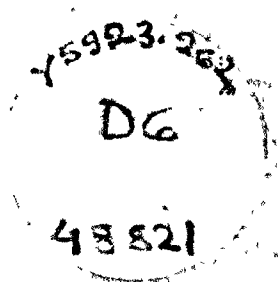


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THE BRAHMAN'S AND KAYASTHAS OF BENGAL.

BY
BABU GIRÍNDRA NÁTH DUTT,
B.A., M.R.A.S., M.S.A.,
Author of the "History of the Hntwa Raj," etc.

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Dr. G. A. GRIERSON, Ph.D., C.I.E., I.C.S , (retired

FOR

HIS KIND PATRONAGE

TO

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE present work purports, in a brief compass, to be a national history of the two great castes, Brahmans and Kayasthas, which form the bulk of the educated population of Bengal. It is an endeavour to explore a field left still untouched by Oriental scholars, and my researches have resulted in exploding the traditional structure of the ancient chroniclers of Bengal, which was a stumbling-block to many renowned antiquarians.

I have shown that A'di S'ur can be no other than the Great A'ditya Sen ; I have proved beyond doubt that Ballál Sen or any of the Sen Kings can never be the author of Kulinism in Bengal as is still universally believed.

I have arrived at the conclusion that the system of Kulinism originated first in Mithila whence it was imported to Bengal and developed during the Pathan rule, not for the creation of a noble breed as is universally supposed, but for the protection of the powers-that-be,

the metamorphosed Hindus. I have described at length the fictitious origin and the pernicious effect of this vicious system, and if my appeal touches the hearts of my patriotic countrymen and an earnest and zealous movement is set on foot to eradicate it, I will consider my labours amply rewarded. I gladly invite any fair and impartial criticism on the subject dealt with in this little work.

HUTWA RAJ, DIST. SARAN, BENGAL, <i>10th August, 1906.</i>	}	GIRINDRA NATH DUTT.
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The Statesman:—"In the course of an interesting article on 'Kulinism in Bengal,' which appears in the *Indian Review*, Babu Girindranath Dutt makes some very caustic remarks on the practice as it prevails in the present day in this province. He maintains that education, instead of mitigating the evil, has strengthened it. A university degree is not only a testimonial of proficiency in learning, but also a powerful instrument for the oppression of one's father-in-law. A Bengali B. A., we are told, considers himself entitled not only to a bride of a social rank superior to his own, but also to a pecuniary honorarium which is only limited by his own cupidity and the prospective father-in-law's means. If a parent has the misfortune to possess a daughter of dark complexion, or otherwise falling short of the accepted standard of beauty, the demand may rise up to Rs. 15,000. If to this are added the numerous items of expenditure which have to be incurred by the bride's family before and after the ceremony and the presents made to the bridegroom's relatives, it will be seen that the possession of a marriageable daughter is by no means an unmixed blessing. The author proceeds to quote a typical instance of nuptial extortion in which the bridegroom's family demanded, after the marriage, from the bride's father, who had

already paid the double sum contracted for, a blackmail for each member 'for partaking of food in the bride's house!' It can easily be imagined what the lot of the girl-wife must be, when, as sometimes happens, her people refuse to submit to such extortion. Nor does the evil end with the sufferings of the bride and her father. The latter, we are assured, is a great believer in the maxim that revenge is sweet, but he is not very particular as to the object of his vengeance. He simply wants to treat others as he has been treated himself, and, smarting under his own injuries, he exacts, in his son's marriage, from his son's prospective father-in-law, what he himself had spent on his daughter, with compound interest, and so matters go on in a cycle of reciprocal robbery to the complete demoralisation of all parties concerned. It is gratifying to hear that strenuous efforts are now being made by patriots and public associations to find a remedy for this state of things."

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