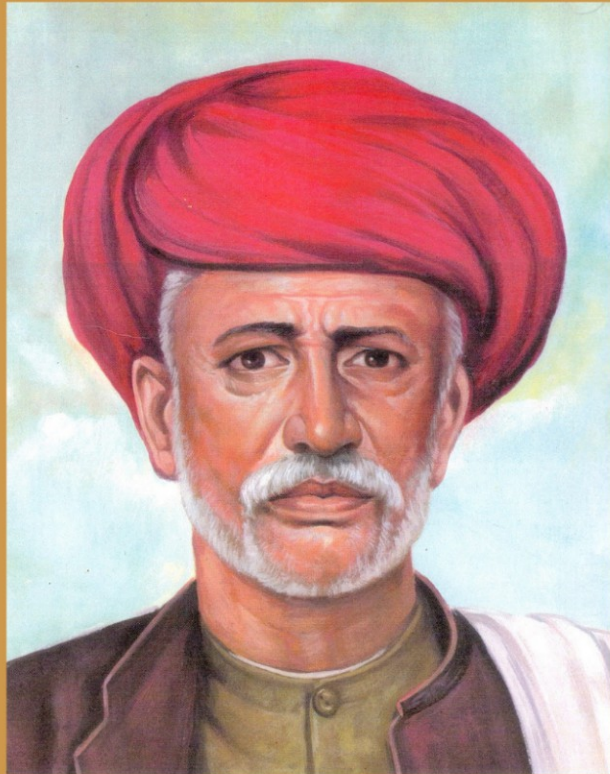


JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULEY

# Cultivator's Whipcord



*translated by*

ANIKET JAAWARE

# Cultivator's Whipcord

*April–July 1883*

Translated by Aniket Jaaware

Cultivator's Whipcord (Shetkaryacha Asud) was written in 1883 but the publication of the entire text was delayed because, as Phule put it, 'We the Shudras have amongst us cowardly publishers'. Nor was it written at one go. Phule did public readings of the various chapters of the book as they got written.

Aniket Jaavare, our translator, had proposed 'whiplash' as a translation for 'Asud'. However, Phule himself preferred 'Whipcord', and that is what we have retained.

Asud and Gulamgiri, between them, sum up Phule's political and economic philosophy and define his historicist understanding of the *varna* system. Phule believed that Maharashtrian Hindu society was made of two groups, the Brahmins and the Shudratishudras. This two-fold division and the historical tension between the two is central to his thought. Here we see Phule analysing history, mythology, language, the social struggle at the core of Maharashtrian society, revolutionary change and its appropriation by the dominant class, in this case the Brahmins. Even if one were to read only these two books, one would get the essence of Phule's thought and system.

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# Cultivator's Whipcord

by  
Jotirao Govindrao Phuley  
for the defence of the Shudra (Dasya) Community

*For the kind consideration of  
His Excellency the Right Hon 'ble  
Sir Frederick Temple Hamilton Temple Blackwood,  
Earl of Dufferin,  
K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G, F.R.S.D.C.I.,  
Viceroy and Governor General of India.*

# Contents

## [Chapter First:](#)

Because the Brahmin workers are dominant in all the departments of the government, through their selfish relations, Bhat and Brahmins so exploit the ignorant farmer in the name of their greedy religion, that the farmer is left without any means of sending his little ones to school. And even if some such one has the means, because of their ill advice, he is without the wish to do so.

## [Chapter Second:](#)

Because the white government officers are mostly engrossed with luxury, they do not have time enough to enquire into the real conditions of the farmers, and because of this negligence most government departments are dominated by Brahmin employees. Both these causes have the effect that the farmers are looted and are without enough to fill their bellies or cover their bodies.

## [Chapter Third:](#)

How the Arya Brahmins came from Iran, the origins of the Shudra farmer, how our current government is forever introducing new taxes on the farmer and schemingly collecting money to increase the salaries and pensions of its own employees and how the farmer is now totally debt-ridden.

## [Chapter Fourth:](#)

The condition of agriculture, with that of the farmer.

## [Chapter Fifth:](#)

Suggestions for the Arya Bhat-Brahmins regarding us Shudra farmers, and the measures that the government should take.

While I was working on this Whipcord many people spoke to me on the proposed book. I present here two typical examples –

- The one who calls himself a Pure Maratha
- A Shudra *sadhu*

# Prologue

Without knowledge, intelligence was lost, without intelligence morality was lost and without morality was lost all dynamism! Without dynamism money was lost and without money the Shudras sank. All this misery was caused by the lack of knowledge.

What we mean is, there are many causes for the abjection of Shudra farmers, relating to religion and state, and we have written this book with the intention of discussing some of them at least. Because of an artificial and tyrannical religion, and because almost all the government departments are dominated by Brahmins, and because the European workers are lazy, the Shudra farmers are ill-treated by the Brahmin workers. Our intention is that they should be assisted in defending themselves from these, and therefore we have titled this book as The Cultivator's Whipcord.

Dear Readers, at present, farmers can be divided into three groups - pure farmers or Kunbis, Malis and Dhangars.<sup>1</sup> Now if we look at how this division came about, we find that originally there were people who depended on farming for their livelihood. These are the *kulavadis* or Kunbis. Gradually there emerged people who worked on their farmlands and in the process diversified into cultivating fruits and vegetables. They became the gardeners or *mālis*. Then there emerged a third group who did both of these and possessed goats etc. They became the Dhangars or shepherds.

These differences must have come about because of differences in work. But now these are thought to be three separate castes. At present there is no inter-marriage between these, but there is inter-dining and other relationships.<sup>2</sup> Therefore these (Kunbis, Malis and Dhangars) must have been in the past of a single and same Shudra farmer caste. Later people from all the three castes had to give up their original business of farming and took up various businesses for their livelihood. Those who have some energy, have continued to be farmers, though most of them are illiterate God-believers, naked and forever hungry; and those who were totally supportless have left their areas and sought business here and there, wherever they could find it. Some have started a fodder-business, some of wood, some of cloth, and some others have started taking contracts, others to be employed as writers, and finally are proud of themselves with their pensions. Thus they earn money and build estates. But after them, their cavalier sons, who have little love of knowledge, become penniless in no time and blame their fathers (for not having left behind enough). Many there are whose ancestors

won whole *jāgirs* and *ināms* on the strength of their soldiery or their wit, and some indeed had become parallel kings like Shinde and Holkar. But at present their descendants, ignorant and illiterate, have either pawned their *jāgirs* and *ināms*, or sold them off outright and are in debt, and many there are, who are penniless and without food. Most *ināmdars* and *jāgirdars* have no conception of the various adventures and achievements of their ancestors or of their various sufferings, and because they are ignorant and in the company of selfish and cunning men and because they are indulging day and night in luxury and addictions, it has become rare to find those whose jagirs are not pawned off and those who are not entirely possessed by debt. Now even among those *samsthāniks* who have no debts and liabilities, the people around them and their Brahmin administrators are so selfish, cunning and political that they prevent the *sansthāniks* from acquiring a taste for virtue and knowledge; they are content to believe that their ancestors created this wealth only for their enjoyment. Blinded by religion and incapable of governing their kingdoms on their own, they throw their lot in the hands of fate and depend entirely on their Brahmin administrators; and generate virtue by donations of cow during the day, and progeny by night. It is especially possible for such kings and lords to improve the lot of their Shudra brothers, but they never think of it and as long as the stupidity of believing that 'the Brahmin is the one I worship' (*brahmano mama daivatam*) does not leave their heads, however much we might break our heads over it, it would be futile; and even if after this someone is prompted to do so (improve the lot of their brothers that is), how would they listen to any ideas which go against the selfish religion which has been firmly implanted in their minds from childhood, and think about them? And the administrators close to them will not allow such a selfless person to do anything. But if someone is courageous enough to give me some time and let me explain according to my wit, I will happily present my ideas to him.

Anyway, a comparison of the condition of the Shudra God-fearing farmer of Hindustan with all other countries in the world reveals that their condition is worse than farmers in other countries, and is even worse than that of beasts.

It needs hardly to be stated that this book is composed from the abject conditions of contemporary ignorant Shudras and Atishudras and English, Sanskrit and Prakrit books. It is clear that without such help, it could not have been constructed.

I request the scholarly and discerning reader to ignore the lacunae in the book, forgiving me for them, and taking only the good things from it, since I have written of my discoveries in it according to my limited wit. And if in their perusal, they see parts that are inappropriate or false, or if they

find any support (in other books etc.) to strengthen the book, they should write to us through newspapers. We will gratefully acknowledge them and consider their suggestions in the second edition.

Shrimant Sarkar Gaikwad, Senakhaskhel Samsheer Bahadur Sayajirao Maharaj<sup>3</sup> has, with great enthusiasm and affection, made me read this book to him and listened to it with great attention, sparing time from all his kingly duties, when I went to Baroda; and Maharaj has, in his generosity, felicitated me and helped me with money. I am deeply grateful to him.

I have read out portions of this book to several Shudra gentlemen in Pune, Mumbai, Thane, Junnar, Otur, Hadapsar, Vangani, Malyache Kural, etc., and they have sent me signed letters stating that the matter in the book is true and correct.



# Chapter First

Because the Brahmin workers are dominant in all the departments of the government, through their selfish relations, Bhat and Brahmins so exploit the ignorant farmer in the name of their greedy religion that the farmer is left without any means of sending his little ones to school, and even if some such one has the means, because of their ill advice, he is without the wish to do so.

Now, the first type of letterless farmer is so exploited by the Brahmin under the pretext of religion that it would be very hard to find a parallel example anywhere in the world. The ancient and cunning Arya Brahmin scripture-writers have so smoothly machinated to tie up the farmer in their selfish religion that from even before he is born, when his mother gets her menses and the *garbhadhan*<sup>4</sup> rituals are performed, till he dies, various things are looted from him. Not only that, even after he dies, his son has to bear the weight of religion for the *shrādhā*<sup>3</sup> and other rituals. For, the moment a farmer's woman gets her menses, in the name of *japa* and *anushtān*, the Brahmins loot their money, and in the process, under the pretext of Brahmin-*bhojan* collect their relatives and friends, create such a confusion of *dakshina* and ghee and *chapati* that of the leftover food, not even *dāl* and *chapati* is left to fill the poor farmer's belly. In the name of pacification of Gods that rule the menses, the Brahmins pacify their bellies and the moment some *dakshina* is put into their hands, after blessing the farmer and telling the farmers' women to fast on Saturdays or the fourth day of the month, leave for their respective homes. Later the Brahmin, on every Saturday or the fourth day, makes the women put necklaces of cotton-leaves on Maruti's neck and grass on Ganapati's head, get foodstuffs for themselves and if possible, later, promising fulfillment of these rituals, they extract minor feasts from the farmer. In the meanwhile, in the course of nature, if the farmer's woman gets pregnant, the dedicative vow<sup>5</sup> made in the name of the ghosts of unmarried Brahmins is invoked casually while talking to the farmer, and when the farmers' women are close to delivery, the Brahmin frequents the farmers' houses, and sweet-talking them into believing themselves the hosts of ceremonies, fulfill all those supposed vows made earlier.

Later, when the farmer woman has a son, the line of wealth manifests itself on the Brahmin's palm. This is how: first the chief priest goes to the farmer's house and asks the exact time of birth to the ignorant women, who count time with threads and shadows; and thus make the horoscope, fixing that

sign under which the most unlucky and ill stars match, so that the joy of having a son is completely taken away by the farmer's anxious fears. Then on the next day, they bring together their own relatives and friends and make them sit for *japa* and *anushthān*, and make the farmer give at least enough money for fruits and other things, because they are fasting. If it is summer, they obtain fans; if rains, umbrellas; if winter, white sheets. Moreover, if the chief priest can manage it, he takes oil, rice, coconut, ghee, sugar, fruits and other things as well, for the *pooja*. In order to impress upon the farmer the love for idol-worship, many of these do not shave or cut their hair during the ritual, some eat only fruit. Thus by cheating the farmer with smooth lies, they extract a lot of money from him. And all of you know what great enjoyment they have at the time of the completion of the ritual, getting from the farmer the appropriate *dakshina*.

The Arya bhats and Brahmins do not admit Shudra farmers' children [*Sir William Jones, Vol. IV, page 111.*] [*Original in English – Ed.*] in their Sanskrit schools, but in their Prakrit Marathi schools they admit these children, and over and above their own monthly salaries, extract food on every full moon and moonless night, grain on many festival days, and even take a fourth from what the children bring everyday to eat in school; and teach them only the basic letters, arithmetic, *modi*,<sup>7</sup> some *shloka* in Prakrit relating to pretentious and false Puranas, and a few songs, or teach them *lāvanis*<sup>8</sup> making them educated enough to write such things. Never giving them sufficient knowledge even to keep accounts of expenses at home. So how would they enter into the *mamledār*'s offices and become even clerks?

At the time of fixing the marriage of the farmer's son, the Brahmin astrologer goes to the prospective groom's house, and arranging all kinds of diagrams of constellations, asks what the names of the children are, and proposing his own advantage to himself, his thumb dances on the digits of his fingers, and makes sure that an ill-fortuned planet is found in the signs, and in order to pacify that planet, they take money from the farmer for the beginning and for the completion of rituals. Then at the time of fixing the date of marriage, at the bride's house they take a folded piece of cloth and make various squares on it with rice, make the two fathers sit on them and arrange coconut pieces, turmeric, *kumkum* and other things; and without in the least thinking of the age of the bride and the groom or their varna, or their qualities arrange a minimal Ganapati with betel nut and with a general bustle of *samarpayāmi*<sup>9</sup> they elicit money from the farmer, and then note the date on a piece of paper, cover it with *kumkum* and turmeric and put it into the hands of the parents; and then gathering everything, including money and things, take also the betel nut Ganapati to crack him and chew him at home. Before the marriage in the Maruti temple, when the groom is given a dress from the bride's side, the *bhats* and Brahmins take an *ānā*<sup>10</sup> or two and

pocket it. When the groom enters the pandal, they put some mounds of wheat for the pair to stand facing each other and make both maternal uncles stand behind them, with naked swords, as supporters. Taking pieces of cloth from whoever is around, they stripe it with turmeric and *kumkum*, and holding it between the pair, turn by turn, sing *shlokas*, some in *raga* Kalyan, some in *raga* Bhairavi, finally saying '*shubhmangal*'<sup>11</sup>, they marry off the ignorant farmer's children. In the marriages of many rich Malis and Kunbis, without bothering about the hosts or their relations or guests, many uninvited Brahmins sit down with panache and shawls, and create such confusion in the marriage-*pandal* for the *dakshina*, that the parents of the bride and the groom are not free to properly welcome the invited relations. Will such unscrupulous beggars ever be found in another country or caste? Then suddenly the *bhatji* actually performing the marriage makes the bride and the groom sit down beside each other, and performs all manner of ritual, saying '*dakshinam samarpayāmi*' intermittently, and then taking some sticks and things, lights a fire and puts ghee and other things in the fire, engulfs the couple thoroughly in smoke, in the name of the *lajja-homa*, and goes home after taking lots of food and *dakshinā* from the ignorant fathers. On the day of completion, with the mediation of one or two cunning farmers, they extract money from the parents, and also take money for removing the pandal. In the meanwhile, praising the rich farmer with similes of Karna<sup>12</sup> and other great donors, and with all kinds of tricks, they so excite the farmer that at the end of the marriage, a gathering of all kinds of Brahmins arranged, and, without distinction, Vedic Brahmins, *shāstris*, Puranic storytellers and *bhikshuks*<sup>13</sup>, all and sundry manage to get *dakshina*, and then go home. Some of the more epicurean Brahmins having enquired if there is dance and other things at night, with tiny *pagdis* on their heads and minute shawls in their laps, sit right beside the invitees, reclining on bolsters, fill the two barrels of their noses with snuff, and filling the surroundings with snuff, listen to the singing of the *nāyakins*.<sup>14</sup>

Now I will explain a little how the Brahmins cheat in the name of religion, and how they denude the farmer's children after the farmer dies of old age, until the children too die. When the farmer's children build new houses, the *shudra* wage labourer works in the heat of the sun, carrying material. The mason and carpenter build towers with bamboo and climbing up like monkeys build the house with various joints of wooden beams. The owner, pitying them, promises a good meal to them at the time of entering the house, but before he can do that, the Bhats and Brahmins frequent the farmer's house day in and day out, promising and cheating him with religion and getting silly recommendations from some administrator, perform rituals in his new house, sticking rag-flags in various corners, first make sure that they and their wives and children get a proper and sumptuous meal, leaving only stale and leftover food for the ignorant and guileless farmer and the

workers which they eat with jaggery, while they themselves eat pan, and blessing the farmer, extract a *dakshinā* from him and go home with their hands caressing their bellies. A few selfish *sadhu* Bhat-Brahmins make friends with young farmers, and enticing them with promise of prestige and fame, arrange gatherings of Brahmins in which some Bhat-Brahmins are felicitated with shawls and things where everyone gets a *dakshinā*. When the farmer builds new farm-houses or new temples or some such building, in the name of *udyāpan*<sup>15</sup> the Brahmins for sure take a meal and *dakshinā*.

On every Chaitra varsha *pratipada*<sup>16</sup> the Brahmins read the predictions for the year at every farmer's house and take *dakshina* from them. Similarly, on Ramnavami and Hanuman *jayanti*, if the Brahmins can find a rich farmer in their lane, they get him to arrange a meal for Brahmins and if they can find only a poor one, they alternately collect contributions from him and make sure of such a meal.

In the *Jejuri yātra*<sup>17</sup> when the farmer along with his family goes to the lake etc. for bathing, the Brahmins take one *shivrai*<sup>18</sup> as *dakshina* from all of them. This *yātra* has at least seventy-five thousand people, and if a murali sits on the lap of some innocent wealthy farmer, the *dev*-Brahmins take money from him in the name the *suvāsini*.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, when the farmer buys the offerings for the gods from the grocer, the Brahmins are in cahoots with the grocer, and thus exploit the farmer.

On every *Ashadhi Ekādashi*<sup>20</sup> the Brahmins take at least one paisa *dakshinā* even from the poor farmer who can give them grains for meals.

In Pandharpur, when farmers with their women and children go to the Chandrabhaga<sup>21</sup> for bathing, the Bhats and Brahmins stand on the bank and take one *shivrai* from all of them as covenant.<sup>22</sup> This yatra does not have less than a lakh people; and from amongst the farmers some are made to give money for ten *suvāsini*s and Brahmins, or at least one, and take the farmers to their own houses, displaying the women of their home eating; taking each farmer separately, and saying 'See these are your ten, if you feel like, give them some *dakshina*, or just pay your respects from a distance, so that they can send your dedications to God, and then eat'. Hundreds of Brahmin priests (especially those at Pandharpur) have become wealthy through such honest business.

In every Shrāvan<sup>23</sup>, instead of suing the *vaidus* and *garudis* for taking away their business of carrying cobras in baskets and visiting farmers' houses saying 'Feed some milk to the cobras' or '*nāga dakshinām samarpayami*'; the Brahmins make cobras of clay or stone, and worshipping them, extract money from the farmer.

On the Shrāvani Poornima<sup>24</sup>, without paying attention to the black thread in the Mahar's neck, they tie Gagabhat-like [*Initially there was no custom of the sacred thread amongst the shudras. It started when in return of a gold balance, Gagabhat put a sacred thread around the Kunbi king Shivaji.*] sacred threads made of white thread on the bodies of pretentious Kunbis, and jump on the food and the dakshina. They tie *rakhees* [*These rakhees are made of cotton threads, and one gets about 25 for one paisa.*] on the wrists of all the farmers and take one *paisa dakshina* from them.

On Vādya Pratipada<sup>25</sup>, Brahmins lure most rich farmers into observing 'devotional week', put *veenās* round their necks, and one by one, make them dance through the night and sing like parrots, while the Brahmins themselves sit in style, reclining on bolsters, and everyday take money from the farmers for this or that. On the night of the Gokulashtami<sup>26</sup>, they read the third book of Harivijay, and take *dakshina* for Yashoda's delivery.' In the morning, for the completion, it is they who eat ghee and chapati first, and then, leaving the leftovers for the farmers and the drummers and others, go home.

Finally, on the last Monday of Shrāvan, the Bhat-Brahmins cheat the ignorant and unsuspecting farmers and persuade them to make a gift of an unlimited amount of grain. The excuse usually is that they must feed a Brahmin couple themselves. Thus having fed the women and children in their family to their heart's content, they condescend to give the peasant a couple of *puran-polis*<sup>27</sup> and a little rice and persuade them to believe that they have got their due.

On each Bhādrapada<sup>28</sup>, Bhat-Brahmins take at least a paisa each from farmer women, young and old, in the name of Hartālika<sup>29</sup>.

On Ganesh Chaturthi<sup>30</sup>, after singing *ārtis* and clapping in front of the idol of Ganapati, they take some *dakshinā* from the farmer. On Rishi Panchami, Bhat-Brahmins make the farmer women dip into little puddles, and during the day, at the farmers expense, eat *ghee* and *chapati*; and in the night, pretending to listen to devotional songs, stare at the faces of renowned dancers, not even casting a glance at the masks of the clay Gauri in the farmer's house.

On Ananta Chaturdashi,<sup>31</sup> they take food from the farmer. In Pitru paksha<sup>32</sup>, Bhat-Brahmins create such chaos amongst the farmers and go after them, that let alone the Bhonsales, Shindes and Holkars, even the poor wage labourer women amongst them are not let off, and in the name of Ganapati, have to give foodstuff, *dakshina*, and slices of gourd, and touch their heads to the Brahmin's feet.

If, fortuitously, it's the Kapila Shashti<sup>33</sup>, Bhat-Brahmins take the rich farmer to holy places like Nasik, Vai and under the pretext of charity, take away lots of money, and from the poor farmers take at least a paisa each at the time of bathing.

Finally, on the *amāvasyā*, in their greed for foodstuff and *dakshina*, they make the farmer worship the feet of cattle.

On Vijaya Dashami, they take money from the farmer for worshipping horses and the *apta* tree, and on Kojagiri night, if it works, devour the farmer's milk.

On the *amavāsya*, they take *dakshinā* from the farmer for Lakshmi Pooja.

On every Bali Pratipada in Kārtik, while doing the farmer's *ārati*, instead of blessing him with '*Idā pidā talo, baliche rājya yevo*,<sup>34</sup> they put shawls on their arms, and roam about the farmers' houses, asking for *māli*,<sup>35</sup> and force the farmers' to be the hosts.

In the *yātra* at Alandi, when the farmer is bathing in Indrayani with his family, they take a *paisa* each for covenant (*sanka*, this *yātra* has about seventy-five thousand people). Later, on *dvādas* they give wordy blessings to the devout and for the meals of *dev-brahm suvāsini*, take foodstuff from the well-off farmer and take simple thin if the farmer is poor.

Also, in Bhonwar, they lure the ignorant farmers of villages in *vāri*<sup>36</sup>, and turn by turn, for twelve months, on every *dwādashī*, they manage to extract Brahmin-*bhojans*. Not only that, they even flatten several rich farmers into giving a meal to a thousand Brahmins. Finally if a farmer in some other town has been punished by the council of farmers and sent there, they shave him, and in the name of restitution and penance, do they not altogether denude him?

On Vādyā Dvādashi Bhat-Brahmins perform marriages for the Tulsi, holding partitions improvised from *dhotis*, sing a few *shlokas* and other verses instead of the *mangalāshtak* and collect money, and if possible other things from the farmer.

In every Paush month, on Makar Sankranti, they read texts describing the fruit of the ritual and take *dakshinā* from him, and promising him the accretion of immeasurable virtue, loot the ignorant farmer's sugarcane fields.

In every Māgha month, on the Mahashivaratri, Bhat-Brahmins read the text of the Shivalilamrut in temples in the farmers' lanes and take foodstuff for reading the complete text.

In every Fālgun month, after worshipping the Holi, when the farmers scream and abuse because they have lost all money or rant against the Hindu *dharma*, even then these *bhatjis* do not allow them to put dust and soil on their heads without taking some *dakshina*.

Over and above the annual festivals and rituals mentioned above, the occasional eclipses of the moon and the sun, the turning of the planets are occasions for the Bhat-Brahmins to take all manner of donations and feasts, walking the lanes of the farmers' houses turn by turn. Also, in order to make the weight of the Hindu dharma lie heavy on the farmers and so that they follow the Brahmins unquestioningly, the Bhat-Brahmins read and re-read hollow and ridiculous texts like the Pandav-Pratap<sup>37</sup> in the rich farmers' houses, and take money, along with *dhotis* and headgear. Some ungrateful Brahmins lure the younger women of the hosts' family and teach them *kukuchaku*.<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, if they can manage it, they make the farmer perform the Satyanarayan *pooja*,<sup>39</sup> and pour *ghee*, milk, and all manner of oblations down their own throats, then feasting with their family, taking as much *dakshina* as they can, finally make the farmer carry the lantern as they go home.

If there are any who yet remain untouched by all this, the Bhat Puranik collects all of them in the temple at night and makes them addicted to listening to stories of Radha and Krishna. At the time of completion, they induce jealousies amongst these, collect a lot of *dakshinā*, then separately collecting money from all, sit in a palanquin, and go away, led and followed by their listeners. Several illiterate Brahmins, lacking the wits to earn their livelihood from the almanac, make one amongst them a white sadhu, put a *veena* around his neck, hard footwear on his feet, and making a Shudra hold a large umbrella over him, sing '*jai jai Ram, jai jai Ram*', and thus beg respectably in the lanes of the farmers' houses.

Several Bhat-Brahmins make a young and handsome fellow amongst them into a yellow *sadhu*, and giving castanets in his hands, they dance round him as he too dances, and with great love sing 'Radha Krishna Radha' and gesturing like dancing boys, lure rich women into becoming their followers. And thus fill their own bellies, and have fun. Because several witless Brahmins do not have the cunning to do all this and enjoy themselves, they take a credulous clerk, turn him into a *devmahalkari*,<sup>40</sup> and the rest of them travel from village to village, make the farmer submit covenants and thus trouble him a lot. Because several Brahmins do not have

the strength to study the Vedas and make a living respectably, they take a half-mad Brahmins from amongst themselves and make him a Swami,<sup>41</sup> and travel from village to village, telling all manner of lies like 'The *swami* recognizes what your wishes are and tells obliquely of some of them being fulfilled', take the farmer to see the Swami, and steal his money.

If the farmer is not completely humbled on this rack of *dharma*, then they get him to make pilgrimages to Badri, Kedar or other holy places, finally taking him to Kashi, Prayag; denude him of thousands of rupees, moustaches and beard as well, bring him home and finally, arrange large feasts for the completion.

In the end, when the farmer dies, the Brahmins, presenting themselves as the (authorized and trained) Brahmins who perform the rituals of death, make the family perform all manner of ritual, read the Garuda Purana<sup>42</sup> everyday at the house and then on the tenth day, bring some respectable crow of a *bhatji*<sup>43</sup> from Dhankawadi or some such place, make the son pay him for crowing over the ritual, and along with the money for reading the Garuda Purana, take at least metal jugs, or brass, umbrellas, walking sticks, mattresses, and pair of *dhotis* as donation. They have also established the custom of the annual *shrādhā* for the dead farmer, which is performed until all the children of the farmer are dead. There are also annual customs of various donations and things, which yield them things from the farmers' children according to their abilities, in the following manner: they flatter the farmer, giving him wordy titles such as Patil or Deshmukh, freely loot him of his produce at the time of the marriages of their own sons and daughters, and to put upon the farmer the stamp of their importance, they invite all the farmers for the occasion and after first feasting along with people of their own caste, they grade the leftovers precisely and then with great cunning serve the farmer along with their Shudra servants, that too from a distance; but while enjoying themselves in all manner in the palaces of prostitutes, without prohibiting themselves the sucking of juices from the prostitutes' lips, [A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 12 and 23.] [Original in English. - Ed.] they think the farmer so low that they do not allow the farmer to touch their well or their water tank. How would they ever allow inter-dining or inter-marriage?

Hearing this narrative, someone might enquire, how is it that the farmers continue to be ignorant and are looted till today? My reply to this is that in ancient times, the moment Arya Bhat-Brahmins began to rule this country, they totally prohibited education for their subject Shudra farmers and for thousands of years, they looted them as they willed. There is written material to this effect in their selfish texts like the Manusamhita. Later when a few objective and pure scholars were disturbed by this Brahmin cunning, they established the Bauddha religion and were increasingly liberating the



abject farmer from the artificial religion of the Arya Brahmins. Suddenly, the crown-jewel of the Aryas, the cunning Shankaracharya argued, using every means available, with the good Bauddhas, and tried to put an end to them in Hindustan. But the Bauddha religion was not even shaken and when it started growing day by day, Shankaracharya joined the Turki people and the Marathas and defeated the Bauddhas through the swords of these. Later he planted a certain fear in the mind of the ignorant farmer along with the magic of the Vedic mantras, and forbade the Arya bhatji to eat the flesh of cows and drink alcohol.

After some time had passed, the bold followers of Hazrat Paigambar started to split the idols at Somnath, along with the artificial Hindu religion, with their swords and started to liberate the Shudra farmer from the Brahma-cunning of the Aryas. From amongst the Bhat-Brahmins, Mukundaraja and Dnyanoba lifted some imaginary parts from the *Bhagavat-bakhar*, and wrote tactical books in Prakrit called *Viveksindhu* and *Dnyāneshwari*<sup>44</sup> and crazed the ignorant farmer to such an extent that the farmers started to think of the Mohammadans as low, along with the Quran, and started hating them instead. After some time had passed, a saint called Tukaram was born amongst the farmers. Fearing that he would enlighten King Shivaji and remove the artificial religion of the Bhat-Brahmins, one of them, a hardened Vedanti called Ramdas Swami, conspired with the wily Gagabhatta to poison the ears of the letterless King Shivaji,<sup>45</sup> and did not allow any friendship to develop between the selfless Tukaram and Shivaji. Later, after Shivaji, his chief servant Bhats, the Peshwas put his legitimate heir in prison in Satara.<sup>46</sup> In the final years of their rule, the Peshwas, instead of spending money from the taxes collected from the farmer, who was eating roots and *bhakri* and *chatni*, on dams so that his fields could have water, spent thousands on a flurry of gifts and donations to the Bhat-Brahmins at the Parvati-ramana.<sup>47</sup> And spending not even a paisa on providing at least Prakrit education to the ignorant farmer, from the taxes collected from the farmers' storehouses, which were already looted by the Pendharis,<sup>48</sup> in the Parvati-ramana, Bajirao Saheb (the last Peshwa) organized whole festivals of donations for the Bhat-Brahmins, where a kedgerie of all kinds of sweets and coins, gold and silver, were poured out in ladlefuls, and we are not much surprised by this. In point then, that partial donor did not make any arrangement in his Parvati jurisdiction for the abandoned widows or orphaned children of the farmers, but had arranged only for people of his own caste, [A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 133. Having received an English education, he (the adopted son of the late Bajee Rao, the ex-Peishwa of the Maharattas) was a frequent visitor at the tables of Europeans of rank and was in the habit of entertaining them in turn at Bhitoor, etc.] [Original in English. -Ed.] Bhat-Brahmins, pujaris, and a few uninvited Brahmins, to have hot water for their baths in the morning, two first class meals every day and at every fasting day, has arranged for pedhas and milk and other food, and on all festivals all the

delicacies that they wished and has arranged for them to listen to singing and music throughout the day.

Our cowardly English government has allowed these customs to continue and spends thousands of rupees on this, which are collected from the taxes on the honest sweat and labour of the farmer.

At present, seeing that several Shudras and Atishudras are attaining humanity by converting to the Christian religion, the importance of Bhat-Brahmins is decreasing and they are being forced to take up labouring occupations themselves. Several wily Bhat-Brahmins are protecting the silly Hindu *dharma*, generating all manner of opinions, implicitly criticising the Mohammadan and Christian religions, corrupting the minds of the farmers. But if from amongst the supporters of the ancient idol-worshipping religious people, Kaka and the leader of the Sarvajanic Sabha, Joshibuva, removed the scales of pride in caste in the Hindu dharma and looked at the condition of the farmers, they would not have been able to call this poor farmer, exploited by the prohibition on *ekpakshiya dharma*<sup>49</sup> ignorant, and if they had truthfully informed our English government of the atrocities on the farmers caused by religion, then perhaps the milk of kindness might have flowed from the government and it would not have consulted the lordly Bhat-Brahmin in the matter of education of the Shudra farmer and might have found other solutions.

In sum, the ignorant farmer is so harmed by the Bhat-Brahmins in terms of time and money, that he is left without the strength to send his little children to school and for generations the fear of the custom of 'do not impart education to the Shudra farmer' implanted by the Bhat-Brahmins is so strong, that he does not have the courage to send his children to school. The kind Governor, following the great George Washington of the democratic country of America, has allowed the ignorant Shudras, who think that religion is what the Bhat-Brahmins say and laws are what the English government makes, to elect their representatives to the municipality. But if the Bhat-Brahmins, in the pride of their knowledge and the hypocritical status in purity-pollution, begin to cheat the ignorant Shudras and Atishudras, then our only prayer is the Governor not be held responsible for that, even though the Bhat-Brahmins have got their desire.

## Chapter Second

Because the white government officers are mostly engrossed with luxury, they do not have time enough to enquire into the real conditions of the farmers and because of this negligence most government departments are dominated by Brahmin employees. Both these causes have the effect that the farmers are looted and are without enough to fill their bellies or cover their bodies.

In general in the past, in the whole of Hindustan the foreign rulers, Yavani<sup>50</sup> kings, and some indigenous kings had lakhs of Shudra farmers employed as *sardars*, *mankaris*, *shiledars*, *bargirs*,<sup>51</sup> foot-soldiers, artillery, camel and elephant riders and Atishudras employed in the stables. Lakhs of Shudra and Atishudra farmers did not find it difficult to pay taxes because from each farmer's family at least one person was employed by the government. But now because these kings and *sardars* and *badshahs* are lost and have disappeared, more than twenty-five lakh Shudras and Atishudras have been rendered jobless and their burden has to be borne by those who cultivate the fields.

While it is true that because of the various actions of our brave English government the incidence of men being killed in all-too frequent battles, has ceased altogether and there is peace everywhere, it is because hunting and war-expeditions have ceased that the virtue and courage of all people has ceased to be, and kings and *sardars*, like frightened women, engage in religious worship during the day and meaningless production of progeny during the night. As a result the population has increased too much as well. Because of this, the division of property amongst farmers has increased, so much so that some are reduced to surviving on the produce of what they sow in maybe eight or ten *pabhari*. And because they do not have the wherewithal to maintain a head or two of cattle for cultivating these eight or ten *pabhari*<sup>52</sup>, they entrust their land to their neighbours and such like, for half the produce or maybe in parts, and travel with their children and family to other towns to fill their bellies as labourers.

In the past, those farmers who had very little land and could not survive on its produce, would go into the nearby forest and would gather wood, fruits and leaves from trees like *palash* and *mahua*. By selling these things they managed to collect enough money for their basic needs, and depending on the town pasture for cattle-feed, could maintain a cow or two and a few sheep, manage on their produce and live happily in their own town. But now the cunning European employees of our honourable government have spent

all their foreign and multi-faceted intelligence to establish a massive Forest Department; including all mountains and hills and valleys. This culminates in the inclusion of unused lands and the town pastures as well. Now our poor and handicapped farmers' sheep and goats have no place to feed even on air in the forest. Now if they want to fill their bellies they have to work in the factories as weavers, iron-smiths or carpenters or as casual labourers; artisans in England are selling things here - tasteful bottles of alcohol, breads, biscuits, sweets, pickles, needles big and small, knives, scissors, sewing machines, heaters, colourful mirror and glass-ware, and thread, cloth, shawls, hand-gloves, stockings, caps, sticks, umbrellas, brass, copper, iron sheets, locks and keys, coal, various vehicles and carriages, harnesses, etc. and finally, carpets - all made with machines, and selling them cheaper here. The goods produced here have lost their market, and many weavers and *julahas* and *momins* are so poor that they are forced to near starvation and have to manage, in secret, on coarse wheat or rice powder, and many on the piths of mango. Several weavers, unable to bear the starving condition of their family, in the evening, buy a few paise worth arrack on credit and at home lie down as if dead. Several weavers bring silk and silver threads from the *gujar* or the Marwadi, to weave cloth and make dresses, but sell them off instead to feed their children and cheating the *gujar* or the Marwadi, run away from the town at night. How would these artisans, starving as they are, help the poor farmer?

Secondly, in order to maintain and prolong the dominance acquired by their ancestors through great effort and deception, and so that the Shudras and Atishudras serve them like cattle or horses or, like inanimate fields, produce things necessary and luxurious for their consumption, the Bhat-Brahmins have inserted the notion that if any of the Hindus travel beyond Attuck their religion is polluted. In this the intentions of Brahmins were realized, but others suffered a great deal. Because they have no experience of the culture and customs of other people, they really think of themselves as animals, instead of realizing that they are human beings. Because trade with other countries disappeared completely, they were rendered penniless and moreover, it is indubitable that the general slogans that reformed Brahmins are repeating, 'improve our country, improve our country', at least on the face of it, must have been caused by the realization about religion mentioned above. All these artificial things have greatly harmed the *salis*, carpenters and other artisans and where these things will lead them to in the future is something that no one but a true well wisher of the country can guess.

Some will object that the poor farmer should work as a labourer for the rich farmer who has enough land and manage to survive, but because the population has increased everywhere in general, farmers no longer have

enough land to cultivate turn by turn, letting some of it lie fallow and because of this most of the land has become unproductive. They themselves have difficulty in feeding their own families so how would they be able to employ the poor farmers as labourers and help them survive? That this farmer, surrounded by difficulties, is not free to send his naked children to school is well known to our far-sighted government employees, and they collect, all in all, local funds of several lakh rupees, in the name of imparting education to the poor ignorant farmer, and a third of it is spent on education for appearances' sake, establishing a few schools here and there. Only a few farmers send their children to these schools. But the teachers themselves are not farmers and so do they have any commitment in this? It is not at all surprising that the people who, for their selfish religion maintain procedures of purity and pollution and bathe and perform rituals throughout the day, do not give proper education to the farmers' children and that their children remain dumb. From the local funds collected from the farmer, how many have educated themselves and become government employees? If this has happened, then the skilful Director of Education should prepare a list of all such employees, with designations and names, and publish it in the gazetteer so that the farmers will joyfully thank the honourable government, and the government gazetteers will have their eyes opened. The few teachers that are there in the villages are all Brahmins. Their salary is not more than maybe eight to twelve rupees and their worth in a city like Pune is not more than four to six rupees Such selfish, unscholarly Brahmins, who are interested only in doing their job and filling their bellies, holding fast to their unnatural pride in caste and religion, openly preach to the farmers' children 'If you do not get government jobs after educating yourselves, do you want beg like us house to house, with the almanac in your hands?'

While re-assessing the ignorant farmers' lands every thirty years the European workers, blindly worshipping our virtuous government do not say 'Amen' until they have raised the taxes at least a little. But while everyday work is going on, are the lazy European workers, overh fond of hunting, spending most of their time in luxury and comfortable to see how the Brahmin employees denude the ignorant farmer? Do they keep a watch over them?

When there are quarrels between the ignorant and dumb farmers over boundaries of their lands or over their turns at getting water from the common well, the cunning Bhat-Brahmins, visiting both sides, advise the two sides in a variety of manners and then on the next day favouring one of them, prepare an application, and send them to the *mamledar*. When the peon brings them the summons, they go to the *kulkarni* to accept the summons, who, after sending the peon away talks to the two parties separately, saying 'You meet me at this time, and you at this time, alone, so

that we can find a fine solution to the problem When the appellant and other people on his side visit his house at the appointed time, they are told 'You should extend your kindness upto this amount then I will be able to visit the chief clerk in the *mamledar's* office so that he punishes the other side because all that is controlled by the chief clerk. And if what I say does not happen, then I will take your amount from him and return it to you, and you may give me whatever you think, by the grace of Bahiroba, and even if you do not give me anything, I will have no complaints. Your victory is my success.' Then taking double the amount from the opponants' side and some for their own efforts, they make an agreement, saying 'Write the complaint the way I tell you do and give two or three false witnesses, then I will tell the chief clerk and not allow even a hair on your head to be harmed because you know how influential he is and how he decides for the *mamledar*. And now, if things do not happen according to this agreement, I will get the amount back from him and return it to you, but I will not return what I take for my efforts, I tell of that clearly right now. It's not as if my kitchen-fires cannot be lighted without your help.' Later, in the *mamledar's* office, at the time of taking statements, the Brahmin employees ask suggestive questions and take down favourable statements from the party that has warmed their pockets, but for the party which has not done that, they change the sequence of points, and prepare such statements that those who listen to them, or read them, will instantly form a negative opinion, instead of getting the factual picture of the case. Many Brahmin clerks completely omit some items while taking down the statements of ignorant farmers. Many Brahmin clerks take the farmers' statements home and prepare different ones and in the morning put them back in the files in the office. If this is the case, then even if the magistrate happens to be impartial, he might end up being unjust. After this, because the advocates have instigated the farmer to appeal to the European Collector, the *shirastedar* puts up before the Collector only those statements that support the party which has warmed his pockets, and at that time, if they cannot manage to get what they want, which is the golden words from the Collector's mouth '*tumchi takrār tarkati āhe*'<sup>54</sup>, while omitting to read the most important points made in the statements; then the shirastedar writes in an illegible hand whatever he feels like, and when the brave lord is about to go out for a walk with his lady, or if there is harsh boss who does not understand Marathi, then because he is sleepy from the last nights' party or because he is about to go hunting, the shirastedar reads out exactly whatever the lord had said, and quite easily obtains his signature on the case.

If the cunning *shirastedar* cannot get done whatever he wants because the Collector is stern, then instead of being taken up in the main office, the cases of letter-less obdurate farmers are taken wherever the Collector travels and the farmers are made to travel wherever the Collector goes,

eating whatever they can get, walking with leaves tied to their feet which thus humble and soften up the farmer. The applications and papers of several totally illiterate farmers are completely omitted from the record, without even being filed for a day or two. Finally, when the side which has spent the more money wins, the town is divided into two. Then on the day of Pola<sup>ss</sup> and on the day of Holi, there are arguments as to who should be on the right side or who should give the chapati. After there are fights between the two sides and few heads are broken (there would be very few cases, criminal or civil, involving farmers, which do not have these 'key-holder' Bhats at their root), the Bhat clerks, praising the farmers in appearance, in reality conspiring with the police *patil*, wake up the devilish group of police in the central taluk office. Then from there, behind the hungry police, carrying colourful things, dressed up in uniforms and headgear, tying up their bellies with improvised corsets, a few drunk constables carrying blunt swords pant upto the village and round up the people from both sides with the help of the Mahar and the police *patil*, arrest them, bring them to the police station and barring the guard, all the policemen and the magistrate, with the help of the ignorant police *patil*, visit the local Marwadi's shop, buy food-stuff at what price they will, if someone offers them drink at the local bar, cooled with food and drink, returning to the police station half asleep, start the inquiry for appearance's sake. Having done that, they bring all the arrested people to the main station and present them to the inspector and on his orders, put them in cells, under remand, until the inquiry is complete. Next I will give examples of how the family of the imprisoned farmer sell off ornaments and trinkets, and that money is given to the employees in the police office. If one of the parties is more seriously injured, then the cunning employee takes money from the other party through the clerk and delays the presentation of the case to the magistrate until the wounds are healed and there is no evidence. Sometimes if their pockets have been warmed, the clerks speak to the moneylenders and make sure that the other party does not make their statements, or sometimes through the clerk in the village, threaten the chief witnesses and make sure that they run away to another village. If through all this a few obdurate illiterate farmers ignore the Brahmin employee's instructions, delivered through the clerk, and present themselves in the magistrate's office for presenting their own cases and making statements, since these farmers are illiterate, their memory is not in order and they do not have enough sense to see the pattern in the sequence of questions and reply appropriately, the employees frighten them to death at the time of statements. In some cases, at this time, they perform all kinds of tricks and frighten the farmers; so much so that the farmers do not dare make exhaustive statements about what they have seen with their eyes and heard with their ears. Moreover, several bold employees, the moment money is finally placed on their palms, fabricate evidence and turn witnesses, and with an eye to the law, arrange that the ignorant farmer is

fined or sentenced as they will. Mostly, because the farmers do not have enough money to pay the fine, they borrow from friends, well-wishers and relations, and having paid the fine, the moment they come home, visit the moneylender for money to return the loans thus taken earlier and to secure the release of others and for appealing, but no self-respecting moneylender lets them stand at his door. When the moneylender seeks recovery convincing the bailiffs, and seeks to summon the farmer, because the Farmers' Law is partial (against his interests that is), he has to face ridicule in full court. Because several young men mug up various law-books and recite them like parrots, the moment they pass their examinations, our credulous government appoints them in high judiciary positions. But these young people, forgetting their social and fraternal relations, thinking themselves the legitimate heirs of the lords-of-the-land, generally ill-treat old, senior and weak people from all other castes. First these people summon the witnesses and others, according to the custom of the government, at ten in the morning, but themselves turn up at twelve, then napping for half an hour, emerge wiping their eyes and install themselves on the seat, and immediately put their hands in their pockets and fish out pans, chew on it, displaying their teeth like monkeys, then load the barrels of their noses with snuff, and squint at the people in court, when suddenly, the pleader, finely dressed up in red headgear, black coats and suited-booted, twirling his moustache calls out, 'Your Honour!' Then this lord-of-the-land, this honourable judge, caressing his belly, asks the lawyer, 'What do you have to say?' The lawyer, hands in his pockets, says, 'We are required to be present in the Sessions Court in relation to a murder case. Therefore, if you postpone the case it would be kind.' The moment he says this, the judge nods and the lawyer goes away in a horse-driven carriage, and it is then that the judge begins his work. I will give a small example. Many of these lords-of-the-land justices, in the vanity of their high caste or in the panache of yesterday's 'influence' do not speak to people of other castes except in the singular second person. If some self-respecting people do not bend down and salute them when these justices enter the court, these people are harassed unreasonably at the time of their statements. Especially if a society is formed against the Brahmin religion, then if a respected member of that society is delayed in presenting himself to the court, without any respect for his wealth or his elderliness, these justices revenge themselves (now why should the reformists rail against the government here?) by smashing them to smithereens while their statements are being made. It is well known indeed how these lords-of-the-land ridicule and humiliate Buddhist Marwadis. Sometimes, if these hypocritical justices fail to understand the meaning of the arguments between the plaintiff and the defendant, then these pious people begin barking like dogs and bite them with their sharp words, in this manner - 'You are mannerless, we should whip you twenty times and count them as one, you are very cunning', and if someone makes



even a minimal response, the cases themselves are cancelled. As if this were not enough, if these murderous justices are displeased with something, is it not possible that they take all the statements home, omit crucial items, make fresh statements and deliver such judgments as they feel like? Because the custom of authenticating statements with signatures or thumb impressions has been abolished. In sum, most lords-of-the-land justices having started to deliver judgments like Ghashiram Kotwal<sup>56</sup>. Several respected moneylenders have closed their businesses of giving and taking, but several Brahmin and Marwadi moneylenders, unmindful of these humiliations, give and take from the letterless farmer, in this manner. First without giving even a pax to the farmer in difficulty, they take IOU's from him and then, from the tribunal court, which is decorated by pensioners thrown out from government departments, take orders from it and then cutting the interest already, put the remaining in the farmers' hands. Nowadays, many Brahmin and Marwadi moneylenders are telling the *napati*<sup>57</sup> letterless farmer, 'We cannot give you money against land because of the government's laws, but if you sell your lands to us, we will give you money and when you repay the money, we will again sell the lands back to you', and then they make vows etc., but it is very rare that the credulous and ignorant farmer gets his lands back from these pious and non-violent moneylenders. Apart from this, these deeply religious moneylenders harm the farmer in many other ways when they loan him money. When these moneylenders bring the ignorant farmer to the court (which has Brahmin *munsifs*) with all manner of false records of accounts with their own books as evidence, the ignorant farmer, in the hope of real justice, sells off ornaments and things and spends whatever money he has for the case. But because there are no lawyers from his caste who would give him discerning advice, the judgments are against him and then these thoughtless farmer, on the advice of a few scheming lawyers, appeals to the higher court. But because the Europeans in the higher court are engrossed in a luxurious and a peaceful life, the Brahmin employees in the government exploit the ignorant farmers. I will take only a few representative examples, thus: first the scheming lawyers fake cash advances for incidental expenses for stamps, etc., the moment the contract is signed on stamp-papers. Then many scheming lawyers arrange for music and dance by the kept-women of the *shirastedars*, and make the farmer pay for them.

The government employee who exploits the ignorant farmer and takes bribes, and the desperate letterless farmer who gives the bribe, both are punished by law. Just as the poor farmer, who driven to desperation, gives a few stale tidbits to the robber Bhat Phadke<sup>58</sup>, who is robbing people in daylight and thumbing his nose at the armed police, and his desperate brother, is made to pay for the police expenses by law, and just as the thieves of all castes who steal things from the farmers' houses are punished

by law, why should there not be a law which punishes the farmer as well, who is robbed by thieves when he is asleep? If our councils of law make such a law and save the cowardly police's neck, then there will be great celebrations by our just government in Simla, near the heavens.

Several ritualistic Brahmin employees make the naive ignorant farmer give donations to storytellers and devotional singers of their own caste. Several strategic cunning people corner the naive rich farmers and make them construct temples for Radha-Krishna, or make them restore old temples in villages and arrange large ceremonies in the name of completion. Several scheming employees trouble the farmer behind the backs of the European employees, and the farmers curse them, but they flatter the European workers day and night, who recommend them for the promotions that they get. Also, most European employees find it extremely difficult to make speeches in Marathi for more than a few minutes, and God alone knows how His Highness the King at Satara, the General, the Lords, Nimbalkar, Ghatge, Mohite, Dabhade, Ghorpade<sup>59</sup>, farmers one and all, understand the speeches of these European employees who speak in 'tumi āmi'<sup>60</sup>, and how they remedy the various complaints reported! *[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 217.]*  
*[Original in English. The comment which follows is originally in Marathi. - Ed.] [It would be more appropriate if the government honoured people who do not depend on the government for their income and run their businesses independently, and, at times, spend their valuable time in works of public good. Otherwise, as the popular saying goes amongst us, 'The honest worker will be apologetic, and the thieves shall have fun'.]*

Some scheming Brahmin employees, in the hope of behaving as they will, bring together verbose good-for-nothings and establish large associations in places and by other means, like pressurizing through their status, make several Shudra farmers, grass-sellers, wood-sellers, contractors, pensioners or wealthy people become members of such associations as they wish. If the Brahmin *shirastedar* proves useful in some delicate matter in the European employee's house, the European employee recommends them to the government, gives them hollow designations of Raosaheb and such like and when this European employee is transferred to another district, these worthy Raosaheb prepare all manner of citations and get illegible signatures of some apparently important people in town and wealthy ignorant farmers, arrange a ceremony in the palatial house of some Shudra contractor and honour the European workers with these citations. In sum, the losses caused by famine caused by God can be made up, but because the European employees are engrossed in luxury and laziness in all government departments large and small, and the departments are filled with Bhats, the losses they cause to the farmer, like the *khot* in Konkan cannot ever be made up. If one wants to write stories of these exploits, they would make up a book like *Mysteries of the Court of London*. And when the Christians could no longer tolerate this condition of the ignorant farmer, they started protesting against the

Education Department in Great Britain. So just as the gentlemen and some lords started looking into the matter of the Education Department in Hindustan, our loving Governor General established a committee for the inquiry into the Education Department, consisting of four or five scholars, and appointed Mr Hunter as the chairman, and he, along with his companions, trod through all the three Presidencies like the hunter Nimrod. But instead of visiting the poor farmers' huts themselves, with their handkerchiefs to their noses and for a while filling their eyes with the poverty; instead of taking statements from a letterless, half-clad farmer in order to subtly inquire into the tribulations of the Shudra and Atishudra caused by the farmers' ignorance; they have taken statements mostly from pious Brahmins, from Hindu, Parsi and Christian communities and have collected all manner of citations in all manner of places, have turned their feet towards Calcutta. But we cannot infer what benefit the ignorant farmer will have from their report. In sum, Mr Hunter has not bothered to sit beside the pitiable and weak and ignorant farmer in order to collide with the selfless Mr Tucker (of the Salvation Army) in order to bring them out of the darkness of ignorance, so that the drum of Mr Hunter's nobility will resound and the sound will be heard on the other side of the world by the representatives of the democratic nation and their eyes will open and in their minds will be generated compassion for our black 'Red Indians'.

If evidence is needed regarding the matter on Brahmin government employees, it can be found easily by looking at the various cases filed and the various convictions for writing false statements, etc.

## Chapter Third

How the Arya Brahmins came from Iran, the origins of the Shudra farmer, how our current government is forever introducing new taxes on the farmer and schemingly collecting money to increase the salaries and pensions of its own employees and how the farmer is now totally debt-ridden.

In all this incomprehensible, unthinkable, ether-like space, countless solar systems come into existence and pass away through the joining and separating of elements. In the same way, when every planet is following its own sun, on this planet earth, through the uniting of the same father and mother, different children are born; one intelligent, the other stupid. So on this evidence we cannot infer that intelligence and stupidity are hereditary. Also, at the time of the union of man and woman, depending on the balance of humours and on the qualities dominant in their minds, the embryo is formed accordingly. That is why the same parents give birth to children who are different in tendencies and nature. If we cannot say this, how could have Thomas Paine in England and George Washington from America, shamed various lords and kings who boasted of their hereditary bravery and wisdom? Moreover, many ignorant black soldiers perform acts of great bravery while fighting with the brave soldiers in Kabul or Egypt, only because they need the money or because they are threatened with court martial, and similarly, we have several examples from amongst the wise scholars in America. people like Parker and Merriam who have courageously and obdurately fought against the enemies of their nation even though they were farmers. Therefore, it is only proved that bravery or cowardice are not hereditary, but depend on the qualities of each individual's nature and context. If one thinks that this thesis is false, then one should look at and the kings and lords on this earth, some of whose ancestors were hunters or goat-herds or farmers or servants or clerks or robbers or rebels and some whose ancestors were even exiled persons like Romulus and Remus. None of the progenitors are found to be kings.

Now if we say that according to Darwin's notion, following the movement of planets in the whole solar system, the monkeys transformed into the different species of the new human beings, then this harms the notion that humans were created from the limbs of Brahma. Therefore, while negotiating with all these notions if we now say according to the Buddhist or Jain notion that human beings were created from duals, or according to Darwin we say that men and women were created from monkeys, or according to the Christian notion that God created men and women from

clay, [The Bible, Gen. 1:20, 2:7.] [Original in Marathi. - Ed.] or according to the Brahmin notion that the four castes of human beings were created from the Brahmin's body, and move ahead [61](#); then we will have to say that when men and women were created, they must have had to live under trees or in tree-hollows or in caves, [Captain James Cook's Voyages Round the World, Chapter V, page 262.] [Original in English. - Ed.] and must have had to eat roots and fruit from the surrounding forest; and then in the afternoon they might have rested under the shade of a tree, away from the bright sun. They must have seen really high mountains with broken ridges and cliffs, and rows of peaks as if wearing white caps of mist, and below them in the valleys, huge trees, like banyan, peepal, and trees of jackfruit, mango and coconut, fig and pistachio and almond, all humbly bowing with the weight of fruit, covered with nets of creepers and grapevines, and in many places laden with bananas and multifarious flowers like lotuses and all around them the ground covered with leaves and flowers and an immense varicoloured carpet formed, and on it, trees laden with leaves and flowers, as if newly planted. Also, cucumber, and melons of all kinds recumbent in all the streams and rivulets and riverbeds, and everywhere the clear water flowing with wondrous and interminable melody. Nearby, on the faces of lakes, swarms of bees humming over the colourful lotuses and in places, on the shores, herons, as if meditating on one leg, waiting for insects to come within reach. In the forest close by, herds of poor deer and sheep struggling for breath as they run hither and thither to save themselves from beasts like foxes and tigers, and in the trees a variety of birds singing melodiously enough to put Tansen to shame, and when they are so engrossed, high above in the sky, birds of prey like hawks and falcons circling and waiting to swoop down and take their lives. And then, the soft and cool breeze from the west bringing the scent of a myriad flowers and rendering everything redolent. Seeing all this, how joyful must the original ancestors of humans have been, those who now call themselves Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Mahars, and Brahmins! So be it. But must not they have had to live naked, with long nails and longer hair because they did not possess the knowledge to make tools or clothes? [The Bible, Gen. 2: 25. \*Captain James Cook's Voyages Round the World, Chapter V, pages 257, 278 and 279.] [Original in English. - Ed.] Not knowing how to make pots from clay or metal, they must have had to drink water from the river, bending low like animals, or with cupped hands! How would they taste *chapatīs*, if they did not know how to make pans or grinders? Must not they have had to walk barefoot, not knowing how to skin sheep or cattle? How would those who would have difficulty in counting upto hundred under the influence of *somarasa* [By F. Max Müller, M.A, Lecture III, page 137.] [Original in English. Somarasa refers to a Vedic drink, presumably alcoholic. - Ed.] know how to roast and eat cattle? [John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, pages 62 and 63.] [Original in English. - Ed.] In sum, they must have been so ignorant that if some charlatan or cunning person had put before them the book of the Vedas, [Works by the late Horace Hayman Wilson, M.A.

Professor of Sanskrit, page 6. Vrihaspati has the following texts to this effect. (Quoted in the Sarva Darsana, Calcutta edition, pages 3 and 6, and with a. V.I. Prabodach, ed. Brockhaus, page 30): 'The Agnihotra, the Three Vedas, the Tridanda, the smearing of Ashes, are only the livelihood of those who have neither intellect nor spirit.' After ridiculing, he says, Hence it is evident that it was a mere contrivance of Brahmin to gain a livelihood, to ordain such ceremonies for the dead and no other reason can be given for them. Of the Vedas, he says, The three authors of the Vedas were Buffoons, Rogues and Fiends and cites texts in proof of this assertion.] [Original in English. - Ed.] cut on parchment, they would have taken it into their hands and seeing that it did not have any smell or taste, it is unthinkable what they would have done to it. Because their ideas of food hadn't gone beyond fruit, they could not, as recommended by the Vedas composed by these barbarians, have stolen other people's cows or for that matter eaten them either under the influence of *soma rasa* or on the occasion of *shrādhā*. Because they would have been so pure, would they have liked to call these selfish writers their inheritors? Would these writers have had the gumption to stand before them and say, 'You are a Buddhist', 'You are Christian', 'You are Mussalman', and 'You are low because you're a Mahar', and 'We are superior because we are Brahmins'? So be it. After some time had passed and as the numbers increased, they must have made separate little huts of branches for their grandchildren and around them they must have put a fence of thorny bushes and branches and on the path leading inside, they must have, from clay or from dry stone, fashioned a gateway. and to prevent entry of cruel beasts at night, kept a guard there at night, so all the other people would have been able to sleep peacefully alone with their little ones. Is that not why we village people give food to the guard for his labour to this day; and do we not in our times, instead of giving food, donate to the police fund, for all the policemen in the police department and other workers as well? What is the difference between these two? A stick in the Mahar's hand and *vadyānchi tikori* <sup>52</sup> in the hands of the policeman. So be it. Meanwhile, in this village, out of the negligible quarrels of children, serious quarrels must have developed and the people of the village, young and old, would have sat under a tree and after inquiry, punished the offender. Because, they would not have known how to construct police stations or town halls like there are today. But, with the passage of time, as all the families would have increased in number, there would have been frequent arguments and quarrels among them over the enjoyment of beautiful women and the nearby forest, and when these could not be settled amicably, most of the wise men of the village would have collected all their belongings and carried babies, and in general with all the men and women in their clan, would have gone away, and settled in other towns at a distance, and these wise men would have come to be called *patils* and *deshmukhs* and most of the people in the towns would begin to conduct themselves with their advice. Even today most people do the same, though the ignorant *patils* and *deshmukhs* have started fighting cases amongst the townspeople on the advice of the

Bhats and *kulkarnis*. The second is that, when we have to arrange marriages we find ourselves asking questions to each other in this manner: 'Question: What is your name and the name of your town? Answer: Pune, and our surname is Jagtap Question: Then are you related to the Jagtaps of Saswad? Answer: We are the same. Several generations have passed since our branch came to Pune from Saswad and nowadays we take our children to Saswad for rituals as our gods and goddesses are the same. Question: Then we should have no difficulty in arranging a relation, the *jagtaps* of Saswad are our kin, so just ascertain the relation, and then we can negotiate and fix the marriage quickly.' Though this is the true story, someone might ask, 'Where is the evidence for what you say?' Then my reply is that the Aryans came from Iran and annihilated all the native *astik* and *rakshasa* peoples and repeatedly invaded and attacked all the surviving *dasyus*, [*John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, page 196. They appear also to have been a fair complexioned people, at least comparatively, and foreign invaders of India, as it is said that Indra (the God of Ether or Firmament) divided the fields among his white complexioned friends after destroying the indigenous Barbarian races, for such there can be little doubt. We are to understand by the expression, Dasyu, which so often occurs and which is often defined to signify one who not only does not perform religious rites but attempts to harass their performers. The Dasyus, here mentioned, are doubtless the Dasyas of the Parsi sacred writings, and the Dakyas of the Behistian tablets, rendered by 'countries' or 'provinces' probably of an exterior position to be the Goim and Gentiles of the Hebrews. They were not altogether Barbarians; for they had distinctive cities and other establishments of at least a partial civilization, though the Aryans lately from more bracing climes than those which they inhabited, proved too strong for them.*] [Original in English. - Ed.] finally enslaved them [*John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, page 29. Of the Dasyas mentioned often in the Vedas in contrast with the Aryans, no such traces can be found, though they are once or twice mentioned by Manu. The word Das, derived from dasyu, ultimately came to signify a bondman. In this sense, it has its analogue in our word slave, derived from the Slavi People, so many of whom have become serfs in the modern regions of their abode. Some of the names of the Dasyas and other enemies of the Aryan race mentioned in the Vedas seem to have been of the Aryan origin; but we see from the non-Sanskrit elements in the Indian languages, that they must have belonged principally to various immigrations of the Scythian or Turanian family of the human race.*] [Original in English. - Ed.] and harassed them no end. How would the victorious Aryans be able to write the true history of the vanquished Shudras in their books? After a long time had passed, when they could no longer survive on the fruit of the forest near the town, they started hunting, and fishing, and when even that was not sufficient, they started cultivating the land and that must have been very useful. When after some time they began to be able to devise ploughs and other implements, they must have cultivated large areas, and since their numbers must have increased proportionately, there would have ensued battles over boundaries and pastures, and there would have been bloodshed. It would have been very difficult for all the people to come together at one place and settle these matters and so a consensus developed that people from all the villages should choose a wise and

knowledgeable person as their representative and all these representatives should meet in one place and settle matters by majority opinion; and so the custom was established. Thus till this day, we find the custom of settling all major disputes through elected juries. Later, when some clans went beyond the Attuck river and sowed the lands and established themselves and the population there increased immeasurably, for lack of rains the yield was totally damaged, the rivers and lakes and streams dried up and all the creatures of the forests went away to where water was available. Seeing the hordes and hordes of hunger-ridden people, some of the stronger people employed the weaker and taking them along, began to raid the more prosperous establishments and when they had established their domination, decided to be kings. (Now if we research this, we will find that most hereditary kings had such pearls as their originators). In order to settle these, people of most towns elected representatives from amongst the more intelligent and established a force to defend their countries,<sup>63</sup> and collected taxes to maintain that force, and appointed *tehsildars*, peons etc. Most people would have been comforted by this. Later, as all the areas became prosperous, the over-important representatives in the land of Bali, that is Baluchistan, saw the wealth of these robber kings mentioned above and became kings themselves and because the earlier republics had lost their glory and were diminished, the representatives of the ninety-six clans established their dominion over fifty-six countries this side of Iran and ruled without any obstructions with each others' help. Therefore their glory was not harmed for hundreds of years and in the kingdoms of the *dasyu*, *astik*, *aheer*, *asur*, *ugra*, *pishach* and *matanga* [Professor Bhandarkar's suggestion in Godbole's *History of Maharashtra*, p. 1. Item 2. John Wilson's *India Three Thousand Years Ago*, page 28.] people, all the citizens were happy and prosperous and there was found smoke of gold everywhere. Not only this, but also because amongst all these the *dasyus* were the most powerful; they must have dominated the Yavanas so much that most Yavanas must have been honest and friendly with the *dasyus* and because of that, the *dasyus* used to help them in every possible way, and deal with them fairly. The custom of calling the *dasyus* *dost* must have started from here, and the *dasyus* would put them in their place if they behaved cunningly and acted up when the opportunity arose, and from there, the Yavanas and Aryans must have started calling them by antagonistic terms like *dushman* and *dushta*; because the words *dost*, *dushman* and *dushta* are related in their roots to the word *dost*. Finally, when all Yavanas, like the Iranians (Aryan), Turkish etc., could no longer bear the fame of the *dasyus*, 'the eighteen castes' among them (indicated by eighteen types of turban) began attacking the *dasyu* areas again and again, to loot their gold. But the lieutenants in King Bali's service, the great warrior heroes Kalabhairav and Khanderao did not fail in defending the kingdom. Meanwhile, after the Aryan people in Iran [John Wilson's *India Three Thousand Years Ago*, pages 17 and 18.] [Original in English. -Ed.] invented the bow and arrow, and from



amongst the Iranian *kshatriyas*, adventurous robbers like Varaha destroyed fifty-six kingdoms on this side; [John Wilson's *India Three Thousand Years Ago*, pages 20 and 21.] Among peoples hostile to the Aryas, we also find noticed the *Ajasas*, *Yakshas*, *Shigravas*, *Kikatas* and others. The enemies of the Aryas are sometimes expressly mentioned as having a black skin; 'He (Indra) punished for men those wanting religious rites tore off their skin. The *Pishachas* are said to have been tawny coloured.' [Original in English. - Ed.] and the Arya *kshatriya* Narasimha poisoned the tender mind of the young prince Pralhad and killed his father with his help. Later when the Arya Vamana felled the heroic *dasyu* king Bali, he looted all the gold from the bodies of women; so the *dasyus* fought many battles to drive away the Aryans from their countries; however, the Arya *kshatriyas* [John Wilson's *India Three Thousand Years Ago*, page 49. Dr John Muir, in his 'Original Sanskrit Texts', pages 44-56, has given a series of passages sufficient to prove that according to the traditions received by the compilers of the ancient legendary history of India (traditions so general and undisputed as to prevail over even their strong hierarchical pre-possessions), Brahmins and Kshatriyas were at least in many cases, originally descended from one and the same stock. Some of the cases referred to by Dr Muir are the same as those of the parties mentioned in the first paragraph of this note.] [Original in English. - Ed.] invaded the *dasyus* twenty-one times and scattered them to all places, so much so, that some of them had to go away to the other side of the world, to the forests of America, by a pathway near what is now called China (where later a sea was formed, and which is now called Bering Strait) [W.H. Prescott's *History of Peru and Brazil*, Vol. I, page 66.] [Original in English. - Ed.] because many of the ancient *dasyu* (Shudra) people there had customs and simple faiths which matched those of the *dasyus*. The chief name there, Kashik matches with Kashika; the word *korikancha* matches with *kanchan*. They believe in the same auspicious and inauspicious signs as here. Amongst them, there is a custom similar to one that the Shudras have here, of burying the dead after covering them with cloth and burying some gold along with them. Though the Shudras are now penniless, instead of salt, they used to bury the dead with rich spices, like the American Shudras. Amongst them are found names like here, [W.H. Prescott's *History of Peru and Brazil*, Vol. III, Appendix No. 1, pages 156, 157, and 159.] [Original in English. - Ed.] 'Topaji, Manku, Artil Yallappa and Artil Balappa'. An area called 'Kanada' is also found there. But these must have been invaded by the Chinese or the Aryans later, because they too have forbidden education and knowledge to the ancient American people, and thinking them low, have become lords of the land and are worshipping the five elements along with the stars in the sky. But here, the caste relations of the Arya Nana [A *Sepoy Revolt* by Henry Mead, pages 135, 136 and 137.] [Original in English. - Ed.] Peshwa, in the anarchy of Parashuram, killed all the progeny born of the widows of the six defeated *aris*, and he (Parashuram) dispersed the clans of the *dasyus* in general and of those that remained in the areas, formed two classes, *shudra* (*das*), *andatishudra* (*anudas*) and the Arya Brahmins made many selfish and torturous 'laws' [The *Laws of Manu, Son of Brahma*, by Sir William Jones, Volume VII, pages, 211, 214, 217, 224, 260, 335, 392, 397.] [Original in English. - Ed.] to harass them. Some of

the written-down items are found in the one-sided and heartless book like the one by Manu. These are like the following, 'Wherever there is a Shudra ruler, Brahmins should not live there, the Brahmin should not teach the *Shudra* and not only that, he should not allow the Shudra to even overhear the chanting of the Vedas. The Aryans should not travel with the Shudras at pre-dawn. The dead body of a Shudra could be carried out only by the southern gateway. The Shudra was not allowed to touch a Brahmin's dead body. Even if the king is starving, he should not take as taxes parts of the produce from a Brahmin, but the king should arrange for annual feasts for the Brahmin. If a scholarly Brahmin finds a treasure, he alone has the right to use them, but if a king finds a treasure, he should give half of the money to the Brahmin. Whatever the crime a Brahmin might perform, he should not be harmed, but merely exiled. The Brahmins should employ Shudras for labour, because God himself created the Shudras for the service of the Brahmin. If a Brahmin frees a Shudra for having been of use in some delicate matter, whichever other Brahmin wishes should enslave the Shudra, because that is why God created him. If a Brahmin is dying of starvation, he may use whatever the Shudra possesses. There is an original law, which states that if a Brahmin dies without inheritors, the king should not take his property into possession, but if anyone from the other castes dies thus, the king could do so if he so wishes. If a Brahmin man knowingly commits a crime, he would only be exiled, without taking away his possessions, but if the same crimes are committed by a man of the other castes, his punishment would be strictly according to the legal provisions for that crime, even if that means execution. If a Shudra cannot find employment with a Brahmin, they should earn their livelihood with their own skills. Even the intelligent Shudra should not amass too much wealth, because if he does so, he would become proud and start abusing the Brahmins. A Brahmin should never beg from a Shudra because if he uses that money for the rituals, he will become a chandala in the next birth. If a Brahmin kills a dog, cat, crow or owl, he should perform the Chandrayana ritual of expiation, as if he had killed a Shudra. If Brahmins kill several invertebrate creatures or a thousand vertebrate creatures, all they have to do is perform the Chandrayana ritual. If a Shudra beats a Brahmin with a grass-stick or smothers him with a *dhoti* or silences him while speaking or abuses him, he should prostrate himself fully at the Brahmin's feet and beg forgiveness'. [[The Laws of Manu, Son of Brahma, by Sir William Jones, Vol. VII, pages 398 and Vol. VTH, pages 33,42, 73, 79, 85, 105, 106 and 118.](#)] [[Original in English. - Ed.](#)] Several such atrocious writings are found in the books of the Arya Brahmins, many of which we are ashamed to write down. Let that be. After this the Aryans were appointed as *kulkarnis* in various villages and included in their own religion some of the cowardly dasyus like Pralhad, who, while holding an enmity with the Arya Brahmins did nothing about it from beginning to end. That is why there is a custom of calling them *deshastha* Brahmins.<sup>64</sup> Because the original Shudras of the area and the *deshastha*

Brahmins are related to each other in terms of their customs, colour and their clan gods, and secondly, till recent times, there was no inter-marriage or even inter-dining between the *deshastha* and the *konkanastha* Brahmins. But the Peshwas started the custom of inter-marriage and inter-dining with the *deshastha* Brahmins. Having established such a system and having become the lords of the land then, they became dominant amongst the eighteen clans of Brahmins and were called 'great'<sup>65</sup>, and they themselves, having conquered hell and heaven, thinking that there was nothing more left to be achieved, instead of rubbing red soil on their chests and flexing their muscles, started performing rituals day and night, applying sandal-wood on their bodies and saffron on their foreheads, started enjoying themselves at their own leisure. Some of them, under the influence of *bhang*<sup>66</sup> started to construct all manners of terribly selfish books, some started looking for the path of *yoga*, the rest of them started calling each other 'superior amongst the eighteen varnas'. Around the same time, the Arya Brahmins started persecuting some of the nomadic dispossessed (Jew) people to force them to accept their religion. These people were infuriated and constructed several books against the Aryan religion and started worshipping the lingas that they possessed. This is how the religion of the Lingayats must have come about. After this, all the Shudra and minor farmer slaves who were under their dominion were fully denounced by the Arya Brahmins. They completely prohibited the imparting of knowledge to these people and their condition was gradually reduced to worse than that of beasts, and because they became enemies of letters and were therefore without knowledge, till today the Arya Brahmin denude them in matters of government and religion, so much so, that it can be easily proved that the condition of even the Africans who were forced into slavery in America was better. But recently, a few hundred years ago, the Mohammadan rule felt pity for them, which forced these people to convert to Islam in order to free them from the traps of the Aryan religion and made them equal Mussalmans and happy. Because we find the custom amongst many of the ignorant Mussalman *mullahs* and *bagwans* who perform rituals in marriages are similar to Shudra or Atishudra rituals. Similarly the Portugese rulers forcibly converted thousands of Shudras, atiShudras and Brahmins to Roman Catholicism, and freeing them from the artificial Aryan religion, made them happy. Because we find amongst them clans like that of the Shudra Brahmins, who have surnames like Gokhale, Bhonsale, Pawar. But nowadays, it is for everyone to see that thousands of suffering Shudras and Atishudras have chosen to deny the religion of the Brahmins and willingly convert to Christianity, and we can see this clearly. Perchance if you are not sure of the suffering of the Shudras and Atishudras, you should observe and think about the various enslaved farmers like Shivaji Maharaj of Satara, Damajirao Gaikwad of Baroda, Patil of Gwalior, Lakhya Bargir of Indore, and Yashwantrao and Vithojirao Holkar, great warrior kings all, and you will realize how several misfortunes came

upon them and their clans because they were illiterate; so I will write no more about that. Let that be. That the fifty-six kingdoms here neglected the republican state, and therefore the *dasyus* were defeated by the Arya Brahmins and are being exploited till date is indubitable, as is the fact that this was appropriate justice for their actions, but the Grecians beyond Iran from the beginning valued the republic and it was close to their heart. When the boastful Iranian Xerxes undertook an expedition to destroy Greece and travelled there with his large army and stationed himself on its borders, a few nationalist soldiers from the city of Sparta raided the camp, coming from the pass at Thermopylae, scattered the Iranian forces, and sent them back to Iran. When this example was followed by the Roman people of Italy, because of the republican state they became superior in knowledge, wealth, and skills, in the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa, there came about great and famous rhetoricians amongst them and nationalist warriors like Scipio. They defeated, and punished great generals like the African Hannibal. Then they went west to the island of Great Britain in the ocean, where the people were painting their bodies with red or yellow clay and wearing animal-skins; and taught them the use of clothes and vessels, and were ruling over them, teaching them the lessons of a republic with a stick in hand; when suddenly there came about Julius Caesar, who was deluded by his achievements, having established his dominion over hereditary kings in several kingdoms, sacrificing six lakh Roman soldiers, he turned away from the mother and republic and intended to enslave her children, become emperor himself. But there were pure-minded people there who thought that they would not be able to bear the humiliation resulting from the establishment of an empire and one amongst them, Brutus, stood in the path with a naked dagger, as Julius Caesar walked to the senate<sup>67</sup> to assume the throne. And Julius Caesar looked into his eyes, Brutus, deeply ashamed in his heart, covering his face with an end of toga, felled Julius Caesar, stabbing him with the dagger, without caring for their mutual friendship, so that his citizen-brothers could be freed of the impending chains of an empire. But because earlier Julius Caesar had entertained various officers, spending vast amounts from the coffers of the state, most of the other leaders were indebted to him, so there ensued a general battle and the republican state and senate collapsed, and thus, after the rule of twelve Caesars, when the Roman glory was about to turn to ashes, the Romans left the English and other people to their own devices and came back to their own country, Italy. But at the same time, because the people near the English, the Scots and the Saxons, were great contrivers, they contrived a wondrous threesome pancake, like mixing brass and copper with gold, mixing republicanism with hereditary lords and kings, and satisfied all. Because most of the land there is hilly and not sufficient to support cultivation for all, while they pursued all manner of skill and business, and were becoming leaders in skills, knowledge and wealth; the followers of

Muhammad Paigambar in Arabstan obliterated the original Aryan people and their kingdom and invading several times, took over the whole of Hindustan, which had been chewed dry by the Brahmins. Later, as the Mussalman emperors were busy listening to Tansen-like music during the day, and in the *zenan-khana* <sup>68</sup> at night, the skillful British hit them on their heads and acquired this country, but I am not saying that this was a great achievement. Because one-tenth of the total population, the Brahmins, had deprived the nine-tenths of people of strength, intelligence, knowledge, skill and courage in matters of religion and state; hiding behind their scheming religion and on the strength of their pens. But later when the British realized that the nature of the Shudras and Atishudras is not naturally obdurate but that they conduct themselves on the Brahmins' strategies, they enticed the Brahmins in various ways, handed over most matters to them and spent all their time in the pursuit of various pleasures; expensive clothes, objects, horses, carriages and food; spending money as they wished and then in order to have enough money to give extraordinary salaries and pensions to European and Brahmin employees, they increased the taxes on the poor farmer, who was labouring day and night on his lands and eating his *bhakri* <sup>69</sup> with water and salt, and increased them every thirty years, and they gave vague indications that they would educate the farmers children, and slapped another 'local fund' onto his head. They established excise posts every six miles on the road which the farmer took to sell the produce; grains, cotton, opium, *jowar* so that he could pay the instalments of the local fund and started collecting lakhs of rupees in these posts. The farmers who were hard-pressed were maintaining themselves on the wood of the forests and various edibles, but the government swallowed these forests and slapped a heavy excise duty on even the salt with which he was eating his *bhakri*. Also, while pretending that they wish to preserve the farmers' crops by giving plenty, of water, were in fact thinking of giving fat salaries to their countrymen, the European engineers and to give loans freely to European! moneylenders. To place that loan on the shoulders of Hindustan, they have spent lakhs of rupees from that loan and constructed canals in many places. And though the price of water is whatever they wish, do they arrange it so that the farmers' lands get water when needed? The careless European engineers entrust everything to the Brahmins, and spend time in leisure with their ladies behind curtains. And here the cunning Brahmin workers flatter the engineer and make sure that all manner of resolutions are passed. I will give only one as an example, which is - if the farmers' crops are burnt after the timely water dries up, the responsibility does not lie on the head of the Irrigation Department. Do not the European and black employees, who swallow thousands of rupees as salary, have enough sense to calculate how many gallons of water are available in the reservoir and give orders for water-supply only to those land-owners whose lands can be supplied water till the end? The farmers' noses begin to flow while begging the employees

to release water. And when water is not available from them, if they go to their superior officers for justice, instead of water a stream of rude language ensues. *[This charge would not hold for people like Vishwanath Dajee. Very few men so free of prejudice can be found among the Brahmin government servants.]* What shall we say to this behaviour of the servants of the government, who, instead of supplying water equal to the high prices charged from the farmer, speak rudely to him, in the pride of their high castes? In sum, because our just government entrusts matters to their lazy and scheming inferiors and does not reduce the rate of water, at present the farmer becomes bankrupt and auctions his house and land and has to give the money to these heartless servants. Therefore our compassionate government should give a tap each to all farmers according to their lands, from which the farmer will not be able to draw more water than needed for his lands. If this is done, then the government will not have to spend money on its servants who release the water. The money thus saved can be used to reduce the water rates and the Irrigation Department will not have to set aside the proposal of the government to reduce the water rates. Also, a new and tremendous expense, similar to the local fund, has been imposed on the ignorant farmer, and this is municipal. This is the excise that the municipality imposes on the farmer when he brings his vegetables and produce into the city to sell it there. Sometimes when the farmer brings a cartload of produce, he has to sell it to the treacherous middlemen, who buy it at arbitrary prices, then he has to pay the excise and, bearing the costs of the transport from his own pocket, he has to return home to his children empty-handed. Listen to this - in the city of Pune alone, the income of the municipality is now trying to equal that of the Sangli *samsthān*<sup>20</sup>. Similarly, even ten or twelve *samsthāns* will not be comparable to the tall municipality of Mumbai. The situation is like the famous saying, 'The appearance is very nice, but God knows what is inside'. Wherever you look, there are broad roads with stone gutters, all around there are lamps on foreign lamp-posts, in many places there are foreign-made water taps and there are toilets and garbage carts. But even though the earlier kings were idolators and were not scholarly like the English, they had, for the sake of their subjects, planted trees on both sides of major roads, built small bridges, little strongholds and castles and in many places they built dams, canals, wells, reservoirs; and in cities like Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Bijapur, Delhi, and Pune, they had built strong water pipes, tanks, temples, *masjids* and rest houses, toilets, baths, and supplies of drinking water, spending money from the government coffers. But since our great philosophic and monotheistic ruler has started to spend money collected from the citizenry, through the municipality, on completing such public works, the subjects' inner strength of honestly earning a livelihood is weakening and thus the government is, in a way, educating them in dishonest ways. Moreover, it has come to the notice that in these prosperous times, the four crore *[Journal of the East India Association, No. 3, Vol. VII, page*

124.] *[Original in English. -Ed.]* population does not have enough to eat and not a day passes when they do not feel the pangs of hunger. Therefore if our just government fixes a reasonable tax on the letterless farmers' lands and educates them in agricultural matters, they would not cleave to ungrateful Brahmins like the Peshwas, *[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 133 and 134.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* Tope, Khasgiwale, Patwardhan and Phadke and lose their lives. Moreover, from the day the English started ruling this country, the educated and skilled craftsmen in England have started producing goods with machines made with their own intelligence and are selling these goods here at cheaper rates than those of goods produced by all the letterless Mangs and iron-smiths and weavers here, thus forcing them into starvation. Because the goods produced here - rice, cotton, leather, etc. - have no market here, these are bought by English businessmen at such rates as they wish, and by selling them to English craftsmen, several people have become millionaires. In sum, because of all this, the farmer cannot even recover the costs of planting, and he borrows money from the Marwadi to pay the governments' tax. But do the that Brahmin employees find time for carefully enquiring into this, busy as they are in luxury and ritual bathing? Moreover, some over-enthusiastic native servants, who are members of associations with very prestigious names, have spread the rumour, of their own devising, that 'the farmers are debt-ridden because they spend uncontrollably on marriage ceremonies', and because of this, our knowledgeable and shepherd-like State Secretary, who travels in a four-horse drawn chariot, could not bear the hollow glory of the farmers, he has altogether removed the excise on English goods! Unmindful of the interest given to the big moneylenders there, about five crore per annum, he through the Law Council, which does not know the trauma of poverty, and through the white and the native 'pure' employees, has contrived to stop the interest paid to the poor moneylender. If the government really feels compassion for us poor farmers, why does it not stop paying about a hundred crore rupees interest to the foreign moneylenders? Then we shall see how the farmer's feet do not firmly find the ground. But our government should suddenly devise a new expedition in some foreign land and spend the saved money on it, so that its fame as a just government will spread all around, and kind and generous people like Mr Wedderburn should, instead of scolding the government for not stopping the payment of interest to foreign moneylenders, and instead of starting new banks, not blame the poor farmer for failures. Also, unless our Governor General recommends a reduction in the salaries and pensions of people on salaries above a hundred rupees, in all departments in general, big and small, like the Army, Justice, Forest, Police, Education etc., and takes care of that matter, the farmer will not be able to get enough cloth to wear, enough food to eat and be able to get rid of his debts. Even if the farmer works day and night on his land, with his wife and children, he is not left with even three rupees per person per month, after paying taxes and the

local fund; whereas the average European and native servant does not find fifteen rupees enough for miscellaneous expenses and drinks and food. So who will listen to us when we enquire about how much money is spent as the lordly Collector's unrestricted miscellaneous expenses?

Therefore if we compare the condition of the Shudra farmer, with eight heads of cattle, who has four or five working sons and daughters and daughters-in-law, in whose family they strive all the time to labour more in other farms and at home and who does not owe a pat to the Brahmin, *gujar* or Marwadi moneylender, to that of the white soldier, the difference is more than that between Kashi and Rameshwar. Here is the farmer, ploughing his land, controlling eight bullocks and pushing the plough in a land strewn with sharp and dry grass, unclad, barefoot, with a strip of cloth to cover his head and a small pouch of tobacco at his waist; and here is the white soldier, pantalooned, a red coat over a shirt, with a silver embroidered rakish cap on his head and on his feet boots of soft foreign leather over cotton stockings, a leather corset on his waist and a triggered gun on his shoulder, parading on the breezy ground for an hour in the morning or in the evening. Here is the farmer's best dress- a coarse *mand-cholna*<sup>21</sup>, a *bandi*, *Apasodi*, a *kharvi pagote* and country boots strung with thread, whose breakfast and lunch is of *bhakri* made from coarse grains like millet with salads of carrots or sweet radish, or dried fish, and if these are not available, nothing more than a chutney to eat with his *bhakri*. Is even this *chutney-bhakri* available on time and enough to fill his belly? The house he lives in is beside the cattle-shed, with a few calves tied near his head or feet, so that it stinks of piss all over, a torn mattress and a torn strip of cloth for his bed, his drinking water is the ditch dug beside the local pond dirtied by the buffalo sitting in it, and he falls ill and gets high fever, there is only a big zero in the name of good medicine and knowledgeable doctors, and over and above all this, there is the sword of the tax and the local fund hanging over his neck. Will any skilled doctor, native or white, say that this unfortunate farmer will not lose his wits? There, the government imports rich clothes, handkerchiefs, stockings and boots for the white soldier, buys good wheat, rice, grains, healthy young cows, the meat of lambs and goats, and foreign liquors like port, clear oil, *ghee*, milk, sugar, tea, salt, chillies, spices, forks and knives, and gets fresh food cooked for him by a Christian cook and feeds him. For him to live in, the government has spent lakhs of rupees and built tall, two-storeyed barracks, which have iron cots, pillows, bed covers and thick covers and there is a lamp hanging in the middle to light them up. In the courtyard of the barracks, bathrooms have been constructed, which have taps of 'filtered' water, and also clean and convenient toilets have been arranged for. If because of indigestion he catches a fever or begins to cough, a hospital has been constructed for his health, which have in them instruments and medicines worth hundreds of rupees and doctors have been appointed at



salaries of thousands of rupees per month and they have been given porters along with palanquins. Moreover, he does not have to think of giving or taking, for he does not have any taxes on his house, does not have to pay for sweepers, water, roads, land or the local fund and does not have to worry about natural calamities.<sup>22</sup> And on this evidence we point to the native 'pure' employee and say, look at this native servant, lying there flushed red like a drunken white soldier, taking bribes from the ignorant farmer, and kowtowing to the white employees. What uncontrolled expense is this! How shall we speak of it? It is important to say to this extravagant government that there will be terrible consequences of this exploitation unless our foreign government, which worships the formless transcendent God, stops trusting the rosy writings of newspapers or of the associations formed by cunning Brahmins and reduces for sure the salaries of all its white and black employees, educates the ignorant and suffering and weak Shudra farmer [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 280,81, 82, 83, 85 and 86.*] [*Original in English -Ed.*] and reduces all the tolls and taxes which have been slapped on him. We stop for the moment.

## Chapter Fourth

The condition of agriculture, with that of the farmer.

In the beginning of this chapter, instead of negotiating the penurious and pitiable condition of the farmer labouring on the land day and night, I will inform you of the real condition of the debt-ridden and ignorant farmer from amongst the Mali, Kunbi or Dhangars, who calls himself Maratha because his father's grandfather's daughter, or his mother's grandfather's aunt was married off to a chief or secondary son in the Shinde or Gaikwad clan. One day a farmer was walking towards his village from the Collector's tent in the breezy mangrove beside the river, striding in anger and grinding his teeth. He seemed about forty and a little demoralised. He had a white twisted turban on his head, which was tied down with a cloth, he was wearing a double half-shirt made of *khadi* and old curled Satara boots. A *jot*<sup>23</sup> on his shoulders, and on it a *kharvi*<sup>24</sup> purse, and the clothes had yellow and red stains from Holi. The boot heels were strong and thick, but he was walking a little oddly because they had developed cracks in a few places. He had a beard and moustache, which were hiding his front teeth. His forehead and eyes were large and the pupils were grey. He was fair and reasonably pleasant to look at. The face was a little rounded though. After reaching home around two in the afternoon, he went to the kitchen and taking a sheet off the peg, he spread it on the ground and with a rolled up blanket under his head, lay down to sleep, covering his face with a handkerchief. But he could not sleep, thinking of his meeting with the Collector- 'He was still busy with his breakfast and tea, and he did not listen to the truth that I was telling him, and did not allow me to pay my instalment later.' He could not sleep, and putting his hands on his chest, as if a little crazed, he started talking to himself thus:

'Unlike other villagers, I have not warmed the hands of the *bhat* servants and so they have spoken to the white officer and doubled my tax, and in the same year the rain was indifferent and my fields and gardens were burnt out, and then suddenly Father died. There were a lot of expenses for the rituals. So in the first year, I assured the garden-plot to the Brahmin moneylender, registered it in his name as well, for the money to pay the taxes with. Later he calculated the interest, doubling and tripling it, and took over my garden-plot. The moneylender's uncle is a clerk in the revenue office, his cousin is the Collector's secretary, his brother-in-law is the *munsif* and his father-in-law the taluk's police officer, and moreover, most of the people in the government offices are his caste relations, so if I had argued with him, they would have troubled me no end and reduced me to a dry summer,<sup>25</sup> on the smallest excuses. Thus in the second year, I sold off the

few ornaments women of my house had on their bodies and put all that money into paying the taxes and later borrowed money every year from Gujar-Marwadi moneylenders to pay for that. Now they have filed suits against me, which have been lying in the court for so many years. I have paid so much in bribes to the court officers, peons, scribes, lawyers and all, that I am at the end of my tether. Now sometimes one finds government servants who do not take bribes, but they are even more useless than those who do, because they are nonchalant and do not care about the poor farmer at all, and the clever lawyers take money from us, in the name of these servants and put the bite on us regularly. And if we do not do that then we have to accept the orders secured by the moneylenders. Now no moneylender lets me stand at his door! I paid off the tax instalments last year with my newly-married elder daughter's ornaments and now her father-in-law does not let her live in his house. Oh, how unfortunate I am that I sold off her ornaments to avoid a calamity and ruined her marriage in the process! And now, how do I pay this year's tax? There is no money to buy new *mot*<sup>26</sup>, the old ones are torn and the sugarcane is drying up. The corn has also gone to waste. The cattle-feed is about to finish, as is all the dried grass and fodder. The bullocks are weak because they do not get enough to eat. The women's clothes are in tatters and they are forced to wear ancient bedsheets bought for marriage. The children have to go about half-naked and feel ashamed of meeting people. Because the grain in the house is nearly over, we are surviving on sweet radishes. I do not have enough money to feed our mother with good food as she prepares to die. What shall I do? How will I be able to till the land if I sell the bullock? I cannot think of starting a business because I cannot read or write at all. If I leave my province and go to alien places, I have no skill which will help me fill my belly. If I swallow a potion made of roots, the able children might be able to survive somehow, but who will look after the old woman and along with my little ones, look after my wife? At whose doors can they knock if they need help? Where will they beg?'

Thus finally sighing, he fell asleep weeping. Later when I come out, wiping my tears and look around, I see that his house is single-storyed and tile-roofed. Beside the house, there is a covered shed for cattle. There are two or three bullocks, old and ruminating and a few large empty containers are pushed into a corner and outside, in the courtyard, there stands an old cart for eight bullocks. On it, there is a broken basket.<sup>27</sup> On the left, a square platform is made, on that there is the *tulsi* plant, and beside it, there is place for storing water and on that there are a few clay pots filled with water and beside it, there is a crudely tiled bathing place, with a half-wall on three sides. Outside it, water has collected in a small ditch and it is filled with insects and worms. Beyond, under the white *chafa*<sup>28</sup> tree, there are a few

children dancing, half-naked, with all manner of stains on their bodies, noses running, sweating and stinking, playing with lumps of mud. One of them is playing at being a shop-keeper, with anklets of seeds on her feet, pretending to sell arrack. Many of the children giving her pebbles and seeds as coins and drinking water, are shuffling about, falling on each other, pretending to be drunk. Behind the house stands a cattle shed made with wooden beams and pillars. In it lies a buffalo who has just calved and a wretched mare. There are all manner of insects sticking to the walls. In the cracks of the roof knots of hair are stuck all over, collected from the head while combing. Beside this, is a chicken-run. A few bamboos and *zaap*<sup>29</sup> are lying about and on the other side a corner for washing hands and feet is constructed and a stone slab for washing vessels. The open drains have collected all the leftovers and flies drone over it. There is a waste-heap beyond and large green flies are buzzing over it because little children have been shitting there. Beside that, because the heaps of grass and fodder are finished, lie small heaps of leaves. In the other corner cow-pats are stacked, beside it, under the tree, there are broken implements lying about and a *vilayati dhattura*<sup>30</sup> grows under them, and a mangy bitch who's just littered lies there, growling at passers-by. Beside it lies a heap of waste fodder, and in the remaining area sits a youngish woman, with her back to the house, arranging cow-pats. She is upto her knees in the dung, pounding it with her feet. In the kitchen itself there is uneven flooring and one sees the waste from grinding and cleaning and cleaned vegetables lying about here and there. Here is a heap of pith thrown about, and there a heap of rotting onions. A stale stink rises from them. In the middle, an ancient woman is lying on a sheet, groaning. Beside her head lies a plate of food - a bowl of crushed *bhakri* softened in the liquid of the dal, and a jug of water. In the cradle a little baby is weeping loudly. Besides all this, at places one finds a line of a child's piss, at some other place a patch of white ash where a child's turd has been cleaned up. Several corners of the house are red and dark from tobacco spit. In one corner sits a large grinder, to be drawn by three or four women, in another there is a large mortar and pestle and in the corner near the door under the broom, all the dirt pushed there after sweeping the floor, and on top, a rag which was used to clean a baby's arse. There beside the cooking fire stands a dirty frying pan and the milk pot. Beside it, the cat has covered up its shit with ash. The walls are covered with stains left from squishing bugs and insects on them, and fingers wiping off snot. In a small cabinet is the oil pot, tooth powder, a horn comb, a rickety mirror, and on a ledge three or four stone lamps are stacked for the night. An oil stain spreads from them onto the ground. Maybe once in a year all the grease is scraped away. In another cabinet beside the flour basket are placed pieces of stale *bhakri*, in a third cabinet there are green chillies, garlic, coriander, and baskets of mangoes, on which flies eat from one side and excrete from the other. And in the fourth stands a heap of old and torn footwear. A

flintstone lies beside them. Old and worn bedsheets hang from one peg, and on another, bedcovers. On a third peg, torn clothes. As I go into the kitchen against the wall, in the middle stand containers big and small. One of them however is secured with a country lock. Here too, clothes of the daughters-in-law and daughters and other women hang on a series of pegs. On one such peg hang the reins and saddle and an empty bottle of oil. On another hangs an oil can. At the end of the room, in a corner, claypots are stacked over each other. There are five such stacks. Two baskets hang from the beam and they contains pots of yoghurt and *ghee*. On this side a place for the idols of gods is constructed of untreated bricks. In the lower shelf lie iron implements, axes, scythes and such. On top a cloth is spread and on that silver icons are placed in a row. Beside them stands a small lamp and oil can, a small bag of incense<sup>81</sup> hangs nearby. And down there, on a gunny-bag made of *burnus*<sup>82</sup> the farmer is deep asleep and snoring. In one corner stands an old barrel of a gun, and a roll of mattress. In the other corner stands the blade of a plough, other implements, and a stick. Moving upwards; a mini-floor is constructed with wooden beams and a hard and firm flooring made from mud and clay and other things. All over that are set little pots in which all manner of beans and vegetables are planted. A garland of corncobs strung together is drying, hung in a corner and beside that some vegetables are being dried. In another place there are gourds and things put out to dry. Parts of farming implements are lying about, and all kinds of pieces or bundles of cloth have been put into nooks and crannies. If you look up you can see that the tiles of the roof have not been changed for three or four years, and wherever the rotting undergird of grass has been stuck together again with grass ropes rats have made holes in it. There are no windows or ventilators of any kind anywhere in the whole house to let in fresh air. The beams and corners and supports and pillars are tarred with black smoke, and in most empty spaces spiders have weaved most artistic and delicate webs, like mosquito nets, on which a thousand baby spiders are playing. On the undergird of the roof, on the beams, on pillars the poisonous shells of insects and spiders are sticking, and especially on wooden spaces there are heaps of dust mixed with rat shit and cockroach shit and for years a broom has not touched them for lack of time. Suddenly, the kind of dust storm which rises because of the heat before the summer rains, swept through the house, and as the dust rose and filled the house with the wind streaming in through the gaps in the roof tiles, the poisonous dust filled the snoring farmer's open mouth, and he woke up coughing. The poisonous cough so troubled him that he nearly fainted and he started moaning and thrashing about. His sick old mother somehow managed to stumble up to him, and putting a blanket roll under his head, cupping his chin, staring into his eyes, said, 'Oh lord! Please open your eyes. So many times have I given money to Rambhat so that Shani should not harm you, and that too sometimes without your knowledge, selling off grain, and have made the

Brahmin sit with his rosary in front of Maruti, and fed so many Brahmin women!! Dear child, so many times have I spent money without telling you so that the gods will be pleased with you. Why did not that god speak through the Collector's mouth today, and allow you to pay the taxes in instalments? O you damned Bhats, you lied to me about Shani and Satyanarayan<sup>83</sup>, and extracted meals and money from me! O you cunning Brahmins, from the very birth of my dear child you have threatened me with ill-favoured stars and taken money from me, where is all the virtue that you collected? O, you have cheated me so much in the name of *dharma* that with that money I could have saved my child's neck! He could have been happy! O it was Raghu Bharari<sup>84</sup>, one of yours, who brought the white man first to Talegaon. It was you who lied to these ill-informed white officers and beggared us, and it is you who now pretend to be united and rail against them. Not only that, as the Malis and Kunbis got beggared, and you couldn't any longer make money out of them, you Brahmins, converting to the white man's religion, wearing pantaloons and shoes, with white cloth on your heads as if for mourning, marry fair-looking devout converted Christian girls, and standing right at the office, say to the Malis and Kunbis that 'All the ancient scriptures of our Brahmin ancestors are false and selfish. The idols of gods that they constructed in these are meaningless. All this is falsity, used to fill their own bellies. Now they have even started Satyanarayan in the white platoons, and are making all you Malis and Kunbis dance to their tunes. Therefore you should not be taken in by their cunning words and worship gods of stone or metal. Do not get into debt for the sake of Satyanarayan ceremonies. You should look for the formless god, that is what will save you.' Let that be. But instead of advising the Malis and Kunbis, you should walk the lanes of your relations, and tell them - 'Burn all your false scriptures. Don't mislead Malis and Kunbis and Dhangars!' Telling them to do this, again and again, and making them behave accordingly will surely reassure the farmer. Also, if we behave according to the advice of you Brahmin padres, then your caste-relations in the offices will, lying to the white officers, ruin our children. Suddenly, the farmer came to his senses, and putting his arms around his mother, started weeping.

Now I will briefly describe the condition of all those people who are paupers, weak, constantly labouring on their farms, completely ignorant, Malis, Kunbis and Dhangars, and if you pay attention to their condition, it will be a kindness to them. Brothers, if you yourself investigate, you will easily ascertain that in all the villages big and small, the farmers' houses used to be large and the roofs tiled. In every house, in the kitchen there would be an iron blower, iron utensils, on the stone stove there would be an iron pan, and a pot of milk and clay vessels for cooking down there, and maybe copper pots, pans and so on. Besides these there would be a variety of grains stored in a stack of vessels, and green vegetables as well. On the

floor there would be grain bought last evening from the moneylender. In a nook there would be sheets, and clothes made from old *saris*, nets for carrying cow-pats and things, a lamp with an oil can, combs and the *kumkum* box. Upstairs there would be firewood, usually the three sided cactus, stored. On the floor, there would all manner of implements. Beside the door, outside, there would be the stored water and the open place for bathing. On the right, there would be the stable for cattle, with a roof over it. The women of the house, who labour all day on the farm along with the farmer, having finished the daily chores at home, would be wearing a length of cotton and a *choli*, with hollow bangles<sup>85</sup>, a small gold *mangalashtra* round their necks, and coppers toe-rings, the only make-up she has is kohl in her eyes and the big *kumkum* on her forehead. The children of the house, minding the cattle through the day, are naked, and instead of silver bracelets, wear little earrings with copper wires. They have no other ornaments. The farmer himself wears a waist-thread made from old *saris*, a *langot*<sup>86</sup> made of *khadi*, and a small torn turban on his head, and if he can't find simple *dhotis*, then he wears coarse cloth around his waist, for the rest, he is naked and wears old patched up shoes, or shoes held together with string; and therefore he is unable to work on the farm in the cold and rain. Illiterate as he is, he does not have the rational power to think, and so he trusts the old tales in *Harivijay*<sup>87</sup> and such like because the Brahmin tells him to, and does he not then waste his time and money on pilgrimages to Pandharpur and the various Krishnajanma and Ramjanma and Satyanarayana ceremonies, and at Holi, spend time watching lewd plays? Because he has no love of knowledge, and because he is ignorant and, instead of telling him the benefits of knowledge, [\[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 293.\]](#) [\[Original in English. - Ed.\]](#) there was the tight system of ensuring that he would never get knowledge so that he would continue to be a slave. Even if our present government does not seem to have such evil intentions, on the evidence of their outward behaviour, it can be proved that employees of the Education Department do not have any true sympathy for the cause of the farmers' education. Because till date the government has swallowed up many lakhs of rupees in the name of local fund, meant for the farmer's education, weighed against that, they have not been able to educate even a single farmer enough to enable him to function as a collector. Because the schools in villages are filled with Bhat-Brahmin teachers [\[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 288.\]](#) [\[Original in English. - Ed.\]](#) whose worth is less than that of the potter working with mud and clay, who have no knowledge on which side to grip the farmer's plough, wordy administrators merely, dependant entirely on the farmer, how will these teachers, whose ancestors demeaned the farmer to the lowest of states, proud that they are the best of human beings, be able to teach the farmers' children any useful knowledge and discipline? When they do not get any job in the cities despite several attempts, they apply for jobs in the Education Department, move to villages and somehow survive as

teachers. But because many of the farmers who could not survive on farming in their villages, migrated to bigger cities, and laboured in whatever employment they got and survived, only a few children of these farmers have become scholars. But these seven-and-a-half children seal their own mouths about how the Brahmin employees of the government destroy their ignorant caste relations because most government office-are dominated by Brahmins, and become close friends of Brahmins and begin to rail against the government in associations and meetings established by the Brahmins. They begin to drop turds with fear if they do not rail along with the Brahmins, the Brahmins will publish in newspapers and books all kinds of matter about them, and moreover, say all kinds of things against them to the *mamledar*, *shirastedar*, magistrate, engineer, doctor, judge, who are all Brahmins, and might even, at the slightest opportunity, endanger their jobs. As if this is not enough, several Brahmins have, ignoring the prohibition on travel across the sea, travelled abroad and on return, joined their caste relations again. But these seven-and-a-half troublesome nincompoops, unashamed of their ignorant relations, invite these Brahmins home, and perform rituals, and honour the Brahmins. What can one say to such ungratefulness? One might want to say that they cannot fill their bellies without depending on Brahmins, but then do not several xx <sup>88</sup> manage to fill their bellies in town? Let that be. Nowadays the farmer's meals consist of stale pieces of *bhākri*, on which is put a lump of red chutney, at noon he eats some form of dal with *bhākri*, and at night ground grains in the water of the dal. Sometimes he has to survive on carrots and sweet radishes, and he never gets enough *bhākris* on time. Therefore if he suddenly feels hungry while working on the farm, he puts aside his plough, and eats whatever is edible around him - green mangoes, tamarinds, whatever he can get, then he gulps down a lot of water and again takes up the plough; and whenever he does get enough *bhākris* to eat, he eats them up greedily, without even drinking water while eating, so he burps through the day and then he gets indigestion and he has no money for any herbs and medicines! So finally he catches typhoid and has to die. In the houses of many farmers, festive meals consist of sweet *chapatis*, fried stuffs and in the end, rice with *dal*. As for the pauper farmers, if the Gujar or Marwadis do not lend them money, they somehow manage with *jowar bhakris* and things. Thus most farmers cannot pay the taxes unless they borrow money, and such humbled farmers cannot even marry their daughters without having to give some 20-25 rupees for that. Moreover, some totally debt-ridden farmers' sons, if the *gujar* and Marwadis do not lend money for their marriages, begin to quench the fire of desire by other means, and they eventually waste away with tuberculosis because of that. Some other time, I will publish an essay called 'The Cultivator's Thrashing'<sup>89</sup> with evidence from renowned doctors and scholars regarding this. Many a youth surreptitiously begin to visit brothels, and eventually die, and the rest that remain are lured by the life of crime



and robbery, and eventually get killed.*[Several ignorant farmers, shudra and Ramoshis followed Vasudev Phadke, and were sent to prison, and many were hanged.]*

Those young Kunbi, Dhangar or Mali farmers who somehow or the other manage to borrow money for the marriage have to, after a day's labour on the land, labour on the grinding stone and sing womens' songs like a eunuch *['O son of Brahmin, why are you out with a pen and an inkpot - I am sure, to harass the peasant and the low-caste.'],* and do all other manner of errands in the evening. Similarly, the young women of the town, along with the groom's mother, sit cutting onion, grinding turmeric, and roasting *bajra*<sup>90</sup>. So the stench and grime of all these items sticks to the groom's mother's clothes as she works through the night, and anybody who stands near her has to suffer. In the courtyard a small pandal is created with branches of *shevri*, mango, and a little shade is thus made available. The wonder of the ill-tuned drums of the Mahar or the Mang is different still. Once the groom is called *Gadanganer*<sup>91</sup>, some rice and a bit of jaggery put on the plate with a nailful of *ghee*, then all the children walking around with the bride and the groom go at it like wolves and polish it off in minutes. The marriage feast would start on the street, without any sheet spread to sit on. On the day of the ritual, people would bring their own plates from home, and if along with *jowar bhakri*, or ground *jowar*, a few pieces of intestine or rib fall into the plate, they would indeed be fortunate, because the legs of the mutton would be hung up at home to feed the guests and children for two or three days. In the meal for the town, crushing fried things into the rice, with carrot or potato preparations on the side, the farmer finishes his meal with a lot of water, and burps. In this meal, there would not be *ghee* worth even a little per thousand people. When the farmers' meals are conducted with such pomp, all the misinformed Brahmins spread rumours in their associations, and suggest to the executive that the farmers are debt-ridden because they spend inordinate amounts of money on their children's weddings! Had these people ever, *[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 234, 270 and 271.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* in their grandiose and vacuous 'public' association, admitted a Mang or Mahar farmer, and sat beside him? Or have at least one of these people, who preach the knowledge in the Vedas all over the towns, said that farmers spend too much while sitting in a farmers house and eating the food that they got there? There people have fun playing the role of coquettes in farces, singing songs sung by the farmers while grinding grains, but has any one of them been seen grinding huge amounts of grain in their own children's weddings? If someone has and informs me thus, I will be grateful to him. Do these people ever do any farming things with their own hands? What do they know of the sting of farming? So be it. But do the women in their houses ever work like the women in the farmers' houses? Walking behind the plough, sowing grain and things, weeding the farm along with the husband, lifting up heavy loads of ash, cow-dung, waste matter, or, when in summer there is not much work,

labouring as stone-breakers on roads? Instead of helping their *bhat-bhikshuk* husbands, the moment they wake up, they make themselves up, finish the daily chores, and sit listening to scriptures or mythological stories; at the time of marriage, they do not even touch the grinder, and wearing expensive clothes, generally parade around, making Shudra women carry things, and Shudra men carry umbrellas over their heads. Farmers do not, like these hypocrites, arrange sumptuous meals for their own relations, and careless of women in the house, listen to all manner of lewd songs and dances, and pay large amounts for that. Have these Bhats and white officers left any strength in the farmer to arrange for a good meal at least once in his life? How can we ever argue with these voluble people? Their ancestors have, in ugly books like the Manusamhita posited caste distinctions, and made moves against the Shudras. Had they not done this, they would have been able to perform a miracle. Which is, that without bothering the ladies of the governor's family since they are like delicate velvet flowers, had they invited the wives of a few European Collectors along with their children to a marriage in a farmer's house, and made them share in the work, and made them chief invitees. I will bet my name on this, that seeing the dirt, the confusion, the conditions and the food, [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 44.*] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] they would have run away with their children, and I swear to this in public, in the presence of the nosy court attendant who moves around with yellow bamboo sticks, and a round turban. Both these white and black employees have so completely denuded the farmer, behind the government's back, in order to enjoy themselves day and night, that the governor feels ashamed to invite him to his court. O, cannot the farmer be invited to the governor's court, the farmer, on whose labours [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 198.*] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] the government depends for its army, its ammunition, and the inordinate salaries of its black employees, and the lassitudinous luxury of the white ones, and their pensions? O, should such be the condition of one who is the foundation of all the nation? He does not get enough food to feed his belly, not enough cloth to cover himself, and the sword of the taxes to be paid is constantly hanging on his head, and the hunting dogs of the lords do not even sniff at him? What should we say to this? He cannot even read things written in his own script, how can we expect him to read up books on farming techniques in other languages and improve his farming? How could he who is always starving, [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 334 and 358.*] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] send his children to larger towns, to study in agricultural schools?

Now let us turn to the present condition of the farmer. Since our generous and kind government began to rule in this Brahminic nation<sup>92</sup>, they have started killing bullocks and cows and calves, without any proper ritual, and have started eating them, along with Mussalmans, Mangs and Mahars, one of the important resources of the farmer is diminishing. On top of that,

because of the lack of rain there was a drought, and the cattle were destroyed by lack of fodder. Secondly, because of the rules of the Forest Department and the inadequacy of pastures, the cattle could not be fed, their off-spring became weak and cattle was seized by diseases, and thousands died, and the farmers had to uproot their pegs. Next, because there was not enough cattle to labour on their farms, the farmer could not take proper care of his fields, and the yield has decreased. Moreover, our cunning government, through its Brahmin employees, has carried out surveys every thirty years and have established levies and taxes as they willed, and the farmer, losing his courage, has not properly tilled his lands, and therefore millions of farmers have not been able to feed themselves or cover themselves. As the farmers weakened further because of this, they started dying by the thousands in epidemics. There was drought to add to the misery, and thousands of farmers died of starvation, but in spite of all this, their numbers did increase, and that led to the tilling of the same lands in increasing proportion, and the lands could not be rested. So the yield of the lands decreased. Moreover, every year vast amounts of grain, cotton, leather, wool were being exported to alien countries, and because of the inadequate information or because of their own rough nature itself, the white engineers and doctors and employees wasted large amounts of manure into the sea, and now most of the lands are close to being fallow. O, these foreign white engineers, in cahoots with white doctors devise schemes<sup>93</sup> to make money, and sell the goods manufactured by craftsmen from their own countries, waste unlimited amounts of local people's money, and then make sure that there are buildings named after them. Later if all the local citizens are ruined along with these buildings, why should they care? Having made money and acquired fame, they are done. Sometimes it does not rain one year and there is not enough crop. Sometimes because there are not enough bullocks, the crop suffers. Sometimes because the moneylender does not lend money in time to buy fresh seeds or sometimes because the farmer uses seeds bought last year, the crop suffers. If for these heavenly or earthly reasons, the farmer does not get a sufficient yield, and goes alone to the Brahmin employee's house to tell him of his condition and of his crops, he finds the Brahmin, newly bathed, sitting with stripes of holy ash on his body, enveloped in incense-smoke, engrossed in worship, some other sitting with an old and dirty book, reading it, and someone else counting the beads, while thinking of women.

Hearing his footsteps, without opening his eyes the Brahmins asks, 'Who is it?' Farmer: 'My lord it's me, a farmer.' Brahmins: 'Why have you come at this holy hour? If you have brought vegetables and stuff, hand it in inside, without touching the children. Come to the office in the afternoon and make an application in your name, then I will talk to the officer myself. Now go.' Then the farmer turns and walks straight to the Collector's tent in the

mangrove, and saluting the butlers, the *jamadar* and the *sepoy*, and standing at a distance from the tent-door, what he sees is that some white officer dressed in a Mughal manner, with a velvet carpet under his feet, bathed in lavender perfume, is busy eating, some other is lying face down on a couch and is busy reading rosy descriptions in a book and is therefore disinterested, so the *sepoys* rudely turn the farmer back and he cannot even tell his woes and complaints to the white officers. Therefore there is not any manner in which the farmer can convey his condition to the white officers, who are inured in their customary luxury, status, attendants; or to black officers who are engrossed in their wealth, their higher caste and colour, and their rituals of purity (neither is there any interaction between the women and children of white and black officers and the ignorant women and children of the farmers' houses to establish a communication). Both these officers are so completely different from the farmer, [*Why doesn't that upstart from the red or the green garden know this? Why does he pretend to be innocent?*] and such alien people will survey the farmer's lands, and give him relief? During the survey sometimes the white officers go on a hunt, and having tired themselves fully, sleep for long hours in the tent, and the 'pure' employees conduct the survey with the assistance of the cruel *kulkarni* clerk, the letterless cowardly *patil* and a few drunk hoodlums of the village, and if relief is to be given in the tax, then those who would give it are the alien white officers from across the sea! And if after all this, the farmer does not get any relief, should he pay the tax with money borrowed from the Marwadi moneylender, [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 29*] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] or should he avoid it, and become a robber? Or how else? Let that be. But when the ignorant farmer borrows money to pay the taxes, these Brahmins dress up as Mais and blocking his path, give him all manner of blessings and surely extract some money from him. If there is timely rainfall, and the farmer gets a reasonable crop, since the cowardly employees of our brave government have disallowed use of firearms and other weapons to the farmer, he cannot protect his crop from wild boar and pigs. Of the remaining crop, the Brahmin, the Marwadi moneylenders, Gujarati traders and brokers from other castes keep an eye on the crop and grab whatever they can of it. Not only this, but even the Gujarati Brahmin cooks in traders' households have started claiming some amount of jaggery. Let that be. Eventually when the farmer returns from the market and enters the town gate, a few hoodlums and the *patil* demand to be given drink, and if he does not, then we can be sure that after a few days, he will receive a summons of some kind or other. What a just kingdom this is, wealthy in knowledge!

But in this just kingdom, there was a time when it was possible to travel from the southernmost point to the northernmost, carrying gold, without being challenged. But at present, the goddess of wealth cannot find food and clothes in the houses of the farmer, deprived of education and clothes, and

has therefore gone away to her father, the ocean, and beyond the seas, the English people have shed laziness, following her wishes, and have become industrious and hard working, and have started treating all women young and old with equality, so she has not become a domestic servant in their houses. And now even though they speak sweetly to all the farmers, and collect money as they will, they avoid educating the farmer. The main reason behind this must be that they realize that the moment the farmer educates himself and acquires knowledge, he will carry his whip on his shoulder, and he will bring the goddess of wealth back to his own home, and make her stay there happily. Because if this ever happens, the English will have to scream and yell, and travel to America, and somehow manage to fill their bellies by working hard day and night. And if the goddess of wealth had not gone to her parent's place and stayed there quietly, these Bhat-Brahmins would have made much of their norms of purity that they would not have stopped even at telling their own parents to keep off because they were dressed in ritual clothes. They would have said, 'Do not touch us, do not let your shadow fall on us.' So it is difficult to infer what these lords-of-the-land would have reduced the farmers to, but I can say with full certainty that they would have surely have buried Mangs and Mahars in the stones of these new buildings.

Now if the Mangs and Mahars seek to improve their lot and humanise themselves, then there too black Bhat Christians are constantly at the white missionaries ears, and ensure the farmers' failure. There too, those who became Christians from amongst the higher castes manage to maintain a series of differences and inequalities, that is what we have seen. Moreover, nowadays several educated Bhats and Brahmins are going to England, [[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 286.](#)] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] taking with them their ritual pots and pans, and what stories these victorious people, in the pride of wealth, will tell of the poor farmer and Shudras and Atishudras to the English people, and what difference these stories will make is something that even our poor Governor General will not be able to guess. Because in the time of our industrious ex-Governor Temple, these Bhats and Brahmins who were supervising over the poor farmers who were labouring for food on various canals and lakes had wreaked havoc, so much so that the condition of the defeated Africans whose children were stolen and sold in America was better. If we tried to write this down to convince you, then even a better book than *The Cultivator's Whpcord* will be written. We could look into this if I find the time. But at present, if instead of talking about Hindustan in London, if these people bring Mr Fawcett and Mr Gladstone, wise men both, to India and stay with them in the farmers' houses for a week or two, then instead of returning to England to blabber about Hindustan, they would directly escape to America, and if this does not happen, these children of

Bhats and Brahmins may write what they will in newspapers about this book, and fill their bellies.

In sum, since there is no book amongst the Malis, Kunbis and Dhangars which could be said to have come from god, like the Bible, brave and great kings among them, like the Shindes and Holkars, and the lords of the farmer's children, and cows, cannot even read even basic books of Sanskrit conjugations because of the obstacle of the Arya Bhats, they do not know that they are human, and what their real rights are. If we say this is not so, then why would the farmers have maintained the tradition of washing the Brahmin's feet, and drinking that water? Why would they have worshipped stone and metal idols, cows, and snakes, and plants, and treated them as gods? Because the Arya Brahmins have kept them ignorant for their own selfish purposes, the farmers do not have the power of balanced thought, and believe in all manner of ghosts and creatures and practise all manner of mumbo-jumbo and magic and waste their own money. They lose their lives too, because they do not believe in medicine but in shamans and magicians. Let that be. We could take this up some other time.

Thus because they are tethered from all sides and have lost their essence, and because they marry off their children when very young, the tender semen of the farmer is decaying, and his children are born weaker and weaker, and powerless. In the olden days, nobody could withstand the farmers' slingshots, but now in the present British rule, his grandchildren and great grand children are so weak, even street walkers can humiliate him. Secondly, because they are married at an early age, when the children come of age, they sometimes do not like each other's looks, behaviour, nature, and then there is a rift between them, and thus several rakish young men have abandoned their young wives, *[I read this fourth part in Mumbai city last year, in April 1883. From that day, those learned people from amongst the Shudras who have abandoned their wives because they were not fair of colour or good looking are very angry with me, and instead of being ashamed, or repentant, and bringing them back home, these people have been privately, or secretly, or through published pieces, have been maligning me. Who can possibly shut them up?]* some of whom now have to live out their lives in their parents' home, the remaining, shelterless, are tossed about in life, and eventually die. The parents marry off children without the children's consent at a young age, and then if the farmer does not like his wife by marriage and he marries another or keeps another, then I would find it difficult to say that they are unjust, but what can one say to them marrying yet another, and yet another, four or five such wives? In my opinion they should marry a fifth woman, so that when such a person dies, his children will be free of performing rituals of the dead body. Also, from amongst the Kunbis, there are some farmers who somehow manage to read texts like Vyankateshtotra, or Tulshiakhyān, or Rukmini Swayamvar<sup>24</sup>, and after they have married twice or thrice, they become self important personages in the

village, and in the company of the cunning Brahmins, give false evidence here, sign false receipts there, and harass the poor of the village to no end. Amongst the Malis, there is not even this much reading skill. But while listening to all manner of folk tales and folk performances, and religious tales, once they manage to memorise a few devotional songs, a few anecdotes and a few verses, they become the very cornerstones of such activities, and after that, they think of all the scholars and learned men as nothing. Once they manage to turn the tables on some scholars, they become proud and soon marry for the second and the third time, in spite of their first wife. They now have silver rings on their fingers, pearls in their ears, beautiful caps on their heads and carpets to sit on, beside which lie dirty tobacco cloth-bags, and filthy spittoons. If one chews a pan with them because they insist, one almost throws up while spitting in them. Then they sit beside some hangers-on, who are preparing *ganja*<sup>95</sup>, and tell stories of their own little victories, and call themselves descendants of this or that personage, and thus become important people. The wives of those whose turn it is to feed these people, do so on time, from their own earnings of their own occasional labour. Having slept soundly in the afternoon, these executives come out of the house, and striding along with legs spread wide, rocking on their feet, twirling pale moustaches on the holes of their mouths, these executives collect some good-for-nothing followers, and as they move through the lanes, teasing a few innocent young women here and there, create factions in the caste, and when these matters are settled in the panchayat, rifts are created even amongst relations, and then these people poison the ears of everybody around, in the end making it difficult for some women to live at their parents' homes or at their husbands' homes. Finally these active personages threaten the poor in a variety of ways and extract money for the day's drinking and go home, where they eat whatever is kept in the women's baskets, fruit and such like, and while the women cook, they sit there and talk sweetly to them. In marriages in the town, these good-for-nothings make sure that they get a feast. If such devilish, letterless people are the leaders of the ignorant farmer, how will their condition, or the condition of their farmlands ever improve? Let that be.

From the information I have collected, I have presented here a sample. If you yourselves collect information, you will realize that at present, the farmer is in a perilous condition, as if by the wrath of God, and that the information given here is very little. But I cannot bring myself to state that this will match with the information that our industrious government has collected through the white gazetteers and black Bhat mamledars. Because it is difficult to find a government department in which the Bhats have not entered. At the base of all this misery lies the ancient injunction of the Brahmins that the Shudra farmers should be educated. The various storytellers and mythopoeists, Bhats, have impressed this idea on the

farmers' minds so deeply that the farmer thinks it sinful to educate his children. Also, we have already experienced that because of his penury, the farmer cannot educate his children. Therefore our multi-faceted government should in proportion to the taxes that it collects, the various local funds and other collections, close down all the Marathi and English schools in villages, and, looking upon the farmer with kindness, start a school for making teachers from amongst the farmers themselves, and spend money in each taluk, from the local fund to provide food, clothes and books to farmers' children, and start boarding schools for them. Once such teachers are ready, it should make a law that the farmers' children should study only in schools run by these teachers, until they come of a certain age, so that at least a little education is imparted to the farmers; but until real education and knowledge is available to them, the strong imprint of the scheming Brahmins will not be erased from their minds. And until this is done, the farmer will not come to his senses. But even if our dilly-dallying government, which switches things from this hand to that hand, spends the total local funds on recruiting Brahmin professors and directors into the Education Department, the farmer's children will never receive an education from them. Because the fence that the Mahar builds for the farmer's land is blown away in the wind. These are, after all, hired mules, by evening they will collect silently at the public charity house. This I will whisper in the ear of our government, and finish today's subject.



## Chapter Fifth

Suggestions for the Arya Bhat-Brahmins regarding us Shudra farmers, and the measures that the government should take.

Before beginning this fifth and last chapter, I will make some suggestions to the cunning Arya Bhat-Brahmins, so that they do not meddle in the issue. I pray to God that the eyes of the native, ignorant *dasyu*<sup>96</sup> Shudra brothers will be opened, along with those of the foreign and learned<sup>97</sup> government. Because now they are wrapping up and hiding their swords of religion and rapiers of the *shastras* in ritual cloths, and ignoring totally the Mangs and Mahars. They are exhorting and advising all the factions who are complaining in their own ways about the hierarchies in this country, Shudras, Parsis and Mussalmans, especially the youngsters, that unless they all concentrate and unite, there will be no progress possible in this country. I am attempting here that the letterless farmer should not undertake any rash action hearing this. The rest is in the hands of their destiny.

Because in the past the ancestors of these cunning Arya Bhat-Brahmins established, through the strength of their archery, their complete dominance over the *dasyu shudras*. From that day onwards till today, for thousands of years, the defeated Shudras were kept ignorant of their own human rights, and these Shudras came to believe in this selfish religion, rather than the public and human religions as found in the books of the Bauddhas, Mussalmans and the Christians, they became completely dependent on the Brahmins, and began to think it a great virtue to despise other human beings and criticise the true, rights-based religions. Thus the Brahmins came to do what they will with the Shudras, and the Shudras themselves came to believe that it was the right of the Brahmins to do so.

Later it became habitual to think that the Shudras should not be suspicious about anything that the Brahmins did, and that was their duty, and this continues up to the present. And because the government in England, and its white employees are thoroughly ill-informed of this condition, they fail to take appropriate action. Thus the overall condition of all the Shudra farmers is now so abject, and these Brahmins, with the cunning intention of becoming blameless, and making the farmers do things for them, are advising the Shudras, through their newspapers, meetings, associations and through their books that 'these Shudra farmers should remain loyal to the Brahmins and unite with them, otherwise this unfortunate country will see no progress.' Now it is clear from this hollow advice that their intention is merely to cheat the farmer with false promises of progress and upliftment. Because the custom of treating Shudras like slaves was started by the

ancestors of the Brahmins, and that custom still continues. How will the farmers and the alien Brahmins unite? With their skills and education, tremendously successful people like Dr Franklin and Thomas Paine have laboured day and night, and the American people have pushed down all the artisans of all the nations of Europe, and brought in money from there to the tune of crores every year. This knowledge and education the ancestors of the Brahmins shut tight by prohibiting it in their selfish books. Therefore the progress of true soldiery and archery was completely stifled. One might want to say that we can see with our own eyes how the young members of great families like Shinde and Holkar ride horses and make a bombastic display of spears and other weapons, but these unfortunate souls cannot even take positions and with the help of binoculars, fire cannon balls. All they do is twirl their moustaches, and exploit the farmer, ruining the reputation of their great families. Thus it was that greedy conquistadors from the French, the Portugese and the Mussalman rulers invaded this country and took away inordinate amounts of wealth with them. Many of them defaced the selfish religion of the Brahmins. And finally, several Mussalman warriors carried thousands of Brahmins by their ears, and converted them to their own human religion, and performed circumcisions. But right up to this time, the prohibition on teaching the Shudra farmers' children in the Sanskrit schools continues. Therefore, how will there be unity between the farmer and such Brahmins?

Now looking at the order of nature, it can be seen that everything except knowledge is common to men and all other creatures. For example, the beast knows nothing more than eating, sleeping, copulating, protecting its off-spring, defending itself from enemies, and to burp and growl after eating, and therefore the beasts cannot improve upon this and therefore their original condition does not change even a little. Whereas man has a natural and peculiar intelligence. It is through intelligence that he has reached high up, above all the creatures of water, beasts, birds and insects, and it is with this intelligence that he invented the wonderful skill of putting down his thoughts on paper. This enabled people of all the four continents to note the errors they had made and their experiences, and now there is an immense storehouse of such experiential knowledge in the world, and using this experiential knowledge in combination with their intelligence, European people are communicating their knowledge through the wireless machine, thousands of miles away, helping each other in times of famine, sending lakhs of tonnes of food through ships and trains and helping each other survive. From amongst this species of intelligent human beings, the Shudra king Shivaji troubled the monotheist Mussalman *badshah* to no end, and protected cows and Brahmins along with their selfish religion. In memory of this, the treacherous servants of this letterless Shudra king, the Peshwas kept his ignorant descendant under arrest in the fort at Satara, and assigned

the investigation to the inordinately cruel Trimbakji Denge, while they themselves distributed coins and rupees to people of their own caste in Pune, and while doing sacred things like the Krishna Leela, began to punish people of the tailor's caste, along with the Shudra farmer, for wearing the *dhoti* like a Brahmin. Not only this, contemporary Brahmins think of cow-piss as sacred and purifying, the cow which has been eating the farmers' turds, and they drink cow-piss and purify themselves. And the same *bhats* and Brahmins, through the trick of their selfish religion, *[Sir William Jones, Vol. II, page 224. It is, indeed, a system of despotism and priestcraft, both limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support, though with mutual checks; it is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy, with idle superstitions and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative and consequently liable to dangerous misconception; it abounds with minute and childish formalities with ceremonies generally absurd and often ridiculous.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* think of the Shudra farmer as low. Thus, how will the farmers and Brahmins unite?

Several of the Arya Brahmins serve sentences of rigorous imprisonment for forging documents, printing currency, or bribery. Several of them, for being *shaktas*, eat meat and do other unholy things with impure Mang women, but think lowly of Shudra kings like Bhosale, Shinde, Holkar and do not intermarry with them. Most Bhat-Brahmins enact all manner of impure things with the dancing girls or harlots in town, but the same Arya Bhats think it sinful to intermarry with the simple and innocent farmers' daughters. So how will the farmers and Brahmins unite?

Most of the Bhats and Brahmins do not allow the Shudra farmer to touch the stone or metal idols in their temples, and do not eat with them, even at a distance, but put leftovers in his plate, and are done with it, so how will the farmers and Brahmins unite? When the unselfish followers of Hazrat Muhammad Paigambar stepped into this country, on the strength of their holy monotheist religion, they began to decimate the selfish religion of the Aryas and Bhats. So some Shudras very enthusiastically started embracing the Mohammedan religion. Then the scheming Mukundaraj took some Sanskrit passages and polished them up with a little atheist opinion and wrote this Prakrit book called the Viveksindhu<sup>98</sup>, in order to entice the rest of the Shudras, and then until the British started ruling, the Arya Bhats told the Shudra farmers ridiculous stories from the Mahabharata and Ramayana, and lured them into fighting with the Mussalmans and did not allow the farmer to educate his children in the company of the Mussalmans. The moment British rule was established, the Arya Bhat Brahmins secured all the important positions very easily, and now they are eating up the farmer. *[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 225.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* And though they think of the British and other Europeans of being as lowly as the Mangs and Mahars, they do not allow the Shudra farmer even a glimpse of the texts of the Vedas, which their ancestors thought the holiest of all, but now several of their scholars put all these texts under their arms and run door to door to

teach them to the white foreigners, but these Bhat-Brahmins, are they not more or less selective when teaching the farmers' children in village schools, run by the government? So how will the farmers and Brahmins unite?

If through the general agency of Europeans like the religious missionaries, the children of the displaced farmer educate themselves a little, and if through the kindness of white employees, they secure employment, the Bhat employees in many offices tell all kinds of tales about them to the white employers and finally get them driven away, and several Bhat employees in order to please the white employees misreport the farmer's crop and yield and later, blockade the farmer's pleas and representations in a variety of ways and frighten him to death. So how will the farmers and the Brahmins unite?

Most of the Vedic scholars, storytellers, mythologists etc. are extracting all manner of meals and annual gifts, using all manner of tricks, from the ignorant Shudra farmer kingly clans like Bhosale, Shinde and Holkar and are getting thousands of feasts and daily gifts of cows and other donations. In contrast, none of the Brahmin rulers of princely states like Aundh, Bhor and Sanghi feed anyone. Even in times of drought they would not condescend to distribute food. Neither has a single Brahmin *samsthanik* <sup>99</sup> remembered those annual covenants, thousands of rupees, and the frequent feasts gotten out of the Shudra farmer, and in return educated even a single child of a farmer, providing books and food etc. So how will the farmers and the Brahmins unite?

In most rich Brahmin households, when the daily alms are given, there is a process of selection, in which the Brahmin beggar is given rice, and the Shudra and Mussalman beggars are given some millet or just told to move to the next house. Therefore, would it not be quite right to say that people like Judge Tucker, European, of another religion, are far more kind than the Arya Bhat-Brahmins? Because he spent money from his own earnings to educate Brahmin and Shudra children and taught them English, and these children are now employed right beside the white employees and are doing roaringly well. This is called understanding! This is called kindness! This is called charity! This is called progress! Otherwise, the Arya Bhat-Brahmins will unite when needed and after the need is over, one looks this way and the other that way. Because it is the Bhat-Brahmins who are going to benefit. But if the learned Arya Bhat-Brahmins really wish to unite the people of this country and take the nation ahead, then first they must first drown their cruel religion, [*A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, page 227.*] [*Original in English. - Ed.*] which is customary amongst both the victors and the vanquished, and they, publicly and clearly, must cease using any artifice in their relationship with the Shudras, who have been demeaned by that religion, and trample on

inequality and the Vedanta opinion, and till a true unity is established, there will be no progress in this country. If by chance, in their inherited and customary cunning the Arya Bhat Brahmins join hands with a few half-baked Shudra scholars and manage some progress, that improvement will not last for too long. If a few belly-filling clerks from amongst the Shudras unite with the Bhat-Brahmins, and they in turn attempt to take raw mangoes from the green garden and arrange them for ripening, then they will ruin not only the mangoes, which will be valuable in the future, but also the dried grass on which they are set and all the skilled farmers will have to hang their heads in shame. This, my prophecy they should store in the holiest of holy places in their homes, is what I am asserting here.

Now I will go to the cool mountains of Simla, and resting there for some time, I will call upon our government beyond the seas, and in the presence of our supremely kind Governor, suggest measures for improving the farmers' condition:

Now our good and law-abiding [g100](#) government should keep aside the greed of money and appoint detective doctors to keep an eye on the farmer's behaviour, and if the farmer misbehaves and loses his health, or begins to steal and do other sinful things, then arrangements must be made for proper punishment, without that they will not become moral. Unless laws are passed forbidding the farmer from marrying more than one woman and forbidding him from marrying his children at an early age, their off-spring will not turn out strong. Because the white employees are ill-informed there is a disproportionate number of Bhat-Brahmins appointed, and therefore they do not have to slave in the farms, and their women do not have fill their bellies by frequenting the market with produce. Moreover, because the farmer is ignorant, the Bhat-Brahmins benefit immensely from caste distinctions and hierarchies.

Thus the Brahmins, employed in government jobs, and the mythologists, storytellers, teachers in schools strive day and night, using all their cunning, to prevent the breakdown of these distinctions and hierarchies. Therefore until the farmers' children become able enough to manage positions in government, not more than the proportionate number of Brahmins should be employed in government jobs, and the remaining posts should be given to Mussalman or Hindu or Britons. It is only then that they (the Brahmins) will stop obstructing the education of the farmer. This, their artifice has become invisible to white eyes because in most government departments, it is the Brahmins who are employed. Thus the Brahmin caste becomes more and more educated, and wealthy, whereas the farmer becomes poorer and eventually pauperised, and sometimes takes part in the Brahmin's rebellions

and loses his life. Moreover the Brahmins have so impressed their cunning religion on the minds of the farmers that they think it virtuous to plead guilty for murders that they have committed on the say of the Brahmins. This wastes the energies and labour of the police and the Justice Department. Therefore in order to educate the farmers' children, there should be teachers from their own castes, who can hold the plough properly, weed the farm and do other things as well. A law should be made which will ensure that children are sent to the schools run by such teachers, and for the first few years, some lower and easier divisions should be created, enticing them with degrees equal to those of Brahmins, and unless other castes are prevented from forcing the farmer to perform rituals in their marriages, the farmers' children will not be interested in education. Then, later, those children who will pass the Marathi VI division, along with a test in farm labour, and who will be well-behaved, they should surely be made *patils* of the village—if the benevolent government makes such a law, thousands of farmers will compete to educate their children in the hope of their becoming Patils. And when there are such educated and qualified *patils* in all villages, the cunning Bhat *kulkarnis* will not be able to make the farmers fight amongst themselves and file cases against each other, and that will benefit our government immensely, since in a short time the farmer will be able to pay more tax than now, and the unjustifiable swellings in the police and justice departments can then be reduced. Also, the government should for a time believe that there are no Bhat-Brahmins to be employed, and as capable people come up from amongst the farmers, they should be employed as *mamledar* and in other government offices in big and small positions, and are trained to do these jobs. Until this happens, the farmers' feet will not find the ground, and the government's revenue will never increase. At present the government is keeping a sharp eye on the deception and treachery in the exchanges of the Gujarati and the Marwadi, but instead of keeping an eye on the false measures and rotten things in their shops, the government should keep an eye on the drink-loving *patil*.

Let that be. Now I will suggest measures for improving the lands of the farmer, which are increasingly become fallow:

The benevolent government should educate all the farmers, and until they become mature enough to use machines to do the usual things on the farms like European farmers, all the white people and the Mussalmans should slaughter goats and sheep instead of slaughtering cows and oxen; or they should import cattle and slaughter and eat them here, because otherwise there will not be sufficient supply of cattle for the farms, and there will not be enough compost and other fertiliser as well, and so neither the farmer, nor the government will benefit.

The essences of leaf, grass, flower, dead insects and animals, is washed away by summer rain, therefore our industrious government should, as and when convenient, use the white and black soldiers and the extra manpower in the police department to construct small dams and bunds in such a way that this water would seep into the ground, and only later go and meet streams and rivers. This would make the land very fertile, and the soldiers in general, having got used to working in open air, will also improve their health and become strong. Even if they labour to the value of one *anna* every day, this will mean an increase in the government's earnings to the tune of twenty-five lakh per year, because our careful government has, including the police department, at least two lakh *sepoys*.

Similarly the government should, in all the hills and valleys, build lakes wherever possible, so that the small dams in the lower areas will fill with water, and the wells too will have a supply of water and the land for fruit and flowers and vegetables will be used, and the government too will benefit along with the farmer. Therefore the government should maintain these bunds in good condition, especially in the backwaters. The government should conduct surveys of all the lands in its territory, employing water specialists, and wherever it is found that there is enough water to be drawn from more than one source, these places should be clearly marked in the maps of the towns, and the government should give some awards to farmers who dig wells without its assistance. Also, the government should allow the farmer to collect all the silt and other things extracted from rivers and lakes, as in the olden times, and it should also return all the cow pastures to the villages, which it has included in its 'forest'; it should, however, make sure that no firewood is collected, or land tilled in the areas that belong to it, and it should also forbid the cutting of wood for selling as wood for construction and destroy the oppressive the Forest Department.

Our own government should, spending money from its own coffers, purchase breeds of good sheep from several countries, bring them here, and when they are bred here, their droppings will make for a good supply of fertiliser and their wool will benefit the Shudra farmer. If the government does not have the courage to allow the farmer to possess old guns in order to protect his farms from wild beasts, then the government should assign that job to our clean black police department, and if a farmer's crop is devastated by wild boar, then the loss should be made up from the salaries of the senior officers or from the government's coffers—and until such a law is passed, the farmer will not be able to sleep peacefully at night and he will not be able to labour fully on his farm during the day.

If the government sincerely wishes to improve the condition of the ignorant Shudra farmer, and increase its own yield, it should hold annual tests and

competitions of greatest yield and greatest skill, and give awards to the best farmers. Calculating the yield average every three years, the best farmers should be given titles, and if the educated children of the farmer, along with good maintenance of their own farms, also learn some iron-work and carpentry and give exams in those subjects, the government should take them abroad, for them to see the agricultural schools there, so that the farmer will immediately improve his farming and be happy.

Our moral government should keep a sharp eye on the various professional women and organize hospitals for them in each taluk, and the government should make sure that no immoral songs are sung by the various performing artists, and punish them if they do, because unless this is done, the ignorant farmers' morals and natural tendencies are not going to improve. In general, in all the territories, the number of Shudra and Atishudra soldiers and policemen is very high, and they fight against the greenish people of 'Egypt' and 'Kabul', shoulder to shoulder with the white soldier. In general, the Shudra and Atishudra farmer is slaving on his farm, along with women and children, day and night, until he is exhausted, and paying the various taxes, funds, etc., but our charitable government does not think even think of educating the farmers' children enough to enable them to read a book on farming or relevant notices in newspapers, and while lakhs of farmers do not have enough cloth and enough food, our government spends inordinate amounts of money on the salaries and pensions of people in the army, the police, the justice departments, who are employed to protect and ensure the farmer's happiness and security. What should we say to this!!!

Our government gives pensions worth hundreds of rupees per month to many of these apples of their eyes, white and black employees having worked on a fat per month salary of thirty or thirty-five. Many of the black and white employees become too weak and blind to work for the government, and cheating even some very good European doctors, manage to get pensions, the white employees escape to England, and from amongst the black employees, many become suddenly young, as if Jesus Christ himself has roused them from the dead, and polishing their moustaches with wax and blacking, find employment in municipalities or in offices of big traders and earn thousands of rupees. Our watchful government should, without changing the salaries of any of the army carriage bearers, or construction workers, iron-workers, carpenters, the casual employee etc., slowly reduce all the inordinately increased salaries of all the black and white employees and slowly reduce the pensions as well. Unless the things written above are thought of, the foundations of the government will not be strengthened, and the farmers' fated penury will not change, and the days of his starvation will never end.



In sum, then, in all the chapters of the Whipcord, we have not described at all the condition of the eminent kings and lords amongst the Shudras. The reasons are, first because of their hollow wealth, and second because of misfortune, they are alienated from the farmer.

Therefore I have in bold strokes described here only the pitiable condition of the middle and lower level of Shudra farmers, in the city of our Governor, under the rule of the Governor General, and our particular government beyond the seas has been informed. After this, if the government wishes that the Brahmin's children should perform its last rights, then it should continue the custom of extracting the Royal Fund from the crushed bones of the Shudra farmer, and annually spend enormous amounts to educate the Brahmin's children. I have nothing to say against this as of now. *[A Sepoy Revolt by Henry Mead, pages 69 and 235.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* But it should at the least spend the money collected under the false promise of educating the farmer's children honestly on educating these children *[Pages 301, 308, 313.] [Original in English. - Ed.]* so that I would be able to claim to be happy at the fruit of my labour of all these days. But if it does not do so, it will be responsible to God.

Now I first remember with gratitude all my childhood Mussalman neighbours and playmates, in whose company I began to have true thoughts about the falsities of the selfish Hindu religion and its false ideas of caste distinctions, etc. Second, I express my gratitude to the Scottish Mission in Pune and the government institution—through whom I acquired some education and understanding of what a human being's rights are, and the devout European gentlefolk who have assisted these with donations. Then I thank the independent rule of the British government, because of which I could express my views without fear, and pray to the kind Force which runs the world, that their children and grandchildren flourish, and I also pray that this Force will help my ignorant, ill-fated Shudra farmers to open their eyes and come to their senses. I take courage from this hope, and now I sit in peace, watching for those who turn back, because my Whipcord has hurt them.

Date 18  
Wednesday  
Month July  
Year a.d. 1883  
Pune, Peth Junaganj

**Jotirao Govindrao Phule**  
Member of the Satyashodhak Samaj

# Appendices

[Translated by G.P. Deshpande]

While I was working on this Whipcord many people spoke to me on the proposed book. I present here two typical examples.

## I. The one who calls himself a pure Maratha

Just as I completed the second part of Whipcord a gentleman wearing a Brahmin-like headgear visited me. It appeared that he was looking rather closely at the things in the room. I tried to place him. He could not have come from Marwar<sup>101</sup> because the headgear did not show the usual three extensions of a big headgear hanging at the back. He could not have been a tailor either as his headgear did not have any needles stuck into it as is customary with professional tailors. One could not place him among the goldsmiths, as he did not have a protruding chest. One could not yet describe him as a Brahmin because one had not heard him speak. As I was thus trying to figure out who he could be, he turned to me and asked if I had not recognized him.

Jotirao: Yes, indeed, I have not. I apologise.

Gentleman: I am a Maratha from a Maratha family.

Jotirao: You may be a Maratha. But what is your caste?

Gentleman: My caste is Maratha.

Jotirao: Well, all Marathi-speaking people from Mahars to Brahmins are known as *marathas*. It is not possible to locate anybody's caste if only the term *maratha* is used.

Gentleman: In that case my caste is Kunbi.

Jotirao: And, pray, what do you do to earn your living?

Gentleman: Well, not so long ago we had earned a lot of money, almost to the tune of two hundred thousand rupees when we served the Maharaja of Satara. We have been living off those earnings since. All you ordinary folk on one side and we on the other!

Jotirao: But then how is it that you have chosen to visit me?

Gentleman: I have no favours to ask of you. But then I hear that it is your argument that the Brahmin government employees exploit the peasantry. If there are government employees of peasant origin they would not indulge in such exploitation.

Jotirao: Yes that is indeed my view. I argue that in all government departments there should be representation of the peasants in proportion to their numbers. If that is the case there will be no exploitation of hapless peasants.

Gentleman: How can that be? Will you please explain? Let me be certain.

Jotirao: Imagine for a moment that you are appointed to investigate criminal affairs. Now your caste fellows, kith and kin often fight among themselves. The matter comes to you for investigation and justice. Would you use impolite language with them?

Gentleman: No, never.

Jotirao: Why?

Gentleman: Simple. An appointment of that kind is ephemeral, I could be dismissed from the job at any time. If some fellow reports against me to the Collector, my 'officership' will disappear. I cannot afford to make my kith and kin my enemies by using insolent language. I eat with them. I get my children married within the caste. If my caste fellows turn against me, my family will be destroyed. I will have to abandon my children in the name of God. Just see. My children have spent all their life with theirs'. Their houses are adjacent to mine. Our children play together at one place. Our source of water is the same. Our farmlands share common borders. Our animals share grazing lands. In times of need we share our agricultural instruments and we lend each other animals like buffaloes and oxen for agrarian operations. Womenfolk in our households lend each other whatever is needed for food. In short our customs and etiquettes are the same. Our funeral rites are the same. *[Earlier peasants carried out these rites themselves, but over the last 30-40 years, Brahmins have started overseeing these.]* In the event of a death in the house or any other calamity, we feed each other. How can I use impolite language or take

bribes from my own kith and kin? It can only turn my own people into sworn enemies. No, I can't do it!

Jotirao: Extend that logic. Since the Brahmin employees do not belong to their castes, they would not and do not mind harassing the illiterate and hapless peasants. What does your conscience tell you?

Gentleman: I do not know what to say. But then there are some educated people among the peasant castes. They would not even get together and publicly discuss ways and means of helping the peasants. These cowards are interested in women and cursing the Brahmins. Outwardly however, they would be abject slaves to Brahmin employees.

Jotirao: Even the employees of the education department would not discuss the problem of peasant education in their depositions to the Education Commission. Thus misleading the Commission, they cheat the generous Governor General. How can the cowardly Shudra learned members beat them at the game? Is not that right? Let alone finding fault with the Brahmin employees, he cannot afford not to kowtow even to the pettiest of the Brahmin clerks. If he does that by mistake he is so vehemently insulted that the poor man starts wondering if his account was at all truthful! Why are you silent sir? Anyway, the next time you wish to discuss the problem of Brahmin employees, please make detailed enquiries, collect as much information as you can and then come over here for a discussion.

Gentleman: No, no. I am now convinced that because of the monopolization of jobs by Brahmin employees not only the ignorant peasants but also this benevolent government has everything to lose. But then how come the so-called 'Director' in a government office cannot see the damage?

Jotirao: Simple! If they spent their time in looking at the sufferings of the ordinary people, how and when can they have a good time themselves?

Gentleman: Oh, my God! If this is the state today, it is frightening to imagine what the poor, illiterate peasants must have suffered under the Peshwas!

At this point the gentleman concluded his conversation and left.

2 November 1882, Pune

J.G. Phule  
Member of the Satyashodhak Samaj

## II. A Shudra *sadhu* [102](#)

As I concluded writing the third part of the Whipcord, a saffron-clad Shudra *sadhu*, an enthusiastic, garrulous member of the Kabir sect parading a holy *tulsi* garland, a regular visitor to Pandharpur came to my house and sat on a bench in my courtyard. I asked the *sadhu* what it is that he desired. To which the *sadhu* replied:

Sadhu: Are you Jotirao Phule?

Jotirao: Yes, indeed, I am the one.

Sadhu: You are born a Hindu. Because of your English education you have been lately attacking Hinduism. So I thought I should discuss with you if the four principal Vedas, the main scriptures of Hinduism, are indeed divine in origin and satisfy myself. I have come here for that purpose.

Jotirao: Have you yourself actually seen the four Vedas with your own eyes?

Sadhu: Well, yes. I have seen all of them in a Brahmin's house.

Jotirao: Can you offer any reliable evidence to prove that these books were written by God Himself?

Sadhu: Nothing, apart from what the Brahmin told me during our chat.

Jotirao: OK. To begin with, do you think God has a definite shape?

Sadhu: How can he? God is supposed to be shapeless Paramatma [103](#).

Jotirao: How is it then that this shapeless God authored the four Vedas?

Sadhu: Only the Brahmins can answer that question. You'd better ask them.

Jotirao: Secondly, is it the case that the God authored the Vedas with a view to liberating mankind?

Sadhu: Yes, indeed.

Jotirao: Thirdly, in which language did God compose the Vedic scriptures?

Sadhu: In the Sanskrit language.

Jotirao: Fourthly is Sanskrit understood and spoken all over the world?

Sadhu: Very few people know this language.

Jotirao: This would prove that the Vedas were not written for the upliftment of all mankind because most people of the world do not at all speak or know Sanskrit. How can a scripture, which people don't understand, liberate them?

Sadhu: Maybe when they were written, people all over the world spoke Sanskrit. It is possible that later various kinds of languages developed.

Jotirao: This would mean that God did not know that there would be a multiplicity of languages in the future. Does not it go against the omniscience of God? Further many German, Scottish, English scholars like Max Müller have studied the Vedas rather well. Is not it surprising that they did not disown Christianity *[Ever since Pandita Ramabai has shown the so-called religion of the Aryans its place, a nameless coward among the cunning (defender of the Aryans) has been awestruck and has shut up.]* and adopt the Vedic religion.

Sadhu: Maybe the thought of having to bathe thrice a day with a white thread around his neck like the Brahmins in the climate of Europe scared Max Müller. In any case he alone can answer your question. How can I say anything on it?

Jotirao: If God had created the Vedic scriptures for the liberation of entire mankind, the Bhat-Brahmins would not have prohibited the Shudras and the Atishudras from studying the Vedas. The Bhat-Brahmins have thus violated God's commandment and are not the Shudras and Atishudras suffering for that? Why should they trust either the God who is supposed to have created the Vedic scriptures or the scriptures themselves? Or indeed why should they call themselves Hindus?

Sadhu: The Bhat-Brahmins have never prevented the Shudras and Atishudras from studying the Vedas. Several Bhat-Brahmins go to the missionaries and teach the Vedas there. The Shudras are much too poor and resourceless to study the Vedas. What can the Brahmins do? At least that is what the Brahmins argue.

Jotirao: This proves that you do not know anything of the Brahmin's intrigue and conspiracies. Let that be. Are the missionaries who live off religion rich enough to pay for their Vedic studies? And then how about the Shindes and

the Holkars, rulers of the princely states? These Shudra rulers are surely not paupers. They could have studied the scriptures. Why did they not? I think you must understand that these Bhat-Brahmins have been historically making tonnes and tonnes of money off these very rulers. Have they ever thought of running a school for the children of the Shudra peasants? They could have educated at least some of them. But they did not, for that would have been the end of the Brahmins' monopoly over learning. If they had educated some of the caste brethren of these rulers, there would have been some non-Brahmin equals of the Brahmins. The present state when they are all falling flat before the Brahmin would have drastically changed. They did not want it.

Sadhu: OK. If this is the case why can you not persuade these rulers to start schools for their Shudra brethren?

Jotirao: Even in their courts the dominance of the Brahmin officer continues. They would not even let a small fellow like me reach the prince and be heard!

Sadhu: Oh, my God. I never imagined that the Brahmins would have had such cunning! I am now convinced that when the Shudra princes come of age these cunning Brahmins would not hesitate to write to the British authorities that, as these princes cannot manage their affairs, they should not be given charge of their states just yet. Having thus improved the British authorities they must be turning these princes into performing monkeys!

Jotirao: I am sure that these Brahmins will one day pay for their sins!

Sadhu: Thanks. Time for me to take leave of you!

Jotirao: OK! Bye-bye!

2 November 1882, Pune

J.G. Phule  
Member of the Satyashodhak Samaj

# On Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood

4 December 1884

*Written in English by the author*

In June 1884 a Parsi social reformer, Beheramji Merwanje Malabari, submitted to the then viceroy, Lord Ripon, two notes on child-marriage and imposed widowhood for consideration and action by the British government. The government forwarded these notes to the Presidency governments. It had also sent them to leading personalities of the time. Phule was one of them.

Phule reacted to the notes in a positive way, with a great deal of sympathy for Brahmin child-widows. These brief notes are significant for two reasons. One is that while Phule is unforgiving in his attack on Brahminism, he is not against Brahmins *per se*. There are many passages in Phule where he makes the distinction between Brahmins and Brahminism. In fact, one could argue that Phule desired the smashing up of the Brahminical structure not simply because it would free the Shudratishudras, but because it would free society as a whole. Secondly, these comments on the law-givers with their 'malice towards female sex' are among the first gender statements in India, and flow from Phule's recognition that all women, irrespective of caste status, are to be included among the Shudratishudras.

We get some idea of Phule's English prose style through the submission to the Hunter Commission and these comments on Malabari's proposal. It is not as aggressive as his Marathi prose style. But the concerns that mark his Marathi writing are all present here. These notes are a good example of controlled, yet hard-hitting writing. The way he shifts from his otherwise polemical style in Marathi to a neat, brief, and to the point statement in English is admirable. Clearly, he understood the understated character of even the most assertive statement in English. A comparison between his Marathi and English writing is revealing: one is aggressive, polemical and unforgiving; the other is firm, clear, and relatively understated.



## Opinion from Jotterao Govindrao Phulay on Note No. I, by Mr. B.M. Malabari on Infant Marriage in India

I concur with Mr. B.M. Malabari's laudable undertaking, and hope that something may be done by our enlightened Government to alleviate the miserable state of the deluded people of this country. Although Mr. B.M. Malabari is not pressed under the immediate burden of our customs and manners, invented by Aryan Shastra makers, he treated the subject so remarkably well that the Shudratishudras and Brahmin widows will thank him [in] future undoubtedly. I also now beg to add a few remarks on the middle and lower orders, the downtrodden aborigines of this country. In the course of marriage if any slight dispute takes place between the parties, the poor girl has to suffer all her lifetime. After the marriage is over, should a defect in her family happen to come to the notice of the boy's father, the innocent girl is considered an outcaste. If the boy is younger than the girl, she is not well fed, clothed and cared for properly, nay, she is not allowed to remain with her rich parents. If her father-in-law be ignorant and poor, the girl, not being fed well, is stunted in her growth. In short she is more heavily loaded with work for days and nights than American slaves. Thus she is so unbearably tyrannized that she is obliged to put an end to her life by committing suicide; and the crime is very often hushed up by bribing the village Patel, Coolkerni (the quarrel-monger) and Policemen. Many poor parents on the bridegroom's side are thus, by incurring debts for marriages, ruined on accounts of the premature deaths of their daughters-in-law. Besides the husband boy, on coming to his proper senses, does not like his wife and marries one of his own liking. Being thus accustomed, he is induced to marry two, three, or four wives at a time in succession, and thus renders his whole family discontented, abusive and quarrelsome. These ignorant wives are not only obliged to poison each other, but sometimes their own husband. Now the enlightened Hindu of Bengal has made excellent suggestions to University graduates, and these, as they suppose would be a fair beginning for the educated class, but, I think, their suggestions are not universal and applicable to all the classes of Shudras and Atishudras, because very few of the former attend the University and the latter are not at all admitted even into vernacular schools and allowed to sit and learn with the higher class boys. In conclusion, unless our wise Government use some compulsory measures, the ignorant, middle and lower classes will not come

to their proper sense, because the so-called higher classes of Hindus, who hold responsible posts under Government, have by their cunning and shrewd ways, purposely misguided them in matters of religion and politics. I therefore suggest that Government should rule that boys under nineteen years of age, and girls under eleven, should not be allowed to marry. In case they do, some reasonable tax may be levied on the parents of the parties married, and the money thus obtained should be used in the education of the middle and lower classes of Hindus. But the education should not be transmitted through the medium of Brahmin teachers, for, while educating, they create in the minds of the pupils wrong religious ideas and lead them astray. Even the subsidiary kings, Scindia, Holkar, and others are, we find, cheated in the open daylight under the pretence of invented religion, and are induced to extract tax indiscriminately from the cultivators without giving them timely allowances. But there is strong hope that His Highness the present Ruler of Baroda will try his utmost to educate and better the condition of the ignorant cultivators as His Highness has received a good and sound English education.

## Opinion from Jotterao Govindrao Phulay on Note No. II, by Mr. B.M. Malabari on Enforced Widowhood

Now I touch upon the most delicate subject of enforced widowhood upon Brahmin women. The partial Aryan Institution inconsiderately allows polygamy to males, which causes them to fall into new habits of wickedness. When his lust is satisfied with his legal wives, he for novelty's sake haunts the houses of public women. He then contracts venereal diseases from them and is obliged to seek medical assistance at an exorbitant cost, for himself and his wives. When medical treatment ceases to cure him and his wives he loses all hopes of getting children. In this deplorable condition of his life if the lewd husband finds his own wife to go out during the night he suspects her of leading a vicious course and so, punishing her severely, turns her out. In old age in order to obliterate the stigma upon his character, the shameless fellow becomes a religious man and hires public harlots to dance and sing in the temples with a view to venerate the stone idols, for his own satisfaction. After the death of this wicked man, his young and beautiful wife is not allowed by the same Aryan Institution to remarry. She is stripped of her ornaments; she is forcibly shaved by her near relatives; she is not well fed; she is not properly clothed; she is not allowed to join pleasure parties, marriages or religious ceremonies. In fact she is bereaved of all the worldly enjoyments, nay, she is considered lower than a culprit or a mean beast. Moreover, the Aryan Institution enjoins Brahmin males to marry even the lower class girls during the lifetime of his first wife: but his real own sister is prohibited to remarry, after the demise of her first husband. Such partial and unjust prohibitions necessarily lead the helpless Aryan widow to commit horrible and heart-rending acts of atrocity. To prove the above assertion I insert the following instance. One of my Brahmin friends named Rao Saheb Sudashive Bullal Gowndey, who was an officer in the Inam Commission, employed in his house a Brahmin widow as cook, whose name was Kashibai. The poor Kashibai was a well-behaved and beautiful young woman of a respectable family. She was a chaste woman. She served several months in his house. But in his neighbourhood there lived a shrewd and cunning Shashtriboova of a Brahmin caste, who tried his utmost to mislead this ignorant woman. Kashibai at first resisted his inducement but at last she fell victim to his desire and immediately became pregnant. Afterwards by the persuasion of her paramour, she tried several poisonous drugs to commit

abortion, but all her attempts failed. After nine months were completed, Kashibai gave birth to a beautiful son and for the sake of her disgrace she murdered the innocent infant with a knife and the corpse was thrown into the well behind the house of her master. Two days after she was arrested by the police on suspicion, tried before the Session Court in Poona and was sentenced to transportation for life. This crime Kashibai committed, that her character may not be spoilt among the Brahmin community. Her case brought to the notice of the public the unjust and partial character of the Aryan Institution, and so the people were struck with horror. Although my means were not sufficient to defray my expense yet I was compelled to establish a foundling house, in my own compound in Poona, for the Brahmin community immediately after Kashibai's trial was over. The enclosed copy of printed notices were then pasted on the walls of the corners of the street, where the Brahmins reside. From its commencement up to the present time, thirty-five pregnant widows came to this house and were delivered of children, of whom five are living and thirty died from the injuries done to them while in the womb by the poisonous drugs which the mothers must have taken with a view to conceal their pregnancy. Many of the beautiful and helpless ignorant young widows of the respectable Brahmin families have turned out [to be] private and public prostitutes on account of this wretched system. How abominable and degrading is the system of Aryan Institution, which compels Brahmin widows to drag their lives in so miserable and shameless ways, that even modesty shrinks back to enter into particular details. In conclusion, I most respectfully crave the favour of your enlightened English Government to remove the tyranny of enforced widowhood exercised upon the helpless women, by the relentless system of Aryan religious institution. I therefore propose that no barbers should be allowed to shave the unfortunate Brahmin widows. It is quite evident from the partial Aryan religious institution that, when it prohibits the widows from remarrying, why the widowers should be allowed to remarry? If the favour be shown to the latter then the poor widows must of necessity be permitted to remarry. There is no doubt that the selfish and wicked law-givers must have added such unjust and nonsensical clauses into their *shastras* with malice towards female sex.

# Notes

[←1]

Mali: gardener; Dhangar: shepherd

[←2]

The clan-god of Shudras, Khanderao of Jejuri married two women, Mhalsabai from the Shudra Kunbis and Banabai from the Dhangars, and this proves that in the past there was inter-marriage between *kulvādis* and Dhangars.

[←3]

Rulers of princely states in colonial India.

[←4]

To mark conception.

[←5]

Death rituals.

[←6]

Navas, a promise to the god concerned to do something in return for one's wish being fulfilled.

[←7]

Modi: a running script in which most Marathi correspondence and account-writing used to take place. It was taught in schools till well into the 1940s.

[←8]

Song, often erotic, mostly accompanied by dance In the popular theatre of Maharashtra called *tamasha*.

[←9]

Samarpayāmi (Sanskrit) literally means 'I offer'. One offers milk, *ghee*, etc. in a ritual and says *samarpayāmi*.

[←10]

An *ānā* was the sixteenth part of a rupee in the old pre-metric currency system.

[←11]

A marriage ritual.

[←12]

A character in the Mahabharata, step-brother of the five Pandavas, famed for his generosity.

[←13]

Different Brahminical professionals.

[←14]

Women dancer-singers.

[←15]

A ritual to mark the conclusion of the building activity.

[←16]

New-year's day according to the Maharashtrian lunar calendar. Beginning with this paragraph, Phule is discussing the holy days of the Hindu lunar calendar demonstrating how the Brahmins loot on each.

[\[←17\]](#)

Jejuri is a famous pilgrim centre dedicated to the Lord Khandoba, about 50 km to the south south-east of Pune.

[\[←18\]](#)

A copper coin, one paisa, the 64th part of a rupee.

[\[←19\]](#)

A married woman.

[\[←20\]](#)

The eleventh day of the bright fortnight on the fourth month of the lunar calendar. In this calendar the month has two fortnights, one beginning with the new moon to the full moon (bright or Shukla fortnight) and the other from the full moon to the new moon (dark or Vadya or Krishna fortnight).

[\[←21\]](#)

The river at Pandharpur.

[\[←22\]](#)

The original has *sankalp*.

[\[←23\]](#)

The fifth month of the lunar calendar.

[\[←24\]](#)

Full-moon of the month of Shravan.

[\[←25\]](#)

The first day of the dark fortnight.

[\[←26\]](#)

Gokulashtami: the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Shravan. The day of Lord Krishna's birthday. Harvijay: A hagiographical poetic narrative in Marathi on Krishna's life by Mahipati written in 1702.

[\[←27\]](#)

Sweet *roti* stuffed with jaggery and ground Bengal gram.

[\[←28\]](#)

Sixth month of the lunar calendar.

[\[←29\]](#)

A ritual exclusive to women, involving the worship of Uma Mahadev. It is said to assure a happy married life, and a long life to the husband.

[\[←30\]](#)

Fourth day of the bright fortnight of the sixth month Bhadrapada.

[\[←31\]](#)

Fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadrapada, the day on which the Ganesh idols are immersed in water at the end of the ten-day festival of Ganesh.

[\[←32\]](#)

The *shrādh*as to the manes of ancestors collectively performed during the dark fortnight of Bhādrapada.

[←33]

A day on which six particulars synchronize: the day: Tuesday; the month: Bhādrapada; the date: the sixth of the dark fortnight; the *nakshatra*: Rohini; the *yog*: Wyatipat; and the *mahānakshatra*: Hasti. This synchronization is very rare, of course. Hence, 'Kapilashashtichā *yog*' is any astonishing and unhopd for combination of favourable circumstances.

[←34]

Let all suffering be over. Let Baliraja rule.

[←35]

An adaptation of a Persian term originally equivalent to lakal (tax). In the 19th century 'Mali magne' meant extortion.

[←36]

Processional walk to Pandharpur in south-eastern Maharashtra. The town has the main temple for Vitthal, a local form of Vishnu. The van takes place in Ashadh and Kartik, and thousands of devotees walk long distances to reach Pandharpur.

[←37]

A narrative in verse about the Pandavas of Maharashtra.

[←38]

Lead them on to the wrong path.

[←39]

One of the many rituals that Phule attacks mercilessly. See chapter fourth of the present volume.

[←40]

A messenger of God.

[←41]

A sanyasi or a Guru.

[←42]

One of the Puranas which lists and discusses the post-death rites.

[←43]

One of the many superstitions associated with the post-death ceremonies relates to offering lumps of rice to crows at the funeral-place. The superstition is it that if the dead man's soul has no unfulfilled wishes the crows will throng in large numbers and polish the rice-lumps away. Here Phule likens the greedy Brahmins to crows!

[←44]

A commentary on the Bhagvad Geeta written in a.o. 1290. Viveksindhu was written earlier and is traditionally identified as the earliest work in Marathi. Phule does not make clear what was 'tactical' about these works or how these works can be taken to be attacks on 'Mohammadi' people.

[←45]

Later evidence, not available in Phule's time, suggests that Shivaji was in fact not illiterate.

[←46](#)

Phule was the first person who identified the Peshwas of Pune as the usurpers of political power which legitimately belonged to the ruler in Satara.

[←47](#)

An annual gathering of Brahmins at the foot of the Parvati hill in Pune. At this gathering, the Peshwas doled out patronage to Brahmins in proportion to their learning.

[←48](#)

Marauders.

[←49](#)

Partisan religion; obviously partisan in favour of the Brahmins.

[←50](#)

The word comes from Ionian(Greeks). In medieval Maharashtra it came to be associated with the Muslims.

[←51](#)

Positions in the army.

[←52](#)

Pabhari literally means ploughshare. Here however, he is perhaps talking of the disintegration of land holdings and the consequent shortage of instruments of agricultural production generally.

[←53](#)

Caste groups connected with textiles.

[←54](#)

An Englishman's pronunciation of the Marathi sentence for dismissing the complaint.

[←55](#)

The festival of the Bullock.

[←56](#)

Commissioner of police of the city of Pune, appointed to the position by the powerful minister of the Peshwas, Nana Phadnavis. He was notorious for his arbitrary and cruel punishments.

[←57](#)

Someone who is not credit worthy.

[←58](#)

A typical Maharashtrian surname.

[←59](#)

The generals and sardars of the Maratha kingdom.

[←60](#)

Imitation of Europeans speaking Marathi.

[←61](#)

Manusamhita, 1:31.

[←62](#)



Drumstick.

[←63]

The original term used is desk

[←64]

*Deshastha* and *konkanastha* are sub-castes of Maharashtrian Brahmins. *Deshastha*: from the *desh*, plateau. *Konkanastha*: from the Konkan, the coastal belt of western Maharashtra.

[←65]

'Heavy' or 'superior'.

[←66]

An intoxicant.

[←67]

The original term used is *prajasattatmak rajyamandir*.

[←68]

Harem

[←69]

Bread made out of jowar, a kind of millet.

[←70]

Samsthan: princely states in colonial India.

[←71]

*Mand-cholna*: double pajama; *bandi*: half shirt; *apasodi*: jacket; *kharvi pagote*: headgear. The original has *jondhale*, *nachani*, *kondabhonda*.

[←72]

The original has “*asmani va tolanchya sultani*”

[←73]

A kind of shawl made of coarse khadi.

[←74]

A dark maroon cloth.

[←75]

A graphic phrase meaning total deprivation. It is not much in use in contemporary speech.

[←76]

For drawing water from the well.

[←77]

The original has *turathyancha kurkul* (तुराठ्यांचा कुरकुल).

[←78]

Plumeria.

[←79]

Broken-off leaves or matted branches of the coconut tree.

[←80]

A kind of thorn apple, presumably of foreign origin.

[←81]

The original has '*dom dom shadavalachi jholi*'

[←82]

A kind of felt.

[←83]

A ritual which is supposed to grant wishes. It is also performed at the end of memorials, etc. to thank the Lord for His kindness.

[←84]

A cousin of the last Peshwa.

[←85]

Of silver or some low quality alloy metal.

[←86]

Loincloth.

[←87]

A hagiographic account of Lord Krishna's exploits, full of fanciful stories.

[←88]

The two crosses are as in the Marathi text in the Collected Works. Clearly an obscenity is indicated.

[←89]

Obviously, like The Cultivator's Whipcord.

[←90]

Millet.

[←91]

Calling the groom or bride a Gadanganer refers to one of the ceremonies which precede the wedding.

[←92]

The word Phule uses is *sowala*. A Brahminical code which lays down the domains of purity and pollution. *Sowale* is the domain of purity and *owale* is the domain of pollution.

[←93]

Phule uses the word schemes here as if it were a Marathi word. He talks of '*skima*', which would be the plural form if '*skim*' were a Marathi word!

[←94]

Names of some of the innumerable mythological texts.

[←95]

A strong preparation of marijuana, used chiefly for smoking.

[←96]

Slave

[←97]

Vidwan. Although one cannot be certain, this usage is probably ironic, as he seems to talk in a number of places of Brahmins' dominance in the administrative structure.

[←98]

Ocean of reason.

[\[←99\]](#)

Rulers of princely states in colonial India.

[\[←100\]](#)

Phule uses the word dharmik, which can be translated both as religious and as law-abiding or following a rational code. He probably has the latter meaning in mind here.

[\[←101\]](#)

In western Rajasthan.

[\[←102\]](#)

The original title is 'Kabirpanthi Shudra Sadhu'. We have omitted 'Kabirpanthi' from the title since Phule's polemic is not against the Kabirpanthis alone; his polemic targets a larger ideological position among the Shudras. This appendix has been abridged slightly.

[\[←103\]](#)

Grand Being encompassing the cosmos.