

Daily Life

A rich Chitpavan rises at seven, bows to the picture of his favourite god, washes his face, bows to the sun, and has a cup of milk, coffee or tea. He sits talking till eight, and, attended by a Brahman servant or two, bathes, and tying a silk or newly washed cotton waistcloth round his middle and setting his feet on wooden pattens, goes to the house-shrine or god-room. In the house shrine he sits on a low wooden stool before the gods for about half an hour, repeating prayers, worshiping, and chanting verses. When his worship is over, he marks his brow with the *tilak* or sect-mark, changes his silk waistcloth, if he has worn it, for a cotton waistcloth and sits in his office doing business till eleven. He dines with some male friends or near relations, chews betelnut and leaves, and sleep for an hour or two, awakes about two, washes his hands and face, dresses and sits in his office, and, towards evening, goes to look after his estate or to walk. He comes back about six, washes, puts on a silk waistcloth, prays, chants, sups, and goes to bed about ten.

Middle-class Brahmans may be divided into *grahasths* or laymen and *bhikshuks* or clerics. Lay Brahmans belong to two classes, those who are employed in Government or traders offices and those who lend money or manage land on their own account. A Brahman clerk in the service of Government or of a trader rises at six, washes, and goes to market to buy whatever is wanted in the house. He returns, bathes between eight and nine, and, after repeating prayers, worshipping, and chanting verses for about ten minutes, dines. After dinner he chews betelnut and leaves, dresses, and goes to office. He comes back at six, generally reads a newspaper, or sits talking, washes, repeats Sanskrit prayers for ten minutes, and sups at or after seven. After supper he chews betel nut and leaves, smokes tobacco, and sometimes plays chess or cards. He goes to bed about ten.

Middle-class lay Brahmans, who are not in service, are generally landowners and moneylenders. A man of this class rises about six, washes, and sits on his veranda chowing betelnut betel leaves and tobacco, and doing business. He bathes at nine, worships, and again sits on the veranda doing business. About noon he goes into the house, dines, sleeps for an hour or for two hours at the most, and again sits in the veranda till four. He then goes to look after his property and, after visiting a temple, returns at dark; about an hour later he sups and goes to bed about ten.

A priestly or *bhikshuk* Brahman rises earlier than a lay Brahman, washes, and, finished his prayers and worship by seven. If he has anything to buy, any food to beg, any enquiry to make about a dinner, or if he has friends or relations to see, he goes out; if not he sits repeating the Veda or reading Purans till nine. About ten he washes, and putting on a silk waistcloth makes offerings of water,

cooked rice, and flowers to fire and to gods, and dines. He dries his hands and mouth with a towel which he always carries in his hand or across his shoulder, and chews betelnut and betel leaves. About noon he goes to sleep, and wakening about two washes and sits reading his sacred books. At five he goes out, visits a temple, and returns at sunset. After his return he repeats prayers and other verses, till about seven; he then sups and either sits talking or reading some sacred book and retires at ten.

Poor Brahmans may be divided into priests and beggars. These rise at five, bathe, and put on a fresh or woollen waistcloth and repeat Sanskrit prayers. till about seven. When his prayers are over lie marks his brow with the *tilak* or sect-mark and goes out, the beggar to beg, the family priest to his patrons houses, where he worships the house gods, and helps the family if any marriage, thread ceremony, or other important family business is on hand. Their diuner hour is not fixed; it is generally about twelve. A begging Brahman does not always dine at home, but whether he dines late or early at home or abroad he never misses his midday sleep. Generally after meals priests gather at a fixed place, and repeat Vedic texts or talk on various subjects, and receive invitations to dinner for the next day. They return home after sunset, repeat prayers, dine, and go to bed about nine.

A rich woman rises before her husband, and after nursing of her child if she has a young child, hands it to her servant, who is generally of the Maratha caste. She bows before the basil plant and to the sun, washes, and repeats verses. She next gives orders to the cook who is generally a man, and to other household servants who are generally women, has her hair combed, and bathes. After her bath, she puts on a fresh robe and bodice, worships the basil plant and other house gods, and reads a chapter of some sacred Marathi book. She superintends the cooking of the midday meal, and when the men have beagn to eat dines in a separate room. When her meal is over she sleeps for about two hours, and after wakening sits talking with neighbours or relations. About five, she visits a temple for a few minutes and on her. return looks to the cooking of the evening meal, and, when supper is over, goes to bed at ten.

A middle-class woman, like a rich woman, rises before her husband, bows to the sweet basil plant, and washes. She sweeps the cooking room, puts the vessels in order, kindles a fire, and sets a pot of cold water over it. She sweeps the god-room, prepares lights, arranges vessels and flowers, and, taking the pot from the fire, bathes. After bathing and combing her hair she begins to cook. When dinner is ready she serves it to her husband and other male members of the family in the women's hall, and to the women of the family in or near the cook-room. After they have finished she takes her own dinner. She coudngs the cook-room, sleeps half at hour to an hour, and sets to cleaning rice, cutting vegetables, sweeping, and cooking. About seven or eight she serves supper, and, after the men of the house have finished, she herself sups, coudngs the cook-room, and goes to bed after ten.

The life of a poor woman is the same as the life of a middle-class woman, except that as she has all the housework to do she has little leisure from dawn

till ten at night. Occasionally she is able to rest between two and four in the afternoon when she chats with her neighbours or goes to hear a preacher. With her neighbours her talk is of her troubles and worries and about her children, how she is to clothe them and how her husband can ever get money enough to marry them. Either at a pond or a river bank she has to wash all the cotton clothes and occasionally the woollen and silk clothes which her husband and children used the day before, and back, to the house a pitcher full of water which she rests on her right hip. So important a part is this of their daily life that, when they meet, the poorer Brahman women ask each other if their day's washing and water-drawing is over.

The husband milks the cow if there is a cow, and wife warms the milk, puts a little whey into it, and turns it into curds. The curds are churned into whey or buttermilk, the buttermilk is kept, and the butter is clarified into *ghee*. As all these operations are pure the churning pole and strings cannot be touched freely by any person except the mother and the wife to whom the management of the dairy always belongs. The washings of the cooking vessels, broken pieces of food, the cleanings of grain, and the remains of uncooked vegetables are gathered in a vessel and kept in a corner, and form part of the cow's food. When a boy becomes five years old his life begins to be ordered by regular hours. He rises about six, his face is washed and he is taught to repeat verses in praise of the sun and other gods, and to bow to them. About seven he has a dish of rice-porridge and milk, or bread and milk. About eight or nine he is bathed in warm water and dines with his father about noon. After dinner he sleeps for about two hours when he gets some sweetmeats or milk and bread. About four he is taken out and brought home between five and six, and, after eating some milk and bread, is put to bed. When about six years old a boy is generally sent to school. He now rises at five, his face is washed and gets some bread and milk and is taken to school. He returns at ten and is bathed and sandal is rubbed on his brow. He dines about eleven with his father and after dinner takes a nap. He rises about twelve or one, eats sweetmeats, and is taken to school, and brought back at six. He sups before seven and goes to bed soon after.

Except that he has less milk and few or no sweetmeats the daily life of a middle-class and of a poor boy is much the same as that of a rich man's son. The daily life of a rich man's daughter is much the same as that of his son: A few middle-class families, like the rich, send their girls to school, while the poor and a few of the middle-class girls help their mothers in housework and pass the rest of their time in play.

Chitpavans are either Apastumbas or Rigvedis, that is their rites are regulated either by texts written by the Apastamba of the Krishna or Black Yajurved or they are regulated by the text of the Rigved. Apastamba and Rigvedi Chitpavans intermarry. They are Smarts that is followers of Shankaracharya who hold the doctrine that the soul and the world are one. They worship Shiv, Vishnu, and other gods, and observe the regular Brahmanic fasts and feasts. Their priests, who belong to their own caste, spend most of their time at their patrons or *yajmans*. The family priest is most useful to his patron. Besides his religious

duties he buys articles wanted by the ladies of his patron's family and helps his patron in procuring good matches for his children, or arranging the terms of a loan. The patron if he has a mind for it, also finds his priest a ready listener or talker on abstruse subjects, the origin of life, the force that made and moulds the world, and together they sigh over the thought that life is a vain show and that their share of the glitter of life is so small. Though the social power of the orthodox is less than it was, and though among the younger men some are careless of the rules of caste, the hereditary connection between priest and patron and the self-containedness of a Brahman family are powers strongly opposed to change. Families who incline to leave the old ways are often forced to conform by the knowledge that innovators find great difficulty in marrying their daughters and getting wives for their sons. As a class, Chitpavans have zealously taken to the study of English. In the whole of the Poona district few Chitpavan families are without one or two young men who know some English. The bulk of the men in some streets in Poona city understand English, and even those who are settled in villages as husbandmen take care to secure an English education for their