

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY AS OBSERVED
IN A GOVERNMENT HOUSE
RECEPTION.¹

INTRODUCTION.

I had the pleasure of delivering my first Presidential address on 5th February 1915, when I retired from the chair given to me in the year 1914 and when I handed it over to Sir Claude Hill. This is my second Presidential address, and, while retiring, I repeat my thanks to the council for doing me the honour for the second time. I now retire with pleasure to my Secretaryship, which, not counting a previous short tenure of temporary occupancy as acting Secretary, I have been holding since 1901. I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for the kind help they have given me in my work during these 26 years. I beg to thank Dr. R. N. Ranina for kindly acting for me as secretary during the past year.

Following the precedent of some of the past Presidents, I have to deliver my Presidential Address. I will speak to-day at first on the subject of our Society's work during the past years and my connection with it, and then I will speak on "Cultural Anthropology as observed in a Government House Reception."

I.

I hand over the chair to-day to one, who has been a worthy successor to all the educational activities of one of our past Presidents, Dr. Mackichan, to whom let us all send our greetings and good wishes in his retirement. Principal Mackenzie has, as the Professor and Principal of one of our old colleges, the Wilson

¹ Delivered on retiring from the Chair on 2nd February 1927, *Journal, Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. XIII, No. 8, pp. 779-803.

College, and as an active member of the Senate of our University, made his mark upon the educational work of our city and presidency, and so we welcome him with very great pleasure at the helm of our affairs.

I am sorry to note that the literary activity of Bombay, as expressed by its literary Societies, is not what it once was. The attendance at the meetings of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, of our Society, and of such other literary societies is generally small. This may partly be due to the fact of our having now-a-days more gymkhanas and clubs than before. Again, the activity of a community, city or country generally takes the course of "the least resistance." Political activity, being one of that kind, attracts many of our young educated men. But let our rising young friends remember, that quiet studies of any one of the subjects handled by such societies, in the retired corners of the societies' rooms and in the sequestered nooks of their homes, will, in the end, make them, at the proper time, better politicians than otherwise. In the long run, the best politician will be one, who will look to political questions from all points of view, who, with a steady mind, will know well to weigh all questions and to shift all evidence that come before him. Quiet studies in connection with such societies, where one has to weigh and shift evidence in the matter of theories, hypotheses, etc., will train him for the work of being a good politician. The quiet, sequestered and rather dark corners of study-rooms will train them to be better workers, when they will have to work in limelight. So, under the circumstances, if not anything else, the presence at our helm of our President-elect who guides and instructs hundreds of our students will, I hope, give some inspiration and encouragement to many students.

Again, we are sorry to find that the number of members of what are called, "official scholars" is falling in our city as elsewhere in India. At one time, it were they who founded and

helped our literary societies, but now they are few and far between. They submit the plea of being over-worked in office-matters. So, we may appeal to them to turn to our literary societies for a kind of recreation. The literary and scientific work in connection with societies like ours will very likely give them a good diversion. They will be better officials if they will try to be good "official scholars", especially in the line of Anthropology. I will here draw their attention to what the London Academy said, while taking a brief notice of our Silver Jubilee Memorial Volume. It said: "If Government officials in India are sometimes caught napping through want of knowledge of the people of the country, their manners, customs, peculiarities, etc., this voluntary Society is at hand to supply information of a miscellaneous and searching character. The Society has an official Englishman as President,¹ but the writers are nearly all natives of India, well-educated men who ought to be able to get at the correct facts which they certainly can present in good style.....The Silver Jubilee Number contains special contributions. The History of the Society shows good work done for twenty-five years."² There was a time when many officials, from the Governors downwards, were "Official scholars." In our city, the names of Governors like Sir John Malcolm, Jonathan Duncan and Elphinstone, are well known as those of "Official Scholars." Well, we know, that now, in times of heavy gubernatorial work, and what we may call, social work accompanying it, we may not expect our Governors, and even our high officials to be "Official Scholars," but we expect them to join us, at least, to help and encourage us.

It was only last week (24th January) that we read the following in our local "Times of India": "The old generation of official scholars seems to have passed without leaving successors; our cities are given up to the pursuits of wealth and what

¹ Mr. R. E. Enthoven, I.C.S., C.I.E., was the President during the Jubilee year.

² The Academy of 6th April 1912, pp. 429-30.

is misnamed 'pleasure' without a thought of those great cultured activities lacking which man is nought but a poor stunted creature." If you will kindly let me continue in the words of the above advocate of culture, I will say in a modified form, in his words: "A great opportunity and a great obligation lie" on unofficial Bombay and on this Society as the first of its kind in the whole of India, "to raise our life above these sordid surroundings and create" on the platforms of this Society, of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society and of such other literary and scientific societies, "a great cultural centre." But in this work of making Bombay "a great cultural centre," at least of the Bombay University, "a strong stimulus" from the Bombay Government is necessary. But we are sorry to find, that what little stimulus was given us has been withdrawn. Our Society used to get Rs. 500 every year as a grant from the Government since the official year 1913-14. The grant was increased to Rs. 1,000 from 1922-23. But the whole of the grant has been withdrawn from last year on the ground of observing economy in the expenses of the Presidency. Out of all the Presidencies, Bombay is the only Presidency which has an Anthropological Society in its midst. Bombay Government has more than once asked the help of our Society.¹ Literary Journals like the *Athenæum* and the *Academy* have appreciated our work. The *Athenæum*, while reviewing my "Anthropological Papers," Part I, and recommending my volume "to every scholarly student of India," asked "anthropologists in general" to "note this welcome sign of the activity of their brethren of the Anthropological Society of Bombay."² The *Academy* once said: "The Papers of this Society should be more widely known."³ Mr. R. E. Enthoven, a distinguished Government official, the author of "the Tribes and Castes of Bombay" has appreciated the help he has received from

¹ Vide Journal, vol. VII, No. 2, p. 147.

² Vide The *Athenæum* of 13th July 1912, pp. 43-44.

³ Vide The *Academy* of 19th October 1912, pp. 515-16.

some of our members.¹ Again, Sir Alfred Hopkins, the distinguished Vice-Chancellor of the University of Manchester, has, in his Report as an expert invited by our University for advice,² recommended encouragement to the study of Anthropology. The Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland also has recommended to the Government of India, for encouragement, the subject of anthropology. I have once quoted in my first address, and quote here again, what the authorities of the Anthropological Institute said :

“In the first place we have to represent that anthropology, not in the restricted sense of physical anthropology alone, but in the broader significance of the science of the evolution of human culture and social organisation, should be an integral feature of the studies of the Oriental Research Institute. My Council desire.....to refer in passing to the importance of anthropological study from an administrative or political point of view, and to its bearings on the difficult and peculiar problems which confront the Government of India at every turn. To discover, to discuss, and to decide the nature and origin of the deep-seated differences of thought and mental perspective between Eastern and Western societies is a task of high importance and of great complexity, which seems possible of achievement only by the wide synthetic methods of modern Anthropological science by which the results won by workers in the domains of religion, archæology, history, art, linguistics and sociology are unified, classified and co-ordinated. As the writings of men like Sir Herbert Risley, some time President of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Sir George Grierson, demonstrate beyond a doubt, a comprehensive examination of present-day Indian conditions reveals the working of social ideas and ideals which have their origin in a low level of culture. Among the people of India to-day are preserved beliefs, customs, and institutions which testify to the

¹ Introduction p. XIX.

² Vide his Report, dated London, 1st May 1914. Appendix IV, p. 3

vital intimacy of the relations between the higher and the lower forms of culture, and to the special importance of India as a field for anthropological research.”¹

In spite of all this, the grant of a small sum of Rs. 1,000 has been stopped, and that, not in any ignorance of these facts, because we had officially placed them before the then Minister of Education, and I had personally interviewed the Minister and the Secretary of the Educational Department. They said, that their hands were forced by the question of economy; so, let us hope that, on the very first approach of better financial conditions our small grant is renewed.

As for us, let us forget this small temporary discouragement. Let us look straight and work. Let us not be discouraged for having few members. Let us do our best, as long as we can. On this occasion I remember with pleasure the words of encouragement uttered by the late lamented Sir Narayan Chandawarkar, who occupied for years the chair by my side as the President of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, and by whose side, on the chair which I now occupy, I used to sit for a number of years drawing inspiration from his good self. After the celebration of our Silver Jubilee, which was presided over by Sir Basil Scott, our former Chief Justice, he wrote in the “Times of India” of 14th February 1922, an appreciative article, headed “Anthropology: Its study in Bombay.” He wrote :

“It is a historical fact that the basis of the study and encouragement of antiquarian research and Anthropology and Philology was laid in Bombay by Sir James Mackintosh..... That was a period in the history of Bombay when antiquarian research and the study of Philology and Anthropology had become, under the influence of German scholars,

¹ Letter of the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute, dated 18th April 1913, to the Secretary of State for India, a copy of which was sent to the Society.

a passion with many more scholars than now They (some scholars) concluded that this dip into the misty past was of no practical value and was the pastime or vanity of mere fools and dreamers. People wanted to become more practical Mr. Telang made it his duty to do his best to stem the tide of the rising prejudice against the study in question. So he wrote a learned essay meeting the arguments of the opponents of the study Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar defended the cause and the practical value of Philology, Anthropology and Antiquarian research in an animated speech The study I am writing of has waned more or less since those days, owing to causes and influences which I hope are of a temporary nature. There are always an ebb and a flow in every department of thought and life—what historians and philosophers call the periodicity of progress All honour to them for their work of love in this special department of scholarship, for of Anthropology, no less than of any other subject of knowledge and research, it is true that those who pursue and encourage it are men for all ages and all countries. The idea has often struck me as I have at times perused some of the papers read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Anthropological Society and the Wilson Philological Lectures, that their writers have collected and given to the world a mass of information which, amidst the details, the multiplicity and variety, the apparent disconnection and even dullness, has a golden line of unity which must help and be of practical value to the philosopher, the scientist, the statesman and the sociologist by helping them to understand aright the past of man's slow growth in society—and it is the past that makes the future. Bergson, the French philosopher of the present day, in his 'Creative Evolution' tells us that there is no such thing as the present and that we live in the past and for the future. That seems a paradox but life itself is a paradox. We must understand the past aright to guide us now and build for the

hereafter. Our languages, our customs, our manners, our prejudices, our everything have come out of the past; and our Philologists, our Anthropologists, our Antiquarians are doing us practical service by enabling us to see, if we have eyes to see, what, and how we have come to be what we are. What if these unrequited servants of Society, to whom their work and study are of love, are not acknowledged as doing practical service? True utility is beauty and the true beauty is the beauty of knowledge, understanding that word in the sense of well-knowing and right-doing. That is the claim deserved by the Anthropological Society, which celebrated its Silver Jubilee last week. May it flourish and live to celebrate its Golden and Diamond Jubilees and its centenaries! Such Societies are verily of the soul of a people—what is not of that soul is mere body which must perish.”¹

I am tempted to quote at some length the above words of a great good man of our city with a view, that they may catch the eye and ears of our Minister of Education and that he may kindly renew our grant, and, I am sure, that the Legislative Council will accept his proposal of the grant, when it will see, that the work of the Society was so appreciatively recognized by one, who presided at the Council’s deliberations and guided it with discretion and judgment, during its first few years.

Before I pass on to the subject proper of the address, let me say a few words on the subject of the deaths, during the past year, of two of our past distinguished members who had done us very good service. In the death of Sir Basil Scott, the late Chief Justice of our city, we have lost a distinguished member, who had acted as our Secretary for six years (1886—1891), and who, though he was called by his profession to other activities, was still one who took an interest in our work. He evinced this interest on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Society when he presided at its celebration.

¹ Vide the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. IX, No. 6, pp. 395—402, for Sir (then Mr.) Narayan Chandavarkar’s letter.

In the death of Mr. S. M. Edwardes, we have lost a past member who was our President for four years¹ and who was an asset of the Literary activity of Bombay. He was one who added lustre to that chosen group from the distinguished Indian Civil Service, which has done useful service in the cause of Oriental learning. I remember to-day with pleasure, not only the interesting and instructive evenings I passed with him on the platforms of this Society and of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, but also the few hours and days I worked under his direction, as a Volunteer-worker in the census operations of 1901, when he was at the head of the Census operations of our city and when Mr. R. E. Enthoven, who still takes a kind interest in our work, was at the head of the Census operations of our Presidency. During my last visit of Europe, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Edwardes more than once, in connection with the arrangement for my papers before the Folk-Lore Society and the Anthropological Institute of London,² and then, though not hale and hearty in physical health, I found him full of energy for literary work. I feel his loss, not only as our co-worker, but also as a personal literary friend.

I take this opportunity to note with satisfaction, that during my visit of England, not only our above colleagues and friends like Mr. Enthoven and Mr. Edwardes, but other learned—if I may be permitted to use our Parsi word—*hamkârs* (ڄڪڙ) or co-workers, kindly received me well. Some of them thought of kindly entertaining me, but my stay being shortened, as I was called to Paris for receiving the honour of Légion d'Honneur

¹ From 1905 to 1908 and then in 1910.

² I read before the Folk-Lore Society, a paper on "The Vish-Kanyâ of India, as illustrated by a Persian story" and before the Anthropological Institute, a paper entitled "The Daily life of a Parsee of the 17th Century," as referred to in the *Faraziât-nâme* of Dastur Darab Pahlun.

kindly given to me by the French Government, they could not do so.¹

I take the will for the deed and beg to convey my hearty thanks to these kind co-workers in the fields of Orientalism and Anthropology for their kind appreciation of my humble literary work in connection with this and other Societies.

I may note here for the information of my colleagues, that I had the pleasure of attending on 20th May 1925, a meeting of the Anthropological Society of Paris presided over by Professor Meillet. I was accorded a kind welcome by the President, Prof. Meillet, and I did myself the honour and the pleasure of conveying the greetings and good wishes of our Society to our confrères of that Society. For me, it was specially a pleasure to be welcomed by Prof. Meillet because, I remembered with pleasure my first visit of Paris in 1889, when I was a pupil—though that only for one day—of the learned Professor. I had taken one lesson from him in the Cuneiform inscriptions.

During my past presidential year, I had the pleasure of representing this Society, together with the University, the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society and the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, at the fourth Oriental Conference at Allahabad, where I had the further pleasure and honour of being elected the president. I had also the pleasure of presiding at the Anthropological section of the Conference. I take the honour of being called upon to preside at such a Conference, which, on its previous sittings at Poona, Calcutta and Madras, was presided over by distinguished scholars like Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar of Poona, Dr. Sylvain Levi of the Institute of France and Mahompadhya Dr. Jha, the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad

¹ In a letter dated 23rd January 1926, Mr. Enthoven said: "I congratulate you on accomplishing your trip successfully. We should have been glad if you would have spared a little more time for your stay in London as one or two old acquaintances were planning a little entertainment....but we could not manage it in the time available."

University, as an honour paid to our Society and to other Societies and to the University of Bombay with whose work I have been associated for these last 40 years.

My connection with this Society has been that of 40 years, during which I have served it twice as its President, for 7 years as its Vice-President, and 26 years as its Honorary Secretary. I am glad and proud of this long connection with this Society. I had the pleasure of reading about 85 papers before this Society, and about 14, as your Delegate, before the Anthropological sections of the Indian Science Congresses and the Oriental Conferences. I can speak only of the quantity, of the number, leaving it to others to speak of their quality. But I beg to note here with pleasure what the late Revd. Dr. L. C. Casartelli, formerly Professor of Iranian languages at St. Bede's College, Manchester, and latterly, Bishop of Salford, said in the *Babylonian and Oriental Record* (Vol. VIII No. 3, p. 72, April, 1891): "We trust that Mr. Modi will some day collect his numerous essays into a volume, they are worthy of preservation." The London Academy of 14th September 1913, while reviewing my *Anthropological Papers*, Part I, said: "There is much to learn of Indian life from his papers which Mr. Modi should continue to write and publish." As recommended by the Right Revd. Prof. Casartelli and as wished by the Academy, I have continued to write and publish my *Anthropological papers*. Since their writing the above, I have published two more volumes of my *Anthropological papers* and one more, the fourth is in the Press. As your Secretary, I have always taken care, not only to carry on the work of the Society, but to make our Society something like a Bureau of Information to all inquirers on Indian Anthropological subjects. I tender my thanks to all the assistants who had worked under me during the past years and to my present assistant, Mr. Khodabax Edaljee Punegar, B.A., who has been serving us since 1924.

II.

I now come to the second part of my subject. Of the two main branches of Anthropology—the Physical and the Cultural—we of Bombay are working mostly in the field of the second, the Cultural. In the study of this branch, our vast country presents to us many materials. Our modern culture is the heir of past ages. Edmond Burke has said “People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.” Our modern culture has come down to us not only from the cultured ancients, like the Greeks and the Romans, the Babylonians and the Assyrians, the Indians and the Iranians, and such other civilized nations, but also from the preceding primitive people. Even the savages had their rude unsophisticated culture and they also have handed down their quota to the past ages. The cultures of the above ancient nations had an association with the crude culture of the primitive people. Evolution plays its part in Nature, not only on the physical side but also on the mental or intellectual side. Just as the whole physical world has evolved and is evolving from primitive conditions of the past, so, the whole mental or intellectual world has evolved and is evolving from the past. Thus there rises the question as to how far most of the customs and ceremonies, which are observed nowadays and which lead us to form our views about culture, had their first origin in the life of the primitive people of prehistoric times and in the life of the people of succeeding civilized times.

The welfare of a country or nation depends upon the condition of its three institutions : 1 The Church, 2 the State and 3 the School, or to speak in ordinary words, upon 1 Religion, 1 Government and 3 Education. The last, viz., the School or Education, prepares the people for duties in connection with the Church or Religion and the State or Government, or to speak more broadly, for duties in Society. So, varying our phraseology we may say that the welfare of a community, nation or

country depends upon the conditions of its Religion, Government, and Society.

Among the sub-divisions of Cultural Anthropology, religion, though placed last in the list, is not the least. Religion is variously defined by Divines and other scholars, but for our purpose, this definition will do, that "Religion is that which treats of the relations of Man to his maker and to the surrounding world." In this sense, we have not to consider this religion or that religion, we have not to think of individual religions like Christianity or Mahomedanism, Brahmanism or Buddhism, Confucianism or Zoroastrianism, but religion in the broad sense of the word, the religion of all religions. They say a story of a scholar of England, that he once met at Paris, M. Renan, the author of "Vie de Jesus Christ," which was condemned by some as a heretic book, and another French philosopher. In the conversation that ensued, the French scholars said, that in French they had done away with religion. The English scholar coolly asked; Whether they had kept anything or replaced anything in the place of religion which, they said, they had destroyed? "Yes," they replied, we have only kept "Les trois mots, le Dieu, l'ame et la responsabilité" ("Three words—God, soul and responsibility"). Then the Englishman said, that if they kept these three things, they kept religion.

In science, "the most fundamental postulate is the Uniformity of Nature despite all appearances to the contrary." In religion, this fundamental is, that "Universal goodness lies at the heart of things despite all appearances to the contrary." Now, taking Religion in the broad sense of the word, we find many a custom, ceremony, ritual or symbol, common to Religion, State and Society. So, the question is where have those common customs begun? Have they begun first in Religion and then passed into State or Society or vice versa? Our reply is, that generally it is the Church or Religion from which many a custom has passed into State and Society.

We can illustrate this view, to a certain extent, from what we see at a Government House Reception in Bombay. When you next go as a guest to the Government House Reception, stand in a corner of the reception room, watching the arrival of His Excellency the Governor and the presentation of guests and the various functions accompanying these. You may then muse and ponder, meditate and ruminare over the kaleidoscope that passes before you from an anthropological point of view. A Government House Reception—and by a Government House; you may understand if you like, the palace of an Emperor or a King or the House of his honoured representative like the Governor—is, as it were, a typical *rendezvous*, where you see, in a focus, much of the culture of modern civilized society. You see from your corner, where you stand musing as a student of cultural anthropology, the following functions, one by one, and you ponder over them :

1. The Reception or Levée as a whole.
2. The Band playing and announcing the arrival of the Governor.
3. His Excellency the Governor's entrance into the Hall, accompanied by his Courtiers or Officers.
4. Presentation of Arms.
5. His passage over a specially spread red carpet.
6. The Presentation of the guests. When the guests pass, one by one, the following will draw your attention :—
 - (a) Hand-shaking
 - (b) Their Dress.
 - (c) Their distinguishing marks, if any.
 - (d) Their salutations.

We will now examine these different parts of the state ceremonial.

First of all, the Reception held by the Royalty, or by a Representative of the Royalty like the Governor of a country or province, supplies an instance of the influence of Church and its ritual on State and Society and on their ritual, *i.e.*, on the etiquette, the manners and customs observed in State and Society.

Our present Bombay Receptions have replaced what were known as Levées about two decades ago and they are generally held, like the Levées in the beginning of the season,—mark the word season, which is always associated with the movement of the Sun—that is some time after the return of the Governor to Bombay after an absence for some months spent at Mahableshwar and Poona. So let us begin our subject with the question of Levée, as to what it is like.

There are various schools or theories about the Origin of Belief and custom, or, to speak in our ordinary language, of Religion and Religious customs or ceremonies. These schools have their following theories :

1. The Solar Theory.
2. The Meteorological Theory.
3. Spirit Theory.

The late Prof. Max Müller seemed to believe in the first theory, according to which in primitive men—men who lived in open air and who thus saw and experienced the influence of the Sun very frequently,—the thoughts of God, of the highest Power, were found from their observance of the sun. Now, the word *Levée* is associated with the rising sun. Formerly levées were held in the *morning* after sunrise. Beeton thus speaks on the subject : “Levée (Fr. lever to rise) properly denotes the time of rising, and is commonly applied to the visits which princes and other distinguished personages receive in the morning. It is specially applied in this country to the stated public occasions on which,

the sovereign receives visits from persons of *rank or fortune*. A levée differs from a drawing room only in that ladies are admitted to the latter but not to the former.”¹

Now, just as the rising sun opens the day when thousands and thousands of people, especially in the East, bow with lowered heads, out of respect, to the Sun, so, the king or prince opened his Court-day appearing before his court in brilliant dress, when a number of his courtiers bowed to him. Here, in our city, our Governor who was long absent from Bombay, who had, as it were, set, in relation to Bombay, rises or re-appears in the beginning of the cold season and appears before his subjects, or to speak more properly, before the subjects of his king whose representative he is, and receives the salutation, the homage, the worship of the people. He appears, as it were, like the sun, and thousands of visitors or worshippers gather to greet or worship him.

One of our distinguished past Presidents, Mr. R. E. Enthoven, had, for his Presidential address, delivered on 3rd March 1911, taken up the subject of “Campbell’s Notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom.” In that interesting address, he has referred to the above anthropological view of the custom of holding annually a Levée. He says: “According to this school (*i.e.*, the Solar theory school), the published record of the holding of the levée is clearly nothing more than one of the many sun myths that are so common in the religion and superstition of the East. Levée is derived from a French word *levér*—to raise; whence *se lever*—to rise. ‘*Lever du soleil*’ means sunrise; and hence levée. The Governor’s appearance at this function among the State dignitaries, therefore, typifies the rising of the sun. His gorgeous uniform represents the sun’s brilliance”.²

¹ Beeton’s Science, Art and Literature. A Dictionaryⁿ of Universal information, 2nd edition, Vol. II, p. 253.

² Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. IX, No. 3, p. 195.

Standing in a corner of the Reception-hall, you expect the Luminary to appear on the horizon, *i.e.*, you expect His Excellency to appear, shortly. There plays the Band and you learn that he is coming. The Band announces his approach.

2. The Musical Band.

Compare with this item in this social or gubernatorial ritual, what you see in a custom of our Eastern Courts—the custom of playing what is called the *naobat*. *Naobat* (نوبت) is a Persian word meaning time. Then, it has come to mean “a musical band playing at stated times before the palace of a king or prince.”¹ The word has then also come to mean “a large state tent for giving audience.”²

The custom, as observed in Persia and in Indian Native States even now, is that a musical band, consisting of drum and other musical instruments, plays, at sunrise and sunset, a particular tune, thus announcing the rising and the setting of the great Luminary. We know that illustrious persons, for example, Bacon and Newton, are spoken of as luminaries. So, in our Government House Reception, the Governor is the luminary, the sun, and his rising, *i.e.*, appearance among us, is announced by the Band playing the *naobat*. Similarly, his setting, *i.e.*, his departure from amongst us, is announced by the *naobat* or the playing of the Band.³

¹ Steingass's Persian Dictionary.

² *Ibid.* Abu Fazal says of Akbar: “When His Majesty holds court they beat a large drum, the sounds of which are accompanied by Divine praise” (Blochmanu's Aini-i.—Akbari I, p. 157.)

³ In our British military cantonments also, you see the ritual, especially that of the Band playing and announcing, the sunsets. I had the pleasure of seeing the ritual, in its full form, on 26th and 27th April 1925 at Gibraltar which is a great military fort of the old type. There, at sunset, a military band goes to the place of the Commander of the Fort to receive from him the key of the fort to close the fort. Though now, owing to the increase of population the Fort is not closed after sunset, the ceremony is performed symbolically.

Thus, musical band is associated with a kind of announcement. We know that now, on the happy occasions of marriages, musical bands play an important part in the merriments of the occasions. But, at first, the original object of the play of music at a marriage was an announcement of the auspicious event of the marriage to people round about.¹ The ringing of church bells is something like the playing of music, and it announces the coming of the time of prayers and homage to the Deity.

With the announcement made by the playing Band, the Governor enters into the Reception Hall with his staff in a procession. Processions are an old institution. They play a prominent part in the religious, social, academical and political life of a country. The Christian Church has magnificent and stately processions. The Roman Catholic Church has a special book, known as "Processional" which speaks of religious processions. The Vendidad of the Parsees speaks of Ahura Mazda, of God himself, as proceeding to meet Yima Khshaêta or Jamshed with his Anjuman of Yazatas or angels in a procession.² We have social processions like the marriage and funeral processions. The Academies and the Universities have their processions. So, the State also has its processions and the Governor's entry into his Reception Hall is in the form of a procession of this kind. He is the great Luminary, the Sun in the

¹ The Pahlavi Dinkard refers to this view. Dastur Peshutan's Vol. II, p. 87, Bk. III., Chap. 80, s. 15.

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Amat dahûl-i Sûrâi va Sûrnâi barâ hâmē shatra âkâsend âigh hanâ
aushutâan khavitōkdas yehvunet.

Translation.—When the drum of marriage (sûr. nuptial, P. سور) and trumpets inform the whole city that such (and such) persons are being married.

² Vendidad II, 21.

procession. His consort, Her Excellency, is the Moon, and the officers of his staff are his satellites.¹

The presentation of some symbolic things at the entrance, plays a prominent part in many functions.

4. Presentation of Arms to the Governor. In India, when brides and bridegrooms enter into a house on special occasions, water, cocoanut, rice, &c., are presented before them as symbols with one idea or another. They are passed over in a tray over their heads and then lowered and thrown away. All these are a kind of symbolic expression of good wishes for prosperity and for the removal of calamities, if any overtake the party.

Now, in cases like those of Governor's receptions, when the guards present arms, that is a symbolic expression of their readiness to do duty to avert any calamities or difficulties that may befall the recipients of the honour. Let us note here the signification of the word "arms". An "arm" originally is "the limb of the human body which extends from the shoulder to the hand" and then it has also come to mean "a weapon of offence or defence."² The arms of the body were the weapons with which the earliest primitive men fought. It was with their own bodily arms that they defended themselves and their near and dear ones. The arms (or weapons) made out of wood or such other materials were a later invention. Just as at a festive board, the use of forks with its finger-like prongs, is a later form in the evolution of the process of eating, replacing fingers to a certain extent, so wooden or metal implements or arms are a later form in the evolution of the process of fighting. Now, what do the guards signify by presenting arms? They were holding up arms, and on the arrival of the Governor, they present their arms to signify, that their bodily arms and their whole bodies, were, as it were at the service of the Governor, and that

¹ For some further particulars about processions, *vide* my Paper on "A Devil-driving Procession of the Tibetan Buddhists as seen at Darjeeling and a few Thoughts suggested by it," read on 24th June 1914 (Journal of Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. X, No. 3, pp. 209-28. *Vide* my Anthropological Papers, Part II, pp. 124-43).

² Webster.

they were always ready to defend him whenever and wherever required. The modern presentation of arms is something like the offer of the ancient Iranians to their kings or superiors to put on their sash or girdle. For example, we read of the Persians of Pars, offering their services to the Sassanian king Ardeshir Babegân (Artaxerxes I) by saying that they would put on their sash and girdle,¹ to serve him. Here, the guards presenting their arms say something similar, viz., that they are ready to defend the Governor, if required.

This symbolic presentation of arms may also admit of another explanation like that of the officers presenting their swords before the Governor when they are presented to him. We will speak of this later on.

In such State gatherings, a special carpet is spread for the Governor to pass upon. At times, the carpet or red Turkey cloth is spread over the place a short time before the arrival of the Governor, so that it may not be spoiled by the dirty feet of other guests. As, being a luminary for the time being, he is the purest, the most cleanly, the holiest of all, so a pure and clean passage must be provided for him. They say, that in some holy churches of Rome, there were special entrances for His Holiness the Pope. That entrance was first opened occasionally for him to enter through. In one of the churches of Rome, which I had the pleasure of visiting, there were two entrances, one for the general entry and one for what we may call a "private entry" or a sacred entry. The steps of the latter were called "scala sancta" or sacred ladder. The worshipper who wanted to enter by that entrance had to ascend, not on their feet, but on their knees. Hâtim Tai, a holy personage of Mahomedanism, is said to have walked, not on ordinary unholy ground, but on silver and golden tablets or bricks which were provided for him. His followers placed before him, these

¹ The Shah-nameh of Macan, Calcutta Ed. Vol. III, p. 1375.

و دگور که هستیم سا سانیان . . . ببندهیم کین وا کهر بر میان

tablets and he stepped over them ; and when he advanced over the front ones, the back ones were lifted up and placed in his front again. The Governor is, as it were, for the time being, a holy personage and has, therefore a special carpet provided for him so that he may not place his holy steps on unholy ground.¹ This custom is referred to in an old Malayalam document passed in favour of the Christians on the Malabar Coast. Among several things of honour conferred upon Thomas Cana (Tomman Kineir) one was "the walking cloth²." Mr. T. K. Joseph thus speaks about this cloth in a footnote: "Cloth spread on the way for walking along without touching the ground. Our bishops and bridegrooms still enjoy the privilege. For its use in 1916-17, in Ceylon, see Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1916-17, Part I, p. 25. Lengths of white cloth were unrolled along the road for the elephant to walk over." Brahmin bridegrooms are said to walk over such cloth, even now in some parts of our country. Dr. Sven Hedin thus speaks of a similar custom in Tibet: "His Holiness (the Tashi Lama,) leaves the throne and descends the staircase on which a narrow strip of coloured carpet is laid, for the Tashi Lama

¹ In this connection, I am reminded of a Parsee custom in relation to their ritual of consecrated fires. Sacred consecrated fires are spoken of as Shah or Pādshah, *i.e.*, a king. We read, in the *Ātash Nyâish*, "*âdarân shâh pirojgar*," *i.e.*, "the Victorious kingly fires." Among what may be called the "Parsee national toasts," one was "*Atash Behram pādshâh ni salâmati*," *i.e.*, "The Safety of the Fire (Atash) Behram, the King." The Fire, being taken as a King, even an *âthornân*, *lit.*, a priest attending the sacred fire was, at one time, spoken of as "*pādshâh*" or king. So, the Sacred Fire, being held in reverence as a king, when it is removed from a place where it was consecrated to a temple where it is to be enthroned, it is carried in a procession and the route is marked by a number of boundary lines within which none other than the two officiating priests entered. These sacred circles, reserved for the king-like sacred fire, were somewhat similar to the red-turkey carpets reserved for the Governor to walk upon. I have described the ritual at some length in my Paper, entitled the Consecration Ceremonies of the Parsees, read before this Society (Vol. XI, pp. 496-544). *Vide* my book "The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees," pp. 224-26.

² Indian Antiquary of September 1927, p. 666.

may not touch the unclean earth with his holy feet." (Trans. Himalaya I p. 355).

During the process of the presentation of guests, several things draw our attention. The most important of Guests.

- (a) The shaking of hands.
- (b) The various dresses of the visitors.
- (c) Their distinguishing marks.
- (d) Their ways of salutations.

It is an honour to shake hands with the Luminary. He imparts, by his condescension, something, be it pleasure or honour or good fortune, to the persons who shake hands with him. It has been thought from olden times, that the person of the King being sacred, a contact with his body brings good luck or advantage. That was the view, which was held in England upto the last century, when it was believed that scrofula which was known as the "King's Disease" could be cured by the touch of a king. Samuel Johnson was believed by his father to be so cured.¹

¹ We read in Lord Macaulay's account of Johnson's life: "He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year, he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular were distorted by his malady." (Biographies by Lord Macaulay, p. 78). Boswell, in his life of Johnson, says: "Young Johnson had the misfortune to be much afflicted with the scrofula or king's evil, which disfigured a countenance naturally well-formed, and hurt his usual nerves so much, that he did not see at all with one of his eyes, though its appearance was a little different from that of the other.... His mother yielding to the superstitious notion, which it is wonderful to think prevailed so long in this country, as to the virtue of the regal touch, a notion which our king encouraged.... carried him to London, where he was actually touched by Queen Anne." (Vol. I, pp. 6, 7.)

Holy persons do not shake hands with everybody and anybody. They do not even touch everybody and anybody. They think themselves defiled by such touches of unholy or undesirable persons. We know of cases where people of faiths other than their own, are held to be impure. Old Athens re-consecrated all its temples when the Persian army left Athens, taking it, that the touch or presence of those aliens had destroyed the sanctity of their temples. We hear of instances of olden times when some Indian dignitaries washed their hands after visits to them by foreigners. It is said of King Tehmasp of Persia that when Anthony Jenkinson visited his court as an Ambassador of Queen Elizabeth, knowing that he was a Christian, he purified, not only himself, but all the premises of his palace also, by sweeping sand over it, sand being considered as a purifying material like water.

Thus, the Governor, our sacred luminary, does not shake hands with everybody, but with those, whom he invites as his guests after due inquiry and of whom he knows that they are clean in their character and respectability. God or the Deity is spoken of in India as "Dast-gîr (د دستگیر)", *i.e.*, the Holder of the hands of his worshippers. The holding of the hand is, as it were, a mark of favour, and an expression of willingness to help. Here, the great luminary, by his shake of hands, gives an expression to his favourable thoughts about his guests.

The subject of Dress, is a fertile subject for inquiry from an anthropological point of view. Mr. W. M.

(b) Dress.

Webb, in his interesting book entitled "The Heritage of Dress," gives us an interesting look into the question of the "Evolution of Dress" from its primitive state. What kind of dress did the primitive people put on? The Christian Bible tells us that the primæval Man moved about naked. Then came the dress made of herbage, then that of the skin of wild and domesticated animals, and then that of cotton, woollen and silken cloth. But, even now, if you were to watch

carefully the passers-by in the Government House Reception, you will find, that in their modern up-to-date dress also, there are relics of olden times, and that herbage and skins of wild and domesticated animals play an important part in dresses.

Laying aside the question of the materials of the dresses, the state and the fashions of the dresses of various people, passing before us, make us ponder and even smile a little. We speak of Custom as being a great tyrant, but we find, that Fashion is a greater tyrant than Custom. Again, when we ponder deeply, we find, that our views of culture in dress also change often if not as frequently as fashion. This makes us think of the various phases of culture. When we think of the primitive times, when our ancestors arrived at a period of time when cotton materials began to be used, we find that the primitive dress of our primitive ancestors was something like a mere *chaddar* without sleeves or pajamas. Suppose you are naked in a room and one creeps in suddenly. Then what will you do? You will take up a chuddar, a sheet or a blanket from your bed and will just cover your body for decency. Our modern dress has evolved in one way or another from that primitive condition and that *chuddar* or pieces of cloth like that play a prominent part in the dresses of many people.

Out of all the dresses that pass before us in kaleidoscopic view, the gowns of ladies and the gowns of clergymen draw our attention. Both wear big loose dresses. We find that gowns play an important part on many solemn occasions. Our University graduates and Fellows are required to be dressed in gown. Members of Benches and Bars in our Courts are required to have gowns. Our priests are required to have them. So, ladies also have gowns. The dresses of old Indian ladies, are, though not exactly like gowns, loose dresses like gowns; and in all ages, a loose dress is held to be a dress of dignity, respect and modesty.

Again, in many cases, you read nationalities from the mere looks of the dresses of visitors. Though some of the visitors are

half-dressed in the new European fashion, their head dress points to their religions and castes. Some carry a particular kind of pieces of cloth across their shoulders over their Europeanized coats and trousers. These pieces of cloth symbolized respectability.

The sight of symbolic marks over the foreheads of a number of guests leads us to a number of fresh thoughts over the different religions or sub-divisions of religions and castes. Again, notice, that in case of Indian ladies, the mark is always round, but not so in the case of males. The marks on the foreheads of women symbolize the Moon. Those on the foreheads of males are associated with a kind of Sun-worship. At one time, about 50 years ago, even Parsee ladies put on such marks. I have referred to this subject at some length in my paper on Parsee marriages.¹

Again, watch the different ways of salutations. Europeans and some Indians, who have adopted European manners, simply nod their heads. Some guests raise their hands towards their heads. The Parsees have their particular way of saluting in this manner. Some Hindu guests join both their hands, as is done in worship, and thus perform their *darshan* of the great luminary before whom they pass. Military men have their peculiar way of salaaming. Some who carry swords present their swords before the Governor who touches the swords. Ladies perform what is called courtesy. All these different modes of salutation which we observe at a Reception point to what Herbert Spencer calls "self-surrender." I have referred to this subject at some length in my paper on "Tibetan salutations and a few thoughts suggested by them" read before this Society;² so, I will not say more on this subject in this paper.

¹ Journal of the Anthropological Society, Volume V, No. 4, p. 253.

² Ibid Vol. X, No. 3, pp. 165-78. (Vide my Anthropological Papers, Part II, 110-23.)