

## SIKH VILLAGE LIFE.

of eighty six representative skilled English workmen, to look into the teaching of this great exhibition, thus expresses his opinion: "Seeing some lads at work with the men in the carvers' shop, I went to the bench of one about fourteen. He was carving a chair back of a mediæval form from a working drawing. I expressed my surprise that one so young should have been found capable of carrying so well, and was informed that boys at school are specially prepared for the trades they fancy, so that a boy about to be apprenticed to learn carving is instructed in ornamental drawing, modelling, and designing." He adds as the result of his observation that the "mere mechanical workman stands not the slightest chance with the workman of cultivated taste." Like opinions were expressed by each of the eighty six committee-men representing the intelligent and self educated workmen of England, in each department of industry; and they were all profoundly impressed with the conviction that the English nation was in great peril in regard to manufacturing pre-eminence."

Now, if this technical education is found necessary for their chair-makers, and similar trades on shore, how much more essential is it for the difficult trade of mariner; and when we add to the trade of mariner that of a skilful marine-artillerist, our deduction must be similar to that "self-educated eighty six." Our uneducated seamen will stand no chance against the trained gunners of England and France.

The enlightened views which, in Europe, recognized the necessity of technical education soon made their way to this country, and found expression in the act of Congress of July 2, 1862, commonly known as the agricultural college bill. By the provisions of this act a munificent grant of public land was authorized for the "endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college in each State claiming the benefit of the act, where the leading object shall be to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics." "in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life."

This act has given an impulse to technical education in this country which has already been productive of much good. Following it up we find that last year the ancient commonwealth of Massachusetts passed an act to authorize its cities and towns to establish industrial schools, the language of the act being, "The city council of any city may establish and maintain one or more industrial schools, . . . and the school board shall employ teachers, prescribe the arts, trades, and occupations to be taught in such schools," etc. Thus we see too important acts making ample provision for technical education, and I ask if the trade of mariner is to be totally excluded from the one, the science of navigation from the other? In the name of our seamen I for one solemnly protest. But fortunately for the cause of the sailor the great State of New York has not left the matter in doubt. With her vast commercial interests she saw the necessities of the times, and, by an act passed last year, made special provision for a nautical school.

\* Gymnastic and Technical Education, by Francis H. Smith A. M., Lexington Va., 1871.

The manliest of all Indian peoples, the Sikhs, delight in games and sport of every kind. Enormous "dumb-bells" are played with great dexterity, and heavy weights thrown high and far, but their chief sport is called *sautchee*. For this a large open space is cleared and the actors form two rings. One man falls from the outer circle and is chased by others from the inner ring, till either fugitive escapes or pursuers give in; and so the game continues. One of the most favorite amusements is wrestling, especially around Lahore. The rules differ from those of the English game, in so far as the attack is not confined above the waist. Several wrestlers from Lahore are kept by the Baroda chief. When these return on a visit to their homes they send forth a challenge to the world, the victor's name is proclaimed for and wide by beat of drum, and a collection is made in his favour. Ram, quail and cock fighting have many patrons and the sports are witnessed by large crowds, the wealthy portion of which bet largely on the issues. The musical instruments of the people consist of the monotonous tom-tom, the double flageolet, and various kinds of flutes, violins and lyres—the tom tom being used to excite the men to valorous deeds, and the flageolet as an accompaniment to singing.

The Sikhs readily help each other in pecuniary difficulty, and assistance is freely given in raising a heavy beam for roofing or for a Persian water-wheel, in extinguishing a neighboring fire, and in rescuing men and cattle that may have fallen into bog or well. Women are regarded more as servants than as companions of the men, but a clever wife manages to become chuncceller of the exchange, and then the husband has to be careful, if only for his own comfort. Most of the women, however, work all day incessantly, either grinding corn, churning butter, perparing thread from raw cotton with their spindles, or carrying flour to distant villages, where they barter their produce for chillies, salt and other necessities. The Sikh bachelor is a rarity, for without a helpmate his work in the fields would be retarded. Marriages are preceded by betrothals during infancy, the whole arrangements being concluded between a barbar and the mother of the girl. Amongst the Hindoo Jats the ceremony of marriage is peculiar. Four posts are erected; over them a roof of red cloth is stretched, and two reed seats are placed inclosure for the contracting parties. The officiating priest recites a verse and joins their hands, the bridegroom repeating another verse which expresses his consent to the union. A fire is then kindled, the bride and bridegroom walk round it and the marriage is complete. The fire, representing a deity, is supposed to be a witness of the ceremony. Another form of marriage is *chudder dulna*, that is, throwing a sheet over the couple. This light and easy form is mostly had recourse to when a man marries his deceased brother's widow; the ancient Levitical custom still holding good among the Jats of Northern India. Otherwise the marriage of a widow is rare. The market price of marriageable daughters varies according to supply and demand, but the sum usually given by a bridegroom is from 100 to 500 rupees. Sometimes a father obtains a plot of land for his daughter's hand, but this occurs only when the

girl marries into a lower class or clan. All the beggars of a country-s do collect at a wedding and have to be well fed before they depart. Priests, Brahmins and fqueers all claim a gift of some sort; and hence the Sikh, unless he is rich, is as liable to fall into debt as his Rajpoot brother when disposing of his female offspring. There is a Punjabee saying—

"Ghur bin gat nahin,  
Shah bin pat, nahin,"

which means, a man cannot be forgiven without priority aid, nor be respectable without the banker's money. In the north however, it is rather the Rajpoot-mussleman who falls into debt than the unsophisticated and economical Sikh. Still the latter does, now and then, resort to the moneylender, especially when seed is wanted; and after a bad year, lucky is the man who gets out the Mahajan's hands with even a portion of his hard-earned crop. "When the harvest is ripe the banker makes his own terms, taking the produce at his own rate, or else threatening to sue in the civil courts, and sell up the house and home and worldly goods of the wretched zemindar, who has, through inability to get money elsewhere, or through ignorance, once got into the hands of a money-lender, who uses our courts as an engine of oppression, to enforce his iniquitous terms. The zemindar may well cry out, as he often does, to God for mercy, for the money-lender most assuredly will never show him any."

The "Hodge" of a Sikh farmer is paid for his labour in grain at harvest-time. This system is termed *sew* and the servants *seebes* who are of two descriptions—those who aid in cultivation and those who work as domestics. The former comprise carpenters, who supply yearly one pitchfork, and sickle and and spade handles, repair ploughs, Persian water-wheels, and other implements of labour; blacksmiths, who furnish annually one share for each plough; potters, who prepare earthen vessels for the wells; saddlers, who give a pair of blinkers for the field bullocks; and "sweepers," who supply two hide ropes per plough and two for each well. The payment of the carpenter and potter amounts to three mounds of grain for each well they work at, the blacksmith and potter receiving half this quantity, as their work is not so heavy. The sweeper has five per cent of the out-turn and the hides of all dead cattle. The second class of servants includes the barber, who shaves his master, arranges all marriages, and is now monger general. He receives the same fee as the blacksmith, together with the washerman of the family. The water-carrier gets sixteen seers of grain from each individual he serves all the year round. And last but not least, there is the musician, or village heard, who enlivens weddings and other merry gatherings. His reward varies at the will of his employer, but at a birth he receives one rupee after bestowing a patronymic on the little one.—*Friend of India*.

A discovery of interest to wood engravers is the fact that plates of polished slate may be used as substitutes for box wood for engraving. These plates will furnish over 100,000 impressions without loss of detail, do not warp, and are not affected by oil or water. A new variety of opium obtained from Persia is described as possessing properties peculiar, in some respects, to itself. Its odor differs from that of Smyrna opium, being rather comparable to that of green colofoc, and, when it is heated, an odor of chocolate is exhaled.