices; three have been published and that on Karens is in the press and will be published probably in 1923. Other monographs have been projected for the Intha, Taungyo, Taungtha, Lisaw, Lashi, Maru, Chin, Palaung, Wa and Salon races and

groups. The Journal of the Burma Research Society, published quarterly in Rangoon, has also articles on some races and their languages. Amongst other books recently issued is the Revd. W. G. White's *The Sea Gypsies of Malaya* (1922) which describes the Salon or Mawken race of the Mergui Archipelago, and in particular describes the taking of the census of the Salons in 1911. The method followed in 1921 was the same, but I am unable to say whether it was done more or less efficiently than in 1911 under Mr. White, whose account in his book of the enumeration of 1911 is depressing. The total numbers enumerated in 1911 and 1921 are shown in the margin hereby. Mr. White states that owing

2. Salons enumerated.		
Census.	Males.	Females.
1921	929	1,012
1911	1,020	954

to the bad work of his assistants the error in 1911 was very large; he considers 5,000 is a very conservative estimate for the Salon in 1911 and contests energetically the suggestion that the Salon race is dying out. If, as is probable, Mr. White's report is correct the figures of 1921 are also badly wrong. At next

census either the enumeration of the Salon should be made correct or it should be given up entirely, as the use of a sea-going launch makes the work distinctly expensive for so small a class of people.

**156. Chinese Races.**—It was noted earlier in this chapter that only two Chinese race-classes were tabulated, namely *Yünnanese* and *Other Chinese*. For the two classes together the totals at four censuses are shown in Marginal Table 3.

3. Chinese Race.			
Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921	149,060	101,877	47,183
1911	122,834	89,345	33,489
1901	62,525	47,210	15,315
1891	41,774	28,480	13,294

The increase in the decade 1911-21 has not been so large as in the previous decade, but it has been quite large all the same. Of the increase shown in the census of 1911 about 18,791 was due to the extension of the racial classification to include the areas of Kokang and West Manglün in the Northern Shan States; but as the census of these areas in 1911 was only by estimate and not by enumeration the precise figures are not very certain, while they cannot be checked because it is not known how many

Chinese were recorded in Kokang and West Manglün apart from other parts of the Shan States in 1921. Chinese in areas of the estimated census of 1921 are not included in the figures given for that year as no attempt at estimating the racial classification for such areas was made; as the new areas other than those of the estimated census into which the census was extended in 1921 have very few if any Chinese the figures for 1911 and 1921 are fairly comparable.

In previous censuses no attempt has been made to distinguish non-Mahomedan Yünnanese from other Chinese; no exact statement can be made therefore of the separate increases of these classes. But as the Yünnanese in 1921 are generally in districts in which there are few other Chinese it is possible to make a fairly

reliable estimate of the corresponding figures for 1911 as in Marginal Statement 4 in which the Mahomedan Yunnanese are, described by their common name of Panthay. The figures in the table for Panthays are those given in the appendix to Imperial Table XIII of the census of 1911; it is not known what part of them was due to actual enumeration and what part was an estimate for the Panthays in Kokang and West Manglun; in the census of 1921 very few were recorded in the whole of the Northern Shan States together. The small increase shown in Marginal

4. Yunnanese and Other Chinese.				
Race.	1921.		1911 (Estimates).	
Panthay	1,076	441	1,127	775
Other Yunnanese	34,676	23,039	32,700	22,500
Other Chinese.	66,125	27,703	56,418	10,214
Total	101,877	47,183	89,345	33,489

Table 4 for Other Yunnanese is due largely to a decrease in the Bhamo and Myitkya districts which is shown by a decrease of 8,600 in the total Chinese there. Part of this decrease is probably due to differences of the method of enumeration. In 1921 the Chinese caravans in the Bhamo district were not enumerated in the non-synchronous areas wherever they were met, but were omitted until just before the date of the synchronous census; then those departing from Bhamo town too late to leave Burma before the census were enumerated before starting, and those arriving within such a time as showed they were already in Burma on census night were similarly enumerated after the census date. In 1911, some caravans were probably counted non-synchronously which had left Burma again before the synchronous census took place; and as it can hardly be expected that the caravans always kept carefully the certificates of enumeration given them when they were enumerated, some were probably counted twice. Even so the change in the relative figures for the sexes in Bhamo district is a mystery.

5. Chinese in Bhamo District.		
Census.	Males.	Females.
1921	1,207	622
1911	3,355	3,458

For Chinese other than Yunnanese the increase shown in Marginal Table 4 is probably a fairly correct estimate. But five points must be noted, namely (1) the readiness with which women of the indigenous races marry with Chinese; (2) the practice of bringing up the sons of such marriages as Chinese although the daughters are brought up as of their mother's race; (3) the tendency of tribes on the north-east frontier to be absorbed into the Chinese race; (4) the heterogeneous racial character of the Chinese even in China where the Chinese race is the product of the absorption by Tartar races of a large variety of peoples who formerly inhabited the various parts of the Empire; (5) the various sources from which Chinese immigrants (other than Yunnanese) have come to Burma, including all the ports of Malaya as well as those of China. The Chinese who come from Malaya are already of mixed races, and the further mingling of these with the indigenous races of Burma has the result that, in the words of the census report of 1911, it is impossible to conceive a more heterogeneous mixture than the Chinese of Burma.

The term *Baba* or *Bawa*, said to be a corruption of a Malay word *Wawa* meaning a person of mixed race, has been used at some times to describe persons partly Chinese and partly of indigenous races of Burma. The corresponding Chinese term is said to be *Ship-vit-tem*. But in fact such people regard themselves either as Chinese or as belonging to the pure race of the mother, and the description was not found for a single person in the enumeration schedules.\* Having regard to the heterogeneous composition of the Chinese this practice seems to be more logical than the use of such a term as *Baba*. I am informed by a Chino-Burman that the word is merely the Hindustani word *Baba* meaning a child; that in the Straits Settlements it is applied without offence to Chinamen born and brought up there in contradistinction from those brought up in China, and that it is used by Chino-Burmans of Rangoon to describe themselves in speech and writing. But in Mergui the Chinese are said to be jealous of their description, and very particular about their children being called Chinese.

An article in the *Indian Review* of June 1922 claimed to show that there was great danger to the national life of Burma in the Chinese immigration. It pointed out quite truly that in Lower Burma an important village which has not a Chinese grocer supplying its miscellaneous wants is a rare exception. The writer

\* See the instruction to enumerators in the second article of this chapter.



wondered whether it was politic to allow the rural trade of Burma to be monopolised by an alien race, and even suggested that in spite of the possible international complications, it would soon be necessary to prohibit Chinese immigration.

6. Persons in Divisional Burma born in China and the Straits Settlements and Malaya.				
Census.	Males.	Females.	Increase.	
			Males.	Females.
1881	58,953	16,749	6	8,864
1891	51,797	8,485	15,330	3,874
1901	30,467	4,011	...	...

Marginal Table 6 shows the number of persons recorded at the last three censuses as born in China, the Straits Settlements or Malaya. Such persons enumerated in the Shan States and Karenni are omitted from the table because in those places questions of Yunnanese caravans and of miscellaneous non-Chinese races are involved and the whole matter is on a different footing. A few non-Chinese however are included. Figures of the magnitude of those in the Marginal Table 5 and also of those of Marginal Table 3 for *Other Chinese* do not seem to give any ground for the apprehensions mentioned, especially in view of the commonly held opinion that a Chinese admixture improves the indigenous racial stock.

**157. Indo-Burman Races.**—Numbers are tabulated in Imperial Table XIII for three Indo-Burman races, the Zerbadis, the Arakan-Mahomedans and the Arakan-Kaman, all these being associated as Race-group S for convenience. There is also a fourth recognised Indo-Burman race, namely, the Kalè; but for the reasons given in Article 161 below no figures have been tabulated for these. The next four articles give some short accounts of the four Indo-Burman races in turn.

**158. Zerbadis.**—The description Zerbadi is applied to the offspring of marriages between Indian Mahomedans and Burmese women. They wear Burmese dress and speak Burmese, but the first generation and often later generations are bilingual, talking the Hindustani of Burma besides. Of recent years exception has been taken to the name by some Zerbadis who desire to have the term *Burma Moslem* used in its place. The difficulty that there are other Moslems or Mahomedans born in Burma of families which are to all intents and purposes settled permanently in Burma is an objection to this description which could be set aside if the term came into general use with a restricted meaning; but for the purposes of the census *Burma Moslem* could not be used as a substitute for *Zerbadi* because it would be impossible to include under it the Buddhists and Christians who are of the same mixed descent as the Mahomedans and also describe themselves as Zerbadis. In this connection it is curious to note that in the tables of the census of 1891 the only Zerbadis shown were Buddhists and were 24 in number. The term Zerbadi was not used at all in the census report of 1881, and it appears in fact from its use in the census reports to have been a newish word about 1891. I have been informed that the term is in common use in the Straits Settlements and is not thought offensive there; whether it travelled from the Straits to Burma or the other way I do not know. The term *Indo-Burman* used in 1881 could not be used now as equivalent to *Zerbadi* as it is required for a group of races of which the Zerbadis are only one. After enquiry of some members of the race it appeared that there was difficulty in finding another suitable and well-understood name, and that many of the race took no objection to the term Zerbadi, which accordingly, as no alternative could be found, is used in this report as the name of the people who have generally been so called in the past. The term *Burma Moslem* is used for the name of People VI which includes only Mahomedan Zerbadis and Arakan-Mahomedans.

Some Zerbadi children adopt their father's race as well as his religion; some follow the mother and become Burmese. Of the 6,000 Mahomedan Burmese females recorded some were of course the wives of Indian Mahomedans; some, like many of the 2,700 Mahomedan Burmese males, were probably really Zerbadis. Besides the Zerbadis proper the term was applied in the census of 1901 to the Myedu race of the north of Shwebo who are descended from Mahomedans of Northern India who came to Burma in the time of King Alaungpaya (1752-1760) to offer their services as soldiers and were given lands in Shwebo and Yamèthin districts; at this census the Myedu have been separately tabulated and included amongst the Indian races, but the comparatively large number of Zerbadis in



Yamethin district is probably due to the settlement. According to the census report of 1901 descendants of Mahomedans brought by the Burmese as prisoners of war from Arakan and Manipur were also commonly described as Zerbadis. The latter are probably the Katha Mahomedans who for 1921 have been tabulated under the Mei'tei race of the Chin group and are the subject of a later article of this chapter; it is not known how the former have been returned in the census of 1921 nor how either were tabulated in 1901.

The numbers of Zerbadis tabulated at successive censuses are shown in Marginal Table 7, but these numbers cannot be accepted forthwith. Only the

24 Buddhists were tabulated in 1891 when the term was first used. But there were 10,062 of Indo-Burman mixed races tabulated in 1881, of whom many must have been what would now be regarded as Mahomedan Zerbadis; while over 20,000 Zerbadis were recorded in 1901. It is clear therefore that there must have been some Mahomedan Zerbadis in 1891 tabulated under other descriptions. Possibly the Mahomedan Burmese, nearly 7,000 in number, who were tabulated in the census of that year, were Zerbadis; but

there is no certainty even about this, and the total of Zerbadis in 1891 is quite unknown. In 1901 no classification of the Zerbadis by religion was given. In 1911 the Buddhists had greatly increased since 1891, but in 1921 their numbers are much less again (764 persons). It is really impossible to say exactly what were the correct numbers of Zerbadis in any year. It is certain there has been an increase in those numbers; but whether the variation in the tabulated numbers is a fair measure of that is another question. In the census report of 1911 it was remarked that the rapid increase shown by a comparison of the figures for 1901 and 1911 in Marginal Table 7 was significant as indicating the extent to which intermarriage between the Burmese and Musalman races was proceeding. But it is probable that part of the increase of 1911 was due to a growing tendency on the part of Zerbadis to regard themselves as a distinct race. The growth of this racial consciousness has been shown in the formation of a Burma Moslem Society, and in the protest of that society against the election rules under which a Burma Moslem, born in Burma of a father also born in Burma, is regarded as an Indian if his father's father had a domicile in India but outside Burma at the time of his father's birth, and as a Burman if that grandfather was born in Burma. In the census of 1921 the practice of recording race instead of the Mahomedan tribal designations has also helped probably in securing a more complete record of the Zerbadis. It was natural for a Zerbadi to describe himself in earlier censuses as Sheikh, Saiyad, etc., according to the tribe to which his father or earlier progenitor had belonged, because he would regard that as true as well as his Zerbadi description; but he would be more likely to return Zerbadi when the alternative was such a race-name as Bengali or Chulia. Still the remarks on Burmese Mahomedans earlier in this article suggest that the numbers of Zerbadis even for 1921 are not quite complete.

**159. Arakan-Mahomedans.**—The Arakan-Mahomedans are practically confined to the Akyab district and are properly the descendants of Arakanese women who have married Chittagonian Mahomedans. It is said that the descendants of a Chittagonian who has permanently settled in Akyab district always refuse to be called Chittagonians and desire to be called Arakan-Mahomedans; but as permanent settlement seems to imply marriage to an Arakanese woman this is quite in accordance with the description given. Although so closely connected with Chittagonians racially the Arakan-Mahomedans do not associate with them at all; they consequently marry almost solely among themselves and have become recognised locally as a distinct race. The Arakanese Buddhists in Akyab asked the Deputy Commissioner there not to let the Arakan-Mahomedans be included under *Arakanese* in the census. The instruction issued

7. Zerbadis as tabulated.

Census.	Religion.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921	Mahomedan ...	93,488	45,129	48,353
	Other religions ...	834	529	315
	Total ...	94,316	45,648	48,668
1911	Mahomedan ...	56,339	26,266	30,073
	Buddhist ...	3,390	1,781	1,609
	Total ...	59,729	28,047	31,682
1901	Total ...	20,423	11,283	9,200
1891	Buddhist ...	24	23	1

to enumerators with reference to Arakan-Mahomedans was that this race-name (in Burmese *Yakung-kala*) should be recorded for those Mahomedans who were domiciled in Burma and had adopted a certain mode of dress which is neither Arakanese nor Indian and who call themselves and are generally called by others *Yakung-kala*.

The number of Arakan-Mahomedans tabulated in 1921 was nearly 24,000. The numbers tabulated at previous census as Mahomedan Arakanese have been

Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921	23,775	12,740	11,035
1911	4,075	3,558	1,117
1901	...	...	...
1891	466	288	178

as in Marginal Table 8. Such differences of numbers as are shown here indicate enumeration of the Arakan-Mahomedans at previous censuses under other descriptions; in the census tables of 1901 it is impossible to identify them. Probably they have been entered as Sheikh or possibly under *Other Mahomedan Tribes* in all the three earlier censuses mentioned in the table. The defect of females is possibly due to some women

who marry Indian Mahomedans describing themselves as of the same race as their husbands.

**160. Arakan-Kamans**—The Arakan-Kamans are generally known simply as *Kamans*, but Arakan has been prefixed in this census to prevent confusion of their name with that of the Khaman race of the Mishmi Group which is found in the Putao district and is called the Khaman-Mishmi race for distinction. Previously no separate record of the Arakan-Kamans has been made. They are the descendants of the followers of Shah Shuja, son of Aurungzebe, who fled to Arakan in 1660 A.D. after the failure of his attempt to seize the Moghul throne. After the death of Shah Shuja they were formed into a royal bodyguard of archers, and hence received their name. Their features are Indian, but their language dress and manners are Arakanese. They are still located in the Akyab and Kyaukpyu districts, 4 males in Sandoway being the only ones enumerated outside those districts. Of a total of 1,054 males and 1,126 females, all are Mahomedans except 10 males and 7 females who are Buddhists. The Arakan-Kamans are not included in People VI as Burma Moslems; the Buddhists are in People I with the Burma Group and the Mahomedans in People VII with *Other Mahomedans born in Burma*.

**161. Kalè**.—The Burmese term *Kalè* formerly meant merely Hindu, and this is the meaning given for it in Stevenson's Burmese-English dictionary; probably it meant a Tamil Hindu, but as these were formerly much the most numerous kind of Hindu in Burma there was not enough difficulty to interfere with the ordinary use of the word. *Kalè* is used now to describe a class of persons who are descended from marriages of early Tamil immigrants with Burmese women, and have adopted Buddhism and the Burmese language, and regard themselves as a definite community amongst the Burmese Buddhists and as differing only very little from the main bulk of that class, to whom they often bear a close physical resemblance. In a law-suit relating to an inheritance in a family of this class a few years ago however it was decided that neither Buddhist nor Hindu law applied to them; and there are some religious practices which would probably not be regarded as permissible by most pure Burmese Buddhists. The number of *Kalè* of this kind is very small; a leading member of the community estimated that there might be 200 in Rangoon and a few more in other parts; he was not prepared to estimate the total number but thought 400 might be near the mark for the total in the whole province including Rangoon. The enumeration schedules were examined for some people in Rangoon known to be *Kalè*, and it was found they had all been recorded as Burmese Buddhists in accordance with the view they ordinarily take of themselves, and with the instruction to enumerators which is given in the second article of this chapter. On the other hand, it was found in the tabulation-office, that for nearly all the people described in the enumeration record as *Kalè* by race the religion was given as Hinduism and the language as *Kalè*, Tamil, Chetty or Hindu (*sic*). Most of these are probably pure Tamils and the others the offspring of Hindu fathers and Burmese mothers, who, as they have claimed to be Hindus, must be regarded as belonging to their father's race, which would generally be the Tamil race. Hindu *Kalè* are therefore the product of an idiosyncrasy of some enumerators who used the term *Kalè* in its old meaning. The total number of them is small; Insein district for instance

showed 61, but Henzada only 6; and many districts showed none. All Kalè therefore who gave Hinduism as their religion have been tabulated as Tamils and so too for a few described as Animists. Thus the people who returned themselves as Kalè were not Ka'è according to the present meaning of that word, while those who were Ka'è returned themselves as Burmese Buddhists; consequently no Kalè are shown in Imperial Table XIII.

**162. Europeans and Anglo-Indians.**—Owing to the mixture of the ideas of nationality and race which it involves, a precise definition of *European* is somewhat difficult to find. For this census the definition is the list of classes tabulated as such in Part I of Imperial Table XVI, including those who are regarded as Americans in the United States as well as those who are counted as natives in the several countries of Europe other than Turkey. Enumerators however were not expected to know what was included in the term *European*; the instructions reproduced in the second article of this chapter show that they were required to record more specific descriptions like English, Scotch, French. The term *Anglo-Indian* also presents difficulties because it is used in different senses even officially. For instance, persons who are Anglo-Indians according to the ordinary usage of the word may have been (at the time of the census) European British subjects for the Criminal Procedure Code, and some are Europeans according to the recently introduced election-rules of Burma; while under these same rules some of pure European descent are Anglo-Indians. For the purposes of the census an Anglo-Indian was defined as a person who is partly of European and partly of Burmese or Indian descent, the term Burmese here being used to include all the indigenous races of Burma.

Fortunately at the time of the census the electoral definitions of *European* and *Anglo-Indian* had not yet been promulgated; but there is no doubt that other special definitions such as that of *European British Subject* which were in force had an influence on the returns and caused some to describe themselves as *European* who should have been described as *Anglo-Indian*. It is as much in this way as in any other that the misdescriptions of these two classes of races in all censuses have been so numerous that it has been held that only the combined total of the two could be accepted with any confidence. As on this occasion it was particularly desired to obtain reliable figures for the part played by these races in the economic life of the province, so far as that could be shown by the tables of occupations, the records for them were scrutinised with care, and an exception was made to the otherwise universal rule of the census that the actual enumeration-record should be accepted. Really it was not an exception because even that rule requires that self-contradictory records shall always be modified according to the probabilities of the case. For instance, except in hill stations and a few large towns English children above the age of seven or eight are rare; in Burma English males above age twenty without an occupation and dependent on others are rare; a Presbyterian born in India or Burma and having a lowly paid occupation and declaring himself to be English (not Scotch) is more likely to be an Anglo-Indian; a person described as English but born thirty years ago in such a place as Myaungmya (in which few Europeans live) and showing for occupation "Clerk, teacher, etc.," is more likely to be Anglo-Indian, because the only European mother he could have had in Myaungmya thirty years ago would be the wife of a Deputy Commissioner or similarly placed officer, and the children of such parents would be likely to have a more definite profession than that stated. Sometimes even the record of language offered evidence. Such considerations could determine many cases. There is of course an element of risk sometimes that an exceptional case has been met; but the residual error is certainly reduced if the actual record in all doubtful cases is allowed to stand and if proper precautions are taken about persons enumerated in hill-stations where Europeans settle or go to school. In most districts too the numbers concerned are comparatively small; and although the enumeration-books could not be searched, it was possible to collect the slips by households by examining their serial numbers and by comparing the occupations of workers with those of dependents. It was thus possible to identify the parents of some Anglo-Indians recorded as Europeans. The number of slips in which the entry was modified was after all not very large; no actual account was kept but the numbers may have been about five hundred. It was not possible to recognise cases in which pure Indians had been recorded as Anglo-Indians, but these are probably not numerous in comparison with the whole body of Anglo-Indians; and it can probably be accepted that such Indians are



Anglo-Indians by culture and tend to be absorbed amongst Anglo-Indians, so that the error in any case is not particularly serious.

Similarly slips showing French race with a birthplace outside France were examined for the credibility of the particular combination of records they showed. For slips showing *Portuguese* race the rule followed was that domestic servants and ships' stewards were treated as Goanese while for the remainder the following rules were observed: (i) speakers of English or Burmese were treated as Anglo-Indians; (ii) speakers of Kanarese or Goanese were treated as Goanese; (iii) speakers of Portuguese were treated as Portuguese if born in Portugal or Cape Verde, while those born in Goa or other parts of India were marked for classification as *Goa-Portuguese*, which accordingly appears as a race-name in class Z in Imperial Table XIII.

All these rules were conservatively applied, and it is probable that while some errors still persist, and a few new ones have been introduced, the net result is distinctly more accurate than the uncriticised record. The numbers of Europeans and of Anglo-Indians as shown in Imperial Table XVI are reproduced

g. Europeans and Anglo-Indians.				
Race.	1901.		1911.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
European and allied races.	615	2,202	8,904	2,924
Anglo-Indians.	8,458	8,230	6,039	5,067
Persons born in Europe, etc.	5,518	1,795	7,476	1,435

in Marginal Table 9 with corresponding figures for the census of 1911; the smaller discrepancy between males and females for Anglo-Indians indicates a probability of increased accuracy of the figures, and the same is a fair inference from the closer approximation of the numbers of Europeans to the numbers born in Europe, America, Cape Colony, Australia and New Zealand which are given at the foot of the table. The implication of the figures in the table is that the number of persons tabulated as Europeans born in India has diminished from roughly 1,500 for each sex to about 600 males and 400 females; the discrepancy between 600 and 400 is not excessive because numbers of European males of India migrate temporarily to

Burma. The decline in the number of persons born in Europe has already been discussed in Chapter III.

**163. Hindu Castes and Mahomedan Tribes.**—At the census of 1881 in Burma no attempt was made to record Hindu castes or Mahomedan tribes; it was thought impossible to do this with Burmese enumerators. In 1891 a record was attempted, but the superintendent of that census considered the record to be of very doubtful value, and thought such a record should not be made again. In 1901, however, the record was made because it was thought that uniformity with the census in India must be maintained; but the superintendent of that census gave a warning that the figures were quite unreliable.

A record of caste was made again at the census of 1911; and the comment of the superintendent of that census was as follows:—

"The final results are obtained after two doubtful transliterations of an extremely doubtful set of original statements . . . 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 enumeration-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."

The records in the censuses for Mahomedan tribes have not received such severe condemnation as those for Hindu castes, but in fact they have been little better. In 1901 over 79 per cent. were tabulated as Sheik, 3 per cent as Saiyad, and 4 per cent as "Tribe not returned," while the remainder were tabulated as Afghan, Egyptian, Malay, Mopla, Turk, etc., some of which descriptions are more national than tribal or racial. In 1911 the only classes tabulated were Sheik, Saiyad, Pathan, Malay, Zerbadi and "Other and unspecified Musulman tribes," 56 per cent going under the first and 24 per cent under the last description, which as a matter of fact, consisted chiefly of persons for whom the description given was only *Musalman*. The superintendent of the census of 1901 did not offer much criticism of his figures, but the superintendent of 1911 thought it was doubtful if much more reliance could be



placed on the figures for the separate Musalman tribes than on those for the separate Hindu castes. The census report of 1921 for Madras also states that Chulias promote themselves in considerable numbers even in Madras to membership of the Sheik and other tribes; they would naturally do this even more in Burma where there would be so much less check upon them by jealous acquaintances.

Under these conditions it seemed proper in 1921 to avoid spending money on the tabulation of Hindu castes. I accordingly asked permission to omit all records of these matters and to substitute the quasi-national classification which has actually been used in Imperial Table XIII. The Census Commissioner consented on condition that the Local Government agreed, and the Local Government approved the proposal. Accordingly the instructions to enumerators directed them to omit all record of caste; and lists of the classes of Indians likely to be met were given to all supervisors to enable them to instruct enumerators and check the record.

The classification adopted recognises such distinctions as that between Bengalis, Hindustanis, Oriyas, Tamils and Telugus which are important to Burma but ignores, the subdivision of these by castes, and, still more important, refrains from mingling people of all these kinds under a single caste-name. In India such a classification would possibly be nearly nonsense, at any rate in the eyes of those who attach most value to the caste-system. But the classification is not offered as a model for India; it is offered only as a tentative effort at something more useful in Burma than an entirely fictitious record of caste. It cannot be hoped that even for Burma the classification is impregnable against attack; a great deal of investigation had to be done to learn something about the various races, and this was complicated by the difficulty that, while few in Burma really know much about these matters, the Census Superintendents in India were not acquainted with some of the names used in Burma, or found them used in different senses. Some classes are included which seem to be overlapped by other classes, e.g., the Kumauni who are people from the three districts of Almora, Naini Tal and Garhwal in the Kumaun division of the United Provinces; I have not discovered the relationship of these to the Garhwali who are separately tabulated, but some who know them say they are distinct. Others however suggested that Garhwali and Dogra should both be included under Punjabi. Similarly some have suggested that Komati should be included under Mahratta, and both Kachchhi and Surati under Gujarati; while others say that all Malabari Mahomedans are Moplas and should be transferred to the corresponding entry. For all these cases Imperial Table XIII gives separate figures which can be combined as appropriate; this seems better than compounding figures on uncertain information. Similarly some would perhaps contend that the Chittagonians should have been included in Bengalis. But anyone who desires can compound the separate figures given and others may prefer to have them separate; there is, I believe, sufficient difference to justify the separate tabulation.

Amongst the classes which caused difficulty were the Coringhi Mahomedans. According to the Superintendent of the Madras Census all described as Coringhis should be regarded as Telugus. But some others to whom reference was made were of opinion that there are no Mahomedan Telugus, and that Coringhi Mahomedans were really Nursapuri or Deccani Mahomedans. Unfortunately it was too late then to examine the record of their language; in Imperial Table XIII therefore the Coringhi Mahomedans have been tabulated as Telugus, but they have been entered separately so that correction can be made if desired. The record of their birth-places was as shown in Marginal Table 10. Rohillas do not appear in the table as they are a branch of a Pathan race and included under Hindustani Mahomedans. Chulias are not known as such in Madras but as Lubbai, Marakhayar or Ravuthar; they are said to be descendants of Hindus converted to Mahomedanism in the time of Hyder Ali, and they speak Tamil. Madras-Mahomedans are an Urdu-speaking race descended from a mixture of Pathans, Afghans and Moguls which are all Mahomedan races; they do not intermarry with Tamils or Chulias. The Moplas have become known by this name in Burma on account of their recent rebellion, but hitherto they have more generally been known in Burma by the term Kaka which is not known in Madras; they are descendants of marriages of

10. Birth-places of Coringhi Mahomedans

Birth-place.	Males.	Females.
In Burma ...	1,650	372
Elsewhere ...	397	446
Total ...	2,047	818

Arab sailors centuries ago with the women of the Malabar coast, and their language is Malayalam. The term Chetty in Madras means strictly a shopkeeper and is used for the keeper of a petty shop as well as for a large dealer; it seems to have acquired something of the same meaning with regard to money-lending as the term *bania* has in other parts of India, but it is nowhere restricted in Madras as in Burma to the Natukottai Chetty bankers. As the chetty is really a Tamil engaged in the particular trade of money-lending, he has been tabulated as a Tamil. The Surati are Mahomedans said to be known in India as Suni Vorah. The Punjabi Sikhs are included under Punjabis. The Wethali of Myitkyina District are Assamese and have been tabulated as such. There are also in Myitkyina district many descendants of Shans or Kachins by Assamese women who were captured in raids by those races upon Assam; constant inter-marriage has submerged the Assamese strain and these returned themselves as Shans or Kachins according to the race to which they principally belong and whose customs and language they have adopted. The Myedu are the descendants of Mahomedans of Indian descent who were born and bred in certain Indian colonies in Shwebo. The Manipuris shown in previous censuses have disappeared from Imperial Table XIII; a discussion of them will be found in Article 169.

**164. Indians in 1921.**—The term *Indian* is used in this census to include all

Race, (1)	All Religions.		Hindus and Animists.		Mahomedans.	
	Males, (2)	Females, (3)	Males, (4)	Females, (5)	Males, (6)	Females, (7)
All Indian Races	653,980	233,097	379,529	104,428	249,600	116,671
Bengali ...	60,117	17,871	12,172	3,002	46,651	14,639
Chittagonian	129,854	76,534	5,110	286	122,872	75,682
Hindustani ...	107,657	26,020	82,482	19,657	23,400	5,984
Oriya ...	49,993	2,482	48,017	1,973	853	212
Tamil ...	100,315	51,749	68,192	36,761	21,328	7,196
Telugu ...	129,566	28,621	125,413	27,095	2,047	818
Other Indian Races	76,578	29,820	38,143	15,654	32,449	12,147

who described themselves as belonging to one of the forty races tabulated in Group X in Imperial Table XIII, or who, having failed to define their race clearly, appeared from other parts of their record to belong to one of those races and were accordingly tabulated as "Indians of unspecified race." As in the cases of Anglo-Indians and Euro-

peans this is different from the definition adopted in the electoral rules. The total number of Indians recorded was 653,980 males and 233,097 females, amounting to nearly 10 and nearly 4 per cent of the total males and females respectively in the province and nearly 7 per cent of the total population. (More precisely these percentages may be given as 9.7, 3.6, and 6.7 respectively.) Although forty "races" are included, the majority of the Indians belong to one or other of six of these as is shown in Marginal Table 11.

The distribution of the Indian population by religion is shown in Marginal

Religion.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Hindu ...	477,531	374,524	103,007
Animist ...	6,425	5,005	1,420
Sikh ...	4,843	3,704	1,139
Arya ...	270	190	80
Brahmo ...	448	355	93
Mahomedan ...	366,271	249,600	116,671
Buddhist ...	7,155	5,822	1,333
Christian ...	22,602	13,674	8,928
Others ...	1,532	1,106	426
Total ...	887,077	653,980	233,097

Table 12. The Hindus and Animists ought really to be taken together, as it is so much a matter of chance for many of the uneducated Indians whether a Burmese enumerator records them as of the one or the other of these religions. The Mahomedan females exceed Hindu and Animist females together by about 12 per cent and are about one-half the total Indian females; but Hindu males exceed the Mahomedan males by about 50 per cent. A somewhat different

aspect is given to the proportions of Hindus and Mahomedans if the districts of Arakan Division are excluded as in the next article. No other kind of Indian compares with the Hindus and Mahomedans in number; the Christians who come next have only about 2 per cent of all Indian males, 4 per cent of the

females and 2.5 per cent of the total for both sexes; the numbers of other religions are much smaller still and altogether make up only 1.5 per cent of the whole. Including Indian Animists under Hindus, as will be done throughout the remainder of this chapter, the Hindus and Mahomedans together make up 850,227 or nearly 96 per cent of all Indians in the province.

The distribution of Indians by natural divisions is given in Marginal Table 13,

where is shown their concentration in the Delta, Coast and Centre subdivisions of Burman division which together include 95 per cent of the total. In Delta subdivision 10 per cent of the population is Indian; but of this 10 no less than 4.5 is due to the inclusion of Rangoon which alone contains 189,334 Indians, or 21 per cent of the total in the province. So too in Coast subdivision in which one-sixth or 17 per cent of the population is Indian. Akyab District, in which the conditions are special, includes 201,388 Indians or 23 per cent of all the Indians of the province and accounts for no less than 12.5 of that 17 per cent; while Amherst accounts for another 2.5 of the remainder leaving only 2 per cent for the rest of the subdivision to contribute.

This concentration of the Indians is brought out still more clearly in Marginal Table 14. In all the districts not shown in that table the proportion of Indians in the population is smaller than in those shown. The latter can easily be picked out on any of the maps in the introduction to this report. They include all the districts lining the shore of the Gulf of Martaban and have an off-shoot from Rangoon to the adjacent district of Insein and a continuation along the railway to Toungoo; Akyab and Mandalay are then added as isolated districts, the former being another littoral district.

appears on the map as a littoral district is not really such, because the greater part of its coast has no population save in a few isolated fishing settlements, behind which is a wide belt of tidal jungle separating the coast completely from the populated area of the district; Myaungmya is thus for practical purposes an inland delta district. In Thaton District too the Indians are chiefly an extension from the Amherst colony into the Paung township in the south and from Pegu into the Kyaikto township in the north. The districts of the table apart from Akyab and Mandalay are thus best described as radiating from the ports of Rangoon and Moulmein and continued along the lines of communication by river from Rangoon to Bassein and by rail to Toungoo. The districts selected for the special statistics of Indians in Imperial Tables XII and XIV include also Yamethin besides the districts of Marginal Table 14; but that district has slightly less numbers than some others, and was included because its Indian population, which is chiefly in the southern portion, is a further continuation along the railway line of the Toungoo colony.

Natural Division.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Percentage of total population which is Indian.	Percentage of total Indians of province.
Province ...	887,077	653,930	233,097	7	100
Burman ...	866,299	637,453	228,846	8	98
Delta ...	491,799	385,610	106,189	10	55
Coast ...	260,381	164,406	95,975	17	29
Centre ...	90,211	69,439	20,772	2	10
North ...	24,108	18,004	6,104	4	3
Chin ...	2,691	1,897	794	2	...
Salween ...	1,328	1,110	218	1	...
Shan ...	16,759	13,520	3,239	1	2

District.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Percentage of total population which is Indian.	Percentage of total Indians of the province.
Rangoon ...	189	155	35	55	21
Akyab ...	201	119	83	35	23
Amherst ...	41	30	11	10	5
Mandalay ...	30	23	7	8	3
Hanthawaddy	62	47	15	17	7
Pyawb ...	25	19	5	9	3
Myaungmya	90	17	2	5	2
Bassein ...	22	19	3	4	2
Insein ...	38	24	8	11	4
Pegu ...	50	35	16	11	6
Toungoo ...	25	18	7	7	3
Thaton ...	30	22	8	6	3
All others ...	159	155	33	2	18
Total ...	887	654	233	7	100

Myaungmya District as a matter of fact though it appears on the map as a littoral district is not really such, because the greater part of its coast has no population save in a few isolated fishing settlements, behind which is a wide belt of tidal jungle separating the coast completely from the populated area of the district; Myaungmya is thus for practical purposes an inland delta district. In Thaton District too the Indians are chiefly an extension from the Amherst colony into the Paung township in the south and from Pegu into the Kyaikto township in the north. The districts of the table apart from Akyab and Mandalay are thus best described as radiating from the ports of Rangoon and Moulmein and continued along the lines of communication by river from Rangoon to Bassein and by rail to Toungoo. The districts selected for the special statistics of Indians in Imperial Tables XII and XIV include also Yamethin besides the districts of Marginal Table 14; but that district has slightly less numbers than some others, and was included because its Indian population, which is chiefly in the southern portion, is a further continuation along the railway line of the Toungoo colony.



*Rangoon* naturally attracts all immigrants as the capital, the ordinary port of arrival and the industrial centre of the province. More than half its total population and approximately two-thirds of its males and one-third of its females are Indians; but still, as was pointed out in Chapter II, the Burmese females exceed the Indian and make up one-half of the total.

*Amherst* owes much of its large number of Indians to the former history of Moulmein as the principal port; a large Indian colony having once been started has grown and spread beyond the town.

*Mandalay* district includes numbers of Indians in the railway centre of Myitngè as well as in Mandalay City and Maymyo where the cantonments make a considerable contribution to the district total.

*Akyab* is a special case because of its contiguity to India, the ease with which the boundary is crossed, and the special local conditions of a seasonal immigration which leads to the presence on the date of the census of a number of Indians who will return shortly after to India. Actually of the 201 thousand Indians shown in Marginal Table 14 for Akyab 78 thousand males and 76 thousand females were born in the district; the phenomenon is as much an annexation of part of India by Burma as an invasion of Akyab by Indians. About 90,000 of the Indians of the district were enumerated in Maungdaw township which is separated from the rest of the district by hills and jungle that form a much more effective barrier to daily intercourse than the Naaf River which separates it from Chittagong. Another 45,000 were in the adjacent township of Buthidaung just over those hills and 20,000 more in Kyauktaw which is no great journey further on. Adding to these a purely adventitious Indian population of 13,000 in Akyab town, four-fifths of the Indians in the district are accounted for. Outside Akyab town, in the townships remote from the Naaf River, the percentage of Indians is small; even with Mahomedan Arakanese included the Hindus and Mahomedans together make up only 4 per cent of the population in Ponnagyun township and 10 per cent in Pauktaw, while in the adjacent district of Kyaukpyu they form less than 2 per cent. The proportion of Indians dies off very rapidly in fact as the distance from the Naaf River increases. The seasonal immigration to which reference was made above is an immigration of Chittagonians to reap the rice-harvest of the district and work the rice-mills and port of Akyab town. The number of these immigrants varies from year to year according to the conditions in Chittagong, increasing if the agricultural conditions there are unfavourable. In February and March these immigrants return home, and by the middle of March most have returned although a certain number stay on somewhat longer, chiefly in the port of Akyab. As the date of the census varies by a few days it happens that the number of these immigrants included in any census is an accident; no arguments can be based therefore on variations in the enumerated Indian population of Akyab District. The census of 1921 being on the 18th March was later in the year than either that of the 1st March 1901 or that of the 10th March 1911 and consequently included comparatively few of such adventitious Indian population; 13,000 were reckoned as such in Akyab town, but practically all the Indians enumerated outside the town were normal population—as indeed is implied by the indication already given that three-quarters of them were born in the district. But the census of 1911 and still more that of 1901 included considerable numbers of temporary immigrants in the figures for Akyab District.

**165. Near and Distant Districts.**—It was shown in Marginal Table 11 of Chapter III that the aspect of immigration from India was changed if the four districts of the Arakan Division—Akyab, Kyaukpyu, Sandoway and the Hill District of Arakan—and two other districts touching India along a comparatively easily crossed land-frontier—the Chin Hills and the Upper Chindwin—were marked off and separate totals compiled for the remainder of Burma. This will frequently be the case again in the study of the statistics of Indians. The particular circumstances of Akyab district have been recounted in the preceding article. That district dominates the statistics of the group specially mentioned above, and in some cases is the only one of the group for which the statistics are large enough to demand special consideration; but it is convenient, and will never cause any difficulty, to associate uniformly the six districts mentioned. As the determining factor in this special treatment is the proximity of the six districts to India, they will be styled the *Near Districts* while the remainder of the province will be represented by the term *Distant Districts*. The distant districts thus form that part of Burma in which, as they can only reach it by sea, casual or very short



term immigration of Indians is small. For convenience of comparison with figures obtained in succeeding articles, the total populations of the near and distant districts at three censuses are given in Marginal Table 15. In all three years,—1901, 1911 and 1921—the near districts contained roughly one-tenth as many people of each sex as the distant districts, and so had about one-eleventh of the whole population of the province. The figures for Indians given in Marginal Tables 11 and 12 are divided between the near and distant districts

15. Population of Near and Distant Districts.				
	Census.	Total Population.		
		Persons.	Males.	Females.
Near Districts	1921	1,206,206	620,781	585,425
	1911	1,130,074	586,628	543,446
	1901	1,003,842	525,906	477,936
Distant Districts	1921	12,005,986	6,136,188	5,869,798
	1911	10,985,143	5,596,866	5,388,277
	1901	9,486,782	4,816,127	4,670,655

in Marginal Table 16. For the corresponding figures of 1911 and 1901 Marginal Tables 22 and 23 below and the article which includes them should be consulted. In 1921, as Marginal Table 16 shows, the Chittagonians were the most numerous Indian race in the province because of their strength in the near districts; that is due to their number in Akyab district which is so little separated from their own district of Chittagong. In the distant districts the most numerous races are the Telugu, Tamil and Hindustani which together make up nearly two-thirds of all the Indians, and together with the Oriya, Bengali and Chittagonians the numbers will differ so little from those for the whole province in Marginal Table 11, that the latter can be taken as a rough approximation. Marginal Table 24 below also gives some statistics for females of the most numerous races.

16. Indians in Near and Distant Districts. (Nearest whole thousand.)			
Race or Religion.	Total.	Near Districts.	Distant Districts.
Total	887	212*	675*
Bengali ...	78	29	49
Chittagonia ...	206	167	39
Hindustani ...	134	6	127
Oriya ...	52	8	50
Tamil ...	158	1	157
Telugu ...	158	1	157
Others ...	106	6	100
Hindu ...	484	21	463
Animist ...	366	189	178
Mahomedan ...	23	...	23
Christian ...	14	3	11

\* Details below fail to make up these numbers owing to omissions of parts of thousands.

**166. Immigrant and Indigenous Indians.**—Marginal Table 17 shows the relative numbers (taken from Imperial Table XIII) of Indians of certain religions who were born in Burma or outside Burma. Christian and Buddhist Indians and 1,532 Indians of other religions are excluded from the table because separate records of them by birthplace have not been kept; but as the total exclusion amounts only to a little over 21,000 persons, or 2.5 per cent of the whole, this defect is not serious. The table shows that only about 300,000 or something over one-third of the Indians enumerated were born in Burma; all the rest were immigrants. Three hundred thousand is about 2.3 per cent of the 13.2 millions which form the whole population of the province. Immigrant Indians are nearly twice as numerous as the indigenous, but this is due entirely to a large preponderance of males; immigrant females are only four-sevenths as numerous as the indigenous. These results are greatly affected however by the inclusion of the figures of Akyab district. If, following the uniform system proposed in the preceding article, separate figures are compiled for the

17. Birthplaces of Indians of certain religions in the whole province. (Nearest whole thousand.)					
Religion.	Persons.	Born in Burma.		Born outside Burma	
		Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Hindu	484	51	42	328	68
Animist.	6	1	...	4	1
Sikh, Arya or Brahma.	366	103	99	146	17
Mahomedan.	856	155	148	478	80
Total ...					

distant districts, the totals are as shown in Marginal Table 18. The total immigrant outnumber the total indigenous Indians in both sexes; the immigrant males are nearly six times as numerous as the indigenous. The change from Marginal Table 17 is most marked for the indigenous Mahomedans, who, instead of being twice as numerous as the indigenous Hindus, are now only half as numerous. For the total of the religions of Marginal Table 18, which include nearly 96 per cent of all the Indians of the distant districts, the indigenous Indians number only 140 thousand which amounts to just under 12 per cent of the total population of those districts.

18. Birth places of Indian of certain religions in distant districts. (Nearest whole thousand.)

Religion.	Persons.	Born in Burma.		Born outside Burma.	
		Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Hindu Animist.	463	50	41	312	61
Sikh, Arya, or Brahmo.	5	...	...	4	1
Mahomedan.	178	25	23	118	11
Total ...	645	76	65	433	73

167. Variations in the number of Indians.—In previous censuses the

19. Indian Hindus and Mahomedans (see text for account of uncertainties of figures.)

Religion.	Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Increase.	
					Absolute.	Per cent.
Hindus (including Animists)	1921	483,956	379,529	104,427	103,630	27
	1911	380,326	308,024	72,302		
	1901	274,352	232,203	42,149		
Mahomedans	1921	366,271	249,600	116,671	31,949	10
	1911	334,322	227,918	106,404		
	1901	300,001	198,446	101,555		
Hindus and Mahomedans	1921	850,227	629,129	221,098	135,579	19
	1911	714,648	535,936	178,712		
	1901	574,353	430,649	143,704		

numbers of Indians. were not tabulated. Numbers were given of course for the Hindu and Mahomedan and other religions; but they include others than Indians, and the numbers of Indians at previous censuses must be built up by modifying the figures given for each religion so as to allow for non-Indians. For comparison in each religion the same process will be used to discover the figures of 1921 although these are immediately available in the tables.

There is no record of the number of Indian Animists in 1911 and *nil* were shown in 1901; these seem therefore to have been treated as Hindus at both those census. Accordingly for a comparison with those censuses the numbers of Indian Hindus and Animists recorded in 1921 should be combined. An allowance has also to be made for the Kathò (Manipuri) who are discussed in a later article of this chapter and are included in the total numbers of Hindus. For 1901 and 1921 the tabulated numbers for Hindu Kathò can be subtracted; for 1911 an allowance of 3,000 of each sex above the numbers tabulated as Manipuri would bring those numbers about half way between the numbers for 1901 and 1921 and will at any rate reduce the error involved in using only those tabulated numbers. The figures given for Indian Hindus (including Animists) in Marginal Table 19 are thus obtained and may be taken as rough measures of the truth.

For Mahomedans the difficulties are greater because of the uncertainty about the numbers of Zerbadis and Arakan-Mahomedans who, together with Malay, Chinese and Burmese Mahomedans, should be subtracted from the recorded figures for Mahomedans to show the numbers of Indian Mahomedans. Using the tabulated numbers for these races, except the Arakan-Mahomedans in 1901 and 1911 for whom the estimates shown in the margin have been allowed, the figures for Mahomedans in Marginal Table 19 are obtained. The uncertainty of the accuracy of the subtracted figures appears also of course in the remainders shown in that table; the errors are of less importance in comparison with these larger numbers, but they may still be so large that that variations shown in the last two columns of Marginal Table 19 may be entirely wrong. A great deal of time has been given to an effort to discover some indirect

Census.	Males.	Females.
1911 ...	10,000	9,000
1901 ...	8,000	7,000

way of approximating to the correct figures, but I have not succeeded, and I have to italicise some figures of Marginal Table 19 to mark them as uncertain; they must be regarded as simply the best estimate I could frame with inadequate data.

The numbers of Christian Indians tabulated in 1901, 1911 and 1921 are shown in Marginal Table 20; they are all liable to errors of the kind described with regard to Roman Catholics in the concluding Note of Chapter IV of this report. The number of Buddhist Indians in 1921 was 5,822 males and 1,333 females; in 1911 and 1901 none were tabulated, and it appears probable that they were tabulated under Hindu castes and are therefore included in the figures already used for Hindus. The number of Sikhs, Aryas, Brahmos, Jains and Parsis and all others can be derived from Imperial Table XIII of 1921 and Imperial Table VI of earlier censuses\*; their totals are shown in Marginal Table 21 and it may be assumed that only Indians are included. The decrease in this total for 1921 is due to a decrease in the number of Sikhs employed in the military police.

Summing now the totals for the various religions the figures of Marginal Table 22 are obtained. The uncertainties in the figures for Christians do not seriously affect the table because the errors of recording Christian Indians as Hindus will have no effect on the total of Indians. There is still the doubt about the figures for Mahomedans; but, while the error of Zerbadis on which that depends may be large in comparison with the variations in the numbers of Indians in the successive decades, it cannot be large enough to affect perceptibly the percentages calculated in the last three columns.

Marginal Table 23 shows the result of applying for the distant districts the same process as was used to prepare Marginal Table 22 for the whole province; but it is somewhat more accurate than that table because it is free from estimates for the Arakan-Mahomedans. The percentage of Indians in the total population of the distant districts is seen to have increased by one-fourth in twenty years and to be approaching 6 per cent; but Indians still include only 2.5 per cent of the female population. While Indian females form so small a part of the total female population the proportion of Indians in the total population tends to be kept down by the absorption of their children in the Burmese race. Many Hindus marry Burmese women, and, except in a minority of cases of wealthy families, the children are brought up as Burmese and adopt the dress, manners and customs of the Burmese, so that even if they are not themselves absorbed into the Burmese race their children are. This is not so much the case with Mahomedans whose children by Burmese wives are called Zerbadis and are generally tabulated as such; but, even so, many of their descendants tend to join the Burmese race.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that many of the absolute figures of this article are quite rough approximations. They are near enough to give something near the right percentage in the last three columns of Marginal Tables 22 and 23 but it would be rash to assert that the absolute increases which they suggest in each decade are correctly given, because the possible errors in them are not

20. Christian Indians.			
Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921 ...	22,602	13,674	8,928
1911 ...	23,089	15,857	7,232
1901 ...	8,798	5,294	3,504

21. Sikhs and Others.			
Census.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921 ...	7,093	5,355	1,738
1911 ...	7,488	6,138	1,350
1901 ..	6,934	5,950	984

22. Indians in Burma (see text for uncertainties of figures.)						
Census.	Absolute numbers (Nearest whole thousand.)			Percentage of total persons males and females.		
	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921	887	654	233	6.7	9.7	3.6
1911	745	558	187	6.1	9.0	3.2
1901	590	442	148	5.6	8.3	2.8

23. Indians in Distant Districts.						
Census.	Absolute numbers (Nearest whole thousand.)			Percentage of total person males and females in the same districts.		
	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1921	675	527	148	5.6	8.6	2.5
1911	562	445	118	5.1	7.9	2.1
1901	424	336	89	4.5	7.0	1.9

\* Eleven males and six females amongst the Agnostics, Atheists, etc., of 1921 were Indians.

small in comparison with those increases although small in comparison with the total figures of each census.

**168. Indian versus Indigenous Population.**—A complete study of the penetration of Burma by Indians would extend beyond the limits permissible in this report. The results reached in the last four articles however, together with those relating to Indians reached in the next two chapters of this report, seem to show the proper perspective of the problem. The frequent cry that the Indian is rapidly displacing the Burman is due to the large numbers of Indians who can be seen landing from the ships that come from India to Rangoon, and to the fact that the Indian population is concentrated in parts in which its presence was particularly noticed by the European observers who first raised that cry. About one-third derive their livelihood from cultivation; the main part are engaged in occupations classed as Industry, Transport and Trade, and consequently are either in the towns or close beside the railway and river routes. This is true even in the districts in which the Indians are proportionally most numerous; and it is exactly such a location as must make them be seen most frequently by observers. Their share in transport and some other industries however is exaggerated in the occupational tables. Their share in the skilled occupations of industrial establishments is discussed in Chapter XIII; they have not such a monopoly of these as is sometimes suggested, and in any case allowance has still to be made for the overwhelming preponderance of the indigenous races in agriculture. It is true that in certain localities a large area of paddy land has gone into the possession of Indians or is worked by Indians; but in a view of the whole province the area is still small and the problems involved are local. The last four articles preceding this have shown that the Indian question must be discussed separately for the near and the distant districts (or possibly for some divisions of the province differing slightly from those). In the distant districts the proportion of Indians (Marginal Table 23 of this chapter) is still only 1 in 18 of the population and it has grown by about 10 per cent in the last decade instead of the 13 per cent shown by the preceding decade. How far this falling off is only due to a falling off of the number of Indians leaving India to come to Burma and how far it is due to special losses of Indians through influenza is uncertain. But it seems clear that the power of a foreign immigrant population to displace the indigenous population must depend chiefly upon the number of the foreign women who come to settle in the country. Marginal Table 23 shows that Indian females have increased from 1.9 per cent of the female population in 1901 to 2.5 per cent in 1921; while Marginal Table 18 shows that in the distant districts less than half the Indian females of 1921 were

24. Indian females in distant districts, 1921.			
Race.	Religion.	Number	Per thousand of total female population.
All races	Hindu ...	101,766	17
	Mahomedan	34,687	6
	Christian	8,910	2
	Others ...	9,421	...
	Total ..	147,784	25
Hindustani	Hindu ...	18,713	3
	Mahomedan	5,914	1
	Others ...	377	...
	Total ...	25,004	4
Tamil	Hindu ..	36,720	6
	Mahomedan	7,189	1
	Christian	7,577	1
	Others ...	801	...
	Total ..	51,687	9
Telugu	Hindu ...	21,066	5
	Others ...	1,525	...
	Total ...	22,591	5
Other races	Hindu ...	19,267	3
	Mahomedan	20,766	4
	Others ...	2,469	...
	Total ...	42,502	7

born in Burma. Even a single homogeneous immigrant race of which this is true is far more likely to be absorbed than to dispossess. Exceptional results might come if the immigrants consisted chiefly of the highly educated or skilled classes or of financially powerful classes; but while the Indians include all these, it cannot be said that the majority of them come under these descriptions. And the Indians of Burma are far from belonging to a single homogeneous race. The 2.5 per cent or 25 per mille of the female population of the distant districts which is Indian is distributed amongst a number of religions and races. Putting aside those which claim only a few persons, there are three religions and three races which share with large numbers in the manner shown in Marginal Table 24. Whether the tie of race or religion is regarded, the proportion to a thousand of the total female population is small for any unified class. The proportions have certainly been increasing. But this too has been due partly to the peculiar age-distribution



of the indigenous Buddhist population which Chapter V shows has caused the Buddhists to have a particularly low rate of increase just when the Indians of Burma had a natural rate of increase above their average. The age-distribution of the Buddhists may also have had an effect upon the increase of immigrant Indians. There has been since 1906 a relative defect of Buddhists in ages 20 to 35 which, by diminishing the economic competition against which the Indian immigrants have to contend, would naturally cause some of those immigrants to stay and survive who, if the competition had been fiercer, would have either returned to India or succumbed; the reports of Burma received in Indian villages would be more favourable on this account and so more people would be inclined to migrate to Burma. In recent years Burmese have been doing work commonly regarded as characteristically Indian, forming large travelling reaping-gangs and working barges to transport the rice-harvest; the extension of the railway to Ye-u is being carried out entirely by Burmese labour. It is reasonable to think that these developments are due partly to the increased proportion of young men of 20 to 25 amongst the Buddhists; and it may be expected that during the next decade Indian immigrants will find it more difficult to meet the competition of Buddhists of the most vigorous working-ages of 20 to 35. Other influences may have an opposite effect, but this must tend to make the rate of increase of immigrant Indians less than it would be otherwise.

The history of Burma moreover has something to tell. Immigration from India to Burma has been important since very early times. The earliest organised kingdoms in Burma owed their existence, cohesion and power largely to Indian immigrants of nearly 3,000 years ago; and not only the religion of the country but every branch of Burmese culture has been strongly affected by Indian influence. Pali, the classical language, is Indian. The carvings and frescoes in the Buddhist pagodas and monasteries at Pagan, dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries, give frequent evidence of the influence even of Vishnuism and Sivaism. The old Aryan god Indra is king of the Burmese nats. Nine hundred years ago in the time of king Anawrahta, a Hanthawaddy much more extensive than the Hanthawaddy district of to-day appears to have been actually under the dominion of the Cholas of Southern India. The great popular hero of Burmese history is Kyansittha who was a son of Anawrahta and reigned over all the present province of Burma except the Tavoy and Mergui districts from 1057 to 1075; a stone figure of him in the Ananda Pagoda at Pagan, which is so individualised that the archaeological experts are convinced that it is a true portrait, shows that his eyes and indeed his whole face were not Burmese. His mother is described as a princess of Wethali which was formerly identified as in India. In recent years it has been thought that Wethali was in Arakan, but this does not disprove that Kyansittha's mother was entirely or largely Indian by descent; and as the sculptor gave Burmese features to a companion figure, the stone figure shows conclusively that either Kyansittha had Indian features (which is the generally accepted and most probable view) or that such features were expected in kings. During the reign of Kyansittha an Indian prince of Pateikkaya came to Pagan desiring to marry Kyansittha's daughter; the king's advisers prevented the marriage *lest the foreigners should become too powerful in the country*, but the son of the royal lovers afterwards became king Alaungsithu. The common view therefore that the Burmese are in danger of losing their country to the Indians is not new but goes back at least 800 years to this twelfth-century romance; and it is not unreasonable to ask for special evidence that a dispossession which went on so slowly through these centuries when the indigenous races were absorbed in internecine strife is going to have lightning effect now. On the other hand, the last thirty or forty years have seen the indigenous races spreading out to reclaim to cultivation the jungle of the delta, the colonisation of which, with its difficulties of fever, flood and finance, is a feat that has not always been fully appreciated. Now it has been recognised that a complete development of the economic life of the province must be balanced, and that if the indigenous races are to retain their place they must take part in the larger industrial and commercial enterprises as well as in agriculture and in trade and industry on a small scale. One of the Burmese leaders expressed this in 1922 as follows: "The economic menace is imminent, and unless we are prepared to repel it our national existence is doomed. . . . If we start organising ourselves from now and learn and strive diligently to get the control of the trade, commerce and industry of the country into our hands we may yet be saved." The principal difficulty in this seems to be the lack of financial credit; but the recent

developments in which Burmese have joined in industrial enterprises may establish this for them if they make its establishment their aim and sacrifice minor gains for it. The provision of banking facilities in the largest towns, which is involved in this need but does not constitute the whole of it, has been recognised as an urgent desideratum, and it is hoped that a beginning will soon be made. To a nation alive to the conditions the present numbers of Indians and their rate of increase offer no menace. There will be room for them always. But, while the Indians may come to Burma and work for the advantage both of themselves and of Burma there are at present no signs that they will within any reasonable time dispossess the Burmese and convert Burma into an Indian country. Those who come only for a short time cannot do this; those who stay will tend to be absorbed as they are being absorbed now. By their absorption they will of course influence Burmese development as they have always done, but the essential character of the country must remain Burmese.

**169. Kathè, Manipuri and Ponna.**—The people of the principal race in Manipuri call themselves *Meit'ei* and in Burmese are called *Kathè*. The *Meit'ei* language belongs to the Chin group and has been tabulated accordingly in Imperial Table IX, while in Imperial Table XI the *Meit'ei* race, in accordance with the usual rule of following the language-classification where there was not a definite reason for the contrary, has also been tabulated in the Chin group. All recorded as *Ponna* also have been regarded in the present census as *Meit'ei*, exactly as in the census of 1901 when they were similarly tabulated under *Manipuri*. There is however a good deal of difficulty attached to the term *Ponna*. Its origin is unsettled. In one sense it means simply a Brahman; but it tends to be used now as a race-description for any kind of Burmanised Indian, so that sometimes the *Kalé* (discussed with other Indo-Burman races earlier in this chapter) are referred to as *Kalé-Ponna*. The three principal kinds however are known as Bama (or Myamma) *Ponna*, Yakaing (or Arakan) *Ponna* and *Kathè Ponna*. The first regard themselves as descendants of Izzuna (who is Arjuna the Pandava of ancient India) and an aboriginal Manipur woman (that is a Chin) and describe the *Meit'ei* or *Kathè* as all the Hindu converts from various Chin tribes. The real difference appears however in the story that the Bama *Ponnas* are descendants of Hindus who came from Manipur to the court of the Pyu king Duttabaung in the ancient times of the kingdom of Tharekhattara (Prome). This story is given in a Burmese record of the time of King Bodawpaya (1781-1819) which describes an enquiry by him into the origin of the Bama *Ponna*, who were then known as the Sagaing *Ponna*; and the truth probably is that the Bama *Ponna* are the descendants of an ancient immigration (without mixture with the Burmese) while the *Kathè* are descendants of immigrants who came from Manipur centuries later when the racial constitution of the Manipur population had been modified. The story of the origin of the Bama *Ponna* is of course mixed up with the legends of the Indian kings from Kapilavastu who founded the first kingdoms among the original Burmese tribes. The Yakaing *Ponna* seem to have had a similar but less ancient origin, and the different environment of Chittagong and Arakan. Although the ordinary Burmese word for a Brahman is *Ponna*, the *Ponnas* of all three kinds include classes recognised among themselves as Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. Apparently the term *Ponna* came to mean a Brahman of any kind because the *Ponna* employed at ancient Burmese courts as astrologers were Brahmans; and now a Brahman from India who is not of *Ponna* descent must be described as *Kala-Ponna* if ambiguity is to be avoided. The *Ponna*, as the caste-division implies, are Hindus and worship certain Hindu gods; but the Yakaing *Ponna* do not worship the same gods as the Bama *Ponna*. The Bama *Ponna* are very strict about their Hindu customs, wearing the 9, 6 or 3 sacred threads and the sacred beads and being very watchful about ceremonial purity. They are also strict vegetarians. The Brahmans among them, like many other Brahmans, believe that it is their duty to renounce the world and undertake a life of meditation and religious austerity as *Sadhu* or *Sannyasin* at the age of 48; and it is said that many do make this renunciation. The Yakaing *Ponna* differ from the Bama *Ponna* by having no such custom of renunciation; and by religious practices which include the sacrifice of goats. A further difference between the Bama and Yakaing *Ponna* is that the former talk Burmese and the latter Chittagonian. Both the Bama and the Yakaing *Ponna* are very strict about intermarriage with other races; these classes do not even marry with each other, and any one marrying an outsider is no longer regarded as a *Ponna*; it is in this

way that the communities have been preserved so long in spite of their small numbers.

It is in the case of the Kathè Ponna that the tendency to use the term Ponna for any Burmanised Indian causes difficulty. Just as the Kathè Ponna differ from the Bama Ponna in the time of their arrival in Burma, so there are differences amongst the Kathè. A large number of Manipurians were brought to Burma as prisoners of war after the Burmese invasions of Manipur, particularly those of 1758, 1764 and 1819; and it is chiefly to the descendants of these that the term Kathè has generally been applied. These were skilful in weaving intricate patterns in silk cloths, and it was principally as weavers to the Burmese king of Ava that they were kept in Mandalay. They were also however employed later to dig canals; but so little of the pay disbursed from the royal treasury for them filtered through the hands of the various Burmese officers, that they used to escape secretly to British Burma and so founded colonies there. They were noted not only for their weaving but for their skill in astrology, music, dancing and massaging; and some accounts of them unfairly add begging to this list of accomplishments. As would be expected of people from the country in which polo originated, the Kathè were also noted for horsemanship. Besides the war prisoners and their descendants there are Kathè who have come freely from Manipur since, and among both these classes (who may be called the recent Kathè) the term Ponna has often been used merely as a description of those who practise astrology and conduct ceremonies. Many of the recent Kathè have become much Burmanised; indeed the greater part have been so completely absorbed by the Burmese that they describe themselves as Burmese Buddhists; in particular it is said that these transformed Kathè form a large part of the population of Mandalay and Amarapura. Some of these it is said still keep the six sacred threads and wear them occasionally, but generally leave them hanging on the wall of the house. Their former connection with Hinduism is also shown by sometimes calling Bama Ponna to conduct their marriage ceremonies in Sanskrit with Brahman rites which are not those of the ordinary Burmese marriage even when that is conducted, as it often is in the case of well-to-do people, by Ponna. The recent Kathè in some places however are still Hindus, and some are little affected by Buddhism; the Kathè of Myitkyina district for instance are simply Manipuri Hindus who have migrated.

All kinds of Kathè and Ponna are thus associated in some way with Manipur but it would perhaps have been better—if the same knowledge had been available before enumeration—to have had Bama Ponna and Yakaing Ponna separately tabulated. As it is, the Hindu Meit'ei of the tables include these and also the Hindus of the recent Kathè. The few Mahomedans are probably immigrants direct from Manipur, and the few Animists are probably members of Chin tribes of Manipur not yet converted to Hinduism. The Buddhists represent those who, while on their way to being Burmanised, have not yet claimed to be Burmese. In any case the enumeration of Kathè has been unsatisfactory at all the last four censuses. The numbers tabulated as Kathè and as Manipuri in 1891 are shown in Marginal table 25, where also those tabulated as Meit'ei in 1921, are shown as Kathè; it is impossible to say how the Hindu Manipuris were tabulated in 1891. The numbers recorded in 1921 in same localities are surprisingly small,—for instance only 28 in Prome; but I am unable to say how far these numbers represent the progress of Burmanisation. The census of 1901 showed 4,727 males and 6,405 females as Manipuris, with 1,796 males and 1,880 speakers of the Meit'ei language. The census of 1911 shows 1,626 males and 1,727 females as Hindus of the Manipuri caste (*sic*) and no speakers of the Meit'ei language. The remainder of the Hindu Kathè in 1911 must have been tabulated under other designations such as *Brahman* or *Caste not returned*, and it is impossible to say how the Buddhists and Animists were tabulated.

25. Kathè and Manipuri in 1891 and 1901.				
Description as tabulated in 1891.	1891.		1901.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
Kathè Buddhist	5,283	6,848	1,759	451
Do. Animist	148	159	116	104
Do. Hindu	...	...	3,644	3,245
Do. Mahomedan	2	...	36	48
Do. Christian	3	3	...	4
Manipuri Ponna Buddhists	1,083	1,086	...	...
Total	6,519	8,096	5,555	3,852



### 170. Castes and depressed classes amongst Indigenous Races.—

Recently a paper was written by a Chino-Burman and read before the Burma Research Society in Rangoon to deny the statement so frequently made that there is no caste amongst the Burmese. The writer drew attention to the classes of *Sandala* or *Thubayansa* (grave-diggers) *Payakyun* (pagoda-slaves), *Thinchi* (described by him as pagoda-slaves), *Khwa* (pagoda-slaves who eat the offerings to shrines) and *Kèba* (hereditary beggars), and also to the *Don* (fishermen), *Hari* (sweepers) and *Hara* (washermen and barbers) of Arakan. He declared that all these and "people who follow certain despised trades and professions such as hunters, butchers, actors, intoxicating drug sellers and midwives are looked down upon as untouchables and they are absolutely debarred from taking any part in all social functions of the respectable classes; and therein the caste system among the Burmans, which is undreamt of by other races and foreigners who live side by side with the Burmese is as rigidly enforced by the respectable classes as by the Brahmans towards the Chandala and Panchama of India."

The use of the term *caste* with regard to the Burmese is a mistake, because that term has no meaning (except when it is used figuratively) apart from the whole Hindu social system. The *Don*, *Hari*, and *Hara* are known only in Akyab and are Hindu descendants of mixed marriages between Hindus and the Chin hill-tribes, who in conformity with regular Hindu practice occupy a low place in the caste-scale. The *Kathè* or *Ponna* discussed in the preceding article were not mentioned by the writer in his paper; they as Hindus have a place in the caste-system and they speak of themselves as including persons of all the four *varnas*—Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. All these however are essentially cases of colonies of Hindu society in Burma; and the existence of caste among them is on practically the same footing as the existence of caste among the Bengali, Tamil and Hindustan Hindus who come from India to Burma nowadays. The extension of the same term to the other classes mentioned is a different matter, because these are all Buddhists and entirely outside the Hindu social system. The *Thinchi* form the subject of the next article. The *Sandala*, *Payakyun*, *Khwa* and *Kèba* are fairly described as depressed classes, as they have not the same freedom of intercourse with the ordinary Burmese as these have with each other. For instance, a person of the ordinary classes would not be prepared to marry with them; and except in very special circumstances would not eat with them or allow them to use his dishes. The *Sandala* live outside the village or in a special quarter of it; the other classes live on land belonging to the pagoda or other edifice with which they are associated. But this is far from the conception of the untouchables of India. For instance, although a Burman would not ordinarily start a conversation with *Sandala*, he would have no hesitation in selling things to them and discussing the price, and he would not give a thought to the matter if in handling the goods his hands came in contact with theirs. From the *Khwa* the Burman regularly buys flowers on the steps of the *Shwe Dagôn*. The attitude of the ordinary Burman towards the *Sandala*, *Payakyun*, *Khwa*, and *Kèba* resembles much less the attitude of a high-caste Hindu towards an untouchable than the normal attitude of the ordinary rural Burman towards the uneducated classes of Indians. Less misconception will be caused if the term *caste* is avoided and some such term as *special classes* is used.

It is well-known that the *payakyun* include descendants of royal prisoners captured in war by the Burmese kings; the most famous of these probably is King Manuha, the Talaing king, whom the Burmese conquered in the eleventh century. It seems probable in fact that the disabilities of the original *payakyun* were to be ascribed to their being captive members of a conquered race rather than to their association with the pagodas and other sacred buildings; and that later, when the stigma had become firmly marked, others to whom it was desired to apply a stigma were added to them. Essentially the distinctive character of the status of a *payakyun* seems to be economic and to be that of a serf attached to pagoda-land and affected by the special conditions attaching to such land. With the increasing advance of thought the institution of *payakyun* will at least be modified and will probably fade away; indeed there are signs of such a development already. The mere increase of population and intensification of intercourse make it already much easier for a *payakyun* to conceal his status if he migrates to a reasonable distance; there can be no doubt that increasing numbers will take advantage of this, and the more educated classes of the ordinary population already feel there is no objection to it. The other classes



seem to accept the institution of payakyun as part of the world in which they live, and simply have never questioned it.

The ordinary statement that the Burmese have no depressed classes thus requires some modification ; but it cannot be said on that account that there is any idea of caste among them. There are besides the special classes mentioned in this article, divisions corresponding to education and economic condition ; but the suggestion of caste is as wrong for them as for ordinary English people, who even if they do not seek intercourse with classes of inferior culture, would still give no support to a suggestion that there was any matter similar to caste involved. Generally indeed there is probably as free intercourse between different economic and social classes of the Burmese as among any race or in any part of the world. The attitude of the Burmese to the hunters, butchers and sellers of intoxicating-drugs is simply a declaration of appreciation of two of Gotama's five precepts which he declared should be obeyed by every man. Three additional precepts were given which were not obligatory upon every man but were recommended as a means of rising to a higher moral level, and still two more were added for the monks. One precept, which in some accounts was No. 9 and therefore applied only to the monks but in some other accounts was No. 7 and therefore given to laymen, was to abstain from dancing, music, singing and stage-plays. It is not difficult therefore to comprehend that professions relating to these were disparaged ; everyone who entered them announced that he was content with the observance of the minimum of the Buddha's commandments. He was not so bad as a butcher because the latter disregarded even that minimum ; but he was only one step removed, even if that step was a long one.

Two other classes remain to be mentioned. The census report of 1901 gives a reference to the *Thugaung* of Salin Subdivision of the Minbu district, describing them as landed proprietors who intermarry only among themselves, live in groups of families in superior houses and have gradually come to consider themselves and to be regarded by others as a separate class. The *Thugaung* are the descendants of governors of charges round about Salin who were appointed by king Alaungsithu about 1100 A.D. and given special rank. Their descendants still have the right to certain appointments as *myothugyi*, and are recognised as a special class, so that if one of them is mentioned in conversation an allusion to the fact that he or she is a *thugaung* is almost invariably made. There are four branches or families, and their marriage customs exclude from the class the children of any *thugaung* woman who marries outside these four branches. The *Yabein* also, who have been tabulated in recent censuses as a race, have been described by some as being only a class who were despised because they bred silkworms for silk and consequently took life. In the present census 1,774 have been recorded as compared with 1,549 in 1911. In both censuses they have been recorded chiefly in the Pegu district, with a few more in Insein district ; there are said to be a few others in Prome district, but these have probably been recorded as Burmese as they tend to be absorbed by that race.

**171. Thinchī.**—About the year 1732 A.D. an Arakanese general with about 300 followers who plotted against and killed Narapadi, king of Arakan, were executed ; and as an enhancement of their punishment the dowager-queen directed that their descendants for ever should suffer social degradation. The degradation is said to have taken the form of dedication as slaves of pagodas and other religious edifices ; but the present-day descendants of the plotters, known as *Thinchī*, have for several generations earned their livelihood as agriculturists and traders, and are no longer employed in the service of any pagoda or other religious building ; and no distinction between them and other Arakan Buddhists is recognised by the Arakanese Buddhist monks. Some have migrated to other districts and have been absorbed into the general population. In Sandoway too it is said that some ordinary Buddhist girls have married thinchī men although they have then been regarded as thinchī themselves. The economic position of the thinchī appears to be neither better nor worse than that of their neighbours ; some are well-to-do and some poor ; there are day-labourers amongst them and merchants. The only objections to the thinchī on the part of the Arakanese at any recent time have been in respect of intermarriage and commensality. As to the first the Arakanese of pure blood object to marriages with Chins, Mros, Chaungthas and others, and so the objection in the case of thinchī is not peculiar. As to the second, the ordinary person would not partake of cooked food or of water handled by thinchī, but freely accepted or bought fish,

rice, vegetables, milk and so on. Thinchis might come to one's house on a friendly visit or for business purposes, but they would not be allowed to eat or drink from plates or cups used by the household. The betel-box however was shared without objection. Buddhist monks accepted alms or food, cooked or raw, from thinchis; and once so accepted, anyone could eat it without fear of contamination.

In accordance with the Arakanese tradition such an order as that imposed upon the thinchis might be annulled by a ruler of power equal to or greater than that of the king who made the order; and the sentence of degradation was cancelled by the Government of Burma on the 19th December 1922 and all the disabilities of the thinchis were thereby annulled.

The numbers of thinchis in 1921 have been reported by the Deputy Commissioner, Akyab, to be the number of Buddhists in two specified villages, and are accordingly 316 males and 290 females. In addition the Deputy Commissioner, Sandoway, reported 17 in his district; no others were known.