

in theology and medicine, to qualify him more fully for all the departments of missionary work.

W. HASTIE.

"I have already made sufficient observation with regard to the people of Govindpur and the places round about, and the effect which our evangelistic work produces on them, to enable me to give you some account of these things.

"According to the recent census, the whole village of Govindpur contains about 2000 inhabitants, including the Government officers as well as the permanent settlers. Of the permanent inhabitants, most of whom dwell at Govindpur proper, a little way off from the Grand Trunk Road there is only one *Brāhmin* family, the least respectable family in the village owing to the character of its head, and there are no *Kayastas*. The bulk of the population consists of *Bantias*, *Mudis*, and other trading or labouring people. There are a few Mohammedan families at Govindpur, although these people are very scarce in this district of Maun Choom. Govindpur being a *serai*, or stage for travellers along the Grand Trunk Road, there are many shopkeepers among its people, whose houses are mostly on that road. Some of these people are tolerably rich, and have brickbuilt houses. The cultivators of the soil, living in the village proper, form an important element in the population. Hired labourers can also be got for building huts, excavating tanks and wells, carrying men in *dulis* or *palkis*, and for like purposes. They do not subsist mainly on rice, as the people of lower Bengal do. For about six months in the year they live upon *Mahul*, a flower with a very sweet taste and a strong smell. It is used in various ways, and an intoxicating beverage is prepared out of it, which is very commonly drunk, both by the Bengalis of Govindpur and the Santals of the

adjoining villages. The lowest classes of the people are habitual drunkards. This drink, however, is not considered injurious to health. All classes here, as well as in the adjoining villages, speak the Bengali language, with differences in pronunciations and dialect from our Calcutta language. These differences, however, are very slight, and the Bengalis as well as the Santals round about Govindpur understand our discourses.

"The Santals as well as the Bengalis (except the Mohammedans) call themselves Hindus, although their Hinduism is not exactly the same as the Hinduism of Calcutta.

"The Bengalis of this whole region marry their children very early. I have not yet discovered a single girl old enough to walk about, without the red paint on her forehead, the mark of a married girl. It is quite common to marry their girls when they are only six months of age. Boys are married when they are six or seven years of age. This evil custom is not prevalent among the Santals. I asked a Santal of about fourteen years of age if he was married. He said he was not. At what age, I asked, was it their custom to marry. Now these savage people have no idea whatever of age; so he pointed out, by means of his stick, that when he would attain to such a height he would be married. I inferred that they are married at twenty. Their girls are married at about fourteen and even later. There is a curious custom amongst the Santals. Whoever touches the head of an unmarried Santal girl—be he a Hindu or a Mohammedan, a Santal or a Bengali—must marry her, unless he spends so much, and goes through certain ceremonies restoring her to her caste. So that intermarriage is with them possible, although the girl so intermarried would never again be received in their community. Among themselves the Santals observe no caste distinction—they are quite free to eat with any other Santals but being Hindus, they do not eat with men of a different religion.

"On Monday last, at the request of the head-master, I visited the Government school. There are only about thirty pupils in the school, and they teach a very low standard of books. There