

Tanners, and Basket-makers also occasionally use these animals. Donkeys are lowly regarded, and would not be used by the higher castes, say for example, by Merchants in carrying grain.

Animals are generally treated badly, with an indifference which at times amounts to cruelty. They are never groomed, are inadequately housed, and invariably underfed. Draught cattle are better cared for than others, but even they are a pitiful sight in the middle of the summer when all the forage is gone. Goats are herded by small boys, and in Navra Toli all the cattle and buffalo are taken out to pasture by a Bhilala from Sayta. The livestock also are pastured on fallow fields, and on harvest stubble. Breeding is not controlled, and inferior bulls are freely allowed to couple with sickly cows. The peasants do not have any effective remedies against the common cattle diseases such as rinderpest and black quarter. Their method is to apply a hot iron to the affected portions, and let the animal recover as best it can. Free veterinary services are now available, but not fully used. The potentialities of animals and their products are also not realized. Sinews occasionally are taken by the Weavers for use as rope, but horns, hooves, bones etc. are all given over to a contractor who periodically collects and removes them to Kasrawad.

Dogs are kept by a few families as house guardians, and companions. They are of the usual non-descript breed seen throughout India in the villages, are untrained and cowardly, but sufficiently alert to warn their masters of a stranger's approach.

Conclusion

In the foregoing pages I have sought to characterize briefly the social organization and aspects of the economic and religious organization of a peasant community in Central India. Although not a detailed study, the material presented makes it abundantly evident that for the area under study, the once widely accepted and still encountered view of the Indian village as a self-sufficient unit, a small republic, is not defensible. Not only is this view untenable today, when fundamental changes have occurred in even the remotest parts of the country, but it may be questioned whether it ever correctly reflected the facts. Today, the Weaver, Boatman and Oil-presser have for the most part abandoned their traditional callings and turned to agriculture. The services they formerly provided are more cheaply obtained from outside the village, thanks to mechanical looms, lorries and petrol-driven oil mills. But apart from the change necessitated by the introduction of an improved technology, it has been seen that in a multitude of ways, in the social, economic and religious spheres the three villages discussed here are inter-dependent. It is to the group of them, together, that I would apply the term "community" without, however, wishing to minimize either the fact or importance of intra-village solidarity.

How far the actual functioning community extends beyond the individual village in other regions of India is a matter for further investigation. There is, however, no evident reason to suppose the example here presented to be unique. This may also be true in the temporal dimension. One may ask whether there