

Folklore - Social & Political

Social and Political Institutions. (1st Edition : "Local Customs.")

Begin by making a rough plan of the village or settlement, showing every dwelling, and ascertain to what clan (etc.) each householder belongs (and what totems he owns). Later, you can identify the individual householders and proceed by the genealogical method.

Social groups. Ascertain into what social groups the people are divided. Give the generic and proper names of each group with the meanings if possible. Ascertain what is the mutual tie that holds each group together ; a common name ? (supposed) common descent ? reverence for a (supposed) common ancestor or other object of worship ? residence in a common locality ? or ties of blood genealogically proven ? Note whether the groups are totemic, that is to say, are they associated with some species of animal, plant, or other natural object ? (See *Totemism*.) Note whether the several groups have special functions to perform for the welfare of the community ; whether they practise special arts and crafts ; if so, do they keep their methods secret ? Are the groups recruited by adoption ? if so, who may be adopted, when, and by whom ? Is a lengthened term of residence necessary, and a formal ceremony ? or does intermarriage suffice to give the stranger rights in the group ?

Slavery. Note whether slavery is practised, domestic or communal. How are the ranks of the slaves recruited (as by capture in war, by inability to pay debts, by purchase) ? What is the status of the children of a freeman, or freewoman, and a slave ? Have the slaves any special duties to perform in public functions, especially in magico-religious rites ? Are slaves owned by any superhuman powers or by temples ?

Marriage System. Is group-marriage known ? or, on the contrary, is marriage permitted only to one member of each group (*rare*) ? Is the marriage system one of endogamy or exogamy, with regard to (a) the caste, (b) the clan, (c) the family, (d) the village or district. If exogamy rules, are certain groups allotted to each other, or is choice free ? Is polygamy customary, if so, in what form ? polygyny (many wives), or polyandry (many husbands) ? In this case, must a woman's husbands or a man's wives belong to one particular group or family, or are they selected promiscuously ? If polygamy rules, do the wives live separately or together ? Does the husband take up his abode with each in turn ? Are they regarded as of equal status ? If not, how is the principal wife chosen or distinguished ? What is the position of the supplementary wives and of their children ? Are concubines recognized ? and may the women correspondingly have *cicisbei* ? or do they in fact, though not openly ? Note any prohibited degrees of marriage, any relations-in-law (or blood-relations) with whom intercourse is for-bidden, or towards whom any sort of reserve is practised.

Give particulars. Are any marriages compulsory or recommended ? such as with a brother's widow (called the Levirate), or between "cross-cousins." Is a woman obliged to marry into a rank above her own (hypergamy) ? If certain matches are reckoned the "best," does the bride-price or the dowry differ from that paid in other cases ?

State whether (1) the husband leaves his own social group, temporarily or permanently, to reside with that of his wife, or *vice versa* ?

Note whether (2) descent is reckoned in the male or female line, or in both ; whether children belong to their mother's social or local group or their father's.

Note whether (3) the authority over the family or kindred is exercised by the father, or eldest male member ; by the mother, her brother or maternal uncle, or her relations generally.

What special duties or privileges belong to collateral relatives ? (*e.g.* the mother's brother, father's sister, sister's son, or brother's daughter).

What is the position of widows ? Do they belong to the deceased husband's group, or return to their own ? may they re-marry ? if they may, is it by different ceremony, and how does the ceremony differ from that of a first marriage ? what becomes of their dowry ? of their children by either husband ?

Property and Inheritance. Note what kinds of property belong to the men, and what to the women ; who inherits a woman's property, and who a man's ; whether individuals can leave their goods as they please ; if the children inherit, whether they take equal shares, or whether the firstborn or last born has special claims ; whether sons and daughters share alike ; whether the family property is divided on the death of the head, or held in common. Give details of the rules of inheritance as far as possible.

Land. To whom does the land belong ? to the tribe, to the community, to the family, or to individuals ? How is the right to occupation determined ? and what is the consequence of ceasing to occupy or cultivate ? Does ownership of the land also carry with it ownership of the crops (*e.g.* fruit-trees), and *vice versa* ? Can a man or a community part with land ? Where a supreme chief exists, note what are the respective rights of the chief and of the people in the land, cultivated and un-cultivated.

N.B.—(A right understanding of the native laws of property is of the first importance in countries where white men govern or have settled among coloured races.)

Contracts. Note how contracts are made and enforced, between master and servant, owner and tenant, buyer and seller ; what pledges are given, and what penalties exacted for a breach of agreement, etc.

Authority. Ascertain who is responsible for the maintenance of law and order ; who takes cognizance of breaches of law and custom ; who decides questions of (*e.g.*) war and peace, of holding assemblies or other public functions. Note whether there is any assembly of elders or of the whole community, how summoned and constituted ; when does it meet, and where, with what ceremonies ? Must its decisions be unanimous ? how are they enforced ? is there a separate organization for war and peace ?

Law and Justice. Ascertain what offences are major, and what minor crimes ? Which are offences against the individual and which against the community ? What punishments are inflicted in each case ? Is murder a matter for private revenge, or a question for public justice ? If so, is the *lex talionis*, blood for blood, enforced, or is a fine (*bóld wite*) imposed ? Who sees to the enforcement of the penalty ? What is the judicial procedure ? the ceremonial of a court of justice ? are oaths taken (by what ?), ordeals submitted to, oracles consulted ? Give details. How is the verdict arrived at and how is the judgment enforced ?

Sanctuary. What places or persons have the right of sanctuary ? churches, temples, shrines, desert spots, stables, women or women's apartments, guests ? All such, or individuals only ? Does the refuge protect against the law or only against private foes ?

Kings and Chiefs. Ascertain what are the powers and duties of the chief or king, and how his political powers are limited ; whether he is expected to control the weather, held responsible for any failure in the crops, or other public misfortune, supposed to possess special powers of healing or of divination. Does he officiate in the public magic-religious rites ? Is the chief's office hereditary ? if not, how is he chosen ? Observe with what ceremonies he is installed in his office ; what are the insignia of his office ; have the insignia any special powers ?

What physical disabilities disqualify a man from being king ? Is the king or chief subject to any special prohibitions ? State them. Who would be injured by any breach of them ? the king, the offender (who saw him eat, partook of his food, etc.), or the commonwealth ? Does the king reign for life or only for a fixed term ? Is he got rid of at the end of the term, or when his physical powers fail ? if so, how ?

Societies. Is there a bachelors' house ? does it serve as a guest-house ? is it the scene of any special rites ? is it the resort of all the men of the community or of certain societies only ? Have the societies (if any) any other rendezvous ? Who may belong to these societies ? what is their object or purpose ? do they include different grades or ranks ? Is membership voluntary ? Are they secret as regards the members (*i.e.* is it known who belongs to them ?) or only as regards the proceedings at the meetings ? are the performances public ? Are they connected with the ghosts of the dead ?

Social Life, Regulation of. What is the code of manners practised ? and what rules are observed in greeting equals, saluting, or receiving superiors or inferiors, giving and receiving presents, method of conducting interviews, duration of interviews.

What are the local rules of hospitality ? does it include lending of wife (or other woman) ? Is the person of a guest sacred ? for how long ? how long is hospitality incumbent on the host ? What rules are observed in the sending of messages from one tribe to another ? in the reception of embassies ?

What ceremonies are observed on setting out on a journey ? on arriving in a strange country or district ? on leaving it ? on returning home ?

What ceremonies are observed in buying and selling ? making known the goods offered ? the price asked or offered, the conclusion of the bargain, the receipt of the payment, taking possession of the property, etc.

The Village Community in England.

Ascertain the position of the ancient Common Fields (arable) ; the common pastures ("Dolemoors," "Lammas lands," and the like), and their situation with regard to the village. Note the course of old roads, lanes, and paths ; the relative positions of the church and the manor-house ; the sites of the mill and the smithy ; of houses known as the Lodge, the Park, the Grange, or the Dairy House ; names of fields indicating obsolete crops or customs—*e.g.* the Hempbutt, the Herdsman's Croft ; and any other points discoverable from old maps or Enclosure Acts. Enquire for Manor Court Rolls and Church-wardens' Accounts, and note anything that may help to reconstitute the obsolete local social system ; services and payments due ; when due ? heriots, privileges of the lord of the manor, ecclesiastical rights and dues, and the like. Note any peculiar tenures, rose-rents, etc. ; peculiar customs of inheritance, borough English, dower ; rights of annual entry into enclosed ground (when, and for what purpose) ; common-rights, hearth-rights, "keyhold tenure," privileges confined to one part of the village or township, local rivalries, traditions of old local contests. Village officers, how chosen, how paid ; their duties. The pound, the stocks, the village green, tree, or well ; the courthouse or other meeting place of the court, indoor or outdoor ; the name and position of the village inn. Local weights and measures (these varied surprisingly). Fairs or markets, past or present ; when held, how opened, any special laws or privileges during the fair. Kind of business transacted, hiring servants, ceremonies and terms of contract. The dedication of the church (is it the original dedication ?). Annual feast or wake ; any special ceremonies (choice of a Mock Mayor, etc.), games, performances, or festival viands. (See *How to Write the History of a Parish*, by Dr. J. C. Cox. London : Geo. Allen & Sons, 1909.)

Rites of individual life (1st Edition : "Ceremonial Customs.")

Birth. Note how sterility is regarded ; what practices are resorted to to obtain children. Describe what a woman should do when she finds that she is pregnant, what precautions or prohibitions she must observe during pregnancy, what her husband must observe, what methods are practised for divining the sex of the unborn child, and what is done to procure an easy delivery. Note where the birth takes place ; in a dwelling specially provided, at the woman's own dwelling, at her mother's, or where ? Who acts as midwife, is this the duty of any particular relative ? What is done with the after-birth, with the umbilical cord ? has any special person the charge of the latter ? Note any belief about birth with a caul, what is done with the caul ? What is done in the case of birth of twins, deformed infants, infants born feet foremost, or other abnormal births ? Give the reasons assigned.

Note restrictions, prohibitions, length of separation or seclusion of the mother. Does the father submit to a period of seclusion or restriction? Give particulars. Describe supernatural dangers to which mother and infant are exposed; things done to protect them from witchcraft or other evils, rites or ceremonies performed or submitted to before resuming ordinary life, things done to promote or check the flow of milk; ceremonies at weaning.

Are omens drawn from the time or circumstances of birth? What is the first food given to the child, by whom is it given? How is the child received or treated when first taken abroad? Is any public exhibition made of it to the community, or to the sun and moon?

Note any beliefs connected with the cradle, and enquire for cradle-songs and lullabies.

Describe the ceremony of naming the child. When does it take place, how is the name selected, by whom given? Do the parents change their names on the birth of the first child? Is the name-giving accompanied by any other rite? purification? circumcision? Is there any rite, unconnected with naming, performed for a young child, boy or girl? any ceremonies connected with the first tooth, first hair-cutting, etc.? What amulets or talismans are worn by children? To what prohibitions or restrictions are they subjected? How long do they last? till weaning, end of first year, change of teeth, or when? What is done with the cast milk-teeth? Is there any difference in the rites observed for boys and girls, for the first-born infant and succeeding children?

Are children preferred or required as priests or priestesses? or to perform any special rites, and if so, on what occasions? or to do any act which would be injurious if done by an adult who may have violated some prohibition?

What becomes of women who die in childbirth, or children who die in infancy? How are their corpses disposed of?

Adoption. Is this customary? when? with what ceremonies? what change of status do they convey? what rights do they confer? Who may adopt and who may be adopted?

Initiation. What is the customary age of initiation? is it compulsory? does it admit the candidate to clan, tribe, or society? Describe the rites, especially noting (1) endurance ordeals, (2) instructions in conduct, belief, and morality, (3) dramatic representations, (4) communication of secrets, (5) physical operations, (6) subsequent restrictions or privileges. Describe any special dances, and compare with death-dances. Note any ceremonies representing death and resurrection: are they connected with the initiation rites? are women and the uninitiated made to believe that the candidates are put to death and raised to life again? does the candidate receive a new name? does he afterwards affect forgetfulness of his former life? Is initiation repeated on admission to successive social grades or "age-classes".

Are girls secluded on arriving at womanhood? Where, for how long, and under whose charge? What ceremonies do they go through? To what prohibitions and restrictions are they subjected? are these repeated periodically? Do they undergo any further rites, physical or other, previous to marriage? Are they collected in a "school" under superintendence, and instructed in womanly duties?

Marriage. Note any love-charms or love-divinations in use. Ascertain the customary age for marriage, what liberty of choice is permitted to the parties, whether infant betrothal is customary, (if so, at what age the marriage is consummated), what relatives have the right of disposing of the hand of a girl, of a boy; who makes the first overtures, how, and to whom? Is there any ceremony of betrothal? of what does it consist? what rights does it confer? Is pre-nuptial chastity desired? is proof of it required? does the validity of the marriage depend on it?

What special duties in connection with the marriage devolve upon the father and mother or the several paternal and maternal relatives of the bride and bridegroom respectively?

Is there more than one form of marriage ? if so, what is the status of the wife (or husband) in each ? Is a bride-price paid, or a bridegroom-price ? (how much ? what does it consist of ? who finds it and who receives it ?) Does the bride receive a dowry ? (*ibid.*).

Is there a special season for marriages ? What are auspicious days for it ? what omens are observed in connection with it ? Note the preparations for marriage. What ceremonies, purificatory or other, do the bride and bridegroom undergo ? what precautions are taken to ensure good luck or avert evil, what prohibitions are either subjected to ; before, during, and after the marriage ceremonies ? what presents do they exchange ? what special garments does either wear ? Is the bride veiled ? Is the bride or the bridegroom required to satisfy any test or to perform any feat ?

Does the bride go to the bridegroom's home or he to hers ? Do they remove at once or after an interval ? Is the first removal temporary only ? Is any opposition offered to the entrance of the bridegroom or the departure of the bride ? Is she hidden or disguised ? How does she behave ? What companions accompany them ? What does she take with her ? How are the pair conveyed ? Describe all the ceremonies connected with the change of domicile both at the departure and subsequent reception Is the marriage consummated at once, or after what delay ?

Where is the bridal feast held ? Is there more than one ? What guests are present ? what special viands are provided ?

What special songs, dances, or games are performed ? Does the chief, the priest, or medicine-man take a leading part in the rites ?

Give all the ceremonies in order of time, and state which is the essential part of the rite, which makes the marriage binding. In the case of *matrilocal* marriage record all the details with special care, and state whether there is any mock-fight or ceremonial change of domicile. Note what is the sub-sequent status of the husband.

What changes of costume or of hair-dressing do men or women make on marriage, or on widowhood ? What marriage-tokens are worn ?

What are the bride's relations with her husband's mother, father, brothers, sisters, or other relations ? what are the bridegroom's with hers ? If prohibitions occur, give particulars, and say how long they last and how they may be removed.

Is it customary to repeat the marriage ceremony after the birth of a child ? Are conditional, temporary, or irregular marriages entered upon ? on what terms and with what rites ?

Divorce. What causes are held to justify divorce or separation ? Is divorce at the will of one party only ? or of either ? Is the consent of any other persons needed ? With what ceremonies is it effected ? What are the consequences of divorce, (*a*) to the parties themselves (how soon can they re-marry ?), (*b*) to the children, (*c*) to the bride-price ?

Death. What events give warning of death ? When death is imminent how is the sick man treated ? is he abandoned, buried alive, or put to death ? is he removed from the house or bed ? is anything done to ease or expedite the departure of the soul ?

Ascertain what is the first thing to be done after a death. Are deaths formally announced ? how, by whom, and to whom ? To what is death attributed ? Are any steps taken to find out the cause ? or (if attributed to witchcraft) the author ? Is there any idea of death from natural causes ?

How is the corpse prepared for the funeral ? washed ? (what is done with the water ?), clothed, adorned, bound, mutilated, embalmed ? in what position ? Is food offered to it ? is it watched ? Does it sit or lie in state ? how long, and with what ceremonies ? How is the corpse disposed of ?

How is the body disposed of ? by *interment* (temporary or permanent ? in extended or contracted position ? describe position in detail) ; *cremation* (where ? detail the ceremonial ; who lights the fire, by what method, with what fuel, how are the ashes disposed of ?) *exposure* (on what and for how long ?) ; *immersion* (where ?) ; preservation (by desiccation, or other means ? detail them. What parts are preserved, how adorned or painted, where kept, for what purpose and for how long ?) If more than one mode of disposal is in use what determines the choice in each case ? sex, status, mode of death?

State the exact relationship to the dead man of gravediggers and others who perform specific functions in connection with the death. Note all observances or prohibitions with regard to fire, water, salt, food, and cookery.

Lamentations and dirges : are these formal ? by hired mourners ? extempore or in a set formula ? Give the words. When do they begin and how often are they repeated ?

How long a time elapses between the death and funeral ? What is the usual hour for funerals ? Is there a preliminary feast ? who is invited, or comes ? Is the deceased supposed to partake of it ? Is a portion given to the domestic or semi-domestic animals, or doles to the poor ? Must the guests touch the dead?

Are coffins used ? How is the corpse taken out ? feet foremost ? by what exit ? Note any precautions taken on the threshold. May the house door be shut ? What route is taken to the grave ? any beliefs about it ? Does the corpse show any reluctance to go?

The grave : what are its locality, shape, position, orientation ? its furniture—food, drink, wives, dependants ; effigies of above ; property : tools, weapons, ornaments, children's toys ? whole or broken ? Are the objects used in the funeral rites destroyed at the grave-side ? any other property destroyed ? What is the tenor of the farewells at the grave ? How soon is the soul supposed to be at rest ? Is the burial permanent ? or is the corpse afterwards exhumed and re-interred ? In this case, are any bones retained by the relatives ? Which bones ? and what for?

If *cremation* is practised, how are the ashes disposed of ? where, and with what ceremonies ?

What is done in the case of suicides, women dying in childbirth, uninitiated persons, slaves, criminals, persons dying by lightning or other “ visitation of God,” or “ evil death.”

Note any ceremonies performed or undergone by the attendants at a funeral on their return.

What special duties are incumbent on particular relatives in connection with a death ? what signs of mourning are used or worn ? do they differ according to degree of relationship ? How long are they continued ? what prohibitions does a state of mourning involve ? State exactly whose duty it is to re-move the signs of mourning. Is this done publicly ? with any special ceremony or feast?

Is there a second or third funeral feast ? after what intervals ? Who provides and who partakes of them ? Are any games, dances, dramatic performances, held ? Describe them. Do they make any difference to the state of the soul of the deceased ? Where is the soul supposed to be between death and the completion of the funeral rites ? Is there any attempt to drive away the soul, or to retain it ? is any receptacle provided for it (image, tablet, etc.) ? In the case of death away from home, is anything done to recall the soul ? is a cenotaph erected for it ? Is any memorial (stone, cairn, etc.) set up to the deceased ? if so, describe it. Are tombs cared for or neglected ? Compare the beliefs as to another life with the funeral rites.

Occupation and Industries

War. Ascertain whether there is any definite military organisation ; how war is declared ; are enemies surprised, or is notice of attack given ? Note what preparations, positive or negative, are made for war ; sacrifices offered, war-dance performed, omens taken, separation of the sexes enforced, weapons blessed or “ medicined” ? Are magical formulas engraved on sword-blades, etc. ? Do the warriors take any means to make themselves invulnerable, invisible ? do they carry amulets, talis-mans ? Is any sacred object carried by the army to the battlefield ? Note whether the warriors

are sub-ject to any prohibitions previously or while on the war-path. Are they accompanied by priests or medicine-men ; with what object ? Are their wives subject to any prohibitions during their absence, or are any particular actions enjoined on them?

Note how the bodies of slaughtered enemies are treated, and what trophies the victors bring back ; is head-hunting practised, with what object ? Must the warriors observe any particular rites or prohibitions on their return ? How is peace settled ? is there any ceremony of declaring a peace or truce ?

Hunting. Ascertain whether there is a class of professional hunters ; what days or times are thought auspicious for hunting ; what are the preliminaries of a hunting expedition ; what previous preparation do the hunters undergo, and with what object ? (to give skill, ensure safety, procure success ?) what amulets, if any, are carried ? To what prohibitions are they subjected, as to diet, actions, relations with women, etc. Are the traps, or weapons, charmed, “ medicined,” or treated in any way ; is any sort of personality attributed to them ? How are the dogs treated, are they also charmed, etc. ? are they re-warded with a portion of the game ? Note whether anything is done before the party starts to attract the game ; dances or masquerades, sacrifices offered or charms recited ? Are pantomimic representations of the catching and killing of the game enacted ? Give full particulars of the rites. Note any acts or conduct prescribed or forbidden to women and others left at home ; whether any words or names are prohibited while out hunting ; whether any ceremony is observed after killing the game. How is it divided ? who has a right to share in it, and to receive what portions ? Are any parts (horns, teeth, claws, whiskers, etc., etc.) preserved as amulets or talismans, or simply as trophies ? Is there any ceremony in eating game, particularly the first of the season ? How are the bones treated ? What is done to a new hand the first time of going out hunting?

Fishing, Fishermen, and Sailors. Note whether there is a professional class of fishermen, whether their occupation is hereditary, whether they intermarry with other classes or trades, whether they live in a separate district or area, whether they have any special festival or religious patron apart from the rest of the population. What part do the men take in the industry, and what the women ? Note rites performed to attract the fish ; lucky or unlucky omens observed on going fishing ; anything done to bring luck and anything forbidden ; acts prescribed or forbidden to the women in their husbands’ absence ; ceremonies practised in launching boats, especially new boats ; articles taken in the boat to bring luck, and articles prohibited ; words or names which must not be spoken at sea. Must silence be observed while letting down or hauling in the nets ? Note charms repeated or anything said or done to obtain a good haul ; what is done with the first fish taken ; any fish returned to the water (particular kinds ?) ; kinds of fish or other objects which it is unlucky to find in the haul ; kinds of fish which may not be eaten ; what is done with the bones, blood, entrails and eyes of the fish eaten ; anything said or done on salting, smoking, selling, or buying fish. Is there any annual ceremony of blessing the sea ? any ceremony in eating the first fish of the season caught ? How are the bones treated or disposed of?

Describe rites of building or launching boats. Is their ultimate fate foretold from accidents during building or launching ? Have they personal names ? how bestowed ? Are eyes painted on them ? Why ? Are they personified, supposed to have special characters, to be individually lucky or un-lucky ? What amulets are carried on board ? Note any peculiarity about the shape or material of the vessel or fishing-rod, the make of the net or fish-hook, etc., which brings luck or the reverse ; any days specially lucky or unlucky for putting to sea.

Is labour, such as rowing, weighing anchor, hauling on ropes, accompanied by songs ? traditional or improvised ? sing in chorus or as a solo with a chorus burden ?

Note what is done to a new hand on joining the vessel, on first seeing open sea, first going up the rigging, first crossing the Line, etc. ? Are sailors tattooed ? are the patterns original or copied from each other ? have they any significance ? does each man choose his own pattern or is some special pattern allotted to him by right ?

Are any talismans carried to prevent wreck or drowning ? Are any spots haunted by mermen or mermaids ? do they drag unwary victims under the water ? can these be rescued ? how ? Is it unlucky or unlawful to save a drowning man ? how is wreckage regarded, and wrecks ?

Note things done to influence the weather ? Does whistling affect it ? Do witches control it ? do they raise storms ? do sailors buy favourable winds of them ? Note what persons or animals are unlucky passengers (natives of certain countries, clergy, women ; a corpse ; etc.). Are any noted landmarks saluted in passing ? how ? Describe rites relating to the birth of an infant at sea, a death and burial at sea ; can the captain of a vessel celebrate marriages at sea ? Note what rites are observed on landing, or returning from a voyage. Describe them. Note any legends told by sailors of ghostly ships, the Flying Dutchman, the sea-serpent, or other marvels. Have they any special songs ? How are they regarded in folk-tales, songs and proverbs?

Flocks and Herds. Note what domestic animals are kept and who attends to them, men or women ? or both ? whether cattle are housed during part of the year and pastured during the other part ; whether they are pastured in the uplands and lowlands at different seasons ; rites and ceremonies observed on changing pasture. Are the cattle ever driven through fire or smoke ? What is done in case of murrain ? Enquire into veterinary practice (cf. *Leechcraft*). What is done to preserve the cattle from witchcraft ? to secure fecundity ? Are strange births ominous ? What is done to prevent abortion ? if it occurs, how is the immature foetus disposed of ? How is the after-birth disposed of ? What is done to console a cow for losing her calf or a ewe her lamb ? Who milks the cattle or sheep ? men, women, or young children of both sexes ? Are charms or songs used to induce the cows, etc., to give their milk ? Is milk used for human food ? note any taboos in connection with it. May other food be taken before it is believed to have passed out of the system ? may it be boiled ? is butter or cheese made from it ? Do witches and demons steal milk, prevent butter “ coming ” ? what precautions are taken against this, or remedies used ? Note method of churning and all observances connected therewith ; is the presence of strangers objected to ? are charms, amulets, or benedictory gestures used ? Is the flesh of cattle, etc., eaten ? is the flesh of any animal forbidden to women ? Note whether there is a special slaughtering season ; what is done with the old bulls and rams, are they subjects of sport or public amusement ? whether any domestic animals are sacrificed, annually or occasionally ? with what object ? killed in any special way ? with any special implement ? what is done with the different parts of the carcase ? Note whether the herdsmen have any special festivals, guardian deities, or patron saints ; any annual ceremony of blessing flocks or herds ; any festival on the occasion of sheep-shearing. Note what wood is used to make drovers’ sticks or shepherds’ crooks, whether they are carved, with what patterns ? Are there any stories or songs celebrating pastoral life ? Do the herdsmen tell stories of the superhuman knowledge or sagacity of their charges ? Do herdsmen and husbandmen intermarry ? Is there any rivalry between them ?

Agriculture. Ascertain what is the system of land-tenure, as regards the actual cultivators ; communal or individual ; what crops are grown (grain, vegetables, fruit ?) ; what implements are used (hoes, ploughs ?) ; what beasts draw the plough, if used ; whether men or women till the ground, or is the work shared ? if so, how ? Note any rite performed to increase the fertility of the soil ; observances connected with the dunghill ; the proper date for beginning ploughing ; is the plough wetted before putting it into the ground ? is liquor from a festive meal ever poured over it ? is food eaten beside it ? is anything said ? is it ever carried about in procession ? When and with what ceremonies ? Is any part of the field purposely left unfilled ? What for ?

Note lucky or unlucky days for sowing, planting, and grafting ; the proper period of the moon, the good or evil omens observed. Is anything special mixed with the seed grain ? Is it carried to the field by any special person, or in any special receptacle ? Is anything said or done on beginning sowing ? on completing the sowing ? Who sows the seed ? if a patch is missed, does it portend death ? to the sower or to someone else ? Must the sexes be separated at sowing-time ? or on the contrary, is license enjoined or recommended ? Must young plants be planted by women ? Are any rites performed, or talismans used, to protect props or fruit from animals, birds, insects, or other dangers, or to make the newly-sown crops grow, the vines and fruit-trees bear ? are they ever abused and threatened ? Note all observances connected with orchards. Is bloodshed enjoined or forbidden at seed time or harvest ? What is said when the wind waves the growing grain ?

With what implements are the grain-crops cut ? Is the grain bound up in sheaves at once or allowed to be on the ground ? All crops alike ? Do the same persons both cut and bind the corn, or is the work divided between men and women, paid labourers and volunteers, men specially hired and

regular labourers, or the like ? Observe how a new workman is “hanselled,” made to “pay his footing,” or otherwise made free of the harvest-field ; any pretext of “shoeing the colt,” “homing the ox,” or any such ceremony ; any drinking ceremony ? When the master enters the field how is he received ? Is a gift of money demanded of him ? How are passing strangers treated ? are they roughly handled ? What compensation is demanded of anyone who treads down the growing crop ? Is one of the reapers chosen to be “lord,” and one of the women his “lady” ? What do they do ? have they any special privileges ? are they disguised in any way ?

Firstfruits.—Does any special person cut the *first* ears (or firstfruits of the crop) ? Is anything special done with the *first* sheaf (or first fruit gathered) ? is it preserved ? consumed ? by whom ? If eaten, must anything be said or done ?

What is the *last* sheaf called ? Who cuts it ? how ? Do the reapers all throw their hooks at it ? What is the man nicknamed who cuts it ? Is any dialogue or rhyme repeated, or song sung ? What is done with the last sheaf ? is it made into an effigy of any sort ? what is it then called ? What does the successful reaper do with it ? to whom does he give it ? must it or he be drenched with water ? what eventually becomes of it ? Note whether such an effigy is made from each crop or only from the staple crop of the district. Is a corner of the field left unreaped ? what for ? what is it called ?

Harvest-home. When the field is finally cleared, what rejoicings take place ? Is there any ceremony of shouting or triumphing over others more backward ? Is the last load carried home with shouting, dancing, and singing ? (Give the words of the songs.) Is it known by any special name, as “hock-cart” or “hawkey” ? Must the master treat his men to a feast ? with any special delicacy ? If a load is upset, do the men forfeit it ? if the master neglects to give the feast can they exact any penalty ? Are there any games or masquerades proper to the occasion ? any sort of Saturnalia or temporary abolition of rank or order ? In cultivating common fields, who takes the part otherwise taken by the owner or master ? Are bonfires lighted in the arable fields or the orchards ? any effigy or other object burnt in them ? At what time of the year is this done ?

Rain-making, etc. Note and describe all rites performed to produce or stop rain, or to cause sunshine. Who performs them ? a clan, or other section of the community ? members of one or the other sex ? persons having innate powers that way ? the king or chief ? or one or more professional experts ?

Handicrafts. Note whether the craftsmen are nomadic, itinerant, or stationary ; whether they inhabit a special quarter of the town or district ; whether the craft is practised by men or by women or both ; whether it is hereditary ; whether the craftsmen intermarry with the rest of the population ; have any social customs differing from the rest of the population. Describe any ceremonies practised on initiation or apprenticeship. Note whether the craftsmen have any special cult or worship ? do they revere any special deity, guardian genius, or patron saint ; have they any festivals peculiar to themselves ? Note any legend about their craft ; days or seasons on which it is forbidden to exercise it ; omens they specially believe in ; practices on beginning or leaving off work ; superstitions or animistic beliefs about their tools or machines ; forfeits or penalties for handling tools without admission to the craft, or wrongly after admission. Do they show any marks of reverence to their tools ? do they worship them ? When ? Have they any legend of the origin of particular tools ? Give the words of any songs accompanying their labour ; songs about the craft, in praise of it or otherwise ? How is the craft regarded by the rest of the population ? held sacred, tabooed, feared, respected, despised, thought to be under a curse ? Are the craftsmen credited with powers over disease, or over certain diseases ? Is the craft mentioned in folk-tales or proverbs ? to what effect ?

Calander Fasts and Festivals

(1st Edition : “*Festival Customs.*”)

Is time reckoned by the sun, moon, or stars, or by seasons and harvests ? Have the “moons” names ? and are they divided into weeks ? if so, how many, and of what length ? Are the solstices observed ? How are the lunar months accommodated to the solar year ?

Note what kinds of occupations, labour, or sport, are pursued in the several seasons, what engagements are entered into or terminated with them, what fasts or festivals mark the several seasons.

Ascertain what event or circumstance dates the beginning of the year ; how many festivals there are in the year, and what they are called. Give an account of each festival ; state how long it lasts, where it is held, who attends it, what part the priests or other officials take in it, what the lower classes of the community. Does it specially belong to any one class, sex, trade or occupation ? Is it generally observed in the district or confined to one place or community only ? What is the occasion or object of the festival and what the central feature of the celebration ? Narrate the several incidents or ceremonies in their order as they occur.

Note things brought in, things burnt, things carried out ; use of flowers, boughs, garlands ; distribution of flowers, fruit, feathers or other objects (are they kept for good luck ? how long ? and how finally disposed of ?) : processions, perambulations, official or religious, to guard boundaries or bless crops : begging expeditions (*quêtes*), (what is begged for ? materials for the approaching feast ? liquor ? money ?) : things carried about and exhibited : is a reward asked for, is the demand enforced by threats, bugbears, or any terrorism ? Whipping customs ? Masquerades, men and women exchanging clothes, buffoonery ; dramatic performances, songs, dances, special games (between what parties and where played, are auguries drawn from the result ? Auguries generally as to love, marriage, death, harvest, general prosperity in the coming year or season (what methods of divination are used, and when ?). Luck-bringing rites, “ first-footing,” exchange of gifts : courtship customs, kissing practices, choosing partners for the year, by lot or otherwise. Feasting ; what viands are provided, and by whom ? are any special ceremonies observed in preparing them ? are they eaten in common, or house-hold by household ? is a portion allotted to the poor, the domestic animals, the dead, non-human beings ? Drinking customs : is any special drink provided, are healths drunk ? is intoxication allowed, enjoined, or approved ? Fire-customs : ritual in lighting of new fires, things burnt in bonfires, omens from fire, jumping over fires, or through smoke, fumigation. Water customs : bathing, drinking, asper-sion ; visiting wells, springs or rivers. Kinds of work enjoined or forbidden ; freedoms permitted, tricks played, ordinary laws suspended. Is there a leader of the revels ? what is he called, how chosen, what are his powers ? how long does his authority last ? “ Mock mayors” ; enquire into the history of any such customs. Seasons of abstention from work, food, or society ; dates when payments are due, contracts entered upon, servants hired, etc. : particulars of such customs.

Games, Sports and Pastimes

Games. Record all games played in the district by (a) children, (b) adults (men, women, or both together ?). Describe them, and note local variants and their probable causes (season, climate, sex of players). Record Pastimes : infants’ plays with fingers and toes, etc. ; feats of skill, as cats’ cradle, cup-and-ball ; sportive exercises and methods of locomotion, as see-saw, swinging, swimming, stilt-walking, and skating ; children’s singing-games and dances. Record *games with a penalty on the loser* ; hide-and-seek, blindman’s buff, forfeits. *Games with a reward for the winner* ; mental contests, puzzles, riddles ; physical contests, wrestling, boxing, fencing ; games of skill, with organized sides, rules, and opponents (polo, cricket) ; games of chance, or of skill and chance combined (nine men’s morris, backgammon, cards).

Note all “ *ditties*” or songs used in games, with tunes if possible. Give “ counting-out” formulas. Describe any *implements* or apparatus used (balls, bats, tops, kites, hoops, nets, whistles, horns, skipping-ropes, swings, etc., etc.) ; and say of what made and how procured.

Are there any *public games* ? who regulate and manage them ? Is there any customary public play-ground ? At what time of year and on what occasions is each game played ? Note games played annually between two communities or two divisions of a community ; on what date ? how are the sides chosen ? what is the goal or trophy played for, and what the result or effect of victory ?

Note all *sports with animals*, baiting or torturing them, or setting them to fight each other : races. Are these sports held annually ? at what date ?

Gambling. Does this enter into any games, or is it independently pursued ? By players or by spectators ? Is it an old or a new habit ? Is it regarded as a religious act ?

Luck. Does luck in other things follow or affect luck in games, or the contrary ? What affects luck in games, and how can ill-luck be altered ?

Dancing. Note whether dancing is performed for spectators or simply as a pastime for the dancers : whether performed (*a*) as a magico-religious exercise or solemnity, or (*b*) for amusement. Do the steps or figures differ accordingly ? Describe them. Who are the dancers ; children, or adults (men, women, or both ?), initiated persons ? What is the accompaniment ? vocal or instrumental ? Give words of songs. What dress or decoration is worn ?

Note articles made use of in the dance ; worn, carried, waved, etc. (are bells worn, or anything else to produce sound ?). How are they made or procured ? by or from whom ? are they kept from performance to performance ? Is the dance dramatic, or imitative of anything ? are the dancers disguised ? do they wear masks or animal relics ? Is it restricted to time, place or season ? connected with a particular festival ? Do they vary the performance from year to year ? give new steps ?

Drama. Where and on what occasion is it performed ? For pleasure, or for what other object ? Who are the actors, men, women, or both ? Who take the female parts ? Describe the plots ; how are they procured ? Is there any use of songs, music, or dancing ? Are the performers amateur or professional ? How dressed or disguised ? Are there any puppet-shows ?

On what occasions are stories told ? Is there a story-telling season ? Do particular stories belong to particular occasions ? For what purpose are they told ? for instruction or warning, or simply for amusement ?

Ascertain whether there is a class of *professional story-tellers* ; if so, how recruited and rewarded ? whether each has a *repertoire* of his own ; whether there is any sort of property in stories ; whether special or different stories are told by men, women, and children respectively. Are any stories not told before elders, or concealed from women, children, strangers, or outsiders ?

What kinds of phenomena form the subject of myths ? things ordinary and constant, or things fitful and irregular ? novelties or accustomed objects ? natural phenomena or social institutions ? Are there opening and concluding formulas (“ once upon a time”—“ they lived happy ever after”) ? Are snatches of verse or song interspersed in the stories ? Is there any attempt at dramatic narration ? imitation of the cries and gestures of animals or the like ? Take note of all such features.

Relate the stories as nearly as possible in the speaker’s own words, do not try to harmonise versions, and do not reject fragmentary stories because they are not complete. Give the name (not necessarily for publication), age, and status of the story-teller, and state whether he or she is bi-lingual, and, if possible, the source from which he learnt the story.

What kinds of labour, of recreation, of religious and other solemnities, are accompanied by songs ? Are songs sung as an independent form of recreation, and not only as adjunct to something else ? At what times or on what occasions ?

Songs and Ballads

Is there a class of professional singers ? If so, how are they remunerated ? Do they compose their own songs, or sing those of others ? Are they retained in the service of the kings or chiefs ? Do they wander from place to place ? Are the subjects of their songs topical or historical ? Are there any competitive prizes for singing, or singing festivals ? Are the songs traditional, modern, or improvised ? Are there burdens, refrains, or choruses ? Do they contain any nonsense words, obsolete words, or words and phrases not understood by the singer ? Are there any set forms or rules of rhythm and metre ? Do men, women, and children sing different songs ? Does each singer claim property in his

songs ? Are songs put into the mouths of the characters in prose-tales ? Is song supposed to have an influence over animals or over the elements ?

All songs should if possible be taken down exactly, noting the occasions of hearing them.

It is best if two persons can combine in this work, one to give attention to the words, the other to the melody. Let the singer go straight through the song without stopping him or asking for repetitions. Then ask for the first verse (or strophe) to be repeated, as often as may be necessary to get the air on paper. Give your attention to the intervals at one repetition, and the rhythm at another. When you have set down the air as correctly as you can, ask to have the whole song repeated, to verify your transcript.

If only one worker is available he should take down the words and the music at separate repetitions. If no one competent to transcribe the air is available, do not therefore omit to secure the words.

Do not ask the singer to repeat the words without the air, as it is likely to confuse him, but take them down as he sings them, before or after you have recorded the tune. If you fail to catch any words ask to have the whole verse repeated, not part of it. Get any information you can as to the history of the song, where the singer learnt it, and from whom ; and give the name, age, status, etc., of the singer, as in all other cases.

N.B. — The address of the Folk Song Society, from one of whose leaflets the above hints are summarized, is 19 Berners Street, London, W.

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