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Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The People of India, Volume Eight

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 02:31:16

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TODA MEN.--TODA WOMEN.

dialect, says 'it appears quite distinct from the languages of the surrounding countries. With the Sanscrit it has not the least affinity in roots, construction, or sound, and, if I may venture to say so, with any Asiatic language of the present day.' But the language has been completely analysed since Captain Harkness wrote, and is found to resemble closely other Dravidian languages of Southern India, more especially Tamil. But there are both Canarese and Tamil derivations, and Dr. Metz finds that out of one hundred words ordinarily employed by the Todas, eighty are identical with, or derived from, words used by their Dravidian neighbours. This, however, must be the result of scientific analysis, since the language spoken by the Todas seems not to be intelligible to their neighbours on the hills, or if so, in a very limited degree."

The Todas are a very limited tribe in number according to the census of 1871, consisting of 683 persons. Polyandry and infanticide had materially decreased the tribe at one time, but as these practices have been checked, if not entirely abolished, the Todas have considerably risen in number. The estimates of the agents deputed by the Archbishop of Goa was about 1,000 of both sexes, and the census of 1826 reduced them to 326 only, which was probably erroneous. The Todas are divided into two general divisions:--1, Devalyal; 2, Tarseezyal, which cannot intermarry; and they are sub-divided into four clans, the first of which is in some respects a sacred one, performing ceremonies at funerals and other occasions.

Dr. Shortt, page 4, gives the following ethnological descriptions of the Todas:--

"In physique the Todas are by far the most prepossessing as a tribe, and it is this superiority in personal appearance, in conjunction with their singular costume, peculiar mode of wearing the hair, their bold and self-possessed deportment, and unique social and domestic institutions, that have at all times attracted for them the greatest share of attention and interest from Europeans. In complexion the Todas are of a dull copper hue, not deeper or darker in colour than most of the inhabitants of the plains; but they are darker than the Badagas and many of the Kotas, a few of whom are met with fairer even than the Badagas. The Kurumbars and Irulas are not only darker than the Todas, but strikingly so to the eye. The Todas are tall in stature, well proportioned, and in feature partake of the Caucasian type; head slightly elongated, like the Hindoos; forehead rather narrow and receding, measuring two and a quarter inches from the root of the nose to the growth of hair and scalp; eyebrows thick and approaching each other; eyes moderately large, well formed, expressive, and often intelligent, irides varying in colour from hazel to brown; nose long, large, and well formed, generally aquiline, in some slightly rounded, arched, or what is termed Roman, in others cogitative, measuring from root to tip two and half

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