



CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XV

UTTAR PRADESH

PART VI

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPH No. 9

General Editor

P. P. BHATNAGAR

*of the Indian Administrative Service
Superintendent of Census Operations, Uttar Pradesh*

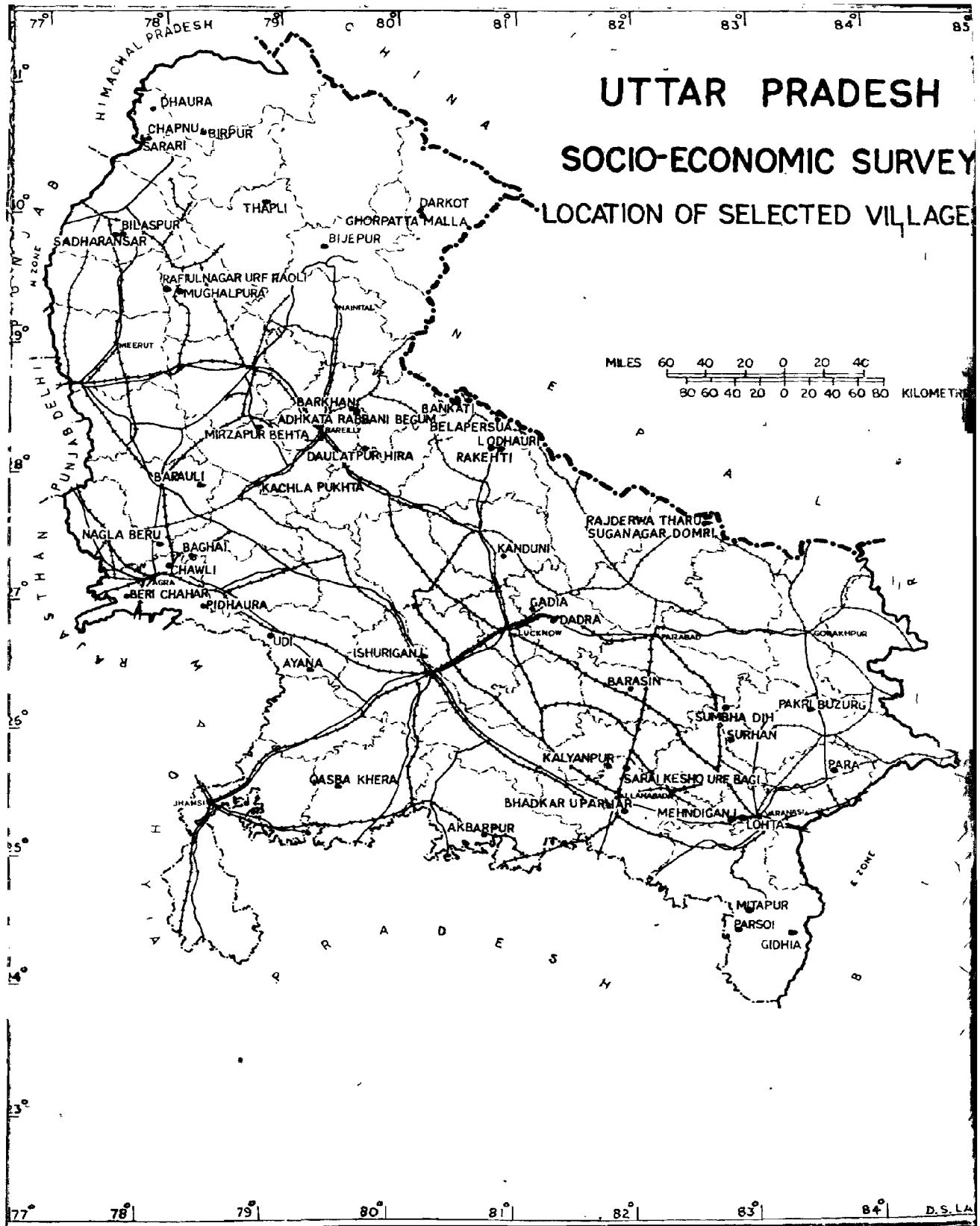
VILLAGE DARKOT

(TAHSIL MUNSIARI, DISTRICT PITHORAGARH)

BY

R. C. SHARMA, M. A.

*of the Uttar Pradesh Civil Service
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FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to

build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive : the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader of a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows :

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, e.g. fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition.

By fair size was meant a population of 500—700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extramural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in*

situ of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress, ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immovable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these

surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues

NEW DELHI :
July 30, 1964.

from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve : to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in an appendix to the monograph on village Thapli of district Garhwal.

ASOK MITRA,
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

In Uttar Pradesh the Census Organisation selected a number of villages for special study of the dynamics of change in the social, cultural and economic life of the rural community. An analysis of the structure and functioning of the village economy is expected to reveal the forces which promote or retard the processes of change coming into play, either in the natural course or as a result of various legislative measures such as the establishment of Panchayats, the abolition of Zamindari, the extension of Planning and Development activities and the enforcement of various social laws. The knowledge thus gained can be utilised for the reorientation of policies of rural development and village uplift.

2. The selection of villages for study was made in accordance with certain principles and criteria laid down by the Registrar General. Of the selected villages, some contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, some are populated by backward aboriginal people, and others have an old and settled character with a multi-ethnic composition and diverse occupations. Minor deviations from the standards prescribed for selection were inevitable because of the non-availability of the requisite number of villages having all the prescribed variables. This purposive selection has made it possible to study the impact of various factors of change upon the culture and economy of villages situated in the interior where outside influences are slow to penetrate and slower to act as also the normal types which are exposed to a greater degree

to the winds of change from various directions.

3. Darkot, a village situated in the hilly interior of district Pithoragarh was selected for study because it has a predominant population of the Bhotiyas, a backward tribe having trade connections with Tibet. Outside influences have been quite slow to penetrate this hilly village.

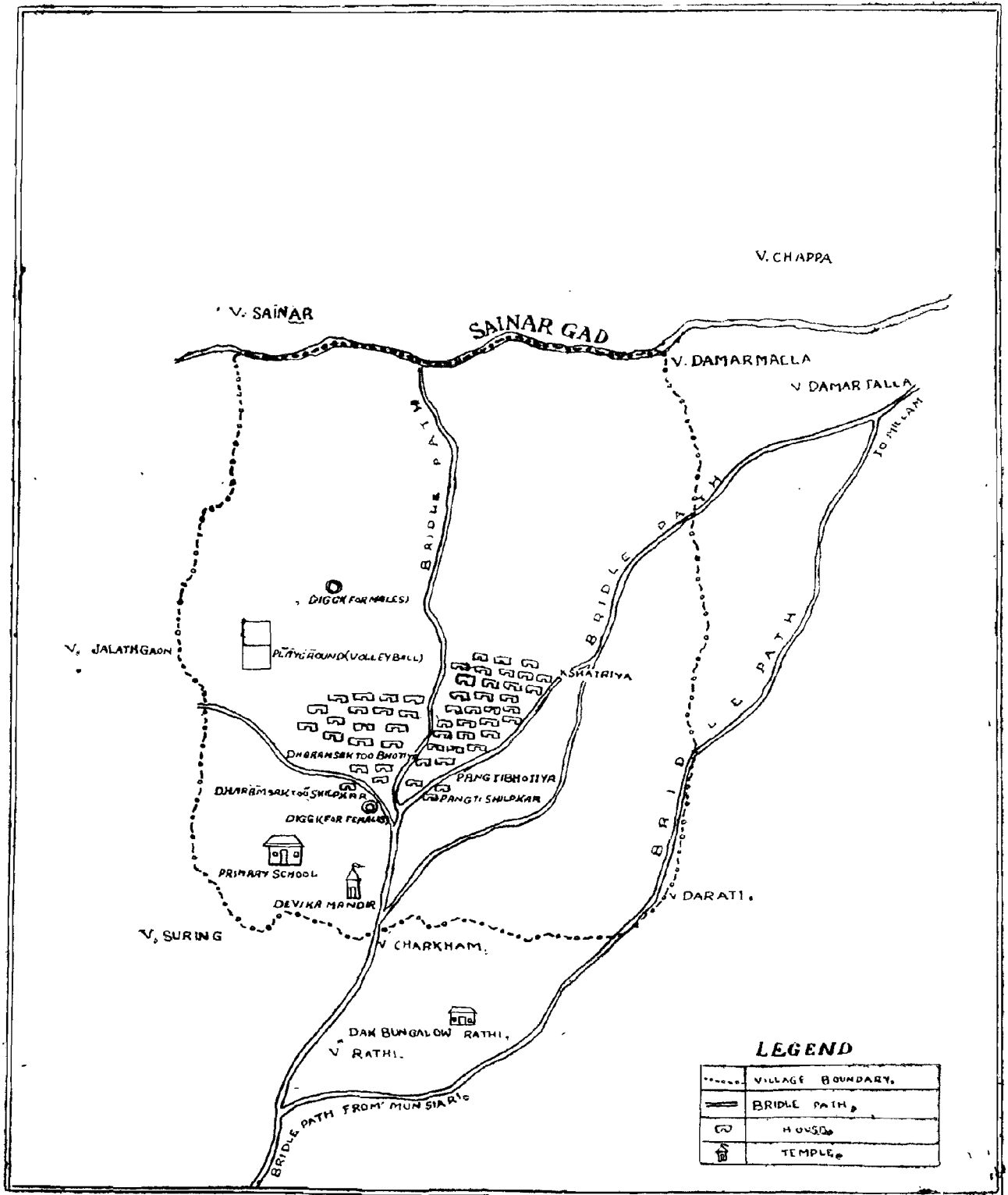
4. The research methods employed in this study have consisted of the use of schedules and questionnaires, case studies, village records, census data, interviews and group discussions. The local investigation was carried out by the field staff of this Organisation, having a well-trained pair of eyes. There was some difficulty in the initial stages because the investigator was viewed with suspicion but after he gained the confidence of villagers and established rapport with them, the work of investigation became easy and simple. The data were collected in the month of June, 1961. The study was of course subject to time pressure.

5. Field investigation in the village was carried out by Sri J. P. Misra, Socio-Economic Inspector, who had been borrowed from the National Sample Survey. Sri R. C. Sharma, Deputy Census Superintendent of the Uttar Pradesh Civil Service, is responsible for marshalling the statistical evidence, analysing the data and drafting the report.

6. Opinions expressed and conclusions reached by the writer of this monograph are based on the results of the investigation. They are his own and do not reflect the views of the Government in any way.

LUCKNOW :
The 27th December, 1962.

P. P. BHATNAGAR,
*Superintendent of Census Operations,
Uttar Pradesh*



NOTIONAL MAP SHOWING HABITATION PATTERN OF VILLAGE DARKOT

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

Darkot is a small-sized Bhotiya village situated in Patti Malla Johar of tahsil Munsiri of district Pithoragarh. It lies on the Munsiri—Millam bridle path leading to Kailash and Mansarovar. It stands on the west of Khalia mountain at a height of about 7,000 feet above sea level. On its north lie villages Chhappa and Sainar whereas villages Suring, Ranchhi and Darati form its southern boundary. To its west lies the ancient village Jalath and to its east is situated village Imar. The river Gori Ganga flows beneath it though at a distance of about 5 miles. It can be clearly seen from there facing the great Himalayan peak Panchachuli with its group. The area of the village is 150.50 acres consisting of 100 acres of unmeasured land and 50.50 acres of measured land. The cultivated land has small fields of a stair-like shape. The *abadi* is in the centre of the village, all the houses clustering close to each other in one compact area. The main inhabitants of this village are the Bhotiyas.

This village has been selected for study because it is predominantly a Bhotiya village and its survey is expected to provide a useful study of the Bhotiya culture, economy, way of life, their needs and achievements and the efforts made by them and the Government collectively for their betterment. It would further reveal the impact of interpenetration of the Tibetan and the Indian culture on a bordering Indian village.

The Bhotiyas inhabiting this village are of Mongolian origin. They are chiefly a trading community carrying on trade between India and Tibet. When we enter the village we feel that "we are amongst Mongolians, among women who, like the little Japanese, laugh at everything and everybody, and do not rush away to hide, or draw their veils over their faces, as the southerners; we are amongst prayer flags, chortens, and prayer poles, where stone pillars fend off spirits and ghosts from the homestead, where

men whistle to the sheep and goats which carry precious burdens on their backs, and sneeze at the ponies or mules which they ride. It is a strange country which charms at first sight, and for which one forms a singular attachment."

This village is located at a distance of three miles from the tahsil headquarters at Munsiri on the Munsiri—Millam route. The railhead for this village is Tanakpur, the terminus of the North-Eastern Railway situated at a distance of 200 miles from here. The nearest bus-head is at Thal from where it takes about three days to reach the village. The nearest post office is at Suring at a distance of about one mile and the nearest telegraph office is at Bageshwar at a distance of 68 miles. The Revenue police station Munsiri covers this village also. The district headquarters is at Pithoragarh which is connected *via* Thal by a motorable road.

The village has its own Bhotiya culture and mode of life. The household industry commonly practised is woollen handicrafts, producing woollen cloth, *thulma*, carpet, *dan*, *punkhi*, etc. The womenfolk are known for their dexterity in these handicrafts. They generally remain at home and are seen always busy in twisting the spindle, plying the *charkha* or weaving fine woollen cloth, blankets and carpets. Men are good traders and have business-like alacrity. In summer they trade with Tibet from June to November and in winter they migrate to the lower regions, purchasing goods from markets such as Tanakpur, Ramnagar and Haldwani and transporting these to the high regions. The inhabitants also collect herbs from the neighbouring mountains which fetch them good money. They also attend the annual fairs at Thal, Bageshwar and Joljibi and a local fair at Darkot, selling woollen products, wool, goat skins, borax and Tibetan salt.

Being situated at a height of 7,000 feet, the village is very cold in winter but quite pleasant

in summer. Heavy rains take place both in winter and summer. The total rainfall from March 25 to September 20, 1960, as recorded at Munsiri at a distance of three miles was 2,195.3 mm. In July alone, there was a rainfall of 886.5 mm. At Munsiri the record of temperature from April 1 to September 20, 1960 was available. The maximum temperature of 27.0°C was recorded on June 8, 1960.

Grass, fodder and thorny bushes are in plenty. Walnut, chestnut, apricot, lemon, plum, peach and other citrus fruit trees are being planted. As for timber, *sarai* trees are found here and there. Paddy, *mandua*, wheat, barley, *urd* and *masoor* are grown but the yield is quite insufficient for feeding the population. Potato is produced in abundance while all other vegetables are grown for domestic use only.

Amongst the wild animals found in the village and its vicinity are *babar*, *ghunar*, *thar*, *hua*, deer, *kakar*, *barsingha*, bear, wild boar and leopard. The birds commonly found are *munya*, *long*, *malyos*, *tetas*, *chakon*, black partridge and wild pigeon.

At the time of survey, the village had 103 households with a population of 513 persons consisting of 297 males and 216 females. The average number of persons per household is 5.2. The history of the households inhabiting the village discloses that the majority of households were settled here before five generations. Only the Lohar Shilpkars came between 2 to 4 generations ago. The only Brahmin household has come to the village from outside the district and one household of Bhotiyas from outside the taluk. No household has come from outside the State. Thus most of the households are local. Out of 103 households, 6 are single member households, 25 are 2-3 member households, 46 are 4-6 member households, 19 are 7-9 member households and only 7 households have over 10 members. The model pattern is therefore, households having an average of 4-6 members. All the households having over 10 members are of the Pangti sect of Bhotiyas. The village has nearly all the main castes, viz., Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas in the form of Bhotiyas who are

traders and the Scheduled Castes Dholi, Orh and Lohar. The village has one Brahmin household, 83 Bhotiya households, 4 Kshatriya households and 15 Shilpkar households.

Due to a long distance, the village is almost cut off from the district headquarters. The village is so far accessible by a bridle path only. The journey to the village is to be performed on foot or by hired mules, ponies or in a *dandi* which is like an invalid chair carried by two persons on their shoulders. Mules, ponies, goats and sheep and coolies are also engaged in transporting goods. The rates of ponies and mules are Rs.8 to Rs.10 per day. The coolies charge between Rs.1 to Rs.6 per day. Lately the State Government have started constructing a motorable road from Thal to Millam. Thal is at present the last motor-head and the journey of 36 miles from this place to the village takes 3 days. The bridle path often gets breached in the rainy season and the village becomes inaccessible.

The only religious place in the village is *Devi Mandir* which is made of raw stone having a slate roof. It is not attractive. It has an area of only 12 sq feet with a height of about 5-6 feet only. It looks like a small room of the type in which goats and sheep are sheltered. But it is distinguished clearly by the white, red and yellow flags flying over and around it. Once a year a big fair is held here for a day in the month of August-September. Thousands of persons assemble here from the neighbouring villages. The fair is marked with singing and dancing around the temple.

The history of the village is lost in the hoary past but its name can be clearly explained. The word *Diar* means *deodar* and the word *Kot* means a *garhi* or fortress. Formerly it was a *garhi* of *deodar* trees and was called *Diarkot*. In course of time it came to be known as Darkot. Another legend traces the origin of the village in a different way. It is said that the place was a dense forest and served as a grazing ground for animals. In this forest, a tribe called Dyari lived. The word *Kot* means *garhi* or stronghold. Thus it was a stronghold of Dyaris and was called Dyarkot and has now come to be called Darkot.

PLATE NO. 1



*A view of village Darkot with river Gori Ganga
in the distant background*

PLATE NO. II



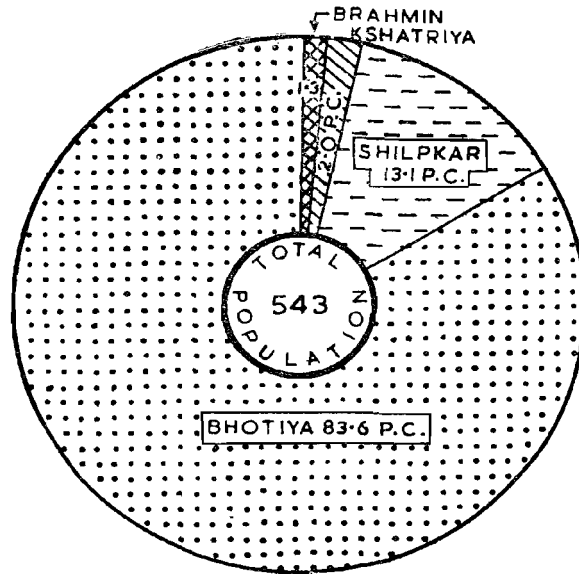
A group of Bhotiya women and children

PLATE NO. III

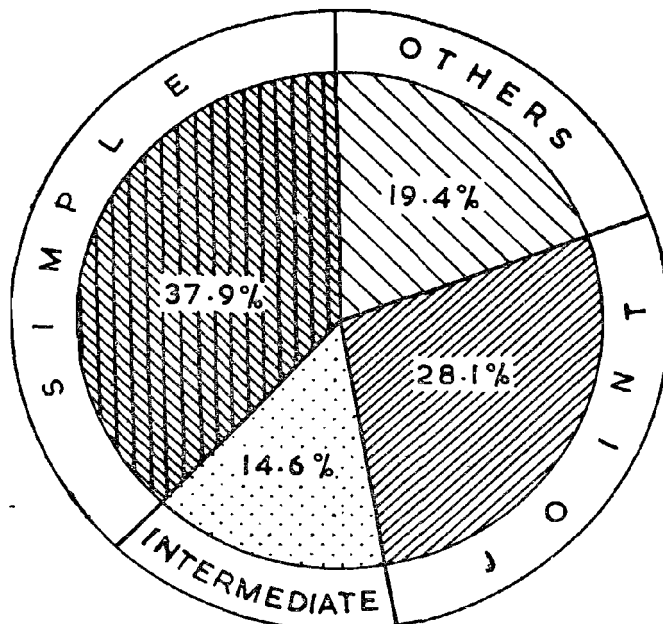


A group of Shilpkar women and children

POPULATION BY CASTE



NATURE OF FAMILIES



CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

Ethnic Composition

The entire population of the village is of Hindus, predominated by Bhotiyas of four sects, viz., Dharam Saktoo, Pangti, Gowal Darma and Jang Pangti. Members of each sect have their dwellings in separate clusters. The Shilpkars attached to each sect also live separately from each other. The Pangti Bhotiyas with their Shilpkars live in one portion of the village while the Dharam Saktoo Bhotiyas with their Shilpkars live in the other portion. At the time of survey the ethnic composition of the population was as follows :—

TABLE NO. 2.1

Ethnic Composition of Population

Reli- gion	Caste	Sub- caste	Number of house- holds	Population		
				Persons	Males	Females
Hindu	Brahmin	Joshi	1	7	6	1
	Bhotiya	Dharam Saktoo	28	146	73	73
		Pangti	53	301	164	137
		Gowal Darma	1	3	2	1
		Jang Pangti	1	4	3	1
		Kshatriya	Kisan	1	2	1	1
	Bhatt		2	8	4	4
	Karki		1	1	..	1
	Shilpkar	Orh	2	9	7	2
		Lohar	2	7	3	4
Dholi		11	55	34	21	
Total			103	543	297	246

Evidently, the village is populated mostly by Bhotiyas who have 85 per cent of the total population. Next come the Shilpkars (Scheduled Castes) and the Kshatriyas who account for 13 per cent and about 2 per cent of the local population respectively. Amongst Bhotiyas, Pangtis dominate in number clearly followed by Dharam Saktoos. The other two sub-divisions, Gowal Darma and Jang Pangti, have only one household each. The Jang Pangti family has immi-

grated for economic reasons only a few years back from pargana Darma of tahsil Didihat, district Pithoragarh. The main occupations of all the Bhotiyas are trade, manufacture of woollen goods and transport through goats, sheep, ponies and mules owned by them.

The origin of Bhotiyas has been given by Walton as follows in the Gazetteer of Almora :—

“Almora contains far more Bhotias than any other district in the United Provinces... Their country is called by the middle hill people Bhot, and it lies in the main to the north of the great snowy peaks, and between them and the Tibetan boundary. Bhot or more correctly Bod is really the same word as Tibet. In the records of the Tartar Liaos in the eleventh century, the name Tibet is written T'u — Pot'e, in which the latter syllable represents 'Bod'. The Chinese character for 'po' has also the sound 'fan' and with the addition of 'si' or 'western', the portion of Tibet to the north of Kumaon is called 'Si-fan' and the people 'Ta-poti'.”

Thus the word Bhotiya is derived from Bhot. This community is mainly found in the inter-Alpine ranges of Himalaya, on the border of this country, viz., Darma, Chaudas, Beas, Johar and Goriphat valleys of district Pithoragarh, Mana and Niti valleys of district Chamoli and villages Jadung and Nelang of district Uttarkashi. Their sub-castes have a connection with the villages of their origin. For example, the surnames Martoli, Brijwal and Pangti are all based on the villages of origin of these sub-castes. They claim themselves to be Rajputs but their Mongolian features are a sure indication of their Tibetan descent.

The Kshatriyas with their limited number are mainly cultivators. The Bhattas among them have only two households and the Kisans and Karkis only one each. They have migrated from Nepal. They too are cultivators.

The Shilpkars are divided with the Pangti and Dharam Saktoo sects of Bhotiyas nearly in the same ratio as that of the population of these two Bhotiyas sub-divisions respectively — 22 persons comprising 12 males and 10 females of Shilpkars are attached to the Dharam Saktoo Bhotiyas and the remaining Shilpkars are attached to the Pangti Bhotiyas. The only Brahmin family was that of a compounder employed in the hospital which has now shifted to another place.

The people of this village are all original residents of Kumaon and speak the Kumaoni dialect of Hindi. Some of the menfolk are good interpreters and speak Tibetan language with fluency and ease. The Bhotiyas have typical Mongolian features — short stature, a big head, round face, a round and flat nose, small narrow eyes, with scanty growth of beard and moustache.

The Bhotiyas are generally honest, hardworking and good-humoured. They are full of energy, experience and worldly wisdom which is a natural consequence of their itinerant mode of life. Their intelligence too is mainly the result of keen observation and wide experience. In matters of money they have a Jewish mentality. They lack in the natural politeness of the Hindus of the plains. Often they are churlish and rough in their behaviour to others.

Dwellings

The buildings in the village have stone walls and stone floors. The roofs of the houses of the poor are of grass, but the rich use mortar, planks, slates or G. C. I. sheets. The roof rests on wooden beams which are fixed over stone walls. First of all the walls are constructed, then the wooden beams are laid over them. On the beams are spread wooden planks and on them clay is spread to fix the stone slates. The clay keeps the wooden planks and stone slates together withstanding even the fiercest winds. These slates are obtained from Papri, a place at a distance of about 4 miles. The walls are constructed of local rough stone. These stones are finished by the local masons by carving into the required shapes. The dwellings are found in a compact

area and are mostly built in rows. Their surroundings are quite dirty; bathrooms and lavatories are yet unknown. There is no restriction on the directions of the entrance of a house. It is, however, generally towards the slope, the back of the house being towards the ridge. Availability of the sun is yet another consideration. The foundation stone of a house is laid at an auspicious time and date to be pointed out by a Brahmin pandit who lives in village Suring. Sweets are distributed on the occasion.

The houses are generally small and insanitary. Most of them are double-storeyed — the upper portion being for the family and the lower for the animals. The houses are generally 35 feet long and 25 feet wide. Above the doors on two sides, windows are fixed. No windows are provided on the back side. As such the inner portion of a house remains dark. The upper storey is reached by a staircase from outside, opening in the verandah of the house. The verandahs are generally quite wide to accommodate a family which sleeps there during the summer. The verandahs are attached to the rooms. These rooms are without ventilation and are generally dark. These serve as store rooms as well as sleeping rooms during winter. The floor of the upper storey is of mud occasionally coated with cow-dung. Every house has a strong boundary wall about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide all round the compound which has a stone floor. It is used for drying the grains or for enjoying the sun.

For the construction of an average house, consisting of two rooms, verandah, cowshed and courtyard, etc. The following material with the cost noted against each is required :

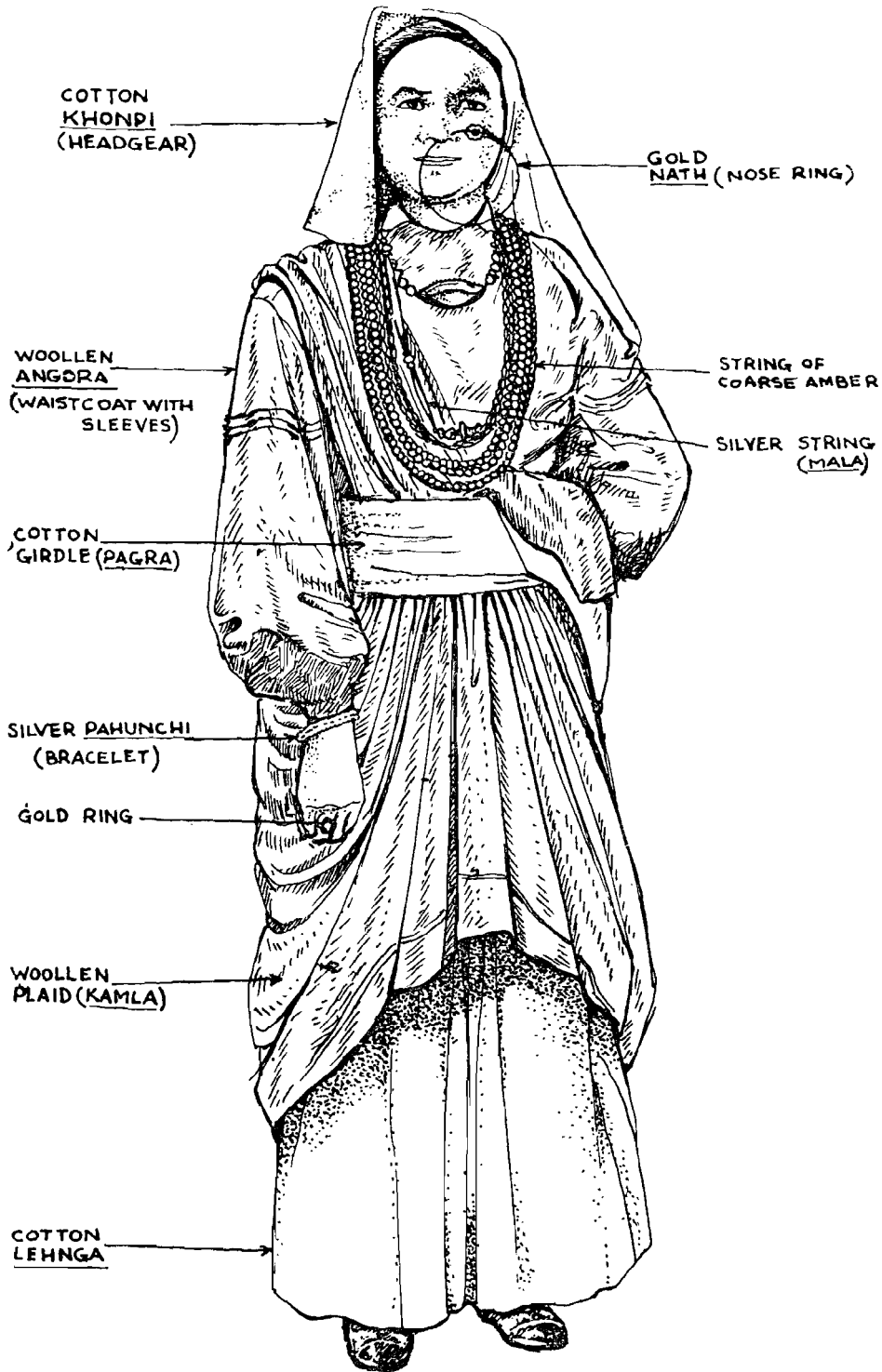
Item	Expenditure
	Rs.
1. Stones	600
2. Timber	500
3. Iron and steel	200
4. Stone slates	350
5. Colour and varnish	50
6. Other items and labour charges	300
	<hr/>
Total	2,000

PLATE NO. IV



A typical Bhotiya male

PLATE NO. V



A typical Bhotiya woman

Thus an average house costs Rs.2,000 approximately. Iron and steel, slates, colour and varnish have to be obtained from outside. Timber and stone is available locally free of cost.

The following remarks on pages 112-113 of the District Gazetteer of Almora by Walton hold good even to-day :—

“The ideal site for a village is about half way up an airy spur, with the cultivation above and below, and if possible a twofold water supply, for the Doms are not allowed to use and befoul springs meant for their betters ; and from a distance the prospect of a hill village is generally very pleasing. The houses are solidly built of stone (the mud-huts of the plains are almost unknown) and roofed with slate, or in the wilder parts, with shingles of pine wood. There is no overcrowding, the houses being generally arranged in neat rows, and occasionally a man lives apart in the middle of his holdings. Except in the case of the Doms, houses of two storeys are the rule and of three not uncommon. The ground floor is called the *goth* and is usually tenanted by the cattle though there is, with the growth of more luxurious ideas, a general tendency to build separate sheds for the cattle. The houses of the better classes are usually surrounded with a paved courtyard or compound protected on the *khad* side by a low parapet wall and bordered with fruit trees. The less adjacent trees are lopped and used as receptacles for straw and grass. Two separate residential quarters are recognized, for the Biths (or Rajputs and Brahmins) and for the Doms. Filth is the characteristic of both. Great heaps of manure and sweepings, removed to the fields once or twice a year, lie in front of each house and engender the hordes of flies for which Kumaon is famous, besides emitting a suffocating stench.”

Dress

Except for traders, the remaining population is leading a life of poverty. Most of them are, therefore, ill-clothed. While non-Bhotiyas wear the same dress as people in other parts of the district, Bhotiyas, especially the womenfolk, have

a distinct dress—*angni* (a short shirt with full-sleeves), *lehnga* (a sort of voluminous skirt extending up to the ankles), *hamla*, a cloth covering the waist and shoulders, *khonpi*, a long white scarf finely embroidered on one side, tied round the head with the tail-piece hanging behind—and *pagra*, a broad *patli* of cloth about 12 yards in length, wound round the waist. The *hamla* is fastened over the bosom with a large pin. Socks and shoes similar to those of the males are also worn by them. They also use *banian* (under-vest) and black woollen *angra* which is just like a waistcoat with sleeves. Some women have also begun wearing sari, petticoat, blouse, etc. The dress of the Shilpkar women is the same as that of the Bhotiya women with the exception of the *khonpi*, the *angra* and the *hamla*, which are not worn by them.

The Bhotiya males used to wear a long woollen gown called *bakhu bokhla*, pyjamas called *bhonta*, waistcoat, shirt, turban and sambhar shoes. But this dress is no longer in vogue. On account of the cold climate of the village, people wear woollens all the year round. They also use *capal pagri* (turban) on the head, *banian*, shirt, waistcoat and coat on the body. Males who wore *bakhu bokhla* had also to use a *pagra* (turban) about 3 yards in length on the head. The pyjamas or the *bhonta* is generally of woollen cloth. When they take a bath, they use *dhoti* as well. In Kumaon it is a general custom for the males to put on a *dhoti* when they enter the kitchen for taking boiled rice.

Almost every Bhotiya suspends from his waist in small chains or thongs of leather, a variety of instruments of daily use, such as knife, spoon, awl, tweezers, scissors, packing needle, flute, tobacco pouch, etc. The tobacco pouch is carried only by the males.

As regards the dress of the children, it also differs according to the sex. The male child will put on a cap, shirt, *banian*, coat and pyjamas. Boys are often found barefooted. The female child puts on a small *khonpi* on the head and a *jhogla*—a dress from the neck up to the feet—on the body and socks and shoes on the feet ; with the advance in her age, she begins wearing more clothes.

A man may be found barefooted but hardly any female is found without shoes except when she is cooking or bathing.

Ornaments

Ornaments are generally used by the females. The males hardly use any ornament except the finger-ring or a gold chain round their necks. These are used by persons who are well-off. Womenfolk are laden with silver and stone ornaments and the rich among them wear gold. A *phulli* made of gold is generally worn on the nose by unmarried and married women but not by a widow. The following is the list of ornaments generally used by the Bhotiya women :—

Name of Ornament	Metal	Part of the body where it is worn	Remarks
1. <i>Nath</i>	Gold	Nose	
2. <i>Phulli</i>	"	"	
3. <i>Beera</i>	"	"	
4. <i>Taps</i>	"	Ear	
5. <i>Karan Phool</i>	"	"	
6. <i>Munra</i>	Silver	"	
7. <i>Soota</i>	"	Neck	
8. <i>Mala</i>	"	"	
9. <i>Jhappi</i>	Gold	"	
10. <i>Globand</i>	"	"	
11. <i>Chandrahar</i>	"	"	Used by rich people only.
12. <i>Timonia</i>	"	"	
13. <i>Toda</i>	Silver	"	
14. <i>Atardan</i>	"	Shoulder	
15. <i>Sooti</i>	"	"	
16. <i>Shiv Sangal</i>	"	"	
17. <i>Pahunchi</i>	Silver	Wrist	

Name of Ornament	Metal	Part of the body where it is worn	Remarks
18. <i>Dhagula</i>	Silver	Wrist	
19. <i>Ring</i>	Gold or Silver	Finger	
20. <i>Payal</i>	Silver	Leg	
21. <i>Sogantola</i>	"	"	
22. <i>Chhalla</i>	"	"	
23. <i>Pulli</i>	"	"	
24. <i>Bichhwa</i>	"	First finger of feet	

Besides the above ornaments, the females wear strings of large pieces of coarse amber round the neck in addition to two or three necklaces.

A *phulli* in nose is worn by the unmarried and the married alike but not by a widow, who also never wears a *globand*, *nath* and *bichhwa* which are symbols of a living husband.

Furniture

No modern furniture is used in this village but those who can afford use mats and carpets. There are only 2 or 3 households in the whole of the village who have got one or two cots. Others spread mats on the floors and sleep over it. Almost every house has a woollen carpet costing between Rs.50 and Rs.70 for being spread on the floor.

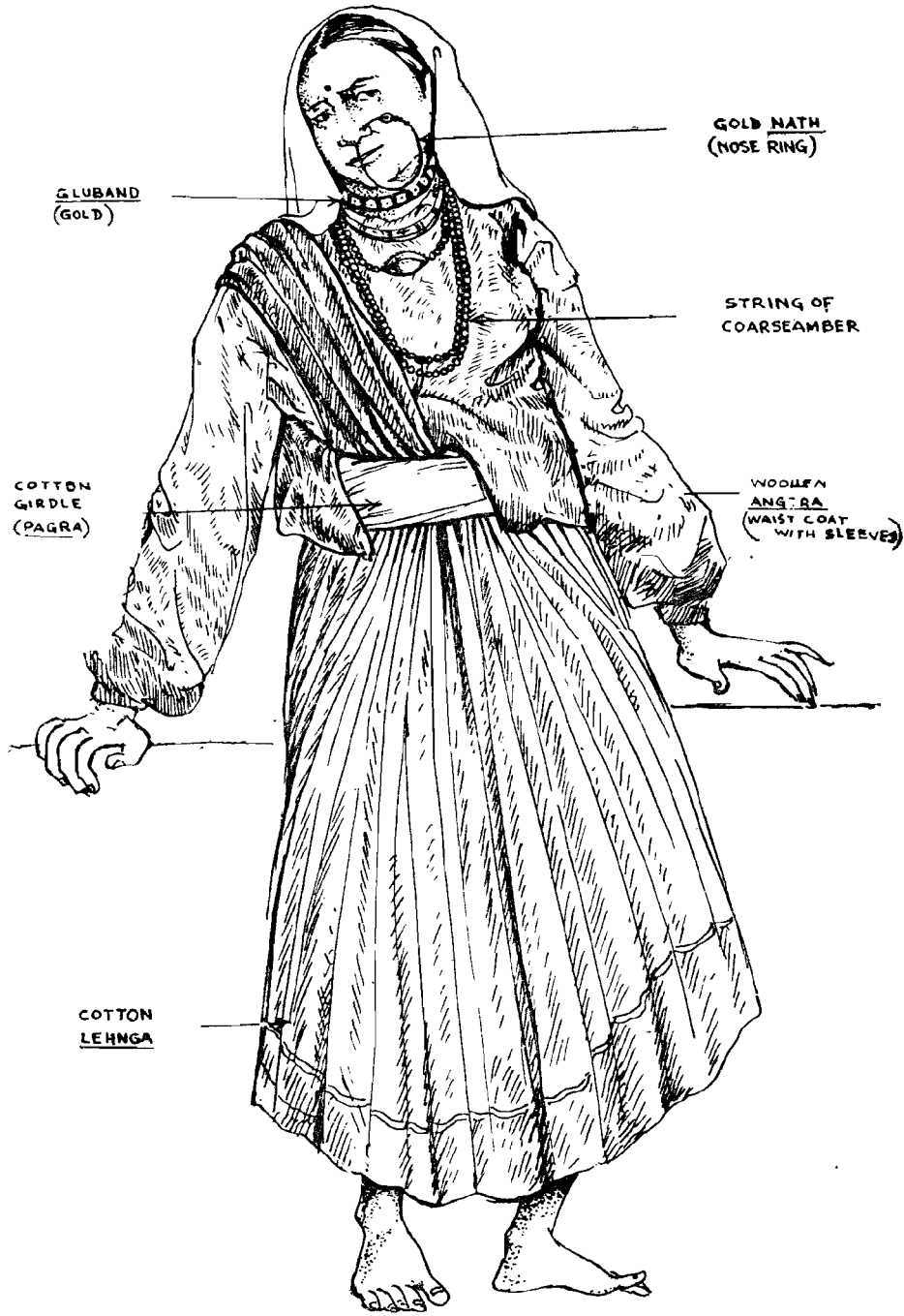
For the storage of grains, *ans* made of bamboo, *bhakhra* made of wood and *dhangdala* made of stones are used.

Utensils

The following utensils are generally used by the inhabitants of this village :—

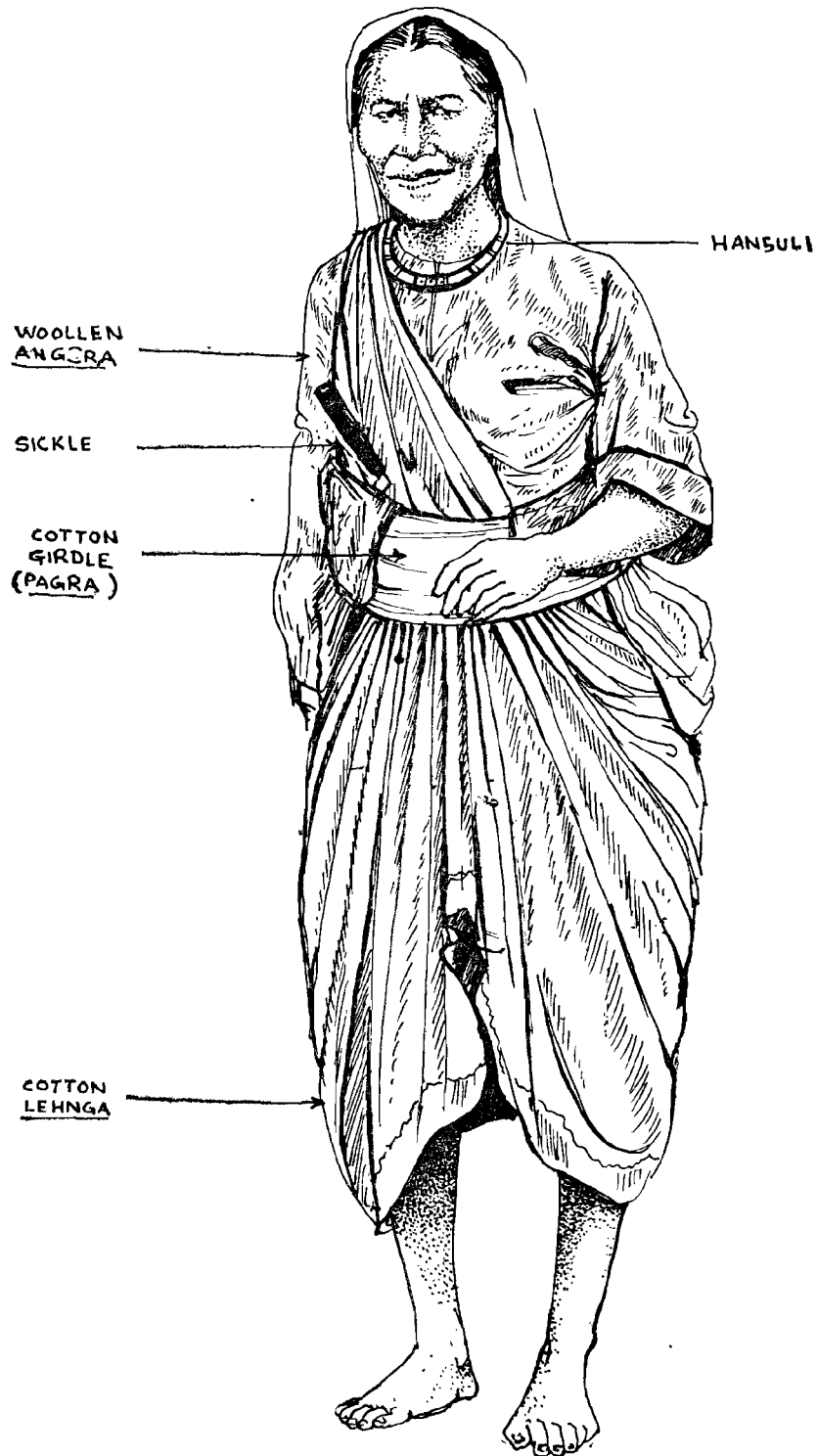
Local name of the utensil	Hindi Synonym	Metal	Use
1. <i>Tauli</i>	<i>Bhagona</i>	Copper	For preparing rice
2. <i>Karahi</i>	<i>Karhai</i>	Iron	For preparing vegetable
3. <i>Degchi</i>	<i>Pateell</i>	Brass or Aluminium	For preparing pulse
4. <i>Thali</i>	<i>Thali</i>	Bell-metal	For taking meals
5. <i>Payala</i>	<i>Katora</i>	Bell-metal	For taking meals

PLATE NO. VI



A typical Shilpkar woman

PLATE NO. VII



A typical Kshatriya female

Local name of the utensil	Hindi Synonym	Metal	Use
6. <i>Tipri</i>	<i>Kettle</i>	Brass or Aluminium	For preparing tea
7. <i>Bugania</i>	<i>Ghara</i>	Copper	For storing water
8. <i>Balti</i>	<i>Balti</i>	Tin	For carrying water'
9. <i>Prat</i>	<i>Prat</i>	Brass or Copper	For preparing dough
10. <i>Pallu</i>	<i>Pallu</i>	Wood	For preparing dough
11. <i>Tawa</i>	<i>Tawa</i>	Iron	For preparing <i>chapaties</i>
12. <i>Karchhi</i>	<i>Karchhi</i>	Brass, Iron or Aluminium	For taking <i>mand</i> from rice
13. <i>Panual</i>	<i>Karchhul</i>	Iron or Brass	For serving cooked food
14. <i>Dumka</i> or <i>Dungwa</i>	<i>Dumka</i>	Wood	For preparing salted tea
15. <i>Kasni</i>	<i>Lota</i>	Brass	For taking water
16. <i>Baati Jaroo</i>	<i>Bara Chamcha</i>	Brass or Tin	A big spoon
17. <i>Koshal</i>	<i>Pateeli</i>	Brass	For preparing pulse
18. <i>Linch</i> or <i>Kanchi</i>	<i>Payala</i>	Silver	For taking tea
19. <i>Kulukushi</i>	..	Wood	For keeping water for dough
20. <i>Dowa</i>	..	Wood]	A cup for taking tea
21. <i>Dungpa</i>	..	Wood	A vessel used as mortar

The number and quality of utensils increases or decreases according to one's means. The utensils are more or less of the same design with slight differences in size or name as are used everywhere except the *dumka* (item no. 14) which is made of wood and is meant for preparing salted tea.

Besides these utensils every house has a few big vessels for storing grains. The kits and the beddings are mostly of wool and so are the dresses. A silver cup called *linch* or *kanchi* is used for taking tea. *Dungwa* is a cylindrical wooden pot inside which a wooden pipe is fitted for preparing salted tea called *jaya*. *Kulukushi* is a wooden dish-type deep utensil used for kneading the dough. *Dowa* is a wooden cup for taking tea and *dungpa* is a wooden vessel used as pestle mortar.

Food and Drinks

The majority use coarse grains and poor food having little nutritional value. Millets, potatoes, barley and rice constitute the main diet. Bhotiyas specially relish dehydrated meat (pre-

pared by salting and drying it in the sun), *sattu* and rice. Wheat and rice have to be imported in large quantities to meet the demand of the local people in this deficit area.

In almost every household whether rich or poor the day begins with simple tea. In some families, the overnight cooked *chapaties* are taken with tea in the morning whereas in rich Bhotiyas families the day begins with salted tea and *sattu* prepared from parched wheat and *choora*, a preparation of rice. At lunch time rice, lentil pulse and *chatni* are generally taken. Some people take vegetables too. The Brahmin and the Kshatriya generally take a bath daily and invariably wear *dhoti* before entering the kitchen for taking boiled rice and pulse.

Almost all Bhotiyas manufacture *jan*, a sort of indigenous beer which is their religious drink. Illicit distillation of country liquor is also carried out by them. Only the Bhotiya families drink *jan* after taking their evening meal, which generally consists of *chapati*, pulse, vegetable or meat. Although there is not even a single household in this village where meat is

not consumed, the Bhotiyas are particularly fond of it. They use dehydrated meat frequently.

In well-to-do Bhotiya families, wheat or barley *sattu* mixed with *ghee* is taken with the afternoon salted tea but the poor are content with simple tea.

Out of the 83 households of the Bhotiya community, 65 households or 78 per cent have only two meals a day, 24 families take three meals a day and 4 families take one meal a day. Those who take two meals a day, take heavy breakfast in the morning which is not less than a meal itself. All the 4 Kshatriya families take two meals a day. In the Shilpkar community, out of the 15 households, two households can afford only one meal a day and 13 households take two meals a day. Thus out of the 103 households, 6 households take one meal a day, 82 households two meals a day and 24 households three meals a day. No one takes more than three meals a day.

In the Gazetteer of district Almora published in 1911, Walton had observed: "The Bhotiyas consume large quantities of food, particularly flesh of which a constant supply is afforded to them in the carcasses of their sheep and goats, which die of fatigue or disease. They eat flesh half raw or cooked and are fond of taking it with rice, but do not first wash or clean the rice as they say that this would prevent its being properly cooked. They abstain from the use of beef of every description. All Bhotiyas drink spirits both European and native as well as that brewed by themselves. When collected together, they drink frequently and often it continues from the evening till dawn. Intoxication does not, however, lead to riot or disorder. The liquor used by them is of two kinds—*daru*, produced by distillation and *jan* obtained by simple fermentation; the latter is a favourite beverage. Both of these are produced from rice. The Bhotiyas do not follow the recipes of the Hindus in the matter of cooking food without *ghee* and with *ghee* and take it without distinction from the hands of all except Shilpkars. Slowly and surely, they are becoming Brahmanised and

already imitate in many minor matters the tedious ceremonies prescribed by the customs of the plains". These observations still hold good.

Sattu which is so popular with the Bhotiyas is made mostly of wheat and sometimes of maize and barley. It is always taken with *jaya*, the salted tea, mixed with *ghee* and uncooked rice, called *choora*.

They do not eat turnip but take flesh of goats, sheep, hare, deer, water birds and fish except that of monkey, cow, buffalo, pig, fowl, crocodile, snake, lizard, rat or other vermins.

In Johar pargana, it is the custom as is in other places that men should eat first and then women. The leavings are always for the women and juniors. The Bhotiyas are so much addicted to the consumption of liquors that they would hardly worship any of the deities without plentiful supply of *jan* and *daru*, wheat and grains of all kinds.

Birth Customs

At the time of the delivery the expectant mother is almost always lodged in the lower portion of the house called *goth*, which is generally used for tethering the cattle. Grass is spread on the floor on which the expectant mother is made to lie on a bed. At the time of delivery, an old woman is called for conducting it. In the absence of trained midwives, one has to bank upon these experienced women. Joy fills the household on the birth of a male child. Just after birth, the infant is washed in slightly hot water. The child is then wrapped in a cloth. The mother is also bathed. She is fed on a nutritious diet to recoup her health. Mostly, *jaula*, prepared in *ghee* is served to her. One *khonpi* is given to the woman conducting the delivery. She is also given one time meals.

Up to the 11th day of the birth the mother and the child live in the *goth*. The mother is made to take her bath in slightly hot water on the third, fifth, seventh, ninth and the eleventh day of the birth of the child. On the touch or contact of the mother with anyone else, the urine of cow, locally called *gaunt*, is sprinkled over the body of both. At every place where the mother

PLATE NO. VIII



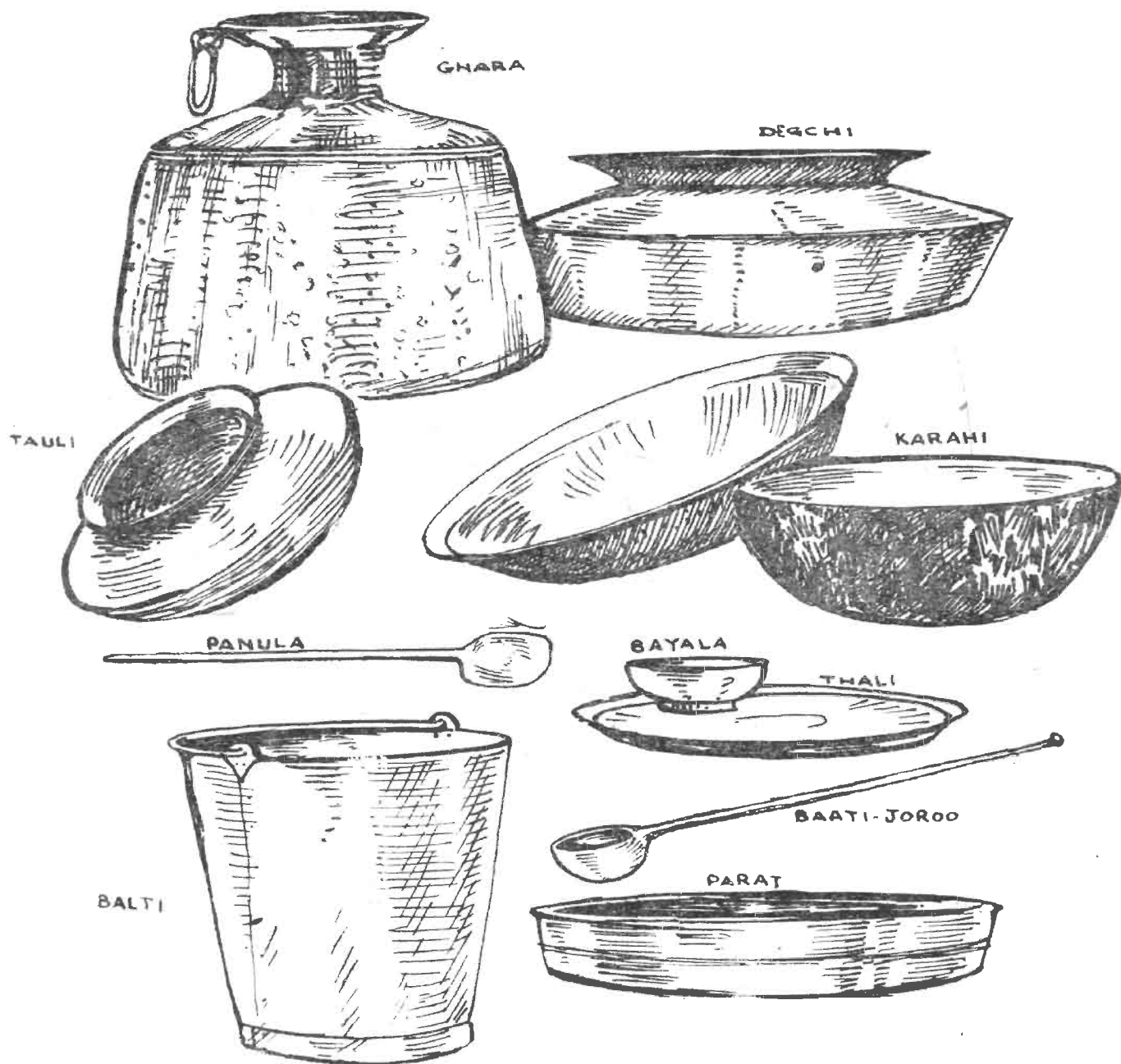
A Bhotiya woman carrying water from the dhara

PLATE NO. IX



*Some utensils used in a Bhotiya household,
placed in front of the house*

PLATE NO. X



Some utensils used in Bhotiya households

moves, may it be inside or outside the *goth*, urine of cow is sprinkled. This process of sprinkling the urine is not only considered sacred but also serves as a disinfectant.

On the 11th day of the child's birth, a Brahmin priest from village Suring is invited. One end of a banana leaf is held by the mother with a little cowdung and a rupee in her hand and the other end is held by the priest. With the other hand, the mother holds the child and then enters the house along with the priest. This ceremony takes place after the mother has taken her bath. The Brahmin offers prayers, prepares a horoscope of the child and reads it aloud. The child is then christened. The Brahmin is offered the money which was in the hand of the mother when she entered the house. A *dhoti* and other useful articles are also offered to him according to the financial status of the family. This ceremony is called *shushura*. On this auspicious day, a feast is also given.

After expiry of six months, the ceremony of *annupras* is observed. The child is initiated into the consumption of grain. On this day, new clothes are given to the child. Giving new garments to the child is called the *chawli de* ceremony.

The ceremonies known as *mundan sanskar* (head-shaving ceremony) and *yagopavit sanskar* (sacred thread ceremony) in plains are combined in this area in the *bratban* ceremony. This ceremony is performed in respect of all the males. In well-to-do families, the ceremony takes place in childhood whereas among the poor, this takes place later on according to the status of the family but in all cases before the marriage ceremony.

To celebrate it, the Brahmin is first of all called at the residence. In one corner, a *mandap* is constructed with a mound of clay. On it the Brahmin writes with ground rice. *Ghee*, barley, *til*, and cow-dung and a few rupees are placed upon it. The boy, his father and the Brahmin are then seated. The Brahmin offers puja by reading from the scriptures, pouring *ghee*, barley and *til* on fire as part of the *havan* ceremony. The head of the boy is shaved. There-

after a white cloth is wrapped round his head and he takes a bath to the recitation of holy verses by the Brahmin. In the end a new dress is given to the boy to put on and his mother leads him inside. Then a feast is given to relatives and friends and an offering is made to the Brahmin.

No rites or ceremonies are performed on attaining puberty by girls.

During the menstruation period, a woman is treated to be impure. She has to live for five days in a *goth*. If anyone touches her, he can be purified by sprinkling of cow urine on his body. During this period she is not allowed to go to the temple, the *dhara* or to a religious recitation. She takes her bath on the fifth day, sprinkles cow urine over her body and then enters the residential apartment.

Marriage Customs

Early marriages are no longer in vogue. Marriages are of two kinds. One form is the *kanyadan* or *anchal* marriage where the bride's father gives the hand of his daughter to her prospective groom after observing a fast on the day of wedding. He also gives money and material to the bride according to his means. In the other form of marriage, known as the *sarov*, the price of the bride is taken from the groom before the marriage is performed. The *kanyadan* marriage is considered respectable and is generally practised among the well-to-do. The poor, however, generally charge a price for the bride. Exchange marriages are also prevalent.

A bride can come from among the Bhotiyas of Johar, Niti and Mana valleys, but not from Darma, Chaudans and Biyas; nor from Tibet or Pithoragarh or Almora. Marriage within the same sub-caste is not permissible, e.g., a Pangti can marry in any family of a Johari Bhotiya except the Pangti. Similar rules of endogamy are observed within the Shilpkars.

The marriages are settled after taking into consideration the status of the boy and the clan to which he belongs. When the marriage negotiations are finalised, the *sagai* (betrothal) ceremony is performed. At the time of the *sagai*

if it is a *kanyadan* marriage, a coconut and a betel-nut are taken to the house of the bride by the father of the boy or some of his near relatives in his absence. Sometimes, rings are also taken for the bride alongwith the coconut and the betel-nut. If some price is charged for the bride, sweets are sent in a cup. The sweets and the cup are given to the bride. After the *sagai* ceremony is over, a date for the marriage is fixed. Marriages are generally performed in the months of *Aghan*, *Magh*, *Phalgun* and *Baisakh*. In no case marriages are performed in the month of *Chaitra* which is considered inauspicious for these celebrations.

The groom with the marriage party (*barat*) goes to the house of the bride. He takes from his house *chartho*, *kali mala*, *peetha* and *chuteela*. On the arrival of the groom the womenfolk of the bride's side keep ready *sago*, meat, pulse and rice arranged in a plate. The *thal* or the plate is circulated five times round the head of the groom and the substance of the plate is thrown in all the four directions. The groom is then made to stand in a *chauka* outside the house. The father of the bride washes the feet of the groom. Thereafter, the groom is escorted to a separate room called *bratidhana*. There he is offered a new bedding.

Either in the upper or the lower portion of the house a *mandap* or canopy is made. In the centre of it, fire for *havan* is burnt by the Brahmin who officiates at the ceremony. At the time fixed for marriage, the bride and the groom come under the *mandap*, accompanied by some persons of their party. The priests of both the parties recite holy verses. The bride washes the feet of the groom and the latter offers to her one rupee as a token of his affection. The other minor ceremonies like the touching of the toes and changing of the places are done in the same manner as in other parts of the hills. The groom and the bride take seven rounds of the holy fire where the branches of banana and pine trees are also kept. Circumambulation of the holy fire is the main and essential ceremony of a marriage. Some presents are also given to the groom. In all types of marriages the *pancholi bartan*, consisting of five utensils, are

always given to the groom by the father of the bride. No iron utensil is presented as it is considered an inauspicious metal. The utensils generally given are a bell-metal *thali*, a brass *lota*, a copper *prat* and *bugania* and a brass *koshal*, which constitute a complete set of utensils for cooking. The groom after accepting the presents, offers *pranam* (respect by bowing low) five times to his mother-in-law. In return she offers ten rupees or more to him according to her status. If the bride has been purchased, the groom pays Rs.4.50 only to the mother of the bride in lieu of the milk which she gave to the bride during childhood.

On the day of return of the marriage party the bride is sent in a *doli* (palanquin) and the groom on horse-back or on foot. At the time of departure, the mother-in-law gives one rupee or more to the bridegroom. When the marriage party and the bride depart, the womenfolk of the bride's party sing some songs.

When the party reaches the groom's house with the bride, his mother comes at the door to receive the bride. On the door of the house five half-cooked *purees* (fried *chapaties*) are kept. The bride leads and the groom follows her. Both tread upon these *purees* with their feet and enter the house. Inside the house the groom's mother presents an ornament to the bride who wears it. Both the bride and the groom then sit together. In one place are served *purees* and *bara* and in another *katora* curd is served; both the bride and the groom taste it. They are also given fruits of the season. Then the *anchal* (ceremonial knot tying husband and wife together) is loosened and both are left to lead their married life.

On the third or the fourth day the bride returns to her father's house with *puree* and *pakwan* and after staying there for three days again comes back to her husband's house. This second occasion can be termed as *gauna* or effective marriage.

As observed by Panna Lall in Hindu Customary Law in Kumaon, in the case of a *sarol* marriage, the presence of the bridegroom is not necessary. His friends and relations go and

fetch the bride with almost no ceremonies. The bride acquires full legal rights as wife as soon as she reaches her husband's house, irrespective of the performance of the *anchal* rites. If she happens to become a widow before the *anchal* rites are performed, she would have full rights of inheritance, maintenance, etc., just as a widow. She cannot marry again, even though she can become concubine. Nowadays the custom about *sarol* is undergoing a change. Even when the bride has been purchased, in some cases *shapta-padi* ceremony is gone through, as in the *kanyadan* marriage, at the house of the bride.

Polyandry is not permissible. When widows remarry they are called *dhantis*. A man marrying a widow has to make some payment to the deceased husband's relations and obtain a deed of relinquishment (*la dava*). The children by a *dhanti* are treated as legitimate. A widow taking her deceased husband's younger brother as her husband ranks as a *dhanti*. The elder brother cannot marry the widow of his younger brother. She always observes strict *pardah* in his presence and does not dare talk to him face to face.

Due to continuous contacts with the Hindus, the Bhotiyas too have adopted the Hindu marriage customs to a great extent.

Death Customs

The dead body of a child is washed in water, *ghee* is rubbed on it and a little *ghee* is poured into the mouth. After that it is wrapped in a white cloth and then buried underground. Sometimes, pieces of gold and silver are also placed in the mouth of dead children whose *bratban* ceremony has not been performed. A little salt is also placed near the head of a child. The dead bodies of adults are generally buried or cremated at the bank of a river. Persons who die an unnatural death or of an infectious disease are not burnt but are buried. Pieces of gold or silver are also placed in the mouth of the deceased. The dead body is bathed in water and a cow or some grain is given in charity. Then the dead body is wrapped in a white sheet and carried to the cremation ground by four persons who shoulder the bier. It is the

son or in his absence a near relative who first lifts the bier on his shoulder. In a plate a *pind* of barley flour is also carried to the cremation ground along with the corpse. The funeral pyre is lit by the eldest son. When the dead body is burnt, the ashes are immersed in the water. The *pind* is also dropped in water after the immersion of the ashes. The son who lit the funeral pyre gets his head shaved. Then he takes his bath and puts on a white *dhoti*. He wraps himself with the blanket of the deceased, as a symbol of mourning. A piece of white cloth is tied to a small stick. All members of the funeral party, who are locally called *mulaini*, also take a bath after immersion of the ashes for cleaning themselves. The son of the deceased holds the small stick in his hand and returns to his house along with the *mulaini*. On return they sip cow urine and smell the leaves of *kurch* and *bilb* to purify themselves, just as they use the *neem* leaves in the plains.

A portion of the house is cleaned and in it a lamp is lit. The son who had performed the funeral ceremony is to sit in this room. All the clothes of the deceased are also placed there. The lamp burns throughout the day and the night. A separate *dhara* is carved out near the distant water source meant for males and an earthen pot is placed there. In that pot, some food is dropped every morning for the deceased.

Members of the family do not take their meals on the cremation day but *chapaties* of wheat flour mixed with salt, chilly and *timur* grass with tea or liquor are served to the cremation party on their return to the house after cremation. If a man dies before midday meals, the feast to the funeral party is given the same evening and if after the midday meals, it is postponed to the morning of the following day.

The man who lit the pyre has to take his bath twice daily. He takes only the midday meals, cooked by himself. He always keeps the stick with the white flag with him. On the tenth day, a Brahmin priest is called in from village Suring, which is situated at a distance of one mile. In the morning some persons especially the near relatives carry to the *dhara* the clothes of the deceased and all the utensils which were used by

the son who lit up the funeral pyre, in preparing the meals. The *dhara* is demolished and all the clothes and the utensils are then given to the Brahmin priest. In addition, some flour, rice, pulse, salt, spices, *ghee* and oil are also given to him in separate bags. On their return, all members of the clan are given a feast of boiled rice.

During the period of mourning the beating of drum among his castemen or by neighbours or the ringing of bells round the neck of the animals is stopped. The close relations also get their heads shaved on the tenth day.

After one year, the *shradh* ceremony is performed but that is generally done in the case of older persons.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY

The following table gives a detailed split-up of occupations, showing the number of persons engaged therein :—

TABLE No. 3.1

Number of Persons engaged in different Occupations

Occupation	Number of Workers			Per-centage
	Persons	Males	Females	
1. Woollen Handicraft	175	29	146	59.1
2. Trade and Commerce	40	40	..	13.5
3. Transport of Merchandise	17	17	..	5.8
4. Cultivation	19	12	7	6.4
5. Tailoring	10	10	..	3.3
6. Blacksmithy	1	1	..	0.3
7. Government Service	17	16	1	5.8
8. Other Services	17	15	2	5.8
Total Workers	296	140	156	100
Non-workers	247	157	90	..
Total Population	543	297	246	..

The total population has about 54.5 per cent workers. Out of the working force about 52.7 per cent are females. Woollen handicraft is the most important occupation in which 59.1 per cent of the working population is engaged. Trade and commerce is carried on by 13.5 per cent, transport of merchandise by 5.8 per cent and cultivation by 6.4 per cent of the workers. Other occupations are government service, tailoring and other services.

Occupations by Castes

The Bhotiyas are engaged mainly in woollen handicraft, trade and commerce and transport of merchandise and to some extent in government services. The Kshatriyas are cultivators only. The Shilpkars are engaged in cultivation (as servants of Bhotiyas, except for one household), trade and transport, tailoring, blacksmithy and other services. In trade, they work as

employees of Bhotiyas whereas in transport they work both as employees of Bhotiyas and as independent workers. The village has no washerman, barber or shoemaker.

The following table gives a castewise distribution of the workers in various occupations :—

TABLE No. 3.2

Occupations according to Communities

Occupation	Brahmin	Bhotiya	Dholi	Lohar	Orh	Kshatriya	Total
	1. Woollen Handicraft	..	150	20	3	2		..	175
2. Trade and Commerce	..	40	..	..	..	..	40
3. Transport	..	8	8	..	1	..	17
4. Cultivation	..	4	6	..	..	9	19
5. Tailoring	..	4	4	..	2	..	10
6. Blacksmithy	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
7. Government Service	1	16	..	..	..	..	17
8. Other Services	..	12	4	..	1	..	17
Total	1	234	42	4	6	9	296

Thus Bhotiyas account for 79 per cent of the workers, followed by Dholis who comprise 14.3 per cent of the workers. Trade is monopolised by the Bhotiyas whereas they far outnumber others in the woollen handicraft as well.

Occupational Mobility

The educated persons have a tendency to get into services. Sometimes there is a change in occupation on account of financial difficulties, e.g., in 23 cases the father's occupation was trade but the son had to change it partly due to financial difficulties and partly due to difficulties in trade after the Chinese occupation of Tibet. They have taken up the occupation of weaving woollen shawl, carpet, *dan*, *punkhi*, *thulma*, etc. Six households have shifted to the occupa-

tion of transporting merchandise from one place to another, three have become servants of traders and two have shifted to domestic service. In one case the father was a trader but the son became a tailor. The son of a *void* has become a trader because he saw better prospects in trade. Sons of two traders have put up grocery and general merchandise shops. In two cases, the father was engaged in trade but the sons have taken up tailoring as their vocation; in one instance, the father used to graze cattle but the son acquired a little land and started cultivation. He also purchased two horses and took up transport work as well.

Sri Chandradatt Joshi studied up to VIII class and became a compounder. His father is still a cultivator. Sri Harsh Singh worked as a trader and *void* but his son Sri Durga Singh studied up to primary standard and got employment as a Cultural Supervisor. The son of Sri Hukam Singh, a trader has joined the military service. Similarly Sri Tej Singh was engaged in transport by sheep but his son Sri Pratap Singh received some education and is now employed as a check-post head constable.

In seven cases, occupations have been changed by the present heads of households who are widows because there is no longer a male member to carry on the old occupation. Either there are no male issues or the sons are too young. Out of these seven families, one was engaged in trade, one in service of trader and one in tailoring. In three families, there is no other member except the widows themselves.

Thus there have been changes in the traditional occupation on account of different reasons. The woollen handicraft has been attracting a number of persons. Facilities for receiving training have been provided by the Government.

Agriculture

The total area of the village is estimated to be 150.50 acres of which 50.50 acres is measured or *nap* land and the remaining 100 acres is unmeasured or *benap* land. The unmeasured land is mostly forest area. Of the measured land, the cultivated area consists of 45 acres (the remaining 5.50 acres being covered by *abadi*,

etc.) of which 35 acres are double-cropped and the remaining 10 acres are single-cropped. The Bhotiyas are not agriculturists and as such there is little emphasis on cultivation; the little land in their name is got cultivated by them through their Shilpkar servants. The details of land ownership by the residents of the village are as follows:—

TABLE NO. 3.3

Distribution of Land according to Castes

Name of head of Household	Name of Community	Land held in acres
1. Sri Lal Singh	Bhotiya	1.25
2. Smt. Leela Devi ✓	"	2.02
3. Sri Chandra Singh	"	2.02
4. Sri Kesar Singh	"	0.20
5. Sri Lachhman Singh	"	0.12
6. Smt. Pani Devi	Kshatriya	1.50
7. Sri Khem Singh	"	3.06
8. Sri Ratan Singh	"	3.06
9. Smt. Udma Devi	"	4.00
10. Sri Nathi Ram	Shilpkar	4.04
	Total	21.27

Thus out of 45 acres of cultivated land only 21.27 acres are in the possession of the residents of the village, leaving a balance of 23.73 acres under cultivation of outsiders. Some land in Bhainskhal and Millam also is under cultivation of the Bhotiyas.

Only 19 workers, 12 males and 7 females, are engaged in agriculture which is naturally of little importance in this village.

The following table indicates the age-groups of workers in cultivation:—

TABLE NO. 3.4

Workers in Cultivation by Sex and Age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Number of Workers		
	Total	Males	Females
All ages	19	12	7
0—14	..	..	..
15—34	9	7	2
35—59	5	2	3
60 and over	5	3	2

About 62 per cent of the workers in cultivation are males.

Soil Classification

Soil is generally classified as *Talaon* (irrigated) first class; *Upraon* (dry) second class and *Ijran* and *Katil*. *Talaon* again is of two types — *Sera* where the water supply is perennial, fields are carefully levelled, soil is alluvial and fertile and *Panchar*, where the fields are situated on the highlands, not properly levelled and consequently less fertile. Inferior terraced land cultivated intermittently is called *Ijran*, but if it is merely a natural sloping hillside without any terraces, it is known as *Katil* or *Khil*.

The soil can also be divided in three categories, viz., the red soil, the brown soil and the *podrol* soil. The red soil is found in slopes and ridges of the hills and is generally sandy in nature. On the surface it is greyish but on mosing it assumes a reddish colour. The brown soil is found in forests and the nearby fields. The colour of the soil is brown or dark brown depending upon the quality of organic matter therein. The *podrol* soil is found in all the terraced land of this area. The texture of this soil is mostly clayey.

Irrigation

There are no sources of irrigation except the stream which supplies potable water in the village. Fields situated by the side of this stream are irrigated but to a limited extent only.

Land Tenure

Land is divided into measured (*nap*) and unmeasured (*benap*) land. Waste land is known as *benap* because only cultivated or culturable and terraced land has been measured at the time of settlement. *Nap* land is settled land and is private property and *benap* land is the property of the State. Land that has relapsed into jungle or permanent waste or has never been cultivated is recorded in the name of the State and is known as Kaiser-i-Hind land. The villagers have no proprietary rights over such

land and subject to certain restrictions, cultivation can legitimately be extended on them. When unmeasured land is brought under cultivation in a separate block, not in continuity of the old cultivation, such cultivation is known as *nayabad* (equivalent of the *nautor* land of the plains) and requires sanction of the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Sub-Divisional Officer.

A hill village has a number of proprietors or *hissedars*. A *hissedar* has full rights of transfer in the cultivated land of the village. All the *hissedars* are jointly and severally liable for the land revenue assessed on the whole village. Out of the proprietary body, locally called *panch hissedaran*, one person is appointed as *pradhan* or *malguzar*. He has to collect the land revenue from the co-sharers.

In every village there is usually some measured land held in common by the whole village community. It is known as *gaon sanjait*. When one *hissedar* gets his proportionate share of the *gaon sanjait* separated by imperfect partition, the remaining land is *sanjait* of specific *hissedars* only.

The *khaikar* is a permanent tenant with a heritable but non-transferable right in his holding and paying a rent fixed at Settlement, which cannot be altered during the currency of a Settlement. The rent to be paid by him is the proportionate amount of revenue assessed on his holding plus a *malikana* amount of 20 per cent.

The *sirtans* or tenants-at-will form the third type of agriculturists. They are equivalent to *asamis* in the plains. They cultivate land which the proprietors cannot, either because of absence or non-availability of adequate labour or other causes. They have no right of occupancy; they pay their rent either in cash or in kind. The rent so paid is termed as *sirti*.

The village land records consist of *phant* or an abstract village record of rights and revenue roll; the *muntakhib* which gives each separate share in detail of fields with their area, classification of soil and the *thok* they are situated in as also the *hissedars* of each *khata* and the *khaikar*

or *sirtan* of each number ; the *khasra* which is the original measurement record of fields giving their area *thok*, *hissedar* and tenant classification and crop and area of crop at the time of settlement.

The U. P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 has not been extended to the district and hence the old system of land tenure continues.

Type of Fields

The village has very little level ground. The best cultivation is on terraced fields, kept continuously under the plough except for the periodical seasons of the fallow. These terraces cost a huge amount of labour and capital to make and maintain and one cannot be made in a single working season. Stones at the lower half of the field are built into a wall and at the same time an excavation is made in the upper part till the whole plot becomes approximately levelled. As the soil is very thin on most hill sides and lies over a stony sub-soil, the effect of carrying out the whole of the operation at once would be to bury the soil under the stones. Usually a small wall is built up and a small excavation made during the first year, the operation being completed in the course of time by weather, tith and deluvion from higher fields. The labour involved is of course very great and the least neglect results in quick and profuse overgrowth of the thorny bushes and other scrub jungle.

There are as many as 206 plots, one above the other just like a staircase. The type of stony soil and the small size of these fields cannot make cultivation a profitable occupation.

Method of Cultivation

To prepare the ground for seed, it is first of all ploughed once in the course of *kharif* crop such as *jhangura* and *mandua* and twice in the case of other crops. Land is more carefully prepared for wheat or barley than for the *kharif* crops. The fields are scrupulously cleaned and are made fit for *kharif* seed. In the case of rice

and sometimes wheat, the clods are broken up after each ploughing with a long-handled mallet and the ground is smoothed over with a toothless harrow. The seed is then sown and ploughed in with the manure. When the *kharif* crop is two or three inches high, the toothed harrow, locally called *dandayala*, is applied. They are regularly weeded till they begin to come into ear. The crop is cut with a sickle. Rice is cut off close to the root but ears are only first cut off in *mandua* and *jhangura* and then stalks are cut for fodder when dried up. Wheat and barley are cut about the middle. In irrigated land, rice is usually sown in a seed bed from which the young plants are transplanted into the remaining irrigated land.

For sowing paddy, the plots are ploughed twice and then seed is dropped and then ploughed up. The wheat plots are prepared in a similar manner but they are tilled seven to ten times before the seed is sown. Except vegetables, maize and *desi bhatt*, all the crops are sown here by broadcasting method. In paddy too, first of all the seed is scattered and then transplantation takes place.

Rotation of Crops

As usual, there are two crop seasons, viz., the *rabi* and the *kharif*. In *rabi* wheat, barley, *masoor*, mustard, rape, *palak* and cauliflower are sown whereas in the *kharif* paddy (*cheena*), *mandua*, *kaundi*, *jhangura*, maize, *bhatt* and potato are sown. Paddy of various kinds such as *riyas*, *kakdiya*, *tuulia*, *jirley* and *kafalra doti*, etc., are grown here. Paddy is the most important crop of the village. Some vegetables are also grown in fields in summer as *zaid* crop and in some kitchen gardens throughout the year.

The standard rotation observed throughout the *upraon* land occupies a period of two years. Rice is sown in May/June and reaped in September. It is followed by wheat sown in October and reaped in April ; then *mandua* is sown in May and reaped in October after which the land remains fallow till next April. Thus the course of rotation generally followed is paddy — wheat — *mandua* — fallow — paddy.

PLATE NO. XI



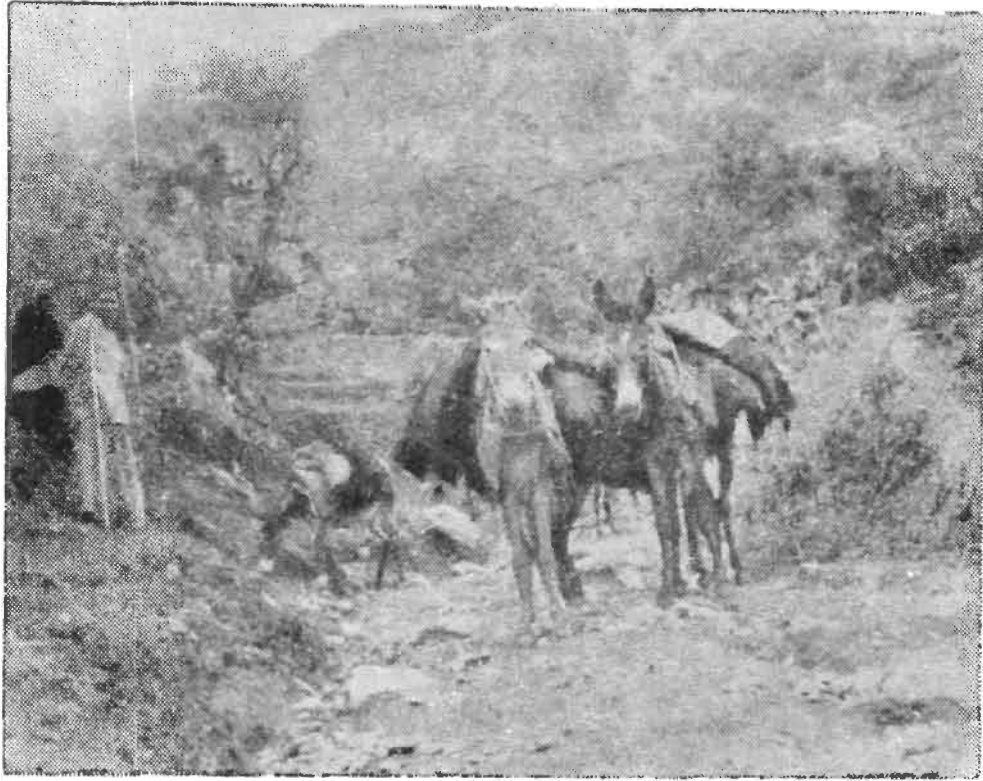
A Shilpkar ploughing a field

PLATE NO. XII



Kshatriya men and women doing paddy transplantation in a field

PLATE NO. XIII



Mules laden with merchandise on way to Millam

Agricultural Implements

The agricultural implements in use are locally prepared. Improved agricultural implements are not known in the village. The following implements are generally used :—

Local Name	English Synonyms	Made of	Used
1. <i>Hal</i>	Plough	Wood	for tilling the soil
2. <i>Jua</i>	Yoke	Wood	for placing on the neck of the animals
3. <i>Danyali</i>	Leveller	Wood	for levelling the land
4. <i>Kutli</i>	Axe	Wood and Iron	for digging the soil
5. <i>Bausa</i>	Large Kudal	Wood and Iron	for digging the soil
6. <i>Dranti</i>	Sickle	Wood and Iron	for cutting the crop

In addition to the above implements, some minor implements, locally called *lathura*, *swail jyotura*, *nasyura*, etc., are also used. All the implements are locally prepared by the blacksmith. Wood is available free of cost but iron has to be purchased.

Manure

Only ordinary compost manure is used in this village. The cow-dung, leaves and litter are stored up at a place. For preparing the cow-dung manure, the cattle are kept in cow-sheds locally called *gath* or *gaushala* or sometimes in the lower portion of the house. The leaves of the trees are spread in the cattle-shed to serve as beds and the litter mixed with the droppings of the cattle is taken out daily early in the morning and stored up at the refuse dump. Some of the cultivators also burn the shrubs and grass in the field and these ashes are ploughed up in the soil as manure. The manure is carried to the fields by the womenfolk. Chemical fertilisers are rarely used because these have not yet become popular with the cultivators in spite of the best efforts of the Village Level Worker.

Pests and Crop Diseases

The crops are not free from diseases and pests. Paddy and wheat are attacked by the *gundhi* bug (*Leptocorhiza vericornis*), so named because

of its bad smell. It sucks away the milky juice from the developing grains; consequently, the grains do not fully develop or shrivel up completely. Wheat crop is affected by rusts and smuts locally called *kavlin*. The insect called *kurmula* generally cuts at the root of various crops. Another equally destructive insect is *petang*. No insecticides or pesticides are ordinarily used in the village.

Average Yield

The following figures indicate the seed sown per acre and the average yield of different crops as returned by the village cultivators :—

TABLE NO. 3.5

Seed-rate and Crop Yield

Crop	Seed sown per acre	Average yield per acre
1. Paddy	1.50 Maunds	8 to 10 Maunds
2. Wheat	2.00 Maunds	15 to 20 Maunds
3. <i>Mandua</i>	5 Seers	6 to 8 Maunds
4. Barley	2.00 Maunds	6 to 10 Maunds

Evidently the rate of seed sown per acre is high and the average yield per acre is quite low. Nature is not generous in a hill village. Seed of improved variety is available with the Block authorities and is sometimes purchased by the cultivators.

The following table shows the agricultural produce of cultivation run by the households and its disposal :—

TABLE No. 3.6

Agricultural Produce and its Disposal

Name of Product	Annual produce	Amount consumed	Amount sold
1. Wheat	138 mds.	129 mds.	9 mds.
2. Paddy	172 mds.	152 mds.	20 mds.
3. Pulse and gram	11 mds.	11 mds.	..
4. Barley	64 mds.	64 mds.	..
5. Vegetables	Rs. 304	Rs. 304	..
6. Chillies	Rs. 55	Rs. 55	..
7. Tobacco	Rs. 75	Rs. 75	..
8. Oilseeds	Rs.110	Rs. 110	..
9. Other agricultural crops	Rs.1,450	Rs.1,410	Rs.40
10. Fodder	Rs.285	Rs.285	..

Factors of Change

As a representative of the Planning Department, the Village Level Worker gives his suggestions to the cultivators for improvement of land and rotation of crops, etc. Seeds of improved variety and chemical manures can also be obtained through him on loan but the cultivators do not evince much interest in these schemes because land with them is very little and they attach more importance to other occupations. The method of cultivation has not therefore shown any appreciable change for the better.

Organization of Man Power

Both males and females carry out the agricultural operations. They are casually assisted by the younger generations. In other villages of the district the womenfolk are active participants in agriculture. In fact they do all the field work except the actual ploughing. In this village however the womenfolk feel more attracted to the woollen handicraft.

Rites, Legend, Proverbs and Myths relating to Agriculture

Before the commencement of the agricultural operations, the *haljot* ceremony is performed in

the month of May or June. An elderly and respectable person of the village inaugurates the ploughing operations.

Maijhar is the ceremony observed by the cultivators after the transplantation of paddy crop is over. Special food is prepared in the cultivator households to celebrate the occasion.

Poshai is another ceremony observed by cultivators when they start manuring the fields. All able-bodied cultivators assemble at the house of the oldest cultivator and then formally spread a little manure in the nearby field. Thereafter a hearty meal is taken. On this occasion, *ghee* and curds are served to the labourers.

Hariyala festival too is connected with agriculture.

Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday are considered to be auspicious days for ploughing and sowing a field. For starting the harvesting operation, Friday and Saturday are preferred; Tuesday is invariably avoided. After being harvested, the crop is offered to the deity before starting its consumption in the household.

As in the plains, some proverbs, too, are common. One common saying is '*sthaunt sukal, auni akal*'. If the pine fruit is plentiful, the crop would be bumper but if the *aonla* tree is laden with fruit, a famine might occur.

Another popular concept is contained in the saying '*jay sal hathuwe vee sal geyuwe*'. There would be bumper wheat crop during the year of a snowfall. Incidentally, the snowfall should be timely and not so heavy as might destroy the crop.

About rain it is said "*Chait ashtami, Jayesht mool Savan pare dhool*". If there is rainfall in the *mool nakshtra* in the month of *Jaith* or on the *Chaitra Ashtami*, there would be draught in the month of *Savan*.

The proverb stressing the virtues of carrying out the agricultural operations by one's ownself runs as :—

'Karner kheti parhner pothi'.

Cultivation by one's ownself makes one a perfect cultivator just as study makes one a learned man.

Animal Husbandry

Livestock in the village consists of milch cattle, wool-yielding and pack animals. All the 656 goats, 575 sheep, 53 mules, 13 donkeys and 8 yaks in the village are used as pack animals throughout the year. In addition, the sheep are a source of wool for the woollen handicraft which is an important occupation. When alive they are

used as beasts of burden and provide the Bhotiya with wool and when they are dead, their hides, fur, sinews and bones are used as household furniture or sold for cash. From April to October every year they are used for carrying goods from Darkot to Millam and then to Tibet and back and in the remaining months they are engaged for conveying goods to fairs at Thal, Bageshwar and Joljibi and other places or for transporting merchandise from markets like Tanakpur, Ramnagar and Haldwani to Darkot and other high altitudes. The position of livestock in the village is as follows :—

TABLE No. 3.7

Distribution of Livestock

Caste	Milch Cattle		Pack/Draught Animals		Goats and Sheep		Hen		Young ones of Milch Cattle		Dry Cows	
	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number	Number of House-holds owning	Total Number
Brahmin	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Bhotiya	23	30	31	91	17	962	3	15	24	33	17	22
Dholi	1	1	3	5	8	269	..	..	1	1	1	1
Kshatriya	2	3	4	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	9
Orh	—	—	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

The flocks of sheep, which produce wool, give their owners meat also apart from their attire and beddings. Sheep and goat hair are used for preparing strings; their skin is used for preparing bags, hand gloves, garments and for sitting. The hill sheep are small in size. They have wiry brownish grey wool, short tails and large horns. They are not good for the table and are reared mainly for the sake of the wool, out of which coarse blankets are made. Sheeps and goats sometimes suffer from common diseases such as rot, mange, small-pox, etc. During the rainy season, the goats are also exposed to a disease called *khari* which generally results in the loss of the hooves. The casualties further multiply by exposure and fatigue, by accidents and operations of wild beasts.

The common variety of sheep carries from ten to sixteen pounds of weight. It costs about fifty rupees. The Tibetan sheep are also employed by the Bhotiyas for transport trade and these are stronger and more active than the Kumaon breed. The regular day's journey is about five miles because of the great time required in feeding on pasture land on the way. Goats are also used for carrying goods. They bear a burden of twelve to twenty-four pounds and cost forty to fifty rupees. They are usually selected as leaders of the flock in view of their superior boldness and alacrity and are furnished with tingling bells. It is chiefly with these goats and sheep that the Tibetan trade is carried out. The salt, grain, borax, etc., are carried in a sort of pack made of worsted with a pair of pockets called

kakbaj slung across the animal's back. These pockets are partly covered with leather to protect the contents from moisture when travelling or when piled on the ground in camp. The pack is girthed underneath the body. A band around the chest and the other crupperwise under the tail render it perfectly safe when moving up or down the hill. It is marvellous to observe the business-like way in which these little animals of burden carry their loads. In spite of the narrowness of the path or the steepness of the ascent they seem intent only on pursuing their way without turning away for anything or anyone. Their obstinacy often causes the trader uneasiness and so they are taught patience. And no less amusing is it to watch the flocks of hundreds meeting in a narrow path or the brink of a precipice, each going the opposite direction and yet none making a mistake in following its own leader and patiently coming over all obstacles in doing so.

Goats are sometimes imported from Tibet for food and sacrifice but their meat is very stiff and ill-flavoured. Goats, as a rule, are small but stout. They are subjected to the same diseases as sheep and frequently get poisoned by eating the rank herbage that springs up in the rains. The leaves of the *ayar* are also said to be fatal to goats. The hill goats are useless as milch cattle and are bred chiefly for the transport trade or for food and sacrifice.

Horses and donkeys are also used by the Bhotiyas for the transport trade. They are used for carrying goods and passengers from Thal or Bageshwar markets to Munsiri. They are of grey or iron-grey colour though occasionally chestnut and roans are also seen. The pony has a compact body, broad forehead, short thick neck, broad chest, straight shoulders, strong back, good bone, well ribbed-up barrel, round muscular quarters, coarse hairy legs and long tail and mane. The feet are fairly open at the heels.

Milch cattle and transport animals play a significant role in the economy of this village. The Animal Husbandry Department provides help and guidance for the maintenance and

development of these animals. Whenever necessary they are inoculated against rinderpest and other diseases. A veterinary hospital is situated at Munsiri.

Forestry

There are no forests in the village but those in the neighbourhood cater to the needs of the village. They provide grazing place for the animals, timber for building and fuel for cooking.

Village Industries

The main household industry in the village is woollen handicraft, the minor industries being tailoring and blacksmithy. This industry has been the mainstay of the village since ancient times. Out of 296 workers, as many as 175 or 59.1 per cent of the total workers are engaged in weaving. The number of females in this occupation is 146 and that of the males only 29. Ethnically, out of the workers in this craft 150 are Bhotiyas, 20 Dholis, 3 Lohars and 2 Orhs. With the set-back to the trade with Tibet, the importance of this handicraft has further increased.

The main products of this industry are blankets, *thulmas*, *pankhus*, *dans*, tea cosy, woollen cloth, etc.

The raw material for the manufacture of woollen fabrics which are being produced here used to be partly obtained from Tibet. The Bhotiyas used to go to Tibet and purchase wool from there in exchange of goods, i.e., *gur*, grain, cloth, etc., which they carried from India. But now the only source of wool are the sheep which they themselves rear.

The wool is first of all washed in slightly hot water, then in cold water and then it is dried up. By this process the raw wool is cleaned of its impurities. The Bhotiya women have a sound knowledge of the treatment, grading and dyeing of wool. When it has dried up it is spun into yarn. After the preparation of warp and woof, locally termed as *thakar* and *pooran* respectively, the weaving process starts on a

wooden frame called the *chan*. The various implements used are *thal*, *lancha*, *baikathi*, *phiaga*, *takli*, etc.

The designs are traditional and appear to be of Tibetan origin because the different gods, demons, etc., of Tibetan literature are copied. The skill is transmitted from generation to generation, it being a family industry. The Bhotiya women have acquired a great dexterity in weaving the yarn into fabric. The males too, keep their spindles twisting all day long. They are seen with a skein of wool which they carry on their wrist like bracelet and they go on spinning even while walking, talking, sitting or carrying a load. In 1955, Government has opened a Training-cum-Production Centre at Munsiri for training 12 persons every year in this industry on modern lines. Stipends are also paid to them. The residents of this village have also taken advantage of the training facilities. With the development of the industry under Government guidance and patronage, the industry is expected to flourish well. The woollen products are sold directly by the producers either in the village or in the *melas* of Bageshwar, Thal Joljibi or in markets at lower altitudes, visited by the Bhotiyas. During summer, marketing is slack. There is no Co-operative Marketing Society. The price of these products is quite high — sometimes prohibitive even.

Great emphasis is being placed on the import of good breed sheep to this area as well as improvement of the breed of the local sheep. This is desirable because the whole economy of this area depends on wool and naturally intensive efforts to increase the yield and quality of wool are necessary. A Wool Development Officer of the Industries Department is posted at Munsiri to look after the development of wool and woollen products.

There are 10 tailors in this village. Four of them have received training at the Government Tailoring-cum-Hosiery Centre established in April 1958, at Munsiri. The training is of one year's duration. They cater to the needs of this village and the nearing villages.

There is one blacksmith also.

Trade and Commerce

Trade with Tibet is an important occupation of the Bhotiyas who, like Khirgis, change places of residence twice a year. Only the males go to Tibet during the summer but during the winter season they migrate with their families and flocks of goats and sheep and other animals to the lower and more developed hill areas or markets such as Tanakpur, Ramnagar and Haldwani from where they transport merchandise to the hilly areas. They also attend the fairs at Bageshwar, Thal and Joljibi during the winter season.

Immediately after the Thal fair in the middle of April, the Bhotiya traders start their upward movements towards Millam and Tibet with their flocks of goats, sheep and mules laden with grain such as *mandua*, barley, and rice and other articles like *gur*, tobacco, spices, dry fruits, tea, cloth and brass and copperware — articles that are very much in demand in a backward country like Tibet. In April and May advance parties consisting of the servants of these traders go ahead to Millam with their merchandise and tents loaded on goats, sheep and mules to make necessary arrangements before hand. In May-June the Bhotiya traders themselves reach Millam, followed by their families, cattle and labourers in agriculture. The Bhotiya traders and some of their servants go ahead in Tibet, leaving behind their families, some servants and cattle at Millam. Their servants carry on some cultivation over their land in Millam, which is available for cultivation only during this period. The womenfolk are busy in spinning and weaving woollen cloth, *thulmas* and carpets known as *dan*. During this period of about four months, the Bhotiya traders make three or four trips of Tibet carrying various articles from their headquarters Millam to Tibet and bringing in exchange Tibetan wool, salt, borax, woollen cloth, indigenous medicines, fur, goat skin, goats, mules, dogs, sheep and horns of yaks (*sura gat*). In Tibet they visit Gianima, Thajam and Gartoi while in India they visit Thal, Bageshwar and Joljibi. They enter Tibet through the snow-clad

Untadhura pass generally. Some of them cross over through the Hoti pass in district Chamoli. According to Tibetan laws, the Bhotiya traders and their flocks were searched carefully by the Tibetan officials called *sarji* working under the directions of Jodpan, the head of the local Government. No one, man or animal, suffering from a contagious disease was allowed to cross into Tibet. If anyone happened to do so by hoodwinking the local officials he was liable to pay a heavy penalty, to be fixed by the Tibetan officials. By the end of September the downward march would start and the Bhotiyas would be streaming back to Millam and finally return to their houses in Darkot by the end of October. After the Chinese occupation the trade with Tibet has received a severe setback.

During the period of severe cold the Bhotiyas and their Shilpkar servants descend to Bhainskhal at a distance of about seven miles from Darkot towards Bageshwar. Their families and flocks also shift along with them. At Bhainskhal they have their permanent houses some of which are pukka structures, but most of which are *kachcha* houses with thatched roofs requiring repair every year. In their absence these houses are looked after by their Shilpkar servants who cultivate their land on their behalf in this village and also look after their buffaloes stationed there throughout the year. That is why this village is known as Bhainskhal (derived from Hindi *bhains*, a buffalo). They have a school also in this village as in Darkot for the education of their children. During their stay at Bhainskhal, they also attend the fairs at Thal and Bageshwar which are nearer to this place.

Transport

Another important occupation followed by 17 persons consisting of 8 Bhotiyas, 8 Dholis and one Orh is transport of goods from India to Tibet from April to September with the help of goats, sheep, mules, horses, donkeys and yaks owned by them. During the remaining months merchandise is carried to Tanakpur, Ramnagar and Haldwani markets and the annual fairs at Thal, Bageshwar and Joljibi.

Besides this, 17 persons are in Government service and 17 persons are in other services. Out of the 17 persons in Government service, 16 persons are Bhotiyas and one is a Brahmin and the remaining 17 persons in other services comprise 12 Bhotiyas, 4 Dholis and one Orh.

Non-workers

Out of the 543 persons in the village only 296 are workers and the remaining 247 persons are non-workers. Thus 45.48 per cent of the population was found dependant upon 54.52 per cent of the population. The following table shows the non-workers by sex, broad age-groups and nature of activity :—

TABLE NO. 3.8

Non-workers by Sex, Age-groups and Activity

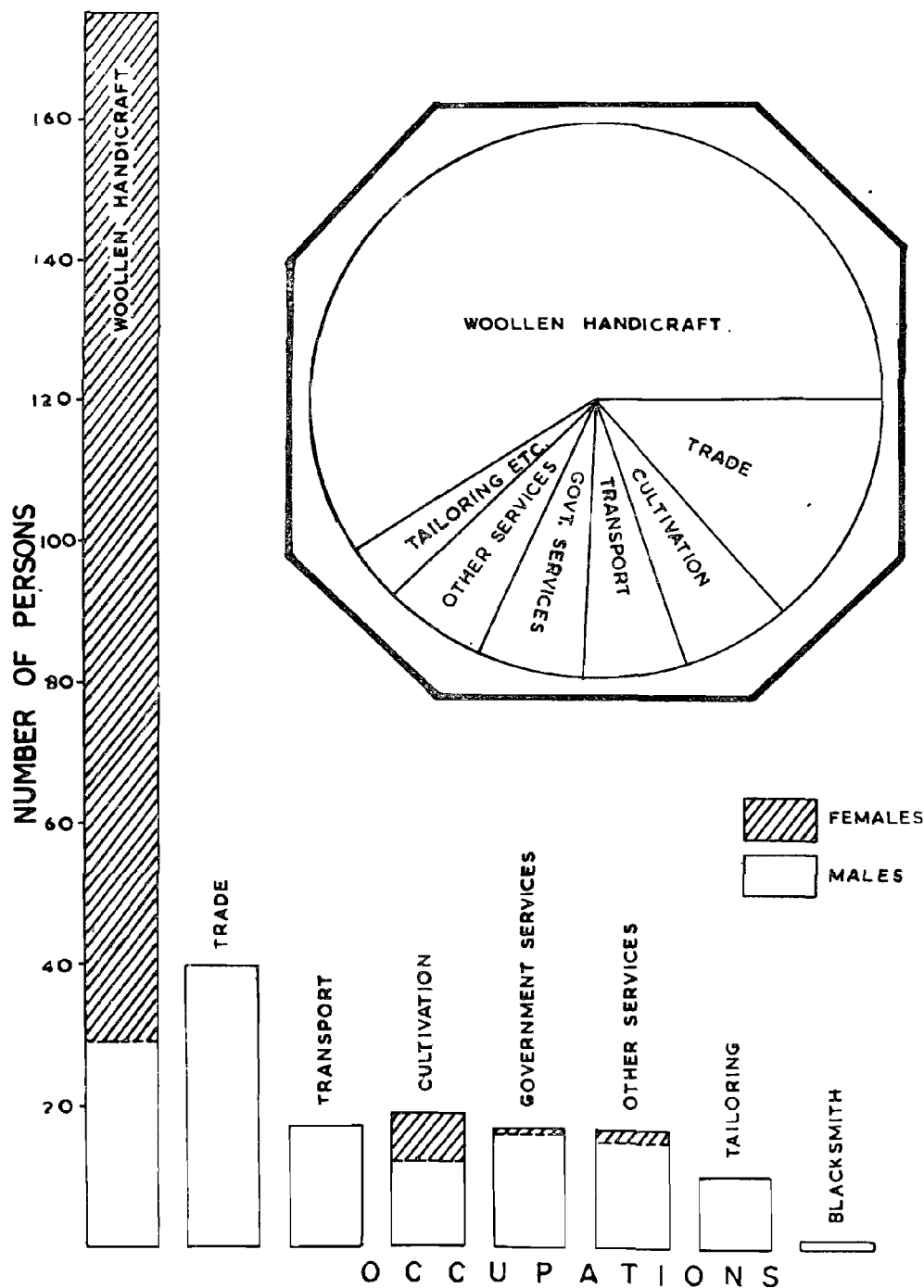
	All ages		0—14		15—34		35—59		60 & over		
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total Non-workers	247	157	90	115	86	33	..	3	4	6	..
Full-time Students	125	91	34	63	34	28	..	..	..	..	..
Household Duties	4	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..
Dependants	109	57	52	52	52	5	..	..	..	..	..
Retired Persons	9	9	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	6	..

Thus 50.60 per cent of the non-workers are full-time students or children attending school whereas 44.12 per cent of the non-workers are dependants, infants and children not attending school and persons permanently disabled. Out of the non-workers only 36.43 per cent are females. It is significant to note that only 4 females were found engaged exclusively in household duties. The womenfolk are generally engaged in spinning and weaving.

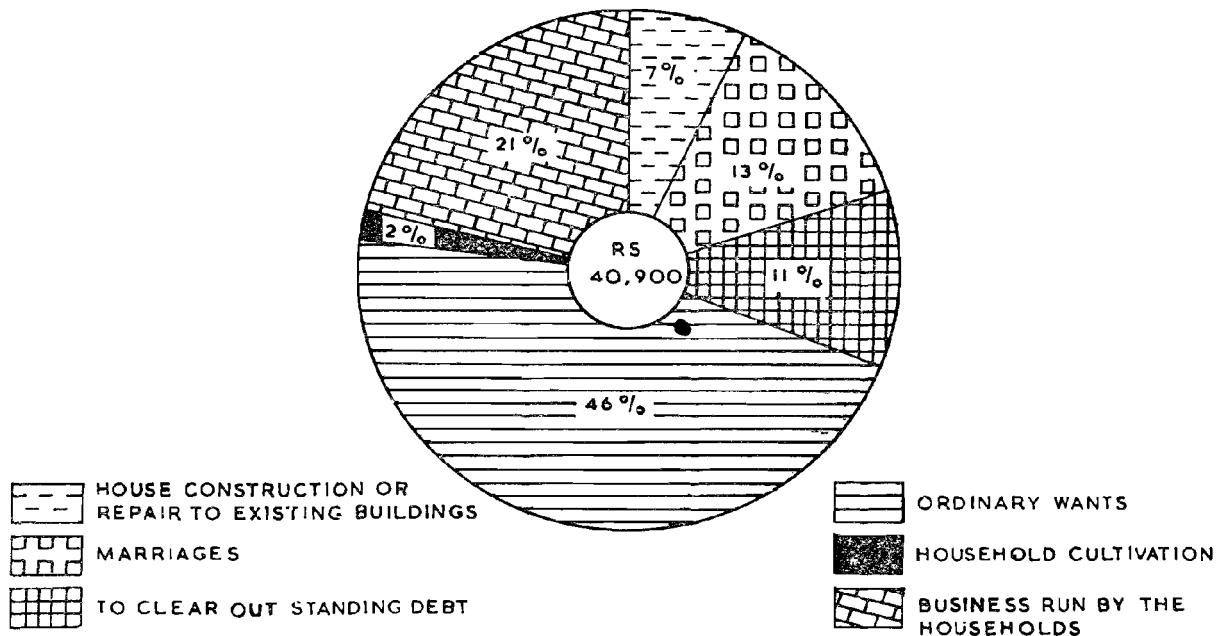
Indebtedness

Out of 103 households, 41 households, i.e., about 40 per cent of the households are in debt.

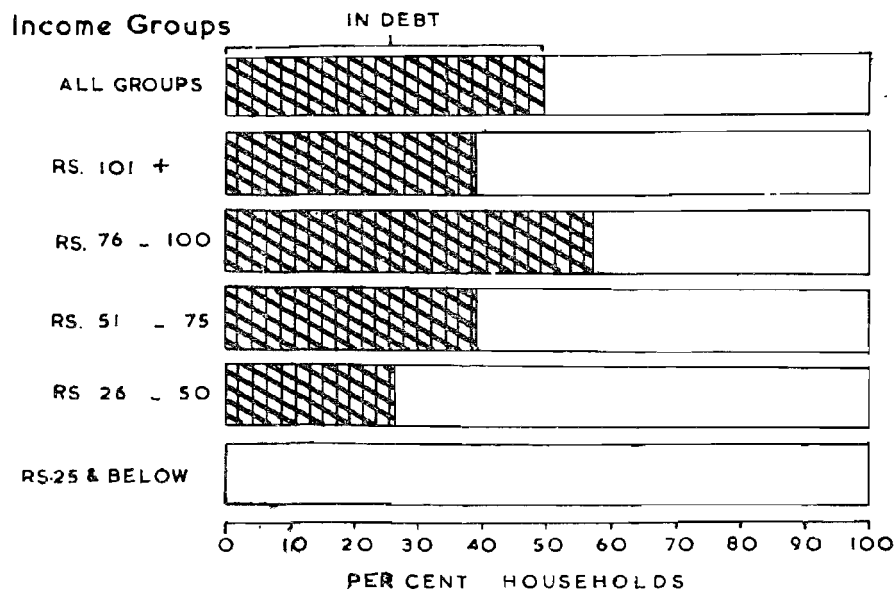
WORKERS BY SEX & OCCUPATION



INDEBTEDNESS BY CAUSES



INDEBTEDNESS BY INCOME GROUPS



The distribution of debt according to castes is as follows :—

TABLE NO. 3.9
Indebtedness by Castes

Caste	Number of families		Amount of debt in Rupees
	Total	In debt	
1. Pangti	53	20	23,100
2. Dharam Saktoo	28	8	12,400
3. Jang Pangti	1	1	250
4. Karki	1	1	50
5. Bhatt	2	1	500
6. Lohar	2	1	300
7. Orh	2	2	500
8. Dholi	11	7	3,800
Total	100	41	40,900

No debt has been incurred by the single households of Brahmin, Gawal Darma and Kisan sub-castes. The Pangti Bhotiyas have incurred the highest amount of debt.

Causes of Indebtedness

The various causes for which debt is incurred would be evident from the following table :—

TABLE NO. 3.10
Causes of Indebtedness

Cause	Amount in Rupees	Number of Households involved	Percentage due to cause of debt
1. Trade	8,600	4	21
2. Marriage	5,500	7	13
3. Ancestral	4,250	3	11
4. Credit purchase	7,700	4	19
5. Re-starting business	700	1	2
6. Education	5,100	3	12
7. Domestic	5,500	13	13
8. House construction	2,700	3	7
9. Cultivation	850	3	2
Total	40,900	41	100

Thus the highest percentage of debt has been incurred on account of trade and business. In fact the proportion of debt incurred on trade is

higher than shown in this table. The figures of debt obtained from the co-operative credit societies, which is invariably for trade, have not been shown. The loans have been taken in connection with trade with Tibet. Similarly the shopkeepers obtained merchandise on credit purchase system — the payment to be made after the sale of the commodities.

Out of the total loan of Rs.5,500 taken for the purpose of marriage, a loan of Rs.4,000 has been taken by one Pangti household alone from the local moneylenders. The head of the household married four times and in addition performed three marriages of his three sons. The average income of the household is Rs.160 per month. The amount of debt is quite high.

An amount of Rs.4,250 is debt incurred by the ancestors. Sri Durga Singh Pangti (now dead) had to pay Rs.1,000 taken by his father, Sri Kunwar Singh Dharam Saktoo aged 24 years, who is engaged in weaving of woollen fabrics had to pay off Rs.2,000 borrowed by his father in connection with trade, Srimati Gopati Devi, a widow, had to pay off Rs.200 taken by her husband, Sri Ram, a Dholi, had to pay Rs.450 and Sri Tirlok Singh had to pay Rs.600 as ancestral debt.

Indebtedness by Income-groups

The following table shows the extent of indebtedness in various income-groups :—

TABLE NO. 3.11
Indebtedness by Income-groups

Income-groups (Rupees)	Total no. of Households	Number of Households in debt	Percentage of Households under debt to the Total no. of Households	Average indebtedness per Household in debt (Rupees)
20 and below ..	1	..	..	..
21—30	2	..	..	..
31—40	5	3	60	566
41—60	22	7	32	507
61—80	27	12	44	862
81—100	14	7	50	1,514
101 and above ..	32	12	38	1,225

Households having an income up to Rs.30 per month are free from debt. With the increase in income the extent of indebtedness also increases. Indebtedness per household is highest in the income-group of Rs.80-100.

Sources of Indebtedness

The village has two co-operative societies, namely, the Pangti Sahkari Vikas Samiti founded in 1937 and the Dharam Saktoo Sahkari Samiti established in 1946. These societies advance loans for the purpose of trade only to members of the Pangti and Dharam Saktoo communities respectively. Out of 175 members of the Pangti Sahkari Vikas Samiti, 27 members are from this village and out of 100 members of the Dharam Saktoo Sahkari Samiti, 17 members are from this village. The loans are generally advanced in June and are recovered in November. The Pangti Society can advance a maximum loan of Rs.1,000 whereas the Dharam Saktoo Sahkari Samiti can advance a maximum loan of Rs.500. The societies charge interest at the rate of Rs.6 per cent per annum. They have their shares in the U. P. Co-operative Bank and the Kumaon Co-operative Federation. Sri Deewan Singh Pangti is the President of the Pangti Sahkari Vikas Samiti and Sri Ganga Singh Dharam Saktoo that of the Dharam Saktoo Sahkari Samiti.

Since these co-operative societies advance loans only for the purpose of trade, the populace has to resort to the local moneylenders when loan for other purposes is needed. The rate of interest generally charged by them is 12 per cent to 50 per cent per annum.

Income and Expenditure

The margin of error in the income and expenditure figure is naturally greater because everyone, especially a trader, has a tendency to give a depleted account of his income and an exaggerated account of his expenditure. The following table shows the income of the various households by occupation and number of members :-

TABLE No. 3.10

Distribution of Households by Occupation, Income and Number of Members

Occupation	Number of Households	Number of Members	Households having Monthly Income				
			Less than Rs. 25	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 and over
Weaving	32	137	1	10	11	7	3
Trade	28	214	..	3	3	5	17
Transport	12	65	..	..	5	6	1
Cultivation	9	38	..	1	1	1	6
Tailoring	5	20	..	..	3	1	1
Govt. service	5	21	..	..	..	2	3
Other services	11	43	..	4	5	1	1
Blacksmithy	1	5	..	..	..	1	..
Total	103	543	1	18	28	24	32
Percentage	100	..	0.97	17.47	27.18	23.30	31.08

Thus 31.08 per cent of the households fall within the income-group of Rs.101 and over, followed by 27.18 per cent households falling within the income-group of Rs.51-75. There is only one household having an income of less than Rs.25 per month. Apparently, the village is economically well-off.

To determine the expenditure pattern, the budgets of 30 households were studied. The budgets of the following 5 households, all consuming meat and liquor, which are of a representative character are discussed here :-

(1) A cultivator named Nathi Ram, Dholi by caste with an income of Rs. 120 per month.

(2) A Bhotia named Lal Singh, engaged in transport of merchandise with an income of Rs.100 per month.

(3) A Bhotia named Vijai Singh engaged in trade, with an income of Rs.186 per month.

(4) A Bhotia named Kunwar Pal Singh engaged in weaving, with an income of Rs.92 per month.

(5) A tailor named Khim Ram, Dholi by caste, with an income of Rs.65 per month.

The household of Nathi Ram Dholi, aged 30 years consists of 7 persons — his wife aged 22 years, his widowed mother aged 65 years, his two brothers aged 25 and 20 years, his daughter aged 2 years and his son aged less than one year. The only source of income is cultivation over an area of 4.00 acres of land supplemented by agricultural labour. The average monthly income comes to Rs.120 per month — Rs.90 per month from cultivation and Rs.30 per month from agricultural labour. The expenditure of the household is as follows :—

Items	Expenditure	
	Rs.	P.
1. Cereals and pulses	85.00	
2. Oil	4.00	
3. Other food items	14.50	
4. Fuel and light	0.50	
5. Clothing and footwear	12.00	
6. Other items	4.00	
Total	120.00	

The expenditure on food items is about 85.8 per cent of the total expenditure. The budget leaves no savings for a rainy day. A debt of Rs.300, incurred for purchasing bullocks, is also to be paid off.

Sri Lal Singh Pangti, aged 40 years, has 5 persons in the household, consisting of his wife aged 35 years and three sons aged 14 years, 7 years and 4 years. He is engaged in horticulture and transport of merchandise by sheep and his wife works as a weaver. Two of his sons are full-time students. The household has a total average income of Rs.100 per month— Rs.70 per month from transport, Rs.28 per month from weaving and Rs.2 per month from horticulture. The

expenditure of the household is as follows :—

Items	Expenditure	
	Rs.	P.
1. Cereals and pulses	44.00	
2. Oil	4.00	
3. Other food items	15.50	
4. Fuel and light	1.00	
5. Clothing and Footwear	12.00	
6. Education	2.50	
7. Other items	6.00	
Total	85.00	

The expenditure on food items is about 74.7 per cent of the total expenditure. An amount of Rs.500 borrowed for domestic needs has to be paid off. The budget is surplus by Rs.15 per month, which can be utilised for clearing the debt.

Vijai Singh Dharam Saktoo aged 35 years, has a household of six members, consisting of his wife aged 30 years, daughters aged 12 years, 7 years and 3 years and a son aged 9 years. His son and his eldest daughter are full-time students. He has a total average income of Rs.186 per month— Rs.166 per month being earned by him from trade and Rs.20 per month being earned by his wife from weaving. The expenditure pattern of this family is as follows :—

Items	Expenditure	
	Rs.	P.
1. Cereals and pulses	59.00	
2. Oil	2.00	
3. Other food items	15.00	
4. Fuel and light	2.00	
5. Clothing and Footwear	12.00	
6. Education	5.00	
7. Other items	3.00	
Total	98.00	

The budget is surplus by Rs.88. The expenditure on food items is about 77.5 per cent of the total expenditure. Education is also being imparted to the children.

Kunwarpal Singh Dharam Saktoo aged 36 years has a household consisting of his wife aged 30 years, two daughters aged 12 and 5 years and two sons aged 8 years and one year. The elder daughter and son are students. Both husband and wife are engaged in weaving, thereby having an average income of Rs.80 per month. An amount of Rs.12 per month is the income from agriculture. His expenditure is as follows:—

Items	Expenditure Rs. P.
1. Cereals and pulses	63.00
2. Oil	2.00
3. Other food items	9.00
4. Fuel and light	0.50
5. Clothing and footwear	13.00
6. Education	1.50
7. Other items	3.00
Total	92.00

The expenditure on food items is about 80.4 per cent of the total expenditure. The budget has no savings at all.

Khim Ram Dholi aged 38 years has his wife aged 35 years and son aged 16 years in his

family. The son is a student. The total income of the household is Rs.65 per month — Rs.50 per month being earned by the husband from tailoring and Rs.15 per month by the wife from weaving. The expenditure of the household is as follows:—

Items	Expenditure Rs. P.
1. Cereals and pulses	44.00
2. Oil	0.50
3. Other food items	6.50
4. Fuel and light	0.50
5. Clothing and footwear	5.00
6. Education	4.00
7. Other items	2.00
Total	62.50

The expenditure on food items is about 81.6 per cent of the total expenditure. The budget is a balanced one. There is a saving of Rs.2.50 for the rainy day.

A review of the above budgets shows that a big percentage of the total expenditure is incurred on food items. This is an index of undeveloped and backward economic and social conditions.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Brief Review of Population

At the time of survey in June, 1961, the population of village Darkot was 543 persons, consisting of 297 males and 246 females. The population of this village at the time of 1951 Census was 268 persons, with 128 males and 140 females, and at the time of 1961 Census it was 431 persons consisting of 215 males and 216 females. Comparing the figures at the time of 1951 and 1961 Census, there has been a rise of 60.8 per cent during the period of 10 years. The unusual increase is explained not by the extraordinary fertility rate but by the fact that at the time of 1951 Census there was greater migration of population to lower regions than at the time of 1961 Census. The population in June, 1961 was naturally greater than that in March, 1961, when some people were out.

Density

The area of the village is 150.50 acres or 60.9 hectares, consisting of 50.5 acres of measured land and 100 acres of unmeasured land. At the time of the survey, the density of population was 2,309 persons per square mile, as against 95 persons per square mile which is the density of population for the district as a whole.

Sex Ratio

The population of the village at the time of 1961 Census consisted of 215 males and 216 females, which shows a balance in the number of both the sexes. At the time of survey, the sex ratio was 828 females per 1,000 males. The sex ratio in this village is quite flexible on account of the itinerant population.

Births and Deaths

The birth and death register maintained by the Gaon Sabha could not be available. An inquiry in November, 1961 disclosed that during the preceding year, 23 births and 8 deaths took

place in the village. The death rate is much lower than the birth rate.

The diseases prevalent in the village are diarrhoea, tuberculosis and leprosy.

Medical Aid

The District Board dispensary shifted on July 31, 1961 from this village to Tiksain market, the headquarters of tahsil Munsiri at a distance of 3 miles from this village. There is a Mission dispensary in village Daranti at a distance of about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile only. Thus, adequate medical facilities exist for the population.

Maternity cases are ordinarily conducted by the old women of the village, not necessarily of the Shilpkar community. They have no formal training for the job; whatever they know has been picked up in the school of experience. In complicated cases the doctor or the midwife from the dispensaries can be called in. Such cases are, however, rare.

Sanitation and Drainage

Since Darkot is a hilly village, drainage is not a problem. In the hills the animals are tethered in the lower storey of the house. This practice leads to great insanitation within the residential area. In this village, the lower storey of the house is used for keeping animals only in some houses. Other houses have separate cow-sheds just near the residential houses. The houses of the Bhotiyas and their surroundings are kept quite neat and clean but the area inhabited by the Shilpkars is definitely dirty and foul-smelling, because the Shilpkars have no flare for cleanliness.

Potable water is available to the village at two water sources locally called *dhar* — one in the village and the other at a smaller distance. The entire population takes water from the *dhar* in the village which is naturally overcrowded by women and children. The menfolk do not go

DARKOT

to this *dhar*. They take their bath, if any, at the other *dhar* which is at a distance of about 2 furlongs from the village.

Population by Age-groups

The following table gives a break-down of the population according to age-groups :—

TABLE No. 4.1

Population by Age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Total Population		
	Persons	Males	Females
All ages	543	297	246
0—4	73	39	34
5—9	69	39	30
10—14	70	42	28
15—19	52	30	22
20—24	47	25	22
25—29	35	17	18
30—34	32	16	16
35—39	49	23	26
40—44	28	18	10
45—49	17	9	8
50—54	19	10	9
55—59	16	8	8
60 and over	36	21	15

Thus 212 persons or 39.04 per cent of the total population belong to the age-group 0—14 years, 260 persons or 47.89 per cent of the total population belong to the age-group 15—49 years and the remaining 71 persons or 13.07 per cent of the total population belong to the age-group 50 years and over. The proportion of population in the age-group 0—14 years (39.04 per cent) is more than twice that in the age-group 50 years and over (13.07 per cent) and hence the population is markedly progressive just like the remaining population of the State.

Marital Status

The following table shows the marital status

of the population in various age-groups :—

TABLE No. 4.2

Marital Status by Age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Total	Never married		Married		Widowed			
		P	M	F	M	F	M	F	
All ages	543	297	246	162	95	117	116	18	35
0—14	212	120	92	120	90	..	2	..	..
15—19	52	30	22	29	5	1	17	..	..
20—24	47	25	22	12	..	13	20	..	2
25—29	35	17	18	1	..	16	17	..	1
30—34	32	16	16	..	..	16	14	..	2
35—39	49	23	26	..	..	22	21	1	5
40—44	28	18	10	..	..	17	10	1	..
45—49	17	9	8	..	..	7	6	2	2
50—54	19	10	9	..	..	9	5	1	4
55—59	16	8	8	..	..	5	2	3	6
60 and over	36	21	15	..	..	11	2	10	13

As is evident, out of 543 persons, 257, i.e., 47.29 per cent are never married, 233, i.e., 42.94 per cent are still-married and 53 persons, i.e., 9.77 per cent are widowed. The never married group mainly consists of persons within the age-group 0—14 years.

The number of still married males and females is almost equal. In the age-group of 10—14 years only two out of 28 females were found married. This indicates that child marriages do not ordinarily take place in the village. In the age-group of 15—19 years, out of 30 males and 22 females only one male and 17 females are married. Thus boys are not ordinarily married at an early age. There is no unmarried girl beyond 17 years of age. There is not a single unmarried male after the age of 25 years.

There are 18 widowers and 35 widows in the village. Widow remarriage is in vogue. The five widows below 34 years of age have lost their husbands only recently. After the age of 34

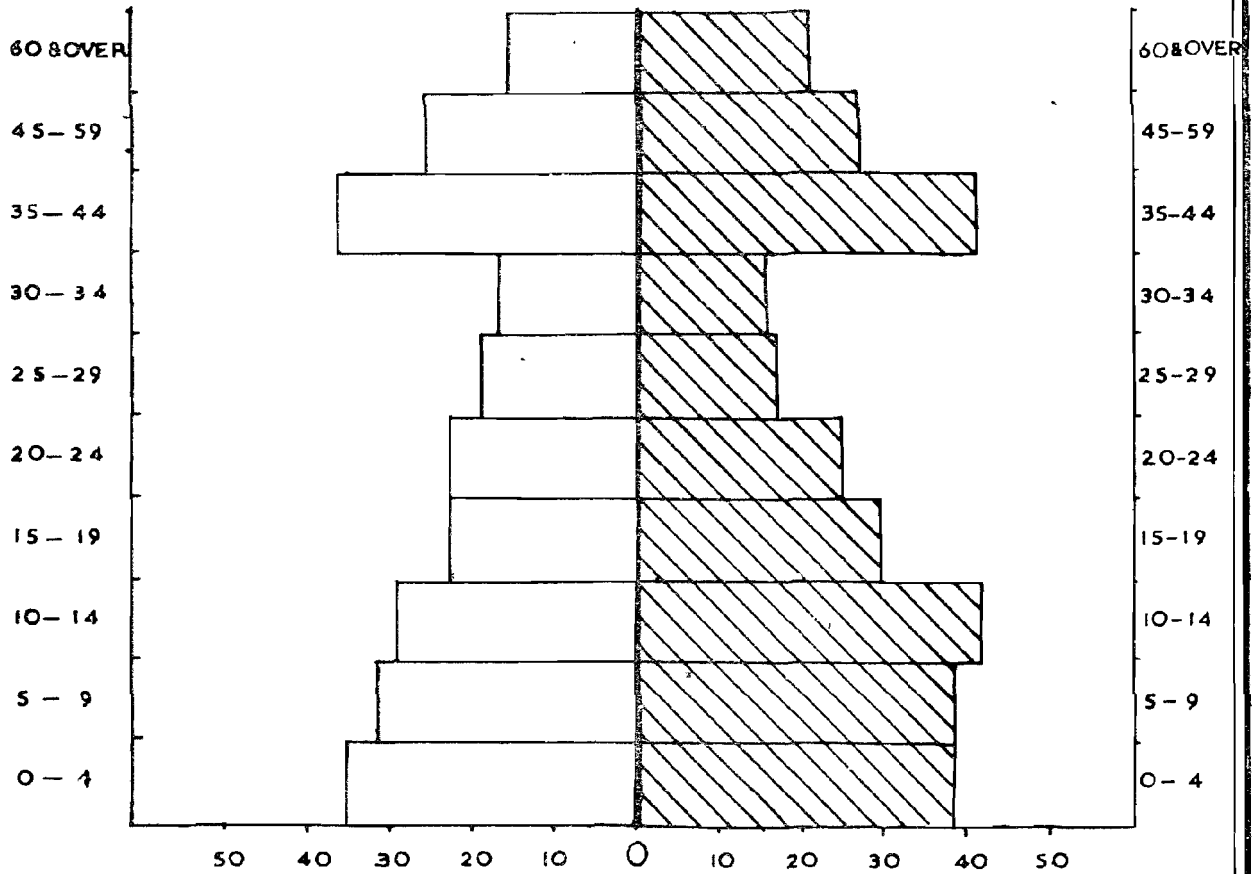
POPULATION BY SEX & AGE-GROUPS

FEMALES

MALES

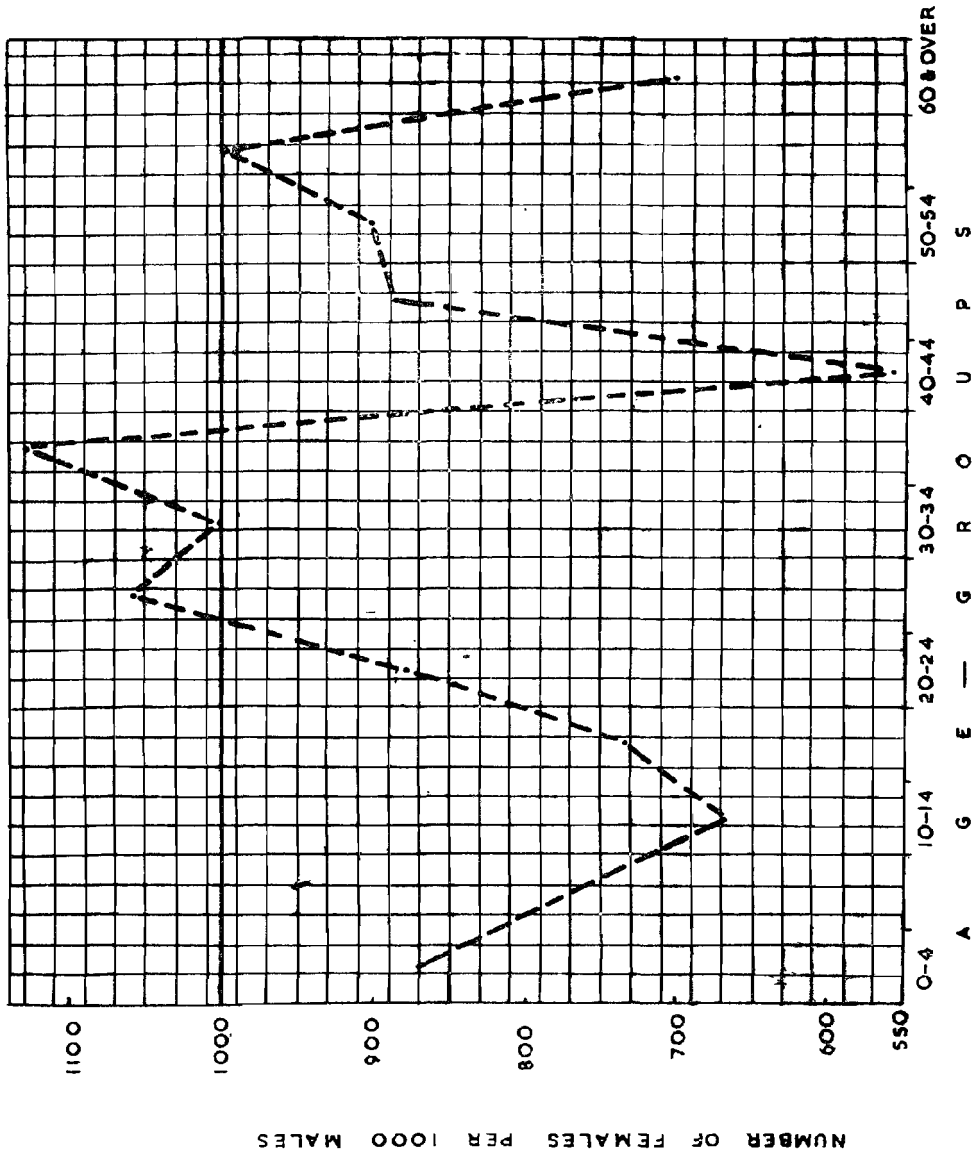
AGE-GROUPS

AGE-GROUPS

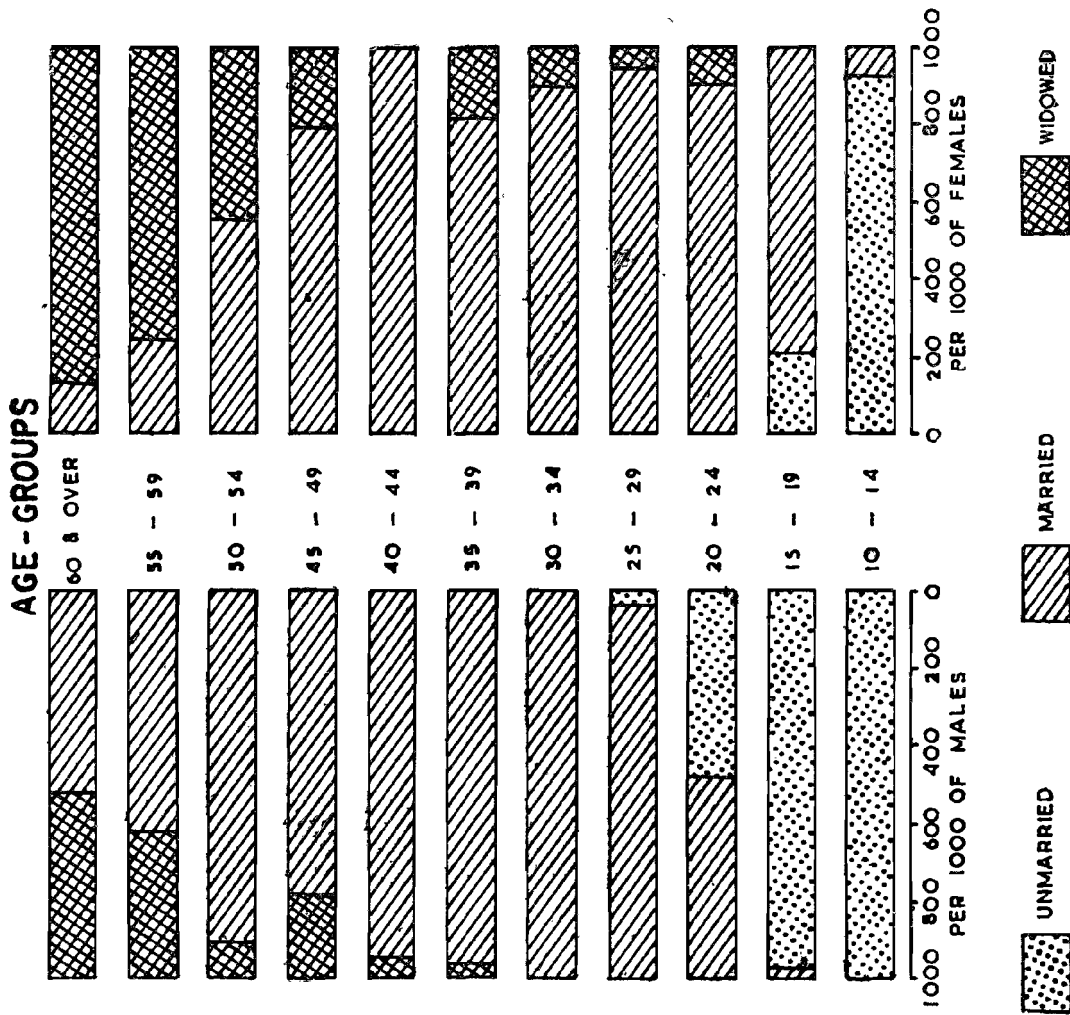


NUMBER OF PERSONS

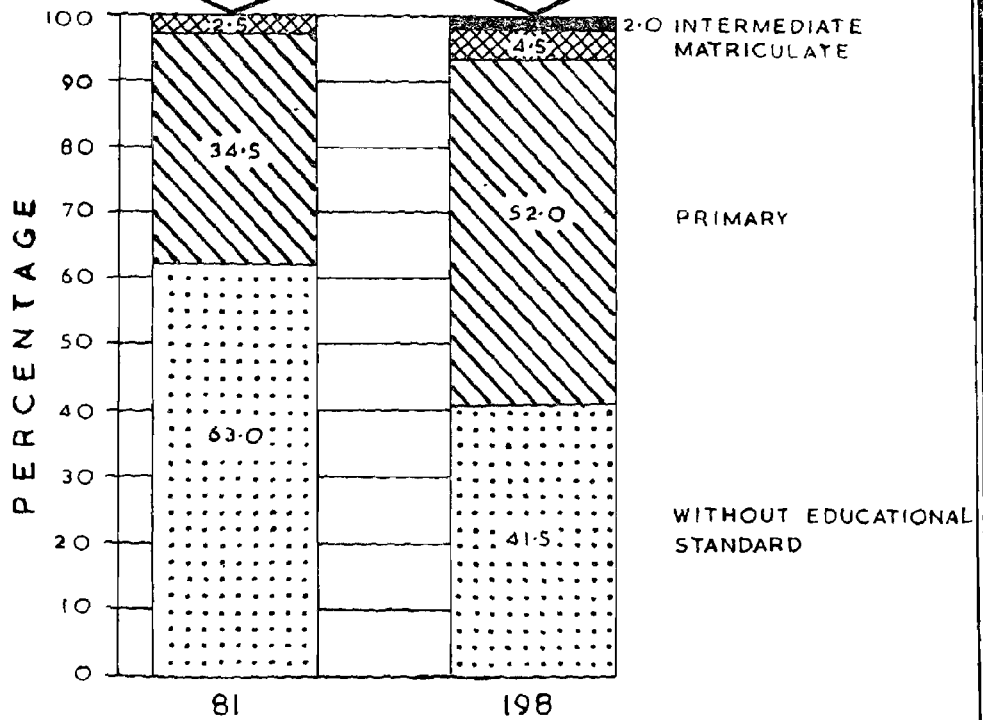
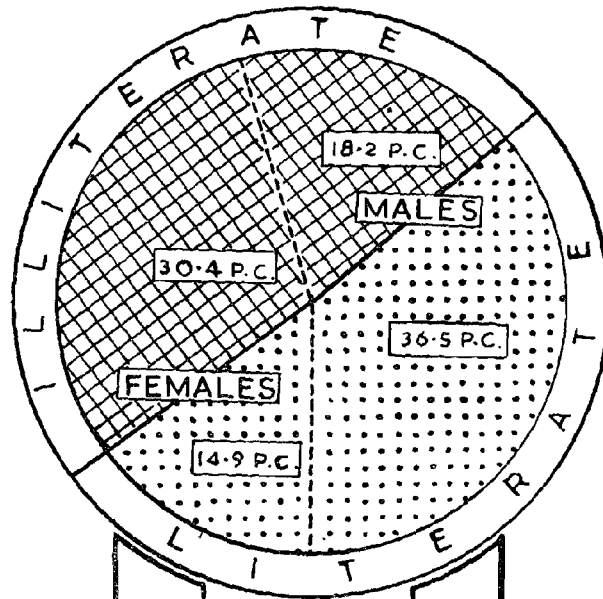
SEX RATIO IN VARIOUS AGE-GROUPS



PROPORTION OF UNMARRIED, MARRIED & WIDOWED PER 1000 OF EACH AGE-GROUP BY SEX



EDUCATION BY SEX



years a widow, unless issueless, hardly wants to remarry.

The following table shows the percentage of married persons within the different age-groups :-

TABLE NO. 4.3

Percentage of Still-married Persons in various Age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Number of persons	Number of married persons	Percentage of married persons within the age-group
0—14	212	2	0.99
15—19	52	18	34.6
20—24	47	33	70.3
25—29	35	33	94.3
30—34	32	30	93.7
35—39	49	43	87.7
40—44	28	27	96.4
45—49	17	13	76.5
50—54	19	14	73.7
55—59	16	7	43.7
60 and over	36	13	36.1

According to the above figures the percentage of still-married persons in the age-groups 25—29 years, 30—34 years and 40—44 years is the highest. After the age of 45 years, the percentage begins falling because of the death of some husbands or wives.

Literacy and Education

The following table indicates the position of literacy and education in the village :-

TABLE NO. 4.4

Literacy and Education

Age-groups (Years)	Illiterate		Literate										Total	
			Literature without educational standard		Primary or Basic		Matric or High School		Inter-mediate					
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
0—14	63	64	30	21	27	7	..	..	..	..	..	57	28
15—34	18	41	19	19	39	16	8	2	4	..	..	70	37
35—59	13	45	21	11	33	5	1	..	..	..	..	55	16
60 and over.	5	15	12	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	..
Total	99	165	82	51	103	28	9	2	4	..	..	198	81

Out of 543 persons, 279 persons or 51.17 per cent of the total population are literate. This percentage of literacy is very high as compared to 23.4, the literacy percentage for the district. Out of 297 males in the village 198 or two-thirds are literate whereas out of 246 females only 81 or 32.9 per cent are literate. The literacy percentage of males and females in district Pithoragarh is 41.8 and 5.9 respectively.

Education has become quite popular in the village. Four boys who have passed the Intermediate Examination are studying for the Degree course outside the village. Out of them, one boy has joined the Lucknow University.

Educational Institutions

The village has a primary school, established in 1930 by Mission. It is under management of the Zila Parishad at present. It had 185 boy and 94 girl students out of which 150 boys and 60 girls are from this village.

A Government Tailoring-cum-Hosiery Centre was established at Munsiri in April, 1958 for imparting training to boys and girls free of cost. Some persons from village Darkot too have taken training at this Centre.

A Government Training-cum-Production Centre for woollen industry was established in 1955 at Munsiri at a distance of about 1½ mile from Darkot. Training is imparted in spinning, dyeing and weaving of wool at the Centre. Some residents of the village have received training at the Centre.

Family Structure and Inter-family Relationship

Family occupies the most important place in socio-economic structure of an Indian village. The head of the household commands the respect of all members of the family. His word is final, to be obeyed and not to be challenged. Marriage is regarded as natural and necessary. *Purdah* is observed by the womenfolk in the presence of elders. The males take their meals first and women afterwards.

Out of 103 households, 39, i.e. 37.8 per cent were simple, consisting of a husband, wife and unmarried children, 15, i.e., 14.6 per cent were intermediate, consisting of a married couple, unmarried brothers and sisters and one of the parents, and 29, i.e. 28.2 per cent were joint, consisting of a married couple with married sons/daughters or with married brothers/sisters. As many as 20 households or 19.4 per cent did not have one of the spouses.

The joint family system is followed as a rule. The member of a family cannot transfer his share or part thereof without the consent of the other co-parceners, unless there has been a family partition. During one's lifetime his descendants do not have any claim to the property, ancestral or self-acquired. It cannot be partitioned during his lifetime. The father can transfer the property *inter vivos* in whatever way he likes. The widow of a co-parcener inherits the share of her deceased husband if he dies issueless after the vesting of the property in him.

Inheritance of Property

The inheritance of property was governed by the local customs as laid down by Panna Lall in Hindu Customary Law in Kumaun till it was repealed by Section 4 of The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 (Act No. 30 of 1956) which lays down that any other law in force immediately before the commencement of this Act shall cease to apply to Hindus in so far as it is inconsistent with any of the provisions contained in this Act. According to the local customs all sons whether by wives taken with the *anchal* ceremony or without or by *dhantis* or by brother's widows, got an equal share in the property of their father. In the absence of sons, widows inherited the estate even in a joint family. When there were no heirs, the inheritance devolved upon the village community. On a division of the property the eldest brother usually got something more than his share — a field, a cow or a piece of jewellery, etc. — called *jethon*. A widow succeeding to her deceased husband's share was disinherited if she left the home voluntarily and became the wife or con-

cubine of another. Blind, deaf and dumb and impotent persons were equally entitled to succeed.

Leisure and Recreation

The village being cut off from modern civilization, there are no modern means of amusement and recreation except the fairs periodically held at places where both men and women assemble, sing and dance. Folk songs and dances are the main features of these fairs. The dancers who are also the singers, form themselves into a circle and shuffle from left to right, the movement being sometimes slow and sometimes fast. Both men and women take part in the dance. Occasionally they mix indiscriminately but more often each sex keeps to its own sector of the circle. The dancers dance to the rhythm of a song repeated by the performers themselves. The song is sung in chorus by the males to be repeated by the females. When one sex sings, the other keeps quiet but goes on dancing in a circle. Casually the leader of the dance stands inside the circle and plays a drum called *hurka*, with his fingers, directing the dancers. The sense of the rhythm, the contrast of voices, the balancing movements of the dancers, the slow and sudden leaps and the music of the instrument are simply fascinating. Dances named *Champhuli*, *Dhurka*, *Jhora* are popular in this region. *Dandyala* and *Dhurang* also are other forms of the ring dance.

Community dancing languished in the plains but continues to flourish in the Himalayan hill districts. The *Jhora* is a Kumaoni dance quite popular in this village. In this dance, men and women of all castes join. They link their arms together and dance in a circle with simple steps, sometimes standing, sometimes bending and sometimes just sitting down. A large number of dancers participate in this dance. This community dance is a big source of recreation to the entire population.

The *Chapali* is the dance of lovers and is performed by couples coquettishly holding a mirror in one hand and flirtingly a colourful handkerchief in the other.

The *Jagar* is a dance performed to propitiate deities and to ward off evil spirits and epidemics

Singing and dancing is performed by sorcerers called *jagarias* and offerings presented. After some time the spirit of god or goddess is supposed to come into the sorcerer who informs the sufferer of the wrong committed by him and the way of propitiating the offended god or spirit.

Out of the musical instruments the shepherd's pipe or *bansali* is quite popular. It is a single pipe made of *ringal* (small hill bamboo). The double pipe is called *murli*. To a traveller in the mountains, its notes are very pleasing. There is also a very small iron instrument known as *binai*, a sort of Jew's harp which is placed between the lips and played with one finger. It is usually but not always played by women.

The boys play Sheep and Shepherd just like hide and seek. The elders play on a chequer board called *Baghbakri* or Tiger and Goat, resembling the English game Fox and Geese. *Rang Bhang ka Khenta Khenti* is now uncommon, rather extinguished.

As regards other recreations, students in the local schools or college enjoy some games and sports. In the school premises, football, hockey and other games are played by students only. Others have neither any interest in these games and sports nor do they find time to participate therein.

Religious Institutions and Fairs

The village has a *Devi mandir* where in every *Bhadon* a big fair is held. The temple is an old one and is not in good condition. A holy stone is placed inside. The temple is made of raw stone with stone slate roof in an area of 12 square feet. It is only 5 to 6 feet high. A number of red, white and yellow flags adorn it to distinguish it from a distance. The fair at the temple lasts for a day when thousands of men, women and children assemble. Some of them come singing and dancing all the way from their villages and continue to dance during the fair.

The changes in the religious beliefs and practices have no doubt taken place due to contact with other Hindus and the impact of civilization but they are insignificant, not radical.

Community Festivals

India is a land of fasts, feasts and festivals. This village too celebrates a number of festivals which are spread throughout the year.

Basant Panchami is celebrated in the first week of February. With the arrival of spring the long and bitter spell of winter seems to be nearing its end and a welcome warmth is in sight. Barley corns are fixed at the doors with dung or donned in the caps. Yellow handkerchiefs are exchanged by way of presents. The males wear yellow caps and the females also have some yellow cloth on. A wave of youthful gaiety runs through every heart as a result of the romantic atmosphere all round. Special food is prepared in every house.

Another festival of spring observed in the month of March is called *Phooldei*. The rhododendron with its bright scarlet flowers and the peach tree with its rosy blossoms adorn the landscape, the fields and the gardens. The birds are chirping gaily and hopping about briskly on the trees. The young boys and girls go from house to house chanting short verses, praying for the prosperity of the householders, strewing flowers at the doors and getting small presents of *gur*, rice food or cash. In the evening rice and flour mixed with *gur* are cooked into a food called *sai* which is taken by all. After this festival the *Hurkiyas* and the *Badis* go about the villages singing and dancing.

Another significant festival known as *Hariyala* is observed on the first day of *Shrawan* i.e., about the middle of July. About ten days before, a mixture of seeds is sown in small baskets or beds prepared near the shrines of the family gods. On the day of the festival the head of the household cuts the green stems after worship by the womenfolk. Everyone then wears the stems on the cap. The ceremony of wearing the green shoots is parallel to the practice of wearing roses in England and that of sowing the seeds is somewhat similar to the annual sowing of five seeds by the Emperor of China in the ancient days. On this day the bullocks are not yoked. It is an important festival. To say to a hillman, "May you

not eat the *Hariyala* feast" is regarded as the worst curse.

Ghee Sankranti is observed on the first day of *Bhadon*, i.e. about the middle of August. Everyone consumes some *ghee* (clarified butter) and curd on this day.

Khatarwa is celebrated with the arrival of winter. Huge quantity of fuel and hay are collected on the wasteland by the villagers on the first day of *Asoj*, i.e., nearabout the middle of September. In the evening, when it is dark, fire is set to the fuel and hay. Young boys and girls make offerings of flowers at the bonfire. They beat the fire with long sticks, uttering the words, *Bhelo ji Bhelo*. After the fire is extinguished the evil spirits are driven out of the cattle-sheds by means of lighted sticks.

Diwali or the festival of lights and *Dasehra* are celebrated as in the villages of the plains.

The festival of *Ghughutia* is observed in the middle of January when winter is at its height. Little cakes of flour are baked and put round their necks by the children by a string. In the morning the children shout *kale kale* at the crows and other birds and offer to them the cakes of flour from the string.

Bhumiyan is also worshipped because it is the village god who looks after the harvests, the fields and the general welfare of the population. Similarly *Badhan* and *Chanu*, the gods looking after the welfare of the cattle, are propitiated by offering milk to them.

On the occasion of *Nanda Ashtami* and *Devi puja*, goats and buffalo calves are sacrificed at the temple. The meat of the goats is consumed by the villagers. Fairs also are held at the village temple and in village Dandodhar at a distance of about four miles from the village on the occasion of *Nanda Ashtami*.

Village Organisation

The village organisation is an integrated whole and no tension is visible. The various sects of Bhotiyas with their Shilpkars live separately and as distinct entities. The trade and industry are

in the hands of Bhotiyas and their cultivation is in the hands of the Shilpkars attached to them. Kshatriyas are cultivators only. The different sections of Bhotiyas marry with one another since marriage within the same section is not allowed. Inter-marriages amongst Bhotiyas of the village have created and strengthened lasting ties of intimacy between a number of families. There is no social rivalry between the Pangtis and the Dharam Saktoos, the main sects of Bhotiyas in the village. They mix freely with each other and smoke the same *hookah*, without any reservations.

The Shilpkars are treated as untouchables in spite of the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955. The Bhotiyas do not take any edibles or water from the hands of a Shilpkar. In fact they are tied to the chariot-wheels of the Bhotiyas and cannot therefore raise a voice of protest. The Shilpkars do not however suffer any disability at the water source or in the school. They are also allowed the liberty of smoking the *chilam* from the *hookah* of Bhotiyas. They can also enter the residential portion of Bhotiya households. They can take tea at the same stall. The Shilpkar is economically dependant on the Bhotiya who in his turn cannot dispense with him. This economic interdependence has mellowed down the rigors of untouchability. People in the village are interdependent and share the joys and sorrows of each other. Thus a hue of cordiality prevails within the village.

Organs of Democratic Decentralisation

The village continues to have its caste Panchayats—one of the Dharam Saktoo Bhotiyas, one of the Pangti Bhotiyas and one each of the Shilpkars attached to them. Cases pertaining to marriage, dissolution of marriage, breach of promises to marry, illegitimate pregnancies, etc., are dealt with by these Panchayats. As a rule, their decision is respected by all but sometimes the dissatisfied party goes to a court of law. With the advance of time there has been a fall in the power and prestige of the caste Panchayats.

With the enforcement of the U. P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1947 in the State, a Gaon Panchayat

was established in this village also in 1949 for the first time. After that there have been two more elections. In the last election held in 1961 only the election of members was conducted by *show of hands and the election of the Pradhan* was conducted by a secret ballot. It is by convention laid down that for one term a member of the Dharam Saktoo sect will be the Pradhan and for the next term a member of the Pangti sect will hold this office. The elections are therefore smooth without any contest or tension.

The income of the Panchayat is derived mainly from house-tax at the rate of 50 P. per house and shop tax at the rate of Rs.3 to 6 per shop per annum. Fair tax ranging between 37 P. and Re.1.25 P. per shop is also levied. The Panchayat has got the bridle path in the village paved with stones. The source of water within the village has also been improved so that two persons can take water simultaneously from there. No other work of public utility has been done by the Panchayat. In fact people are more or less indifferent to the Gaon Panchayat.

The Nyaya Panchayat of the village is situated at village Dummar. During the year ending May 31, 1961, the Panchayat decided 10 civil suits and 3 criminal cases under sections 447/426, 447 and 323/448 of the Indian Penal Code pertaining to parties of this village. One criminal case was dismissed and two ended in a compromise. The Nyaya Panchayat is a source of cheap, and prompt justice. The expenses on litigation have diminished.

Voluntary Organisations

There is a *Nav Yuvak Club*, *Bhajan Mandli Kirtan Mandli* and a *Mahila Mangal Dal* for the social and cultural emancipation of the village. There is also a library having about 400 books supplied by the N. E. S. Block. There is no membership fee. The residents of this village take full advantage of this library and reading room attached thereto. A community radio-set has been supplied by the Block authorities. The villagers thus keep abreast of the latest views and news. A *gram sevika* also runs a school for female adults. Cultural programmes such as

folk songs, One-Act Plays and Ram Lila are observed with great enthusiasm — the moving spirit behind the programmes being the cultural supervisor who was a resident of this village but unfortunately is now dead. All these activities help in bringing about the social, cultural and emotional integration of the population.

Reform Measures

There is no Family Planning Centre nor do the people in general realise the necessity of planning their families. A child is the gift of God, they say.

Dowry is not given to the bridegroom in this village. As already discussed, untouchability is practised in the village in spite of the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955, though to a limited extent only. There has been no prosecution under this Act. In fact legislation is ineffective so long as there is no change of heart. The lot of Shilpkars has improved not because of the legislation but because of the change in social and human values coupled with the economic factors.

Out of 103 heads of the households who were interviewed, only 43, i.e. 42 per cent were aware of prohibition of untouchability under law. People in general are not in favour of inter-caste marriage. Out of 11 heads of Dholi households, four had no objection to marrying in a Dom household. Similarly one Lohar family has no objection to such marriage. One Kshatriya pointed out that he had no objection to marrying in a Bhotiya household.

As many as 37 heads of households were aware of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 (Act 78 of 1956), and 48 were aware of the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 (Act 78 of 1956). Even though Darkot is a hill village situated in the interior, the standard of awareness of legislative measures about social reforms is quite high. The impact of these legislative measures on the population was not visible because up to this time, recourse to the provisions of these Acts has not been taken in a single case.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Darkot, a typical Bhotiya village, situated in the extreme border tahsil Munsiri is a specimen of mixed Indo-Tibetan culture and way of life. The main occupation of the Bhotiyas is trade with Tibet and woollen handicraft. Cultivation on the land owned by them is done by the Shilpkars attached to them. They are simple, honest and hard-working people almost always on the move. During summer they are found moving about between Millam and Tibet on business trips. With the advent of winter they migrate to the lower altitudes of Bhainskhal from where they go to the fairs at Bageshwar, Thal and Joljibi for transacting business in wool, woollen products, skins, Tibetan salt and borax brought from Tibet. Then they purchase or transport merchandise from Haldwani, Ramnagar and Tanakpur to Darkot and other hill stations. They are basically a tribe just on the margin between India and Tibet. The Shilpkars too are tagged to their economy.

In spite of the fact that the village is situated in the interior, the impact of civilization is evident on the population. The village is situated in the vicinity of the headquarters of tahsil and N. E. S. Block in the border district of Pithoragarh, the intensive development of which has assumed a strategic importance in the wake of political tension between China and India arising out of the boundary dispute between the two countries. All facilities are being provided to the Bhotiyas for their social, cultural, and economic development. Their trade with Tibet has received a set back with the mounting restrictions imposed by China in Tibet. They have therefore to be diverted to alternate occupations. Greater emphasis is being put on the development of the wool industry. A Training-cum-Production Centre, for imparting training in spinning, carding, weaving and finishing of wool and its products has been working at a distance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles

towards Munsiri. A Tailoring-cum-Hosiery Centre has also been established at a distance of 3 miles from Darkot. Facilities for training at these Centres and for liberal education up to Intermediate standard exist in the locality. The Public Works Department is constructing a road from Thal to Millam *via* Darkot. It is expected to become motorable within 4 years. Proper medical facilities also exist near the village.

The N. E. S. Block too has extended its activities in the social, cultural and economic spheres of this village. The Village Level Worker and a *gram sevika* take an active interest in the welfare and uplift of this village. The energies of the village folk are being channelised for Planning and Development Work. Saplings of fruit trees too have been supplied to some of the villagers for being planted in orchards. The Small Savings Scheme has also been popularised. Chemical fertilizers and improved varieties of seeds are obtained by the cultivators through the Block agency. Two Co-operative Credit Societies of Bhotiyas are also working actively for supplying adequate credit to the Bhotiyas for their trade.

The price level in the village is quite high due to the inaccessibility of the area. With the posting of some more staff in Munsiri after the creation of the Uttarakhand division, the prices have gone up further. With the completion of the P. W. D. road, the price level is likely to come down.

There is no problem of unemployment in the village. People are on the whole well-to-do. With the intensification of development work, fresh venues of employment have appeared and wages too have gone up. Some new shops have also been opened to cater to the needs of the increased population at Munsiri.

Socially, the Bhotiyas are gradually relinquishing their age-old customs and adopting the

customs followed by the Brahmins and Rajputs of the district. For example, *kanyadan* marriage is nowadays performed in their households. In short they are becoming more Brahminised. Economically, they are well-to-do, possessing a number of articles of material culture. The way of their life has also changed for the better and their standard of living has definitely gone up. Every effort is being made for bettering their lot. Politically, their importance as a border tribe has assumed a strategic importance. Their loyalty has to be ensured. They are fully aware

of the political changes going on and are quite conscious of their importance in the changed circumstances.

The way of life in this village has been changing at quite a quick pace since the establishment of the Uttarakhand Division. With the further intensification of efforts and the spread of education, the social and economic condition of the village is bound to improve further, thereby bringing peace and prosperity, health and happiness to the residents of this area.

TABLES

TABLE I

Area, Houses and Population

Area		Density	Number of Houses	Number of Households	Population		
Acres	Hectares				Persons	Males	Females
150.50	60.9	2,263 persons per square mile	103	103	543	297	246

TABLE II

Population by Age-groups

Total of all ages			0-4		5-9		10-14		15-19		20-24		25-29		30-34		35-44		45-59		60 and over	
Persons	Males	Females	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
543	297	246	39	44	39	30	42	28	30	22	25	22	17	18	16	16	57	52	27	25	21	15

TABLE III

Size and Composition of Households

Total Number of Households	Size of Households														
	Single member			2-3 members			4-6 members			7-9 members			10 members and over		
	House- holds	Males	Fe- males	House- holds	Males	Fe- males	House- holds	Males	Fe- males	House- holds	Males	Fe- males	House- holds	Males	Fe- males
103	6	..	6	25	35	31	46	130	102	19	82	65	7	50	42

TABLES

Caste and Nature of Families

Caste	Total Number of Households	Type of families living in the households			
		Simple	Inter-mediate	Joint	Others
Brahmin	1	1	..	..	..
Kshatriya	4	1	..	1	2
Bhotiya	83	34	12	25	12
Dhobi	11	3	1	2	5
Lohar	2	..	1	..	1
Orh	2	..	1	1	..
Total	103	39	15	29	20

Simple family consists of husband, wife and unmarried children.

Intermediate family consists of married couple and unmarried brothers, sisters and one of the parents.

Joint family consists of married couple with married sons, daughters or with married brothers, sisters.

'Others' refers to single members or unmarried brothers and sisters or one parent living with unmarried sons or daughters.

TABLE V

Households classified by Religions, Caste and Sub-Caste

Religion	Caste	Sub-caste	Number of Households	Number of Households		
				Persons	Males	Females
Hindu	Brahmin	Joshi	.. 1	7	6	1
		Bhatt	.. 2	8	4	4
	Kshatriya	Karki	.. 1	1	..	1
		Kisan	.. 1	2	1	1
		Dharam Saktoo	.. 28	146	73	73
	Bhotiya	Gowal Darma	.. 1	3	2	1
		Jang Pangti	.. 1	4	3	1
		Pangti	.. 53	301	164	137
	Shilpkar	Dholi	.. 11	55	34	21
		Lohar	.. 2	7	3	4
		Orh	.. 2	9	7	2
	Total	..	103	543	297	246

DARKOT

TABLE VI
Age and Marital Status

Age-groups (Years)	Total Population			Never Married		Married		Widowed	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	543	297	246	162	95	117	116	18	35
0—4	73	39	34	39	34	..	..	..	..
5—9	69	39	30	39	30	..	..	..	..
10—14	70	42	28	42	26	..	2	..	..
15—19	52	30	22	29	5	1	17	..	..
20—24	47	25	22	12	..	13	20	..	2
25—29	35	17	18	1	..	16	17	..	1
30—34	32	16	16	..	..	16	14	..	2
35—39	49	23	26	..	..	22	21	1	5
40—44	28	18	10	..	..	17	10	1	..
45—49	17	9	8	..	..	7	6	2	2
50—54	19	10	9	..	..	9	5	1	4
55—59	16	8	8	..	..	5	2	3	6
60 and over	36	21	15	..	..	11	2	10	13

TABLE VII
Education

Age-groups (Years)	Total Population			Illiterate			Literate without Educational Standard						Matric or Higher Secondary			Intermediate		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	543	297	246	264	99	165	133	82	51	131	103	28	11	9	2	4	4	..
0—4	73	39	34	73	39	34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9	69	39	30	42	21	21	24	15	9	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14	70	42	28	12	3	9	27	15	12	31	24	7	..	..	..	..	..	..
15—19	52	30	22	14	6	8	9	2	7	23	18	5	6	4	2	..	..	..
20—24	47	25	22	14	3	11	9	4	5	17	11	6	3	3	..	4	4	..
25—29	35	17	18	17	5	12	8	6	2	9	5	4	1	1	..	..	..	..
30—34	32	16	16	14	4	10	12	7	5	6	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
35—39	49	23	26	23	4	19	11	7	4	15	12	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
40—44	28	18	10	7	2	5	12	8	4	8	7	1	1	1	..	..	..	..
45—49	17	9	8	8	2	6	4	2	2	5	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
50—54	19	10	9	10	3	7	3	2	1	6	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
55—59	16	8	8	10	2	8	2	2	..	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 and over	36	21	15	20	5	15	12	12	..	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

TABLE VIII

Workers and Non-workers by Sex and broad Age-groups.....

Age-groups (Years)	Total Population			Workers			Non-workers		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
All ages	543	297	246	296	140	156	247	157	90
0—14	212	126	92	11	5	6	201	115	86
15—34	166	88	78	133	55	78	33	33	..
35—59	129	68	61	122	65	57	7	3	4
60 and over	36	21	15	30	15	15	6	6	..

TABLE IX

Workers classified by Sex, broad Age-groups and occupations

Age-groups (Years)	Woolen Handicrafts			Trade and Commerce			Transport			Cultivation			Tailoring			Blacksmith			Govt. Service			Other Services		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	175	29	146	40	40	..	17	17	..	19	12	7	10	10	..	1	1	..	17	16	1	17	15	2
0—14	8	2	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15—34	87	12	75	8	8	..	5	5	..	9	7	2	7	7	..	1	1	..	6	5	1	4	4	..
35—59	64	11	53	26	26	..	11	11	..	5	2	3	2	2	..	..	..	..	11	11	..	9	8	1
60 and over	16	4	12	6	6	..	1	1	..	5	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1

TABLE X

Households by Number of Rooms and by Number of Persons occupying

Total no. of households	Total no. of rooms	Total no. of family members	Households with no regular room		Households with one room		Households with two rooms		Households with three rooms		Households with four rooms		Households with five rooms		Households with more than five rooms	
			No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members	No. of Households	Total no. of family members
103	245	543	..	..	41	171	32	153	7	68	16	86	1	9	6	56

TABLE XIII
Indebtedness by Income-groups

Income-group	Total no. of Households	No. of Households in debt	Percentage of col. 3 to col. 2	Average Indebtedness per Household in debt	Total Amount of debt
Rs. 25 and below ..	1	..	..	..	..
Rs. 26—50	19	5	26	640	3,200
Rs. 51—75	28	11	39	618	68,000
Rs. 76—100	23	13	57	1,246	16,200
Rs. 101 and above ..	32	12	38	1,225	14,700

TABLE XIV
Indebtedness by Cause of Debt

Cause	Amount of debt	Number of families in debt	Proportion of debt due to cause to the total amount of debt
(a) House construction or repair to existing building	2,700	3	7 per cent
(b) Marriages	5,500	7	13 ..
(c) To clear out standing debts	4,250	3	11 ..
(d) Ordinary wants	19,000	21	46 ..
(e) Household cultivation	850	3	2 ..
(f) Business run by the household	8,600	4	21 ..
Total	40,900	41	100

LIST OF VILLAGES SELECTED FOR STUDY IN UTTAR PRADESH

District	Tahsil	Village
1. Uttarkashi	Dunda	Birpur
2. Pithoragarh	Munsiari	Ghorpatta Malla Darkot
3. Garhwal	Pauri	Thapli
4. Almora	Ranikhet	Bijepur
5. Bijnor	Bijnor	Rafiunagar <i>urf</i> 'Raoli Mughalpura
6. Budaun	Bisauli Budaun	Mirzapur Behta Kachla Pukhta
7. Bareilly	Nawabganj	Adhkata Rabbani Begum Barkhan
8. Pilibhit	Bisalpur	Daulatpur Hira
9. Dehra Dun	Chakrata	Dhaura Chapnu Sarari
10. Saharanpur	Deoband	Sadharansar Bilaspur
11. Aligarh	Atrauli	Barauli
12. Mathura	Sadabad	Nagla Beru
13. Agra	Kheragarh Etmadpur Bah	Beri Chahar Chawali Pidhaura
14. Etah	Jalesar	Baghai
15. Etawah	Etawah Auraiya	Udi Ayana
16. Kanpur	Kanpur	Ishuriganj
17. Allahabad	Soraon Phulpur	Sarai Kesho <i>urf</i> Bagi Kalyanpur Bhadkar Uparhar
18. Hamirpur	Rath	Qasbakhera
19. Banda	Naraini	Akbarpur
20. Kheri	Nighasan	Belaparsua Bankati Lodhauri Rakehti
21. Sitapur	Biswan	Kanduni

District	Tahsil	Village
22. Gonda	Balrampur	Suganagar Domri Rajderwa Tharu
23. Bara Banki	Nawabganj	Gadia Dadra
24. Sultanpur	Sultanpur	Barasin
25. Azamgarh	Phulpur	Sumbha Dih Surhan Pakri Buzurg
26. Ghazipur	Ghazipur	Para
27. Varanasi	Varanasi	Lohta Mehndiganj
28. Mirzapur	Robertsganj	Mitapur Gidhia Parsoi