

APPENDIX A.

THE following account of the village goddesses Durgava and Dayamava and their three-yearly fair is contributed by Ráo Bahádur Tirmalráo Venkatesh, pensioned Small Cause Court Judge, Dhárwár :

Durgava and Dayamava are the most widely worshipped deities in the Bombay Karnatak. Durgava is believed to be an incarnation of Párvati the hill-born the wife of Shíva, and Dayamava an incarnation of Lakshmi or wealth the wife of Vishnu. Durgava, in Dhárwár, is believed to preside over and cause cholera, and Dayamava to preside over and cause small-pox. The name of Durgava or Durga Devi appears in the Hindu *Puráns* and she is known and worshipped in all parts of the Bombay Presidency. Dayamava is not mentioned in any of the *Puráns* and she is little known or worshipped in any part of the Bombay Presidency, except in the Bombay Karnatak. According to the local story Dayamava was the daughter of a learned Bráhmaṇ. A sweeper of the Holaya or Mhár caste fell in love with her, and seduced her in the guise of a Bráhmaṇ. Dayamava, not knowing that her seducer was a Holaya, married him, and had several children by him. Dayamava once asked her husband to call his mother to his house that she might get to know her. Mátangi the mother-in-law came to dine. The dinner was perfect and was passing pleasantly when Mátangi said to her son, How these sweet cakes taste like to a roasted buffalo tongue? Dayamava was horrorstruck. She made inquiries and finding that her husband was a Holaya not a Bráhmaṇ, she set fire to Mátangi's house, killed all the children she had by the Holaya, and tried to kill her Holaya husband. He fled and hid in a buffalo. Dayamava found him out and killed both him and the buffalo.

The temples of Durgava and Dayamava are small buildings of brick and mud and are generally near the houses of the Badiges or village carpenters. Except in some old shrines where they are of stone the images are generally of wood. They are of the form and size of a Hindu woman with twelve hands. The six right hands hold the *chakra* or discus, the *trishul* or trident, a drawn sword, a spear, a dagger, and a long knife, and the six left hands hold a *shankh* or conch shell, a snake, a crooked dagger, a scabbard, a short knife, and a vessel either to hold blood or red *kunkú* powder. The images are put together out of several pieces not carved out of a single block of wood. The two images are always set side by side, Durgava painted green and Dayamava painted red. The images are decked with ornaments like those worn by the lower and middle class Hindu women except that the nosering is the pink-peasant woman's nose ornament not the upper class pearl ring. They are dressed in women's robes, but without bodices the sleeves of which are painted on their arms. The Badiges or carpenters are the hereditary ministrants or *pujáris* of these goddesses. Morning and evening they lay before them flowers and redpowder, light a lamp, burn incense, wave the incense-pot round their faces, and offer them cooked food or fruit. When a visitor comes to the temple he rings a bell, falls before the goddesses, receives a pinch of incense-ashes from the ministrant, and goes home. The

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more pious break cocoanuts, offer cooked food or dry provisions and money, wave a lighted lamp round the goddesses' faces, and beat their own cheeks in token of atonement for sin.

Once every third or fourth year, in the month of *Vaishákh* or May, or in any other month appointed by the committee, a special festival is held in honour of the goddess Dayamava called the *Dayamavan jatre* or Dayamava's fair. Though Durgava's name is not mentioned during the fair the image of Durgava is carried side by side with that of Dayamava and is treated with equal respect. When the people of a village agree to hold Dayamava's fair the leading men of the village the *desái*, *deshpánde*, *pátíl*, and *kulkarni*, the potter, the money-counter, the *talvár* or watchman, the village carpenter, the blacksmith, the shoemaker, the Holaya or Mhár, the Mádigár or tanner, the potter, the barber, the washerman, the *mathpati* or Lingáyat beadle, the *joshi* or astrologer, the *bhát* or bard, the tailor, the leading landholders, Lingáyat priests, Bráhmans, and shopkeepers all go in a body with music on New Year's Day in the month of *Chaitra* or April to the temple of Dayamava and Durgava and there tell the people that Dayamava's fair will take place in two or three months. They worship with flower and redpowder a hatchet which is to be used in felling timber for the idol car and send men with the hatchet into the forest to fetch timber. Some of the leading villagers form a *panch* or committee to gather subscriptions to meet the expenses of the fair. Every husbandman, for every twelve acres of land, is required to pay 8s. (Rs. 4) in cash and 16½ lbs. of Indian millet worth about 4s. (Rs. 2). The *desái*, *deshpánde*, and other village officers each pays 10s. to £2 10s. (Rs. 5-25) according to his means. The committee get a large copper pitcher and close its mouth with leather leaving a small slit to drop money through. The pitcher is marked with turmeric and redpowder and is called *dabbi* or the subscription-pot. One of the committee takes the pot from house to house and tells the villagers to drop in their contribution warning them if they do not pay, Dayamava and Durgava are likely to visit them with small-pox and cholera. In a large town like Dhárvár the subscriptions amount to about £100 (Rs. 1000); in villages they vary from £10 (Rs. 100) to £50 (Rs. 500). When the subscriptions are gathered the images are fresh painted, except the eyes which must not be painted till the first day of the fair. A twelve feet high wooden car is raised on four huge wheels, and on the car a shed, about twelve feet long twelve feet broad and twelve feet high, is built for the goddesses to sit in during the fair. Above the shed is a wooden pyramid with an ornamented dome and on the dome is fixed an open umbrella. One end of each of two or three strong ropes, each about two inches thick and a hundred yards long, is tied to the middle of the axles of the wheels. The other ends are left on the public road in front of the car that people may take hold of them and draw the car through the chief streets on the great day of the fair. The car is ornamented with coloured cloths, flags, plantain trees, fruit, flowers, and mango leaves. Generally one or two naked human figures are carved to keep off the evil. A large shed is built outside of the town, and, on one side of it, is a raised seat for the goddesses to sit on during the fair. Notice is sent through the village by beat of drum that all houses should be cleaned, cowdunged, and whitewashed, and that the streets should be kept clean for the fair. The townspeople send to friends and kinspeople within a day's journey to come to the fair. As the time draws near people from the neighbouring villages begin to pour in. Shopkeepers raise booths on the road sides from Dayamava's temple to the shed outside of the town, and athletes, songsters, jugglers, and dancing and singing girls begin to troop in. When the village is cleaned and the houses are cowdunged and whitewashed, nine

or ten days beforehand, a second notice is sent by beat of drum that the fair is to begin on Tuesday the tenth or whatever the date may be, that it will last for a fortnight, and that all the people of the village should prepare themselves for it. A lamp is lighted in the temple and kept burning for eight nights and eight days. This lamp-burning is called *ankihakona* or the beginning of the fair. As, during the fifteen days of the fair no corn may be pounded or ground, people grind millet and pound rice enough for their use during the fair, and as, except boiling rice and seasoning vegetables nothing else is to be cooked during the fair, people take care to prepare various cakes and other sweetmeats enough to last for a fortnight. At the close of every fair of Dayamava a fine he-buffalo is bought. His brow is rubbed with turmeric and redpowder, *nim* leaves are tied to his neck, and sandal paste and flowers are laid on him. He is set free and called *pattadakona* or the holy buffalo. He roams about the village streets and goes into the fields and feeds on anything he may find, no one doing him harm or hindrance. Some childless or sick persons vow to the goddess

if they have a child, or if their sickness is cured, they will set free a goddess' name. If their prayers are answered they set a

Such buffaloes are called *harkikona* or vow buffaloes.

The holy buffalo and the vow buffaloes the fair committee buy eight he-buffaloes and about a hundred sheep. These buffaloes especially the holy buffalo and the vow buffaloes, whose free roaming life has made them wild, are generally very troublesome. To quiet them they are tied to posts and starved for three or four days before the great day of the fair and are further weakened by being made to drink strong lime-water.

On Tuesday the eighth day from the *ankihakona* or lamp-lighting ten carpenter women whose husbands are alive are fed in the chief village carpenter's house, and ten Lingayat women whose husbands are alive are fed in the house of the *meti* or chief village landholder. Early on Wednesday morning, the second day, Hindu men and women of all castes bathe, dress in their best, go to the goddesses' temple, and stand filling all the approaches. About eight the village painter paints the goddesses' eyes and besides his regular wages is given a sheep. The *desai* hands the *patil* two gold *mungalsutras* or lucky neck-threads and the *patil* ties one of them round Dayamava's and the other round Durgava's neck. The *deshpande* hands the *kulkarni* two gold nose ornaments called *mugtis* one of which he puts on Dayamava's and the other on Durgava's nose. Next the *desai*, *deshpande*, *patil*, and *kulkarni* are given betelnuts and leaves as presents from the goddesses. After this the *pujaris* or ministrants, that is the carpenters who made the images, lay flowers and redpowder on them, dress them in fine clothes, deck them with ornaments, burn incense before them, wave lighted camphor round their faces, and bring them out of the temple. As soon as the goddesses are brought out a man of the Mádigár or Tanner caste called the Ránigia, who is supposed to represent the brother of Dayamava's husband, comes forward and raising his right hand, in which he holds a stick with a bell and a handkerchief fastened to it, in front of the goddess shouts out before her the names of the private parts, and continues to shout until the car is drawn out of the village as far as the shed and the goddesses are placed on the raised seat built for them in it. Several cocoanuts are broken and two sheep are killed in front of the goddesses. The slaughtered sheep are carried round to the houses of all the leading villagers as an honour and are then brought back and kept near the car. A third sheep is killed and the images are set on the car. The village officers and other leading men stand before the goddesses with folded hands while the people offer cocoanuts, plantains, dates, and other fruit. The offerings are taken charge of by the carpenter ministrants and

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their assistants who stand on the car by the side of the goddesses. Incense is burnt before the goddesses and lighted camphor and lamps are several times waved round their faces. About eleven in the morning with the leave of the fair committee the ministrant allows the car-dragging to begin. About five hundred persons take hold of the ropes tied to the axle of the car, two sheep are killed, and amid shouts and yells the car is slowly dragged along. As it passes people pray to the goddesses to guard them from cholera and small-pox. Every time some roughness on the road stops the car the goddesses are supposed to be dissatisfied, and a sheep or two are slaughtered. At every turn and corner of the public streets through which the car is drawn a sheep is killed. As the car moves on carpenters masons and blacksmiths walk with it to clear the road. If any of them thinks that the goddesses are displeased he calls to the committee who order a sheep or two to be slaughtered. In this way the car reaches the shed outside of the village. On reaching the shed the goddesses are taken down from the car. Two sheep are killed and the goddesses are placed on the seats prepared for them and flowers and redpowder are laid on. The laps of the goddesses are filled with rice, betelnuts and le. and a cocoanut. When the lap-filling is over the people shout to the goddesses. In the evening women of the Asádi caste, a subcaste of the Mádigárs or Mángs, dress in fantastic clothes and dance before the goddesses singing their praises and telling their great deeds. The Asád men beat drums and play music behind the women, while the Ránigia continues to shout filthy words chiefly the names of the private parts. In front of the shed a piece of ground, about ten feet long and ten broad, is coudunged and ornamented with figures drawn with different coloured powders. On the spot so decorated, about four o'clock on the Thursday morning, is brought the *pattadakona* or holy buffalo, who is supposed to represent Dayamava's Mhár husband.¹ Five or six Mádigárs or Tanners throw the buffalo on the ground and hold him down, some by the legs and some by the horns and face. A Mádigár comes with a long sharp knife and cuts the buffalo's throat while another holds an earthen vessel to catch the blood. Next the vow buffaloes and one or two specially bought buffaloes are led before the idol. The head of each is cut from the body by repeated blows with hatchets or sickles. When this is over one of the legs of the holy buffalo is broken and put in its mouth and the head is carried to a small grass hut called Mátangi's *gudsala* or cottage and laid in it. Several earthen lamps are lighted and one of them is set on the head of each of the buffaloes. A large quantity of rice is boiled and set on one side and the body of the holy buffalo is cut in pieces. The front right shoulder is the perquisite of the Ránigia and is handed to him and the other parts are distributed among the village officers according to the village custom. The village officers do not take these parts but make them over to the Holayas and Mádigárs. The boiled rice, which was laid near the body of the holy buffalo is now mixed with a part of the buffalo's blood and the undigested food found in its stomach. The whole is put into baskets and the baskets are set on a cart. Two Mádigárs strip themselves stark-naked and one of them sets on the heads of the other the pot filled with the holy buffalo's blood. The cart and the two naked Mádigárs, followed by hundreds of people and about fifty sheep and some Mádigárs to slaughter them, go to a spot outside the village called the *bhándeva* or

¹ The belief that the buffalo represents Dayamava's husband is perhaps a reminiscence of the time when, as among the Orissa Khonds, with much the same rites, men not-buffaloes were the victims. Compare Macpherson's Khonds, 67.

boundary. On reaching the spot one of the naked Mádigárs throws on the ground part of the mixture in the baskets and sprinkles on the ground a few drops from the other's blood-pot as offerings to the evil spirits who live on the boundary. A sheep is slaughtered and the party go round the village boundary till they come back to the same spot. At every turn and corner of the village boundary a little boiled rice from the cart and a few drops from the blood-pot are thrown on the ground as offerings to spirits. While the party are going round the village boundary the two naked Mádigárs suddenly fall insensible being possessed by evil spirits. One or two sheep are slaughtered and the Mádigárs recover. The Holayas take charge of the sheep, give the largest share to the two naked Mádigárs, and divide the rest among themselves. The whole party then return to the goddess' temple and the people go to their homes, bathe, and eat. On Thursday the third day of the fair the *patil* or headman, the *barkí* or under-headman, and the Holaya or village messenger each take clay pots, draw red-white lines on them, fill them with rice Indian millet and wheat, close their mouths with betel leaves and flowers, and lay them before the goddesses. Each of the three is given a woman's robe and bodice as a present from the goddesses. The same evening large numbers come to the big shed. Some wrestle, some dance on long ropes and perform other athletic exercises, some sing songs, and some walk about looking at the fun, or joking and chatting with Suleru, Basavi, and other courtizans. Many are busy, buying different articles from the shops, or looking at Asádi women dancing. On Friday, which like Tuesday is sacred to the goddesses, the villagers lay cooked food or dry provisions before the goddesses, fill their laps with rice, fruit, betelnuts and leaves, and a copper or silver coin, burn incense, and wave lighted lamps round their faces. During the evenings and nights of Saturday Sunday and Monday the rites performed on Thursday evening and nights are repeated, and on Tuesday as on Friday people offer the goddesses cooked food and dry provisions. Nothing special is done on Wednesday. On Thursday the goddesses are taken in procession to a spot outside of the village. A plot of ground about two feet square is coudunged and decked with devices in coloured powders, and a lamb is set on the square. A member of a subdivision of the Holayas called Potrájás, properly Pote-rájás or buffalo-kings, strips himself naked, ties a few *nim* leaves round his loins, comes running like a tiger, pounces on the lamb, tears its throat, drinks the blood, and runs off with the carcass towards the village-boundary. Some of the Holayas, Mádigárs, and others pretend to run after him to catch and kill him. The Potrája soon gets over the boundary and beyond the boundary he is safe. When the buffalo king's lamb-slaying is over the goddesses are taken in procession to the village boundary. The Ránigia comes forward, walks with the procession, and again in front of Dayamava shouts foul words. As soon as the goddesses are taken out of the shed, the grass hut called Mátangi's cottage, is burnt to ashes, and, on the spot where the hut stood, the heads of the slaughtered buffaloes are buried. When the goddesses reach the village boundary they are placed on a raised seat, and flowers, turmeric, and redpowder are rubbed on them. A curtain is drawn before the goddesses to show, as is said, that they have entered on a state of widowhood owing to the death of Dayamava's buffalo husband. The carpenter ministrants stand inside of the curtain, break the glass bangles on the goddesses' wrists, strip them naked, take the redpowder off their brows, pull off their heads hands and legs, and put them into two baskets, and with mourning carry the baskets to the goddesses' temple and lay them for three days in the idol room. The doors of the temple are locked from outside. On the third evening the ministrant opens the temple

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door, goes into the goddesses' room, puts the pieces together, dresses them in new robes, marks their brows with redpowder, puts fresh bangles on their wrists, decks them with flowers and ornaments, and surrounds them with lighted lamps. Many villagers come to the temple, bow before the goddesses, offer them fruit, flowers, betelnuts and leaves, and silver or copper coins, fill their laps with rice, fruit, betelnuts and leaves, and a silver or copper coin, burn incense before them, and wave lighted lamps round their faces. Prayers are offered to the goddesses asking that the village may be free from cholera and small-pox, and that the villagers may have many children and plentiful harvests. All night long Asádi women dance and sing and Asádi men beat big drums and play pipes. The Ránigia and the Potrája join the Asádis and keep up the merriment till daybreak. This merry-making is called *honnata* or the golden play. The same night a new buffalo is brought and worshipped, turmeric and redpowder are rubbed on his forehead, *nim* leaves are tied round his neck, and he is set free as the holy buffalo of the goddess Dayamava. If this buffalo dies before the next fair a successor is at once chosen.

The fruit, flowers, betelnuts and leaves, money, and clothes presented to the goddesses on the first day are taken by the carpenter ministrants. Under former governments the second day's offerings were taken by government, now they are taken by the village husbandmen. The offerings made on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days are taken by the *desái* the *deshpánde* the *pátel* and the *kulkarni*. The seventh and eighth day's offerings are distributed among the hereditary village servants and craftsmen as the carpenter, the blacksmith, the potter, the Holaya, and the Mádigár. The offerings made on the ninth day are taken by the carpenter ministrants.