

## CHAPTER III

### PEOPLE

Ethnic back-  
ground

THE position of Raichur district almost in the heart of the Deccan plateau has made it, comparatively speaking, less open to racial intermixture than the coastal regions which have had from time immemorial trade and other contacts with the countries of the east and the west. Until about the time of the advent of the Muslims, there has not been much evidence of ethnic fusion or inter-racial influence; but it should be noted that even pre-Muslim Raichur, like any other part of the Deccan, was far from being quite homogeneous ethnically. The Dravidian and the pre-Dravidian, with an admixture of the Aryan and other extra-Indian elements, have had their influence on the culture of the people of the district. "The Aryan and Dravidian forces have acted and reacted upon one another in the crucible of South India for so long a time that it would be an idle enterprise today to seek to disassociate one constituent from the other."

The Muslim conquest of the Deccan caused a rapid racial mixture in the region, which now comprises Raichur district, and this was accelerated by the establishment of the independent Deccan Sultanates. After breaking away from Delhi, these kingdoms had perforce to look, both for assistance as well as for inspiration, towards the Muslim countries outside India. Arabs, Turks and Iranians were invited and encouraged to settle down here. The latter part of the history of the Bahmani dynasties saw much cultural fusion. Inter-marriages increased in number among the Muslims and the Hindus. This phenomenon gave rise to the birth of a new type—the Deccani—who is Muslim in religion, but largely Hindu in customs and manners.

As in most other parts of India, the two epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, provide a background to the social and cultural life of the people of the district. The traditions and customs of different castes have been influenced at different stages by this background of continuity. And, it would not be wrong to say that the sustained vitality that has kept the people together has been built up by the influence of the two national epics. Tradition and legend in Raichur say that the region was associated

with certain incidents in the life of the Pandavas. Certain spots near Koppal and a few other places are styled Pandavara-Vathara (the place of the Pandavas). Names given to specific hill-tops like Arjunanagundu (Arjuna's boulder) and Indrakila Parvata are also evidences of the possible association of this area with the Mahabharata. The region between the Godavari and the Krishna rivers has always been the home of history and legend and Raichur district also, though to the south of the Krishna, possesses a past that reaches back thousands of years. Primitive artifacts, megalithic tombs and dolmens prove the antiquity of the region. The discoveries at Maski and the many archaeological monuments of later history constitute a living past which is there not only for the delight of the historian and antiquarian, but also for all the people who are conscious of the rich cultural heritage of South India.

In Buddhist times also, Raichur figures prominently. The Chinese pilgrim, Hsien Tsang, visited the region in the 7th century and his 'Konkinapulo' may perhaps refer to Koppal, which was known in ancient times as Kopana, Kupana and Kupina, and which was a fertile field for the growth of the Buddhist faith which flourished here from the 3rd century B.C. to the 7th century A.D. Jainism also flourished in the district. The existence in certain places like Adur, Koppal, Halgeri, Madinur, Rajoor and Kanakgiri of Jaina relics is testimony to the sway that Jainism had in this district. The Kadkal excavations have unearthed several Jaina images and what probably was a Jaina temple. According to inscriptions, even the *agrhara* towns of Kuknur and Gabbur had Jaina temples. In Koppal itself, an inscription of the 9th century has been found alluding to the locality as a holy abode from the Jaina point of view. Koppal was considered to be a foremost or a very sacred place among the *teerthas* or holy spots. There is a local saying that this place once had 772 Jaina temples; this may not have been literally true but it is enough to indicate its importance for the Jains.

That the district of Raichur was at one time under the influence of the Mauryan empire is borne out by the existence of the Ashokan inscriptions at Maski, Palkigundu and Gavimatha and names like Moreira Agasi (gate of the Mores) and Moreira Angadi (shop of the Mores), the term 'More' obviously being derived from 'Maurya'. The district was part of the Satavahana empire and witnessed also the great days of the Kakatiya rulers. Then came the Muslim conquerors from Muhammad-bin-Tughlak right down to the Mughals and the Vijayanagar monarchs and all these have left their massive foot-prints on the district. Under the Nizams of the Asaf Jahi dynasty, Raichur played its own important part as part of the Hyderabad State and, along with the two other Kannada-speaking districts, Gulbarga and Bidar, became part of the new State of Mysore on 1st November 1956.

## Population

The total population of the Raichur district, according to the 1961 census, was 11,00,895, while the population figure of the 1951 census was 9,53,640, the percentage of increase being 15.44. The following table gives male and female and rural and urban population figures for the district as in 1961 :—

<i>Sex</i>		<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
Males	..	4,72,139	82,404	5,54,543
Females	..	4,68,134	78,218	5,46,352
Total	..	9,40,273	1,60,622	11,00,895

The taluk-wise population of the district with rural and urban and male and female break-ups was as follows in 1961 :—

<i>Taluk</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
Deodurg	.. Males	47,712	4,319	52,031
	Females	47,583	4,241	51,824
	Total ..	95,295	8,560	1,03,855
Gangavati	.. Males	48,178	9,764	57,942
	Females	46,054	9,262	55,316
	Total ..	94,232	19,026	1,13,258
Koppal	.. Males	52,570	13,579	66,149
	Females	52,149	12,273	64,422
	Total ..	1,04,719	25,852	1,30,571
Kushtagi	.. Males	49,996	3,680	53,676
	Females	48,747	3,524	52,271
	Total ...	98,743	7,204	1,05,947
Lingsugur	.. Males	58,676	9,364	68,040
	Females	58,096	9,117	67,213
	Total ..	1,16,772	18,481	1,35,253
Manvi	.. Males	56,861	4,346	61,207
	Females	58,101	4,369	62,470
	Total ..	1,14,962	8,715	1,23,677

<i>Taluk</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
Raichur	Males	55,610	32,482	88,092
	Females	55,416	30,847	86,263
	Total ..	1,11,026	63,329	1,74,355
Sindhaur	Males	43,721	4,870	48,591
	Females	43,781	4,585	48,366
	Total ..	87,502	9,455	96,957
Yelburga	Males	58,815	..	58,815
	Females	58,207	..	58,207
	Total ..	1,17,022	..	1,17,022

The density of population per square kilometre of the district in 1961 was 77, its place in the State in this respect being the 17th. The density in this district is even less than that in the four adjoining districts of Dharwar (142), Bijapur (97), Bellary (92) and Gulbarga (84).

As in the case of all other districts of the State, the population of the Raichur district has also recorded an appreciable increase during the last few decades. The population of the district, which was 7,31,301 in 1901, had increased to 11,00,895 in 1961. Only during one decade, *i.e.*, between 1911 and 1921, there was a decrease of population to the extent of 61,100 owing to influenza which ravaged the district in a virulent epidemic form in 1918-19. Since then there has been a steady rise in population. The sub-joined table gives the variations of the population of the district since 1901 :—

**Growth and variation**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Decade variation</i>	<i>Percentage decade variation</i>
1901 .. ..	7,31,301	..	..
1911 .. ..	7,85,240	+ 53,939	+ 7.38
1921 .. ..	7,24,140	— 61,100	— 7.78
1931 .. ..	7,71,890	+ 47,750	+ 6.59
1941 .. ..	8,57,533	+ 85,643	+ 11.10
1951 .. ..	9,53,640	+ 96,107	+ 11.21
1961 .. ..	11,00,895	+ 1,47,255	+ 15.44

According to the new principles of classification of urban areas, the towns are divided into six classes according to the size of population ranging from those with a population of one lakh and above (*i.e.*, class I) to those with less than 5,000 inhabitants (*i.e.*, class VI).

In the year 1961, the district had no town of classes I, III (20,000 to 49,999) and VI and had one town of class II (50,000—99,999), two towns of class IV (10,000—19,999) and seven towns of class V (5,000—9,999). Between 1951 and 1961, the increase of population among the ten towns of the district has varied from 10.21 per cent (in Deodurg) to 26.40 per cent (in Mudgal), while there was a large decrease in the population of the Munirabad Project Area (—65.93) owing to completion of the works connected with the dam and consequent dispersal of temporary workers. The population variations of the towns between 1951 and 1961 are given below :—

<i>Town</i>	<i>Population</i> 1951	<i>Population</i> 1961	<i>Decade</i> <i>variation</i>	<i>Percentage</i> <i>decade</i> <i>variation</i>
Raichur (Class II) ...	54,032	63,329	+ 9,297	+ 17.21
Koppal (Class IV) ..	17,314	19,530	+ 2,216	+ 12.80
Gangavati (Class IV) ..	16,263	19,026	+ 2,763	+ 16.99
Lingsugur (Class V) ..	7,835	9,565	+ 1,730	+ 22.08
Sindhanur (Class V) ..	7,516	9,455	+ 1,939	+ 25.80
Mudgal (Class V) ..	7,054	8,916	+ 1,862	+ 26.40
Manvi (Class V) ..	7,903	8,715	+ 812	+ 10.27
Deodurg (Class V) ..	7,767	8,560	+ 793	+ 10.21
Kushtagi (Class V) ..	6,082	7,204	+ 1,122	+ 18.45
Munirabad—Project Area (Class V).	18,555	6,322	— 12,233	— 65.93

**Scheduled  
Castes and  
Tribes**

The total number of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes in the district in 1961 was 1,14,079, which worked out to 10.36 per cent of the total population of the district or 3.66 per cent of the total population of the Scheduled Castes in the State. The Raichur taluk, whose total population was 1,74,355, topped the list with 25,259 persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes, while the Kushtagi taluk, whose total population was 1,05,947, had the least number of members of the Scheduled Castes, among the taluks of the district. The number of persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribes in the district was only 45. The following

statement gives taluk-wise figures for the Scheduled Castes as in 1961 :—

<i>Taluk</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Deodurg .. ..	7,158	7,234	14,392
Gangavati .. ..	4,824	4,936	9,760
Koppal .. ..	5,605	5,642	11,247
Kushtagi .. ..	3,386	3,319	6,705
Lingsugur .. ..	6,281	6,464	12,745
Manvi .. ..	6,290	6,291	12,581
Raichur .. ..	12,736	12,523	25,259
Sindhanur .. ..	5,615	6,028	11,643
Yelburga .. ..	4,723	5,024	9,747
Total .. ..	56,618	57,461	1,14,079

The rural and urban break-ups of the population of the Scheduled Castes in the district were as follows :—

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Rural .. ..	49,030	49,911	98,941
Urban .. ..	7,588	7,550	15,138
Total .. ..	56,618	57,461	1,14,079

The following have been recognised as Scheduled Castes in the district :—

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Annamuk             | 17. Mala           |
| 2. Aray (Mala)         | 18. Mala Dasari    |
| 3. Arwa Mala           | 19. Mala Hannai    |
| 4. Beda (Budga) Jangam | 20. Malajangam     |
| 5. Bindla              | 21. Mala Masti     |
| 6. Byagara             | 22. Mala Sale      |
| 7. Chalavadi           | (Netkani)          |
| 8. Chambhar            | 23. Mala Sanyasi   |
| 9. Dakkal (Dokkalwar)  | 24. Mang           |
| 10. Dhor               | 25. Mang Garodi    |
| 11. Ellamalwar         | 26. Manne          |
| (Yellammalawandlu)     | 27. Masthi         |
| 12. Holeyá             | 28. Mehtar         |
| 13. Holeyá Dasari      | 29. Mitha Ayyalvar |
| 14. Kolupulavandlu     | 30. Mochi          |
| 15. Madiga             | 31. Samagara       |
| 16. Mahar,             | 32. Sindhollu      |
|                        | (Chindollu)        |

The recognised Scheduled Tribes in the district are the following: Bhil, Chenchu or Chenchwar, Gond (including Naikpod and Rajgond), Koya (including Bhine Koya and Rajkoya) and Thoti, while the Denotified Tribes are Lambani or Lambada, Woddars, Paradhis, Yerkula and Kaikadi. It is estimated that there are about 75,000 persons belonging to the Denotified Tribes and 10,000 persons belonging to the Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Tribes in the district. (See also Chapter XVII).

**Religions**

The following statement gives the religion-wise distribution of the population of Raichur district. The figures pertain to the 1961 census.

		Males	Females	Total
Buddhists	..	2	..	2
Christians	..	6,172	6,057	12,229
Hindus	..	4,80,912	4,74,863	9,55,775
Jains	..	1,018	791	1,809
Muslims	..	66,417	64,628	1,31,045
Sikhs	..	12	4	16
Zoroastrians	..	1	..	1
Religion not stated	..	9	9	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>5,54,543</b>	<b>5,46,352</b>	<b>11,00,895</b>

**Hinduism**

The term 'Hindu' is wide in its connotation and includes many faiths. The two dominant religious faiths coming under Hinduism may be said to be Brahmanism belonging to Vaidika school and Veerashaivism, which, while having several points in common with that school, differs from it in many others. Brahmanism is represented, for instance, by the various sects of Brahmins and Veerashaivism by a number of castes, wholly or partly professing the Veerashaiva or Lingayat faith. The term 'Lingayat' is sometimes taken to denote a caste\*, but it would be more correct to treat it as indicating a faith or a way of life. It is a general designation for many castes, the members of which wear traditionally a *linga* on their bodies.

**Brahmanism**

Among the Brahmins, all the three important sects are represented in the district, *i.e.*, Madhva, Smarta and Srivaishnava. The Madhvas derive their name from Madhvacharya, the founder of the sect, who lived in South Kanara about the thirteenth century. They worship both Vishnu and Shiva, but *more* particularly the former. They profess the doctrine of *Dvaita* or

\*So is the Brahmin and therefore, both of these have been included in the section on "Castes and Communities" also for describing certain other aspects relating to them.

dualism. By this is meant the distinction between the independent Supreme Being (*Paramatman*) and the dependent principle of life (*Jeevatman*). There are, according to this school of thought, five real and eternal distinctions (*Panchabhedas*), namely (1) between God and the individual, (ii) between God and matter, (iii) between one soul and another, (iv) between the soul and the matter and (v) between one particle of matter and another. The Smartas derive their name from *Smriti*, the code of revealed or traditional law. They worship the triad of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu. Philosophically, they hold the monotheistic Vedanta doctrine of *Advaita* or non-dualism; the supreme soul, called the Brahman, is the only existing being, the whole universe including both matter and spirit, being an appearance created by the Brahman with the help of *Maya*. The founder of the Smarta sect was Shankaracharya. The Srivaishnavas are worshippers of Vishnu, as identified with his consort, Lakshmi or Shri and hence their name. Their creed is called the *Vishishtadvaita* which reconciled devotion to a personal God with the philosophy of Vedanta by affirming that the soul, though of the same substance as God, can obtain bliss not in absorption but in existence with Him. The founder of this sect was Ramanujacharya.

Veerashaivism, as a faith separate from original Shaivism, was largely built on the writings and teachings of Basaveshvara, who lived in the twelfth century, and other Shivasharanas. The most important features of the Veerashaiva religion are what are known as *Ashtavaranas* and *Shatsthalas*. *Ashtavaranas* or the eight environments or coverings comprise the aids to faith and protection against sin and evil; they are: (1) obedience to a *guru*, (2) worship of *linga*, an emblem of Shiva, (3) reverence to the Jangamas or priests, (4) use of *vibhuti* or holy ashes, (5) wearing of *rudraksha* (seeds of *Cleocrapus ganitra*), (6) use of *padodaka* or holy water, (7) eating of *prasada* or consecrated food, and (8) *mantra* or the uttering of *panchakshara*, the five-syllabled formula 'Namah Shivaya'; some of these details are to be found in Brahmanism also. *Shatsthalas* may be popularly described as six stages of approximation towards union with Shiva; they are: (1) *bhakta*, (2) *mahesha*, (3) *prasadin*, (4) *pranalingin*, (5) *sharana* and (6) *aikya*, the last one meaning absorption with God. There are three degrees of manifestation of the deity, sometimes described as *Bhava-linga*, corresponding to the spirit, *Prana-linga*, corresponding to the life or subtle body, and *Ishta-linga*, corresponding to the material body or material *linga*.

There are two main sects among the Jains, viz., Digambaras and Shvetambaras. The *Yatis* form the religious order. The moral code of the Jains holds existence as divisible into two heads namely, *jeeva* (life) or the living and sentient principle and *ajeeva*



(inanimate) or the various modifications of inanimate matter. These are imperishable. Their philosophical tenet is designated *Syadvada* as one can neither affirm nor deny anything absolutely. *Dharma* is virtue and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the highest virtue. *Adharma* is vice. Their objects of worship are the Teerthankaras; they pay their devotion to some of the Gods of the Hindu pantheon also. There is a very small Jain population in the district, confined to Raichur and other towns and occupied in business avocations.

#### Islam

The essential Muslim beliefs are six in number, namely, faith (1) in one God, Allah, (2) in angels, (3) in the Quran, (4) in the Prophets, (5) in judgment, paradise and hell and (6) in the divine decrees. The five primary duties called the five pillars of Islam are: (1) repetition of the creed *Kalimah*, every day, (2) prayer, (3) fasting during the month of Ramzan, (4) the giving of alms and (5) pilgrimage to Mecca. Apart from Ramzan, two other principal feasts are the Bakrid and Shab-e-Barat. According to Islam, the daily prayer called the *Namaz* has to be performed five times a day. In addition to the usual *Namaz* of every day, special *Namaz* is held in the mosques every Friday and generally the Muslims make it a point to attend this prayer. Most of the Muslims in the district follow the Sunni faith. The main classes of Muslims in the district are Sheiks, Mughals, Pathans and Syedh.

#### Christianity

There are both Catholics and Protestants in the district. The Catholics believe in Father, Son and the Holy Ghost as comprising one Supreme. As followers of Jesus Christ, they owe their allegiance to the Holy Church founded by Jesus Christ and entrusted to Peter, the first Vicar (the Pope). His Holiness the Pope, who resides in Vatican city is the supreme religious head of the Catholics. Protestant Christians are those who follow the teachings of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour and have faith in His death, resurrection and ascension. They believe in his second coming and judgment. They also profess faith in the Holy Trinity, Nicene creed and Apostles creed.

#### Religious movements

Among the new religious movements slowly spreading in the district, mention may be made of the Manikya Prabhu cult which seeks to synthesise old religious beliefs with modern ideas of simplicity. Its headquarters is at Humnabad in Bidar district and the cult is gaining ground in several parts of the district. Disciples give lectures on the efficacy of the cult and on the necessity of taking a practical view of old beliefs and faiths. The teachings of Sai Baba too are now getting to be more and more popular in the district. Small temples have been constructed to this famous saint in various places and people throng to them on Thursdays. There is no elaborate ritual of worship in these shrines and only flowers and camphor are offered. Lectures on

the philosophy and life of Sai Baba are heard with profound interest.

The main language spoken in the district is Kannada. **Language** Telugu and Urdu are also spoken by some people, who are also quite familiar with Kannada. Urdu is spoken by the Muslims. Until recent times, it was the official language and the medium of instruction in the erstwhile Hyderabad State. Its influence was considerable and the educated people spoke it and did much of their work through it in those days. The Kannada language, as spoken in Raichur district, has many Urdu and Telugu words. The eastern part has contacts with the Andhra districts also and, as such, Telugu is understood by some. Marathi is also understood in some trade circles since there has been always a trade connection in cotton and groundnut with Sholapur and Bombay.

A peculiar script called Modi, a form of Marathi-Balbodh script, was used by some of the Kulkarnis (village accountants). The script was used in their records and was perhaps existing from the time of the Peshwas. Though not a regular script as such, it was in some use in the day-to-day revenue affairs until recently.

The statement given below gives the distribution of population according to mother-tongues in the district as per the 1961 census :—

Kannada	..	..	8,46,835
Urdu	..	..	1,11,382
Telugu	..	..	1,08,909
Banjari	..	..	13,114
Marathi	..	..	7,143
Hindi	..	..	5,163
Tamil	..	..	4,461
Marwari	..	..	841
Korava	..	..	694
Gujarati	..	..	587
Konkani	..	..	373
Malayalam	..	..	373
Other languages	..	..	1,020

The scope of this section does not envisage a detailed description of each caste and community in the district. **Castes and Communities** We confine ourselves here mainly to a general discussion of the traditional social structure, customs and religious beliefs. The following is a brief account of some of the castes and communities in the district.

The Bedas, also known as Valmeeki or Nayaks, are spread **Beda** all over the district. It is said that some of the Bedas originally belonged to southern districts and came north in the 16th century.

They first settled in Adoni and came into the Raichur doab, partly through colonisation and partly through conquest. They were a martial community and the principalities that they established were politically important. Hunting and military service were their traditional occupations and now most of them are engaged in agricultural pursuits. In matters of inheritance, the Bedas follow the Hindu law of inheritance. In religion, they are divided into Vaishnavites (Valmeeki) and Shaivites (Kannayya) and some have embraced the Veerashaiva faith. During marriage celebrations, some of them engage Brahmin priests and the others Veerashaiva priests. They are non-vegetarians. The Bedas have panchayats known as the *Kattes* and the head of a panchayat is called the *Kattemani* who wields his authority in religious and social matters. The Mangala Bedas are barbers while Chakala Bedas are washermen to the various Bedar sections and have, in consequence of their occupations, formed separate groups.

#### Brahmin

Among the Brahmins, the Madhvas are in great number. There are also other sub-sects of Brahmins like Kanva-Shakha, Prathama-Shakha and Srivaishnava whose followers are few in number. The Brahmins are spread over all the taluks. In Raichur town itself, there are about 300 houses of Brahmins. Nearly 75 per cent of the Madhvas in the district are adherents of the Uttaradi Matha, and the rest follow the Nanjangud Rayara Matha. The Smartas are not many in number and those who follow the Bhagavata Sampradaya are scattered in Koppal and Yelburga taluks. Except in Gangavati, where there are a few Srivaishnavas following the tenets laid down by Ramanujacharya, people belonging to this sect are not many in number. Some of the Brahmins were big land-holders. Inams and Jagirs were granted to them for rendering various kinds of services. The abolition of the Jagirs and Inams has resulted in their looking out for livelihood to different vocations and their number in the Government services and in private agencies is quite considerable. The joint family system is still in prevalence to a certain extent among the Brahmins in Raichur district.

The accepted form of marriage among the Brahmins is of the Vedic type with the attendant rituals. Five-day marriages are now a thing of the past. The evil of insistence on payment of the dowry is rampant in one form or the other among the Brahmins. In fact, a daughter of marriageable age means hardship for the parents of the girl and this is especially so when they belong to the middle and poor classes. The marriageable age for girls in the Brahmin communities is generally after 16, the boys marrying when they are between 20 and 25 years of age. Brahmin ladies worship also the *Basil* or *Tulasi* plant and the cow is held in great reverence.

Devanga is a Sanskrit word which means 'body of the God' and is applied to this caste which claims descent from one Devanga Rishi who, according to a legend, was created by Lord Mahadeva for the purpose of weaving cloths for Gods and men. The Devangas are scattered all over the district and some of them are Lingayats as already mentioned. In the Karnatak districts of the old Hyderabad State, marriage customs and ceremonies of the Devanga community closely correspond to those among other local castes. Weaving is the traditional occupation of the caste and they make a variety of textile fabrics. Some of them have given up their original occupation and taken to trade, agriculture, carpentry, masonry and other occupations.

**Devanga**  
(Koshti)

As in other districts, the weavers have a number of sub-sections; and though they are noted for their industry and diligence, they are now seldom able to earn a good living on account of the competition from cheap and more attractive mill-made cloth which is readily acceptable to the masses of the people. Many of the weavers have been compelled to give up their traditional profession and betake to other pursuits. Thus, we find that today some of them are agriculturists; others are farm labourers, personal servants and shop-keepers; in short, they follow any occupation that gives them a livelihood and that does not detract them from their ideas of social purity.

The Kapus are cultivating castes. The spread of Veerashaivism saw the conversion of many of the Kapus into Lingayats. The Imperial Gazetteer of India (1909)—Provincial Series—Hyderabad, p. 27—says: "The most numerous caste in the district is that of the cultivating Kapus, numbering 72,900, of whom 53,300 are Lingayats".

**Kapu**

Sheep-rearing and blanket-weaving has been the traditional occupation of the Kurubas. But now a large number of them follow agriculture. There are three endogamous divisions among them, namely, Hattikankana Kurubas (*i.e.*, those who wear bracelets of cotton thread at a wedding), Unnikankana Kurubas (*i.e.*, those who wear wedding bracelets of wool) and Lingayat Kurubas. Mallaiah is their chief deity while Beerappa is their chief *guru*. Divorce and widow re-marriage are permitted among them.

**Kuruba**

The Lingayats or Veerashaivas are a predominant community in the district of Raichur and are spread all over the district. The Veerashaivas are sub-divided into Lingayat-Vokkaligas, who are primarily engaged in tilling the land, Banajigas whose occupation is trade and many other occupational groups. Amongst the Lingayat-Vokkaligas come three other different classes, the Kuda-Vokkaligas, Pakanaka-Reddies and Hande-Kurubas. Among the Banajigas are several sub-sects like the Sheelawant,

**Lingayat**

Lokavant, Panchamasale and the Adi-Banajiga. The great reformation movement initiated by Basaveshvara brought into the Veerashaiva fold many functional communities, such as Koshtis (Hatkars), Jyandras, Raddigalu, Kumbararu, Ganigaru, Simpigaru, Nayandaru, Agasaru, etc. The Lingayat Reddies are largely agriculturists by profession. The Hatkars and Jyandras have weaving as their traditional occupation. The former, in common with the Devanga caste, have Choudamma as their tutelary deity. Among Jyandras, also called Jarads, there are three endogamous sub-divisions. The main deity of the Jyandras is Veerabhadra. The Kumbaras are potters who are divided as Deekshawant and Sheelawant, while Ganigas are oilmen by traditional occupation. The latter have three hypergamous sub-divisions, namely, Deekshawant, Sheelawant and Rasawant. There are also Lingayat Panchalas belonging to the five artisan classes. The Lingayat Simpjis (tailors and cloth merchants) have two endogamous sub-divisions, namely, Nagleek Simpi and Shiva Simpi, while the Lingayat Nayandaru (barbers) have two hypergamous sub-divisions, viz., Sheelawant and non-Sheelawant. They claim descent from the followers of Hadapada Appanna who attended on Basaveshvara and other Sharanas. The Lingayat Agasas (Dhobis or washermen) claim to be descendants of the followers of Madiwala Machayya, a noted disciple of Basaveshvara. The caste and sub-caste rigidities are now slowly disappearing and inter-sub-caste and inter-caste marriages are taking place. Being included in the fold, these occupational groups hold the same status as the other Lingayats. All Veerashaivas pay the greatest respect to the Gurusthala Viraktas who are un-married and lead a celibate life. The constitution of the Veerashaiva community is based on *Panchacharas* with observance of the tenets of *Shatsthala* and *Ashtavaranas*. The *Panchacharas* are: *Lingachara*, *Sadachara*, *Shivachara*, *Ganachara* and *Bhrityachara*. The *Guru* or Jangama, with his *Sthira* or *Chara patta*, attends to the religious ceremonies and he is held in high esteem by the whole Veerashaiva community. The Veerashaivas rever and practise the *sampradayas* of *Basavadi Pramathas* with great devotion. Corresponding to the *Sanyasis* of the Brahmin order, the Virakta Jangamas practise rigid asceticism and command the veneration of the community.

Marriages amongst the Veerashaivas, as among others, are arranged generally by the parents of the parties. The celebrations in the old days usually lasted for about five days, but conditions of modern life and modern economy have been responsible for cutting down the number to just about two days. During the marriage celebration, the worship of Veerabhadra is important among some sub-sects. The actual wedding is performed on a platform with *Panchakalashas* or five brass pots with water and cocoanuts in their mouths, with Vedic rituals excluding *Homa*, etc. The marriageable age for girls amongst

the Veerashaivas is ordinarily about 16 to 18. Boys are usually married when they are between 20 to 23 years old. Widow re-marriage is not uncommon amongst the Veerashaivas. There is a dowry system prevalent now amongst some of the Veerashaivas, in some form or other, though it is said that this was not in vogue in the old days. The Veerashaivas in general are vegetarians.

The joint family system was generally prevalent among the Lingayats in the old days, but the efflux of time has seen changes in this respect also, as in other spheres. They worship everyday *Ishtalinga*, wearing it in a small silver box on their body. The passage of time has not affected their sense of strict devotion to religious tenets, and they lead a very social life. It is this that has kept the community free from disruption, enabling it to function as a well-knit unit occupying an important place in the social, cultural and economic life of the district. There are several Veerashaiva monasteries called Mathas in Raichur district. Of these, the Bichale Channaveera Shivacharya Matha in Matmari is the biggest. Another Matha of importance is the Somwarpet Rayachoti Matha. The Chikkasugur Matha has also a considerable following. The Kille Matha in Raichur city is also a fairly important institution. These Mathas conducted schools and were responsible for promotion of education in this part of the country during the last several centuries. Among the important Veerashaiva fairs are the Amareshwara Jatra at Lingsugur and the fairs held at Devarsugur, Chiksugur and Narada-Gadde.

The largest number of Muslims in the district are to be found in Raichur city and at Mudgal and Koppal. In the rural areas, their main occupation is agriculture and weaving. As a matter of fact, most of the Muslims, who are now engaged in agricultural and allied pursuits, dress in the Hindu fashion and speak fluent Kannada. In the urban areas, Muslims who are educated are in Government and other services. Some of the more enterprising among them have started private business ventures and some are artisans. In the days of the Nizams, many of the Muslims were known to be very extravagant in their habits and customs. At Raichur there are two big mosques—the Jumma Masjid in the Saraf Bazaar and the Osmania Masjid in Teen-Kandil.

Among the occupational or functional groups are the Bhois or Bovis, who are engaged in fishing, plying of boats and agriculture, the Medars engaged in the making of baskets and mats, the Dhobis (Agasaru) or washermen, the Darjis or tailors, Kumbaras or potters, the Hajams or barbers and the Mochies or cobblers. The religion of the Bovis is a mixture of orthodox Hinduism and animism. Their favourite deity is Gangamma or the river

goddess worshipped by the entire community in July-August when the rivers and streams are full. Their tutelary deity is Vyankatarama, who is worshipped especially on Saturdays, with offerings of flowers and sweetmeats. They are not vegetarians but they abstain from pork. Many of them have lost their original occupation of fishing and have become domestic servants in Hindu and Muslim households or taken to agriculture. Palanquin-bearing was an old occupation of theirs. The Medars are mostly Veerashaivas and some of them have also special reverence to God Venkateshvara. The Dhobis are divided into many endogamous groups. A few others have animistic beliefs.

The traditional occupation of the Idigas is toddy-tapping. Some of them are also employed in household and other services; a few of them possess lands and are farmers. The Gollas are a pastoral caste. Some of them have taken to agriculture and trade. There are also Jain tailors and Vaishnavite tailors. The Kumbaras are divided into several sects. Some of them are Lingayats. The barbers are in demand not only for purposes of tonsure but also on occasions of marriages when they engage themselves as musicians playing the pipe, etc. Their religion corresponds with that of the cultivating castes who follow both the Shaivite and Vaishnavite doctrines. The Mochis in the district are called Samagars or Chamagars; evidently, these terms are derived from *Charmakara*, the Sanskrit word for a worker in leather. The Mochis are mostly *Vibhutidharis*, i.e., Shaivites, but they also worship the goddesses of small-pox and cholera. They claim their descent from the famous Shivasharana, Madara Channayya.

#### Panchala

The Panchalas, who comprise five artisan classes, engage themselves in work on the five media, gold, brass or copper, iron, wood and stone. Their work obtained for them a high position in the early days and it was fostered by generations of skilled men. From father to son, they devoted themselves to creation of fine objects of art. "In the carving of wood and the chasing of metal and filigree work, they excel their brethren of other countries. Specimens of their work were purchased for the exhibition of 1851 as models of tasteful design and careful work and introduced into the Schools of Arts of Europe for imitation."\* Want of proper encouragement accounted for the decay of the work of these artisans and many of them were forced to take to other occupations. Some of them have distinguished themselves in the learned professions and quite a few, particularly goldsmiths, have become affluent landlords or merchants.

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\* "The Castes and Tribes of H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions" by Syed Siraj-ul-Hassan, 1920, p. 552.

The Scheduled Castes comprise the Mangs, Mahars, Holeyas, Madigas and others (*see* elsewhere in this chapter). Agricultural and other labour, shoe-making and cultivation have been among their main occupations. They worship the various gods of the Hindu pantheon, Maruti or Hanuman, Bhavani or Durga and Mahadeva or Shiva being given special prominence in their day-to-day worship. They have also some animistic beliefs and the goddesses of cholera and small-pox are also worshipped, especially during the periods when these pestilences are prevalent. For their marriage and religious ceremonies, they engage Veerashaiva priests. At the time of Basaveshvara, they were given a social status and were allowed by him into the Veerashaiva fold. Scheduled Castes

Conditions of life among these Harijan castes were until recently deplorable, but legislation and social reform in favour of them have been responsible in a large measure for ameliorating their conditions and they are now steadily forging ahead and beginning to occupy their rightful place in society.

The original occupation of the Upparas was salt-making. *Uppu*, which means in Kannada salt, denotes their former occupation. Now they have taken to agriculture, earthwork, lime-burning, daily labour and the like. They are scattered all over the district. The caste is divided into several sub-castes. Their favourite deity in general is Venkataramana. A section of them professes Veerashaivism. Widow re-marriage and divorce are permitted among the Upparas. Formerly, some of the Upparas were noted for wrestling feats and other physical exercises. Uppara

Excavation of stone from quarries, stone-cutting and working in earth have been the traditional occupations of the Voddas. They have three endogamous sub-divisions, namely, Kallu Voddas, Mannu Voddas and Uppu Voddas and several exogamous sections. Many of them are also engaged in masonry work, well-sinking, agriculture and allied pursuits. They have ample employment opportunities in the various development works. They worship Venkataramana, Kanakaraya, Huligamma, Malle-shvari and other deities. Widow re-marriage and divorce are permitted among them. They have also caste panchayats. Vodda

The Vysyas are found in a fair number in the district and their main occupation is trade. The Vysyas on the western side of the district are called Kannada-Vysyas, while those settled in the eastern portions are called Telugu-Vysyas. Many of them are punctilious in the performance of their religious duties. They follow both the Shaiva and the Vaishnava *sampradayas*. Worshippers of Vishnu are called *Namadharis*, and the devotees of Shiva are designated *Vibhattidharis*. The marriage rites among Vysya



the Vyayas conform to the Vedic pattern. The dowry system is prevalent to a certain extent among them in some form or other.

### Social life

The joint family system so characteristic of the Mitakshara law of inheritance was predominant among the Hindus of the district till very recently and even today quite a few households accept this system unquestioningly and give due respect to the accepted head of the family. Ownership of large extents of lands was one of the reasons for the existence of joint family system. But changes in the pattern of society and the new laws of inheritance have been responsible for the splitting up of families. This process was accelerated by the abolition of jagirs and Inams which gave a vigorous jolt to the old system. There is now a perceptible tendency among the propertied families to get themselves partitioned out as early as possible, and one of the reasons for such haste may be ascribed to the prevailing uncertainty in regard to ownership of land.

At Verdona in Gangaavati taluk, a typical village of the district, it was found that out of 303 families in the village, 88 were joint families, 131 simple families, 70 intermediate families and 14 were other families. \* The Hindus follow the main Hindu law in matters like succession, partition, privileges of minors, etc. The new law gives equal rights to the son and the daughter, in the event of the owner dying intestate. The impact of this is being felt in the district and signs are not wanting of big property holders settling the question of inheritance through wills. But, by and large, the vast changes in the pattern of Hindu law have not been unwelcome in the district. The Muslims are governed by the Muslim law.

### Marriage and morals

Records of the old times reveal the existence of the system of polygamy among the Hindus in the district. It had continued to be in practice until recently. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 put an end to this system, which was already disappearing, and marked a milestone in the onward march of the Hindu society. It was almost a fashion for affluent men, till recently, to acquire several wives. Polygamy is, however, prevalent among Muslims. Among many sections in this district, widow remarriage is common. This marriage is called *Udike* as against the regular marriage which is called *Maduve*. The re-married widows among some sections do not, however, hold the same status in the society as the woman whose first husband is living. Among the orthodox Hindus, divorce is not generally in practice. Among some other castes, it is in vogue. It can be brought about at the instance of either party for infidelity or other serious reasons. According to the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, divorce is granted on certain specific issues to be determined by courts.

\* Census of India-1961, Vol. XI, Mysore, Part VI, Village Survey Monographs, No. 10, Verdona Village, p. 78.

In respect of marriage alliances, there are many restrictions among the generality of castes. A man must not marry outside the limits of his caste and if he is a member of a sub-caste, he may not marry outside the particular sub-caste. The rule that the bride and the bridegroom should not belong to the same *gotra* (sept) prevails among Brahmins and several other castes. Side by side with these restrictions, there exists a custom which allows marriage among some relatives. The practice of a man to ask for the hand of his sister's daughter either for himself or for his son is widespread among the castes. Among Kurubas, Agasas, Kumbaras and Idigas, it is the right and duty of the maternal uncle to cut the *kalli* plant required for erecting the marriage *mantap*. Among certain sections, the duty of tying the *bhasinga* to the bridegroom's forehead and of bringing the bride to the marriage pandal lies on the maternal uncles. Marriage between cousins is not prohibited among the Muslims. But, a person cannot marry his sister's daughter. A man may not marry his wife's sister during his wife's life-time unless she has been divorced.

Among the generality of castes, the marriage rituals are now simplified. Instead of five days, the marriage celebrations are completed now in two or three days or even in one day. Usually, the marriage takes place at the bride's place. Among a section of the Harijans, the marriage takes place at the bridegroom's place. Among most castes, the marriage ceremonies include, *inter alia*, the planting of the Indian coral tree (*halagamba* in Kannada). This pole is decorated with saffron, chunam and green leaves; four pots are placed in a square near this pole and a thread is passed round them. Within the enclosure so made, the pair are bathed together and then dressed in new clothes. A part of the thread wound round the pots is taken, dipped in saffron and then tied to the wrists of the couple. The priests invoke divine blessings and the *thalī* or *mangalasutra* is tied to the bride's neck and all the people present strew reddened rice on the couple. The wedded pair eat out of the same leaf-platter, a ceremony which is called the *bhooma*. The relations and friends present are feasted. (See also under 'Castes and Communities' elsewhere in this chapter).

Marriage  
ceremonies

Among Muslims, two or three days before the actual marriage, both at the houses of the bridegroom and the bride, a number of earthen pots are arranged in a booth in front of the houses or in the inner apartments. On the eve of the marriage, the bridegroom's party goes in a procession carrying in trays sweetmeats, dried fruits, ornaments and articles of dress for the bride. The party goes back with the trays refilled with clothes for the bridegroom. Dressed in his wedding clothes and with a *sehra* (flower sheet) fastened round his head and followed by relatives and friends, the bridegroom arrives at the bride's place. The

*Kazi* asks the bride's representatives whether she accepts the bridegroom. When told she will have him, he takes a declaration of two witnesses. He then puts a similar question to the bridegroom and obtains his consent. The proceedings are recorded. The *Kazi* then reads out the *nikha*.

The Christians celebrate their marriages in the church. All arrangements for the wedding are made in the bride's house. It is the duty of the parish priest or any other religious authority superior to him to conduct the marriage. After the marriage service is read, the bridegroom and the bride are asked whether both agree to the union. The marriage is then solemnised.

**Position of women**

The position of women in society is one of economic dependence on the menfolk, as elsewhere in the State. About eighty per cent of the girls of the higher classes read upto the secondary school standard and then prepare themselves for a career as wives and housekeepers. Very few go to colleges, and such of them as do sometimes engage themselves in some useful social service in addition to their duties as wives and mothers. A few become teachers. Generally speaking, the women have no independent means of livelihood. A few among the Christian community have become trained teachers and nurses; but the sight of women working in offices or private business establishments, a feature becoming increasingly common in bigger cities, is almost absent in Raichur district.

But the picture is different when we take into consideration the uneducated women belonging to the lower classes of society. Barring Brahmins, Muslims and well-to-do families of other castes and communities, many of the women belonging to the labour classes work along with their menfolk for supplementing the family budget. Their activities comprise work in the fields, ginning and pressing factories, and in certain trade centres. Generally, girls begin to work when they are 14 or 15 years of age and go on till old age prevents them from doing any more work. They are active helpers to their menfolk and their earnings contribute substantially in the effort to keep the family pot boiling.

**Special features**

A refreshing feature of social life in the district is that the old-time habits of reverence to elders and obtaining guidance from them in all matters have not died out. Even to-day, the elders are regarded with high esteem and their advice often sought by the younger members of the family, and this is true of all communities. The passage of time has not occasioned disrespect to the older members of the community or disregard of the advice given by them in matters of day-to-day life. The reason for this is not, perhaps, far to seek. The influence of Basaveshvara and other Shivasharanas, who spread their message

of correct conduct in life, has been great, not only among the Vecrashaiwas but also among members of other communities, inasmuch as the catholicity of his teachings had its appeal for all. Raichur district has been also the birth-place of some of the most famous Haridasa exponents of the Bhakti cult, like Jagannatha Dasa, Gopala Dasa and Vijaya Dasa who incessantly spread the message of supreme devotion to the Almighty and who poured forth their music to make the people realise the importance of Bhakti in every-day life. It is due to the profound influence of the Sharanas and Dasas on the people of the district that we find that the cardinal virtues of piety, devotion, charity and goodwill still continue to shine like beacon stars.

An instance of the continuing faith, among the people, in old-time traditions of reverence and the value of human companionship, is the custom, still being practised in Raichur district, of distributing marriage invitations personally from house to house, accompanied by music and the distribution of *pan supari*. The bride's party carries the invitations for the wedding, meets the heads of the families to whom the invitation is personally and respectfully handed and makes obeisance by offering fruits, flowers and betel leaves. An oral invitation is then made to the elders requesting them to grace the marriage with their presence and bless the couple. Exigencies of a modern age may perhaps indicate the mailing of these invitation cards by post or sending a messenger round for distributing them. But Raichur seems to have realised the importance of keeping alive the graces of an age that is fast disappearing.

Prostitution has been a profession as old as human society and is pursued in cities and towns almost all over the world. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act has been, doubtless, in force but actual attempts at checking the evil do not seem to have been very successful. Some crowded parts of Raichur and other towns have many houses of ill fame. In the old days, this evil profession which was confined to a community, was considered also as an artistic profession giving some scope for development of music and dancing. The Kalavantis, in special, made excellent dancers and musicians and their performances were almost indispensable to the rich and the luxury-loving classes. Even now there are some of them in places like Raichur. Added to this, is the evil of drink which is fairly wide-spread among several sections of the people. The abkari revenue is roughly estimated at Rs. 87 lakhs and is indicative of the extent of the evil. The poorer sections spend much on country liquor and the more affluent sections of society on foreign drinks. In the wake of inebriation and prostitution comes the other evil of gambling; Raichur district seems to have its share of this also. Efforts on the part of the authorities to put down such evils have no doubt been yielding some success, but rather slowly, obviously because

**Social evils**

the clandestine nature of the transactions makes it difficult to track the offenders.

#### Home life

In 1961, there were 2,15,673 houses in the district, while the number of households was 2,20,863. This worked out to about 40 houses or 41 households per square mile, while the average number of persons per household was five. The rural and urban break-ups of these particulars are as follows :—

	No. of houses	No. of households	Average No. of houses per square mile	Average No. of households per square mile	Average No. of persons per household
Rural ..	1,84,374	1,87,678	34.50	35.12	5.01
Urban ..	31,299	33,185	342.44	363.08	4.84

*Rural Housing.*—The people in many villages of the district live mostly in houses built of mud with the roofing also in mud. The walls are raised by heaping mud layer after layer and levelling the sides with a wooden leveller. In the eastern parts of the district, palm leaves and stems are used for roofing and are found to be quite useful in reinforcing the mud roofing. In the western parts of the district, cotton stems are used instead of palm stems, which serve as rafters on which the mud is heaped and levelled. As elsewhere, houses in the rural areas are built with scant respect for sanitation and hygiene; most of them are ill-ventilated and often lack of elementary amenities like drains for waste water. Usually, each house has two doors, the house itself comprising about two partitions, with three or four rooms, one of them serving as a kitchen. Often, the rooms are built round a courtyard. Recent years have, however, seen the construction of a better type of housing, with brick walls and a roofing of reinforced cement concrete. Each village can boast of one or two such houses belonging naturally to the richest persons in the village. Some of the villages in the western parts of the district have ruined stone walls encircling them; these are perhaps the vestiges of a time when the householders had to protect themselves as best as they could from depredators.

Some of the villages have a large number of houses built with stone and these are generally owned by the big landlords, merchants and money-lenders. The roofing is however of mud. These houses have more accommodation than the mud houses and have three or more rooms besides a hall, a kitchen and a bathroom. Of course, cattle live in enclosures very near the house and add to the insanitariness of the houses. Many

villages are located near small streams and in river valleys. When there is no other water supply, wells are the only source. Each village has a couple of step-wells and the summer season witnesses a period of water scarcity in many of the villages. The lanes and by-lanes can, by no stretch of imagination, be called roads and meander according to the haphazard building pattern. Most houses are on road level. Fields round about the village are used for calls of nature and in many of the houses there are no latrines. The scheduled classes generally live in a separate group of huts called *jopadis* and have their own wells or water sources. Generally, each village has a temple of Hanuman at or near the entrance. The entrance itself is called *agase*. Almost all villages have *chavadis* which serve to house the offices of the headman and accountant and are also used for purposes of public assembly. Many of the villages have a Veerashaiva Matha which serves as a centre of social activities.

*Urban Housing.*—Houses in the towns do not differ very largely from the pattern of rural houses, except that most of them are stone-walled and have more accommodation. These houses have spacious rooms, a verandah and a separate block for the kitchen and bathroom and some of them have an upstairs portion also. In addition to mud-roofing, tiled houses are becoming common. The use of stone slabs for roofing is also popular. Modern concepts of house-building are gradually gaining ground and in Raichur town itself, on the Railway Station road, there are a few structures conforming to what may be called the American cottage type. The Sat-Kacheri, where the District Offices are located, is built of brick and presents a modern frontage. The Inspection Bungalow, the District Police Office, the houses belonging to the workers of the Transport Department and some of the structures in the new housing colony adjacent to Rajendraganj are examples of modern construction. Inside the Raichur fort area, particularly in Somwarpet and Gajgarpet, a number of stone houses without verandahs or open spaces may be seen huddled together. It is almost impossible to sleep indoors in many of the houses during the heat of the summer and it is common, during these months, for the inmates to come out in the nights into the open to sleep.

Houses in the towns have some furniture in the shape of chairs and cots. A very few houses in the villages have these. The *charpoy* is as familiar a sight in the towns as in the villages. Generally speaking, houses in the urban areas also do not possess any large or attractive furniture. Most of the people sit on carpets or mats spread on the floor and use bolster pillows to rest their backs. The influence of the *purdah* system prevalent in the old Hyderabad State seems to be still strong and though the several communities, except the Muslims, do not observe *purdah*, they have generally separate quarters or rooms for men and

women; we do not usually see women when the men gather in a room to have a chat. Some of the houses have a room set apart for worship and a few have strong rooms to keep an iron safe.

#### Food habits

The staple food of the people is jowar. Jowar is ground into flour and made into cakes (*rotti*) which are eaten with condiments and vegetables. The poor sections of the community, who cannot afford vegetables, eat the jowar flour cakes with chutney. The vegetarian food consists mainly of jowar bread or wheat *chapatis*, rice, vegetables, ghee, pickles and *happalas* and curds or butter milk. People have generally two principal meals a day, one just about noon and the other in the late evening. The night meal is also similar except that the menu is slightly lighter. Festivals and other days of rejoicing see the preparation of special dishes, both sweet and savoury. In addition to principal meals, they take a breakfast in the morning and tea or coffee in the evening. In the rural areas, those who are engaged in manual labour, generally take three meals, in the morning, at mid-day and in the night. Except the Brahmins, Lingayats, Vysyas, Jains, etc., most of the other communities eat also meat and fish. The Hindus eschew beef and the Muslims pork.

#### Dress and ornaments

The usual traditional dress of men consists of a *dhoti* worn in the *katche* style, a full or half shirt, a coat, an *anga-vastra* called *shalya* and a head dress consisting of a turban tied round the head. The younger people wear often a cap. The dress pattern of women also follows traditional lines. A tight-fitting bodice called *kuppasa* and *seere* or saree are worn. The latter end of the saree, among the generality of castes, except the Brahmins and some other castes, is taken over the head. Among some Brahmin sects, particularly among the Madhvas, the saree is worn in the *katche* fashion. Girls, before they come of age, wear a skirt and a bodice. Boys wear a shirt and shorts. Men working in administrative and business offices wear a pair of trousers and a bush-shirt and sometimes a coat. The sultriness of the climate makes it essential for the people to go in for lighter types of clothing. The well-to-do go in for silk and other costly fabrics, while the middle and the poor classes wear cotton clothes.

The practice of wearing heavy and old-fashioned ornaments has given place to that of light ornaments. The old-fashioned *nagamuragi*, *gejji* and *vanki* have almost disappeared. Women wear simple gold necklaces, small ear-rings and nose-studs either made of gold or set with precious stones, light gold bangles and rings. Silver ornaments are common in the rural areas. The wearing of the silver anklet is, however, going out of fashion.

The stresses and strains of modern living and a growing tendency among the people to sneer at old-time amusements and recreations have been responsible for the slow decay of most of the folk arts of the districts. But even to-day, especially in the rural parts, some of these exercise a profound fascination for the people. The Lambani dance and another called the hand-clapping dance are still popular, and no important public function in many of the villages is complete without an exhibition of these picturesque and beautiful dances. Village dramas, called *Bayalata*, are also very popular and draw large audiences. These are generally staged in the open air, an improvised dais serving the needs of the actors. Stories from the epics and the *puranas* are the common subjects and the actors wear costumes. Music is an invariable accompaniment. The language used is sometimes rather crude, but often serves to animate the audience to high and vociferous appreciation. The drama is acted almost throughout the night and gives an opportunity to the villagers to relax after the day's toil. There are also sometimes *keertana* performances.

Communal life

During festivals, some persons from the villages go out hunting. The days when they could hope to bag some decent game are gone but they still go a hunting and are mightily pleased if they can get a hare or two. The Yugadi festival day and the Dasara season are times when the villagers deck themselves out in all their finery. There is an atmosphere of mirth and jollity all round and the prevailing hospitality of a bibulous variety is lavish. On the occasion of *Kar Hunnime* festival, oxen are decorated and are made to run through the *Agase* of the village. *Gauri-Hunnime* is a big festival for women. Basava-Jayanti, the birthday of Sri Basaveshvara, is celebrated with eclat, so also most of the other Hindu festivals.

In some places of the district, pigeon-flying is a favourite pastime. Pigeons belonging to different persons are brought along with the necessary identifications and are made to fly long distances. Betting runs high and small fortunes are made or lost during these races. Ram fights too are popular in some parts of the district and there are people who specialise in breeding fighting rams. These furious butting animals go at each other in a terrific spirit to win and, as usual, frenzied excitement prevails among the crowd. Heavy wagers are laid and sometimes large sums are made, but the villager has had his relaxation and does not mind paying for it.

The passage of time has seen some of the traditional amusements go into desuetude and replaced, especially in the urban areas, by modern games like cricket, football and hockey and indoor games. Volleyball is very popular in the district and



one of the players, Sri Thimma Reddy, is a national champion in volleyball. There are also several indigenous games like *kabaddi*, *uppinata*, *phani-chendu*, *lagge-chendu*, *tilli-belli* played by boys and *chappala-ata*, *kolata*, *kuntata*, etc., played by girls. Kite-flying and *bugari-ata* are also popular with children. Each taluk headquarters has a recreation centre or club where the modern games are played. In places where important offices are located, the employees have their own clubs for spending their leisure hours. The Officers' Club at Raichur is well-patronised by officials and non-officials alike.

Wandering minstrels go all over the district singing *bhajans* and reciting *vachanas* and songs composed by the famous Sharanas and Dasas. These have a considerable effect on the people in general, inculcating in them a sense of devotion to God and the need to realise Him through *bhakti*.

Raichur and Adoni (now in Andhra Pradesh) were at one time big centres of Karnataka music. The popular taste later veered towards Hindustani music and the importance given to classical Karnataka music lessened. Even so, till recently, celebrated musicians from South India used to visit Raichur often to give performances, which drew large audiences. The name of Sangeeta Rajanna, whose proficiency in music was great, is a household word in the district. Several music-loving public men like the late Sriyuts P. Krishna Rao, Madhava Rao and Kakadki Srinivasachar formed a music circle to propagate and popularise both systems of music and their efforts in this direction were noteworthy and were widely appreciated. Raichur may also be said to be one of the centres of Sharana Sahitya and Dasa Sahitya, the district having been the birth-place of several famous saint-composers. Their compositions are sung with fervour even to-day and an effort is being made to popularise them both in the Karnataka and Hindustani styles. (See also Chapter XV).

## Music

One of the most important pilgrim centres for the Hindus in the district is Narada-Gadde, which is about fifteen miles from Raichur. It is surrounded by the Krishna river and the place is held sacred. The annual fair held in the month of *Phalguna*, i.e., about March, attracts thousands of pilgrims.

Kurugadde near Devarsugur is a well known festival centre for the Smartas. The place is an island in the Krishna river course where a temple is built. The presiding deity is Sripada Srivallabha. Pilgrims visit the place all the year round. Itamitragadde, another island in the river course of the Krishna, is a sacred place for the Hindus who visit the place all the year round for a holy bath.

Manvi is a place of pilgrimage for Hindus where several fairs and festivals are held, the chief of which are Karemma Jatra held

## Pilgrim centres and fairs

about January for two days, the Yellamma Jatra held about February for seven days, the Mahamalleshapapa Jatra held usually about January and the Sanjeevaraya Jatra held about December. Manvi is also the birth-place of Jagannatha Dasa who spread the *bhakti* cult.

The Amareswara Jatra in Lingsugur taluk, which is held for three days about the month of March, attracts a large number of persons. This fair is held at Devarbhupur and is highly popular with the Veerashaitvas of the district. The Kadlurayya fair at Kadlur held in the month of *Margashira* about December attracts a good number of people. The Advirayanagudi Jatra at Kushtagi held about the month of June lasts for 10 days when thousands of Hindus gather there to offer worship. Hanumanji Jatra at Balaganur, Sindhannur taluk, held in *Vaishakha* about May, lasts for three days. The Gavisdheshwara Jatra at Koppal held about the month of January for 11 days is the biggest in the taluk. A cattle show is also held as an adjunct to the religious fair. The Kanakgiri fair in Gangavati taluk held about the month of March lasts for two days. The Mangaleshwara Jatra at Mangalur in Yelburga taluk is held about the month of February and lasts for five days.

The Syed Shams Alam Hussainali *Urus* held about August is a great Muslim festival. Muslims from all over the district and also from outside congregate at Raichur on this occasion to offer prayers.

The Brahmins, Vysyas, Rajputs, Banjaras, etc., cremate **Funerals** their dead persons, while other castes and communities mostly bury their dead. While corpses of children among the former group are buried, those of pregnant women among many others are burnt. Occasionally, the aged and respected among some Harijans are also cremated. The Lingayat bury their dead in a sitting posture. Among the Muslims, the dead are buried in a lying posture with the face towards the west. The customs or ceremonies relating to death among the Kurubas, Upparas and many others are similar to those of the Lingayats. The generally of castes observe a simple anniversary for all the dead in the family on the *Pitru Amavasya* day, i.e., the last day of the month of *Bhadrapada*. Mourning is observed generally for about ten days. The death ceremonies among the Brahmins are elaborate.