



FORDING A RIVER DURING THE RAINS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

THE INDIAN PEASANT AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

(The Linlithgow Commission and After)

BY

N. GANGULEE

C.I.E., Ph.D., formerly Professor of Agriculture and Rural Economics, University of Calcutta (1921-1931); Ex-member of the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture (1926-1928); Member, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research (1929-1931); Member, Governing Body of International Institute of Educational Cinematography (1932)

With a Foreword by

SIR STANLEY REED, K.B.E.

HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON NEW YORK BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS

1935

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY HEADLEY BROTHERS
109 KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2; AND ASHFORD, KENT

His Majesty the King-Emperor's words in
opening the First Round Table Conference,
1930 :

' The material conditions which surround
the lives of my subjects in India affect me
keenly . . . '

TO
THOSE WHO MAY BE CALLED UPON TO
UNDERSTAND THE MASS-MAN OF THE
INDIAN EMPIRE AND HELP HIM OVERCOME
THE INERTIA THAT STERILIZES HIS
CREATIVE LIFE, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

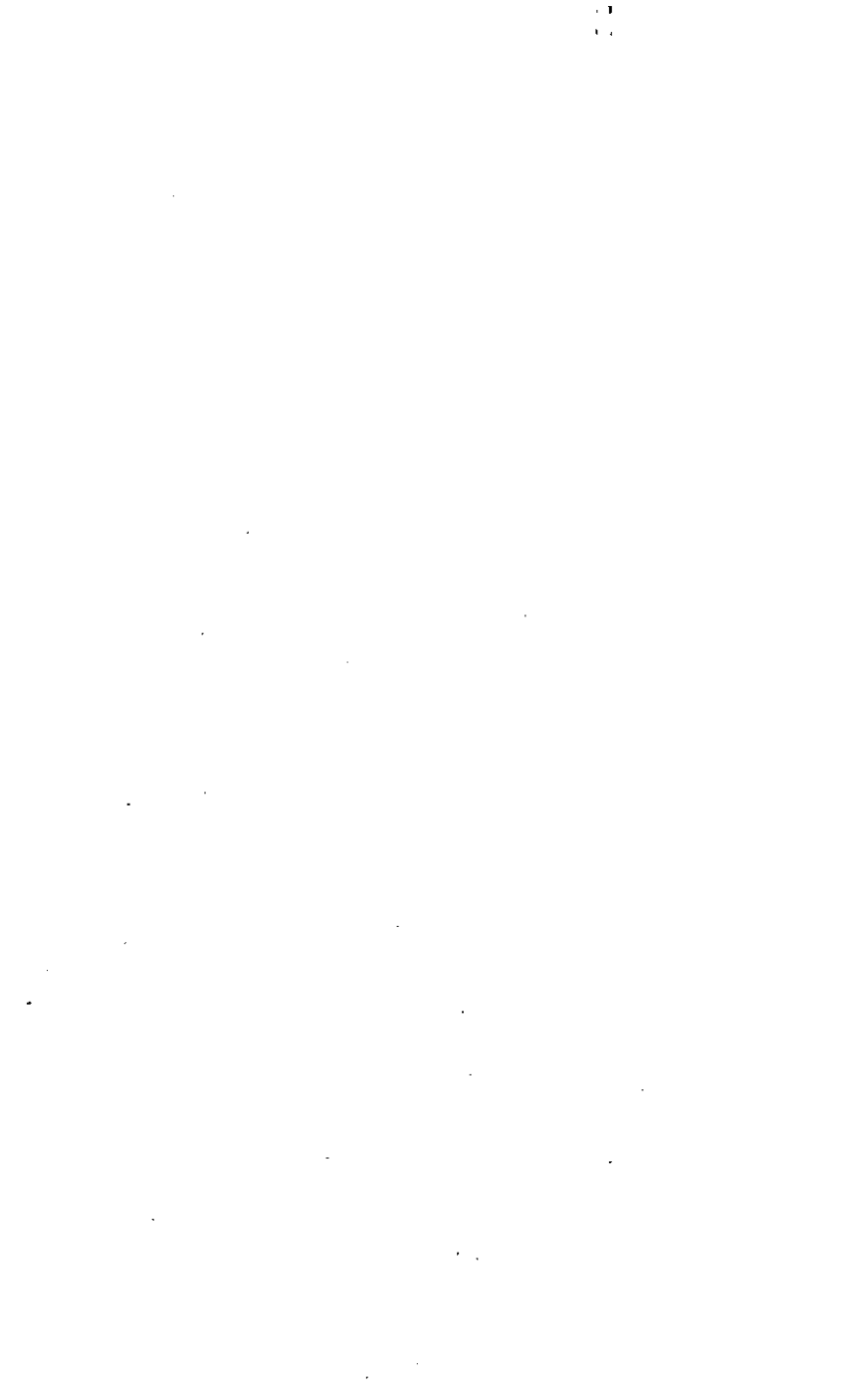
Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.

When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where thy feet rest among the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.

Pride can never approach to where thou walkest in the clothes of the humble among the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.

My heart can never find its way to where thou keepest company with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest, and lost.

TAGORE



CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE	XV
FOREWORD	xxiii

By SIR STANLEY REED, K.B.E., formerly Editor,
The Times of India.

I. GLIMPSSES INTO INDIAN VILLAGES .. I

A Bengal village—Decay of village community—System of land tenures—Possibilities of scientific agriculture—A Santal village—Its organization—Professor G. Lowes Dickinson in a Bengal village—A village school—village minstrels—A Deccan village—Its holdings—Types of inhabitants—Irrigation facilities—Indebtedness—Village industries—A Madras village—Agricultural practices—Agricultural credit—Means of communication—Village school—A village in Assam—Village cattle—Subsidiary occupation—Rural health—Another village in Assam—Average holdings—Indebtedness—A Bengal village—Indebtedness—Village industries—A plan for rural reconstruction—The Punjab peasant—A Pathan village—Indebtedness—Irrigation facilities—A village near Lahore—Agricultural practices—Cattle disease—A model village in Major Skinner's estate—Agricultural practices—Progressive landlords and their duties—A village in South Gujarat—Distribution of holdings—Agricultural labour—Illiteracy—A village in Bengal—Average holdings—Rural environment—Indebtedness.

II. ECONOMIC LIFE OF RURAL INDIA .. 39

Agricultural practices—Certain remedies for Indebtedness—Agricultural bank—Bengal cattle—Machinery in Bengal agriculture—Subsidiary occupations—Wastage of farmyard manure—Lord Irwin's conference with agricultural ministers—Agricultural research in India—Royal Commission on Indian agriculture—Criticisms of the terms of reference of the Commission—Co-operative movement in a Bombay village—Land system in Deccan—Cultivators' income—A co-operative conference in Bengal—Lord Linlithgow's speech—Solvent peasants in

Bengal—Peasant's love for land—Rural industries in Bihar—Silk industry in Assam—Central Co-operative Bank in the Punjab—Co-operative societies for weavers and shoemakers—A co-operative union in the Punjab—Consolidation of holdings—Land mortgage bank and co-operative commission shop in the Punjab—A cotton market in Central Provinces—Malguzari system of land tenures—Central Co-operative Bank in Berar—A grain market in the Punjab—A cotton market in Berar—Estimates of average income per head of Indian population per annum—Simplification of land tenure system in Bengal—Average size of holding in Bengal—Depressing features of rural life in India—Land revenue policy of the Government—Growing indebtedness of the peasantry.

III. SOCIAL LIFE, EDUCATION AND HEALTH IN RURAL INDIA

99

A country fair—An agricultural exhibition—Prevalence of illiteracy—Building of a community school—A suitable curriculum for a village school—Village education and local bodies—Desire for education among Indian rural folk—A page from the history of education since the advent of the British rule in India—Teacher training—Insanitary village environment—Adult education—Malaria—Enquiry into the causes of the 'deficiency diseases'—Raja of Parlakimedi's donation—Prohibition in Madras—State and public health—Existence of social evils—Problem of rehabilitating bankrupt peasantry—Female education—Financial assistance from Government—Litigations—Criticisms of the Report of the Agricultural Commission—Need of reviving village communities—Education and local bodies—Dr. Bentley on Bengal peasantry diet—Finance for public health.

IV. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA ..

136

Faith in the masses—Need for preparation for organizing rural reconstruction centre—Criticism of *Kishan Sabha*—Teaching agricultural economics in the university—Rural reconstruction and the Government—A cattle refuge organization in Bengal—An agrarian party in Bengal—Needs of rural Bengal—A suggestion for a rural conference—Non-political organization for rural reconstruction work—A suggestion for a co-operative bank and a training school—Co-operation with local bodies—a rural welfare centre in Madras—A few suggestions for organizing rural welfare centres—The village uplift movement

CHAPTER	PAGE
<p>in the Punjab—Rural work and leadership from University—Co-operative movement—Agricultural colonization—Rural reconstruction Institute at Surul—Problems of Indian masses—Social reforms—Government and agricultural colonization.</p>	
<p>V. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MASSES ..</p>	<p>172</p>
<p>Revival of village communities—Epidemic of Communalism—Principle of representation by classes—The life of peasantry—Social uplift and economic adjustment—On the Report of the Linlithgow Commission—Agricultural interests in the Round Table Conference—On the Report of the Statutory Commission—A memorandum from the Punjab Zemindars' Association—On Congress politics—Democracy in India—Broadbasing the reforms—Direct and indirect election—Lord Willingdon's leadership in economic development of India—The proposed constitutional change—On the Second Round Table Conference—Finance for social services—India's problem essentially social—Cost of Indian Federation—Rural Development Board—Recrudescence of communalism—Rural voter.</p>	
<p>GLOSSARY OF INDIAN WORDS</p>	<p>221</p>
<p>INDEX</p>	<p>226</p>