



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery*

## **The People of India, Volume Eight**

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 08:24:50

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## MOCHIS.

purpose. A rope is considered by the experienced a barbarous manner of execution, causing prolonged suffering, whereas by the other method death is almost instantaneous. Mochis and Chumas eat animal food of all kinds excepting beef, though it is alleged of the latter that cattle which have died natural deaths are not altogether neglected. All drink spirituous liquors and fermented palm juice, sometimes to excess, and they smoke tobacco and hemp leaves. They are, for the most part, a very unthrifty people, spending what they earn in riotous intoxication or in caste feasts, which are of frequent occurrence in consequence of caste quarrels. Chumas and Mochis are of too low a grade to be allowed to live with members of Hindoo communities or within villages; they, therefore, reside in a suburb of their own. They sometimes cultivate land to a small extent, but their work forms their ordinary support. In some localities they are accused of organized crimes, especially dacoity; but, for the most part, they are a quiet inoffensive class, of course, profoundly ignorant, and superstitious to the last degree. They ordinarily worship Kali or Doorgah, and reverence Brahmins; but they have their own rites, which belong to their aboriginal condition, which are still practised. In one locality only have they shown signs of amelioration and progress. In one of the districts of the Central Provinces the Chumas have established a new creed and faith of their own, which has some resemblance to Christianity, and is spreading among the caste, accompanied by much social reformation. It rejects idolatry and Brahminism, and though its tenets are a pure and simple morality and theism, it ignores Christianity.

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