



*Rare section*

**PANJAB CASTES.**

## Revised list of Agents for the sale of Punjab Government Publications.

### IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

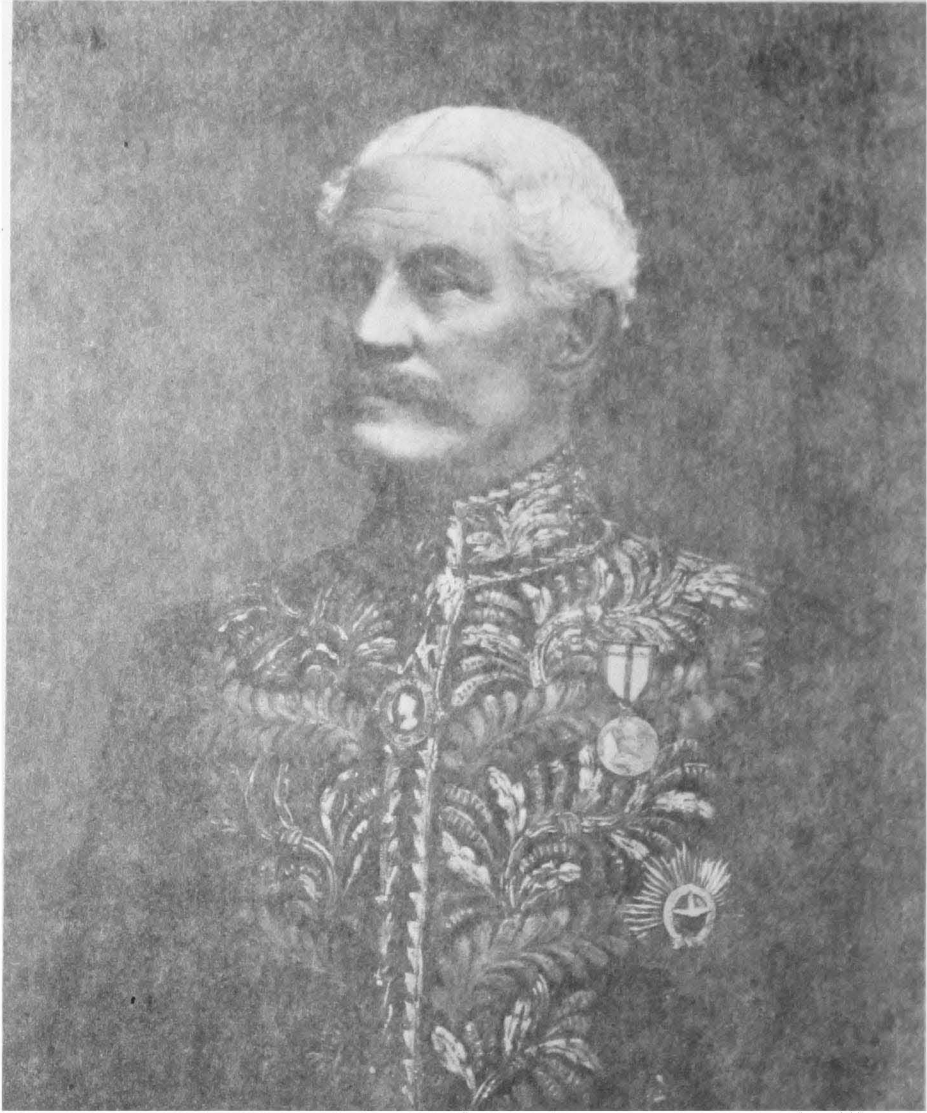
- CONSTABLE & Co., 10, Orange Street,  
Leicester Square, London, W. C.
- KEGAN PAUL TRENCH, TRÜBNER & Co.,  
Limited, 68-74, Carter Lane, E. C.,  
and 25, Museum Street, London,  
W. C.
- BERNARD QUARITCH, 11, Grafton Street,  
New Bond Street, London, W.
- T. FISHER UNWIN, Limited, No. 1,  
Adelphi Terrace, London, W. C.
- P. S. KING AND SON, 2 & 4, Great  
Smith Street, Westminster, London,  
S. W.
- H. S. KING & Co., 65, Cornhill, and 9,  
Pall Mall, London.
- GRINDLAY & Co., 54, Parliament Street,  
London, S. W.
- W. THACKER & Co., 2, Creed Lane,  
London, E. C.
- LUZAC & Co., 46, Great Russell Street,  
London, W. C.
- B. H. BLACKWELL, 50 and 51, Broad  
Street, Oxford.
- DEIGHTON, BELL & Co., Limited, Cam-  
bridge.
- OLIVER & BOYD, Tweeddale Court,  
Edinburgh.
- E. PONSONBY, Limited, 116, Grafton  
Street, Dublin.

### ON THE CONTINENT.

- ERNEST LEROUX, 28, Rue Bonaparte,  
Paris, France.
- MARTINUS NIJHOFF, The Hague, Hol-  
land.

### IN INDIA.

- A. CHAND & Co., Imperial Book Depôt.  
Office, Delhi.
- GULAB SINGH AND SONS, Mufid-i-'Am  
Press, Lahore.
- MANAGER, Punjab Law Book Depôt,  
Anarkali Bazar, Lahore.
- S. MUMTAZ ALI & SON, Rafah-i-'Am  
Press, Lahore (for vernacular publi-  
cations only).
- RAMA KRISHNA & SONS, Book-Sellers  
and News Agents, Anarkali Street,  
Lahore.
- N. B. MATHUR, Superintendent and  
Proprietor, Nazir Kanun Hind Press,  
Allahabad.
- D. B. TARAPOREVA A, SONS & Co.,  
Bombay.
- THACKER SPINK & Co., Calcutta and  
Simla.
- NEWMAN and Co., Calcutta.
- R. CAMBRAY and Co., Calcutta.
- THACKER & Co., Bombay.
- HIGGINBOTHAMS, Limited, Madras.
- T. FISHER UNWIN, Calcutta
- V. KALYANARAM IYER & Co., 189,  
Esplanade Row, Madras.
- G. A. NAJESAN & Co., Madras.
- SUPERINTENDENT, American Baptist  
Mission Press, Rangoon.



Photogravure

Survey of India Office, Calcutta, 1915

SIR DENZIL CHARLES JELF IBBETSON, K.C.S.I.

Rare section

# PANJAB CASTES.

---

*Being a reprint of the chapter on  
"The Races, Castes and Tribes of  
the People" in the Report on the  
Census of the Panjab published  
in 1883 by the late Sir Denzil  
Ibbetson, K.C.S.I.*



Lahore :

PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRINTING, PUNJAB,

1916.

Price Rs. 4-0-0 or 6s.

Y 592 . 236

E6

4838

## CONTENTS.

	<i>Page.</i>
Introductory Note           ...           ...           ...           ...	i
The original preface to the Census Report of 1881   ...           ...	iii
The Chapter in the Census Report of 1881 on 'The Races, Castes and Tribes of the Panjáb'—	
<i>Part I.</i> —Caste in the Panjáb                   ...           ...           ...	1
<i>Part II.</i> —The Biloch, Pathán and allied Races   ...           ...           ...	38
<i>Part III.</i> —The Jat, Rájput and allied Castes   ...           ...           ...	97
<i>Part IV.</i> —The Minor Landowning and Agricultural Castes   ...           ...           ...	164
<i>Part V.</i> —Religious, Professional, Mercantile and Miscellaneous Castes                   ...           ...           ...           ...	214
<i>Part VI.</i> —Vagrant, Menial and Artisan Castes   ...           ...           ...	266

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE Census of the Panjáb Province was carried out in 1881 by Mr. (afterwards Sir Denzil) Ibbetson of the Indian Civil Service and his Report on the Census was published in 1883. The Report has always been recognised as one of the most remarkable official publications in India, and a work of the greatest value both from the administrative and from the literary and scientific point of view. It at once attracted widespread attention, more especially in view of the copious information which it provided regarding the people of the Province, and a separate volume was issued in 1883, under the title of "Panjáb Ethnography" which contained a reprint of those portions of the Report which dealt with the Religions, the Languages, and the Races, Castes and Tribes of the people. The number of copies published, however, both of the Report and of the Ethnography, was comparatively small and they are now difficult to procure outside Indian official circles. There are at the same time indications of a continuing demand for the Report, and more especially for the ethnological portion of it, and to meet this demand the Punjab Government has determined to undertake the issue of the present volume.

This volume reproduces a portion only,—but that is the most important portion,—of the original Report, namely the chapter on the Races, Castes and Tribes of the Panjáb. The chapters on Religion and Language, which formed part of the "Ethnography" published in 1883, though valuable and interesting, have necessarily lost something of their original importance owing to the progress made in scientific enquiry during the last thirty years, but the chapter on the Races, Castes and Tribes still contains much valuable information that cannot be obtained elsewhere, and this chapter must always command attention and respect for its vigorous and comprehensive treatment of the subject. The figures are, of course, out of date and the territorial boundaries of the Province and districts with which the chapter deals are now considerably altered. There are also, no doubt, points on which later investigation suggests modification of the facts and opinions originally given, but it has been thought best to reproduce the chapter as it stands, without any attempt to annotate it or bring it up to date. It is believed that in this way the wishes of most readers will best be met, and it is felt that by this course the volume will best fulfil the further object which the Government of the Panjáb has in view, namely, the perpetuation of the memory of the original writer.

There are so many still alive to whom Sir Denzil Ibbetson was personally known that anything like a complete description of his career in this introduction is unnecessary, but it may not be out of place to mention a few of its

outstanding features. He was born on August 30th, 1847, and after being educated at St. Peter's College, Adelaide, and St. John's College, Cambridge, entered the Indian Civil Service in 1870. He was early in his service selected for the special posts of Settlement Officer of the Karnál District and Superintendent of Census Operations in the Panjáb. He subsequently filled from time to time the appointments of Director of Public Instruction and Financial Commissioner in the Panjáb, Secretary to the Government of India in the Revenue and Agricultural Department, Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, and Member of the Viceroy's Council. In 1907 he became Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjáb, but held that important post for all too short a time, succumbing to a fatal malady on the 21st of February 1908.

No one to whom Sir Denzil Ibbetson was known can ever forget his personality: his tall and commanding presence, his vivacious and original conversation, his constant sense of humour, his quick indignation and his equally quick sympathy. For the thoroughness of his erudition in many directions he was unsurpassed in India and as an administrator there are not a few who hold him to have been the greatest Indian Civil Servant of our time. His character and career are admirably summed up in an inscription placed by the Viceroy on whose Council he served on the walls of the Simla Church which runs as follows:—

UNTIRING IN ADMINISTRATION,  
FEARLESS IN DOING RIGHT,  
A SCHOLAR AND A MAN OF AFFAIRS,  
LOYAL IN CO-OPERATION, DEVOTED IN FRIENDSHIP,  
HE GAVE TO INDIA HIS LOVE  
AND HIS LIFE.



## ORIGINAL PREFACE

TO THE REPORT ON THE CENSUS OF 1881.

IN writing the accompanying report on the Panjáb Census of 1881, I have steadily kept two main objects before me. *Firstly*, I have attempted to produce a work which shall be useful to District officers as a handbook of reference on all the subjects dealt with in the Census Schedules, and which shall stand with regard to such subjects in a position somewhat similar to that occupied by the modern Settlement Report in respect of revenue matters. *Secondly*, I have endeavoured to record in some detail the experience gained at this Census, for guidance on the occasion of future enumerations. My pursuance of each of these objects has helped to swell the size of the report.

It would have been easy to write a short notice of some of the more obvious conclusions to be drawn from the Census totals of the Province as a whole ; and such a notice would doubtless have technically sufficed as a report to Government upon the operations which I had superintended. But it would have been of small use for future reference, and would have served no purpose beyond that of furnishing the text for a Government resolution. A Census report is not meant merely for the information of the Secretariat ; it is intended to be constantly referred to in every office of the Province. The mere results would ill serve this end in the absence of an interpreter. It is of but small advantage to cast voluminous tables of naked figures at the heads of District officers, without at the same time explaining what they represent, which can be done by no one but him who compiled them, and drawing from them the more important conclusions to which they lead, which few will draw but he whose special business it is to do so.<sup>1</sup>

In the ordinary routine of district work, information is constantly needed regarding some feature or other of the society which we govern. That information often exists in print ; but in India libraries are few and books scarce ; while where the latter are available, they are often too detailed or too learned for the practical purposes of the District officer. It has been my endeavour to furnish such a sketch of the salient features of native society in the Panjáb as will often supply the immediate need, and at the same time to indicate where, if anywhere, further details may be found. A Census report is not

---

<sup>1</sup> Much of the length of the report is due to the exceptionally large number of the administrative units for which the separate figures had to be discussed. (See section 929, page 468.) The Native States took great pains with the Census ; and, apart from the intrinsic value of the results, it would have been ungracious to discuss their figures less fully than our own,

light reading ; and men take it up, not to read it through, but to obtain from it information on some definite point. It is therefore more important that it should be complete than that it should be brief ; and so long as its arrangement directs the student at once to the place where he will find what he wants, without compelling him to wade through irrelevant matter, the fuller the information which he there finds on the subject, the more valuable will the report be to him. I have therefore omitted nothing relevant that seemed to me to be interesting or useful, simply because it occupied space.

The difficulty of an Indian Census springs mainly from two sources ; the infinite diversity of the material to be dealt with, and our own infinite ignorance of that material. The present Census was, as regards the Panjáb and in respect of its minuteness and accuracy of detail, practically a first experiment ; and one of its most valuable results has been to show us where our chief difficulties lie, and how and why we have on this occasion frequently failed to overcome them. If the present Census had been one for all time, nothing more would have been needed than such a brief account of the operations as would have explained to the student of the results how those results had been obtained. If, on the other hand, a Census were of annual recurrence, an "office," with its permanent staff and traditions, would have taken the place of the record of the experience which I have attempted to frame. But the operations will be repeated after intervals of ten years. It has therefore been my endeavour to record the experience now gained in such detail as may enable us to avoid past errors on a future occasion, to point out every defect that the test of actual practice disclosed in the scheme, and to put forth every suggestion that my experience led me to think could be of use to my successor in 1891.

Till now nothing of the sort has been attempted in the Panjáb. The meagre report on the Census of 1868 affords no record of the experience of the past or suggestions for guidance in the future ; while though Settlement reports and similar publications contain a vast mass of invaluable information regarding the people, it is scattered and fragmentary, and needed to be collected, compared, and consolidated. A Census recurs only after considerable intervals, and it will not be necessary on each subsequent occasion to rewrite the whole of the present report. Much will be added ; more will be corrected ; the new figures will be examined and compared with the present ones ; the old conclusions will be modified, and new ones drawn. But the main groundwork of the report will stand unaltered.

I have not absolutely confined myself in the following pages to facts and figures which will be immediately useful for the actual purposes of administration. I have not hesitated to enter occasionally into general discussions

on certain subjects, such as religion and caste, and to express my own views on the matter. I venture to think that these digressions are not the least interesting portions of the volume; and in a report which must of necessity consist for the most part of a dry discussion of figures, any passage of general interest is welcome, if only as a relief. But my chief object in entering upon these discussions has been, to draw the attention of my readers to the extraordinary interest of the material which lies in such abundance ready to the hand of all Indian officials, and which would, if collected and recorded, be of such immense value to students of sociology. Our ignorance of the customs and beliefs of the people among whom we dwell is surely in some respects a reproach to us; for not only does that ignorance deprive European science of material which it greatly needs, but it also involves a distinct loss of administrative power to ourselves. And if aught that I have written in this report should incline any from among my readers to a study of the social and religious phenomena by which they are surrounded, I at any rate shall be amply repaid for my labour.

Moreover, Indian official literature is gradually gaining for itself students from beyond the limits of India, and European scholars are turning to it for the facts of which they find themselves in need. In his *Village Communities* (pages 34-5) Sir Henry Maine writes of Indian Settlement reports: "They constitute a whole literature of very great extent and variety, and of the utmost value and instructiveness. I am afraid I must add that the English reader, whose attention is not called to it by official duty, not unusually finds it very unattractive or even repulsive. But the reason I believe to be, that the elementary knowledge which is the key to it has for the most part never been reduced to writing at all." I see no reason why an Indian report should of necessity be repulsive or unintelligible; and I have ventured, here and there, to add at the expense of brevity matter which would perhaps be superfluous if addressed exclusively to Indian officials.

The more we learn of the people and their ways, the more profoundly must we become impressed with the vastness of the field and with the immense diversity which it presents. Not only is our knowledge of the facts as nothing compared with our ignorance; but the facts themselves vary so greatly from one part of the Panjáb to another, that it is almost impossible to make any general statement whatever concerning them which shall be true for the whole Province. I have not always stopped to say so; and I have not unfrequently made assertions, as it were *ex cathedra infallibili*. But I would always be understood to mean, in writing of the people, that while I have taken pains to obtain the best and most trustworthy information available, I only present it for what it is worth, and that it will almost certainly be inapplicable to some parts at least of the Panjáb. Yet I do not think that the uncertain

value which attaches to the information that I have recorded renders that information less worthy of record. In matters such as are discussed in this report, the next best thing to having them put rightly is to have them put wrongly, if only the wrongness be an intelligent wrongness ; for so we stimulate inquiry and provoke criticism ; and it is only by patient and widespread inquiry and incessant and minute criticism, that we can hope to arrive on these subjects at accurate information and sound generalisations. Nothing would be so welcome to me as to find the officers of the Province setting to work to correct and supplement the information given in my report ; for the more holes they will pick and the more publicly they will pick them, the faster shall we extend and improve our knowledge of the matters discussed.<sup>1</sup>

I need not apologise for the many and palpable defects of the report, so far as they are due to the haste with which all official publications have to be prepared. Pages which have been written against time in the first instance, which have been sent to press often without even the most cursory revision, and which, when once in type, the writer has not felt at liberty to improve save by the most trifling corrections, must not be judged by any literary standard. But I must, in justice to myself, be allowed to make one explanation which will account for much hurried and slovenly work that is only too apparent in the following pages. On the 13th of January 1883, I received orders from the Panjáb Government to the effect that the report must be finished without fail by the end of the following February. When these orders reached me, I had completed only Chapters I, II, and IV, and the first two Parts of Chapter III ; while Part II of Chapter VI which deals with Patháns and Biloches, and the greater portion of Chapters XI and XII and of the first two Parts of Chapter XIII, were written in the rough, though exceedingly incomplete. Thus I had six weeks allowed me within which to fill in the *lacunæ* in these last sections, to discuss increase and decrease of population, language, caste with the exception of Patháns and Biloches, age, sex, and civil condition, occupations, education, and infirmities, and to summarise the results of our Census experience. The portion of the report which was wholly written within these six weeks comprises some 260 pages of print. It is hardly to be wondered that my treatment of these subjects is hasty and imperfect. My own feeling on looking back, is one of surprise that I accomplished the task after any fashion whatever. But on the 26th of February the MS. of my report was completely ready for press, and has not been touched since then. The press has been kept fully supplied with copy from the end of October 1882 ; and the subsequent delay is wholly due to the difficulty experienced in getting the report printed and published.

---

<sup>1</sup> I would suggest the pages of *Panjáb Notes and Queries*, a small periodical just started under the Editorship of Captain Temple of Ambála, as a convenient medium for discussion.

I need hardly say how largely I am indebted to others for both facts and ideas. The greater part of the information contained in the report has been either taken from scattered publications and from district Settlement or Census reports, or furnished me by correspondents. I owe much to Mr. Wilson's Code of Tribal Custom in Sirsa and to Mr. Barkley's notes on the Jálándhar district, both of which the writers placed in my hands in MS., and to Mr. Tupper's work on Panjáb Customary Law ; while every chapter of the report attests my obligations to Mr. Alex. Anderson for the prompt and complete manner in which he answered my numerous inquiries about the peculiar and interesting tract of which he was in charge. In one respect I was singularly ill-fitted for the task entrusted to me ; for practically speaking my whole Indian service had been confined to a single district (Karnál), which does not even lie in the Panjáb proper. Thus I have been throughout in the greatest danger of wrongly extending to the Province, as a whole, knowledge acquired in a small and very special portion of it. I can hardly hope that I have altogether escaped this pitfall ; but that I have not fallen into it more frequently, is wholly due to the invaluable assistance rendered me by Messrs. Alex. Anderson, Coldstream, Douie, O'Brien, Steedman, Thomson, and Wilson. These gentlemen have carefully read the proofs of the report as they issued from the press ; and their criticisms have enabled me to correct many faults and errors, and to add much that is valuable. I cannot express too strongly my obligation to them for undertaking and carrying through in their hard-earned leisure so tedious and uninteresting a task. My warmest thanks are also due to Messrs. Cunningham, Douie, and Merk for valuable help unsparingly given on all points relating to the frontier tribes ; to Major Plowden for his careful examination of the sections on the Patháns and their language ; to Mr. Christie for his copious and suggestive annotation of my discussion of the vagrant and criminal classes ; to Mr. Tupper for much valuable help given in the earlier stages of the operations ; and to Dr. Dickson and the Rev. Mr. Wherry for the personal attention they most kindly bestowed on the Census printing, without which I should scarcely have succeeded in getting the work done. But these are only a few among the many who have helped me. I applied for assistance to many officers of many Departments, and to none in vain ; and it is to the help thus received by me, that whatever value my report may be found to possess is mainly due.

My warmest acknowledgments are due to Mr. W. C. Plowden, Commissioner of Census, for his ever ready help and counsel, for the patient consideration with which he listened to my difficulties and suggestions, and for the kind anxiety which he evinced from first to last to do anything and everything that might make matters easier for me, so far as the unity of the Imperial scheme permitted.

Finally, I would express my grateful sense of the courtesy and consideration which I experienced at the hands of District officers throughout the operations. My position as Superintendent of the Census was one of some delicacy; for it obliged me to inspect, criticise, and report on the work of officers much senior to myself. That my relations with those officers were throughout of the most pleasant and cordial nature, is due to a good feeling on their part for which I am indebted to them.

SIMLA :  
*The 30th August 1883.* }

DENZIL IBBETSON.