

**DOMESTIC MANNERS AND  
CUSTOMS OF THE HINDOOS OF  
NORTHERN INDIA, OR MORE  
STRICTLY SPEAKING, OF THE  
NORTH WEST PROVINCES OF INDIA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649564293

Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos of Northern India, or More Strictly Speaking, of the North West Provinces of India by Baboo Ishuree Dass

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**BABOO ISHUREE DASS**

**DOMESTIC MANNERS AND  
CUSTOMS OF THE HINDOOS OF  
NORTHERN INDIA, OR MORE  
STRICTLY SPEAKING, OF THE  
NORTH WEST PROVINCES OF INDIA**



**DOMESTIC**  
**MANNERS AND CUSTOMS**  
**OF THE**  
**HINDOOS OF NORTHERN INDIA,**  
**BY**  
**A NATIVE CHRISTIAN.**

  
DOMESTIC

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

OF THE

HINDOOS OF NORTHERN INDIA,

OR MORE STRICTLY SPEAKING, OF THE NORTH WEST  
PROVINCES OF INDIA.

BY

BABOO ISHUREE DASS,

A NATIVE CHRISTIAN

OF

FUTTEHGURH.

---

*Especially because I know thee to be expert in  
all customs and questions which are among the  
Jews.—St. Paul's defence before Agrippa.*

---

BENARES :

MEDICAL HALL PRESS.

1860.

PREFACE  
TO  
THE INDIAN EDITION.

This work was at first solely intended for those English-speaking Europeans (in which term we include the people of America also) who have never set their feet on the soil of India. This is the reason why the Author has been rather minute in his description. It makes its appearance here only by the advice of some European friends who have thought that it would be read with interest in this country also. This is rendered more probable by the fact, that there are more new Europeans now in India than there were some time ago ; and it is an axiom in the science of government that the Rulers should know all they can of the Ruled, more especially when both the races are so foreign to each other as the British and the Hindoos are.

India being a vast country, inhabited by various nations, differing from each other in many respects, the following Chapters describe the manners and customs of only a certain portion of the immense population ; and even of this portion, only those manners and customs that are more general ; because the people of the different parts of Northern India also differ from each other in some respects.

In writing Hindee single words we have not followed the system adopted by Missionaries in this country, but spelt the words as would appear most natural to the European eye; for instance, we have written *Hindoos*, and not *Hindús*; *Hindee*, and not *Hindí*, &c. In publishing books Missionaries can save much space by the Roman Character system, but as very few Hindee words occur in this work, space has been no object with us. There are however these exceptions to this remark, that *e* has the sound of *ay* as in *bay* and *pay*; *a* has a dash over it when pronounced long, as in *mela*, a fair; and when not accented, it has the sound of *u* as in *cut* and *nut*; *u* and *a* short have been used indiscriminately to represent this sound.

The Work was written before the Mutiny, but circumstances have delayed its publication.

The reader will also kindly bear in mind that the Author writes in a foreign tongue, and that due allowance must be made for his English.

FUTTEHGURH, }  
January, 1860. }



# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

Page.

### INTRODUCTION.

India—Its Geography—Original Inhabitants—History—Features of the Hindoos—The Hindoo mind—Moral character—Desire for fame—Credulity—Cleanliness—Politeness of Manners—Hindoos superstitious. ... 1

## CHAPTER II.

### HINDOO CASTES.

Division into Castes—Brahmins or Priests—Chhattrees or Soldiers—Vyases or Merchants. ... 14

## CHAPTER III.

### CASTES,—CONTINUED.

Sooddurs or the fourth general Class—Káyaashis or Writers—Farmers. ... 32

## CHAPTER IV.

### CASTES,—CONTINUED.

Carpenters—Blacksmiths—Silver and Goldsmiths—Barbers—Cowherds—Shepherds—Fishermen—Oilmen—Fullers—Potters—Weavers—Shoemakers. ... 49

## CHAPTER V.

### CASTES,—CONTINUED.

Sweepers—Other Castes—Description of a Bazaar or Market. ... 61

## CHAPTER VI.

### POPULAR RELIGION OF THE HINDOOS.

Sacred Scriptures—Gods—Incarnations—Daily ablutions—Hindoo Worshipers—Mode of poojá or worship—Hindoo goddesses—A peculiar prayer—Counting beads—Spiritual

guides—Feeding Brahmins—Religion of the middle and lower Classes—Craftiness of Brahmins. . . . .	73
--	----

## CHAPTER VII.

### POPULAR RELIGION,—CONTINUED.

Melás or religious fairs—Pilgrimages. . . . .	88
---	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

### POPULAR RELIGION,—CONTINUED.

Supplying the thirsty with water—Building temples and places of sacred bathing—Alms to the hungry and other ways of obtaining merit—Transmigration of souls—Festivals—Devotees. . . . .	100
---	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

### HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMS.

Family arrangements—Houses—Furniture—Meals—Manner of eating—Dishes. . . . .	115
---	-----

## CHAPTER X.

### SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.

Entertainments—Civilities of Intercourse—Hospitality towards travellers—A peculiar mode of salutation of women—Costume of the nation. . . . .	128
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

### SOCIAL INTERCOURSE,—CONTINUED.

Practice of Medicine—Decision of cases by arbitration—Diversions and Amusements. . . . .	139
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

### HINDOO WOMEN.

Desire for male issue—Destruction of female children—Early marriage—Education of girls—Character of Hindoo women—Dress—Ornaments—Beauty. . . . .	150
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

### HINDOO WOMEN,—CONTINUED.

Name of the husband never mentioned by his wife.—Treatment of a Hindoo wife—Love between husband and	
--	--

wife—Hindoo women religious—Helplessness of Hindoo mothers when their children are sick—Barrenness a reproach—Daily household duties of a Hindoo wife—Grinding—Washing the kitchen, &c.—Drawing water—Scouring and cleaning cooking utensils &c.—Cooking—Hindoo Widows. 161

## CHAPTER XIV.

### NUPTIAL CEREMONIES.

Nuptial ceremonies numerous—Age when a girl is marriageable—Talk about espousals—Teeká—Lagan—Wedding procession—Ashed—Immediate wedding ceremonies—Gaurá—The next day after marriage—The wedding procession returns—Shed, &c. removed. . . . . 175

## CHAPTER XV.

### NATAL AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

A woman in the family-way for the first time—What they do when a child is born—Chhattee, or the ceremony of the sixth day—Dathaun, or the rite of the tenth or eleventh day—The same of the sixth month—Ceremony of shaving the child—Funeral rites—People near death—What done on a person's death—The man that sets fire to the funeral pile—What done by his relations—The eleventh day after death—Marriage of a pair of calves—Balls made for the deceased—Dinners given to Brahmins—Shaving—A lamp lighted and left in a field—Srádth—Offering of balls at a place called Gayá. . . . . 185

## CHAPTER XVI.

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS WITH REGARD TO THE

#### DIFFERENT SEASONS.

Number of seasons—The Hindoo year—Falling of leaves—Spring—Harvest—Hot winds—How the day passed—Night—Cooling drinks—Dust storms—Approach of the rainy season—Sometimes late—Its arrival—Appearance of the surface of the Earth—Fields attended to—Brooks and rivers swell—Women swing—Weather sometimes oppressive—Sickness—Cold season—Winter stuffs—Fire—Hindoo division of time—Whence they date their time. . . . . 194