

But what do all those marks upon the foreheads of so many people mean? Men with white streaks and red lines. Curved lines and spots upon the foreheads and noses of most men and women are to be seen everywhere. They are not just like the face marks of our North-West Indians; they do not seem to be burned, but painted on. Every pious Hindu marks his forehead with the sacred sign of his own particular faith or religious views. These marks are called "Teelaka" or "Pundra." Hinduism may be roughly classified under two main sects, Shivites and Vishnavites (and these, of course, are subdivided). Each sect bears a different mark with different curves, according to the points at issue with the other sect. The Shivite's "Teelaka" consists of three horizontal strokes made of the white ashes of burnt substance supposed to represent the destroying forces belonging to the God Shiv. The mark of the Vishnavites is an upright one of bright red, yellow, and white coloring substances, and is supposed to represent the foot-prints of the god Vishnu. Some hold that Shiv was produced from Brahma's forehead one day when that god was roused to fierce anger, and therefore the mark upon the foreheads of his worshippers represents his incarnation. Other Pundits say that it represents the three eyes of Shiv, denoting his insight into future, past and present time. Then, again, it is held that black and white symbolize the close connection and succession of Shiv's generating and destroying principles. The marks of Vishnu seem to denote that the foot-prints of that god have great efficacy in shielding from the evil influences of sins. Some wear Vishnu's mark like the letter u (U) curved between the eyes down upon the nose—mostly white-colored—which represents both feet of the god, while the central mark, a red streak, is emblematical of "Lakshmee," the wife of Vishnu. Certain it is that those who worship Shiv's wife ("Kalee" or "Durga") wear a small red spot just between the eyes. This wild goddess is the goddess of blood, in whose name the Thugs (pronounced Tugs) used to murder. I have watched an immense throng of worship-