CHAPTER-IV

SOCIO-CULTURAL IMAGE

OF

INDIA IN THE NOVELS

OF

MRS. B.M. CROKER
INTRODUCTION:

As a novelist Mrs. B. M. Croker reveals an indomitable interest in the social and cultural matters. Her novels reflect the social life of the British people as well as of the Indians, their dress, deportment and the dishes as also their practices with cultural aspects. An attempt is made in this chapter to study her novels in socio-cultural perspective.

4.1 BRITISH SOCIAL LIFE [Women, Widows, Girls and Family]

Brought to India by their sheer commercial cravings, and encouraged afterwards by their imperial enterprises, the British had not only to confront with physical factors in India but also sociological, psychological and also emotional factors in this alien soil. As a community brought up on English social codes and conduct, customs, and convictions, mores, moralities and mental make up the Anglo-Indian officials, who formed the major portion demographically, could never penetrate and become one with the mainstream of Indian social flow and flood due to their singularly insular bias of race, colour, culture etc. An individual’s place in Anglo-Indian social set up was decided on the basis of the job he performed. “...government circles were the aristocracy, and civilian and military officials the ‘elite’ to whose exclusive social set planters, business and professional men were admitted. There was, however, considerable prejudice towards the lower rungs of the commercial community, the ‘box-wallahs’, ... the first class people who went to the Club and called on each other, and the second-class people made up of European and Eurasian subordinates in various spheres who gathered at the Railway Institute. It was with this group that the British troops mingled, ...”¹. These ‘gradations’ were further so much strictly guarded so that the system surprised many English people who never came across the ones in England. Here are the words of Sir Edward Wakefield: “never ... has there existed in England such an elaborate structure of class distinction as British exiles erected for themselves in up-country clubs in India”. ² The white settlers in India generally built a fence around the clusters of their residences and residencies which were usually established
a few furlongs away from the Indian cities, towns, calling them the stations, cantonments etc that cut them from the contact of the outer atmosphere of Indian life, compelling the members to toe perfectly the line laid down by the community. Such Anglo-Indian community in India was more of political nature and less of social feature-in its characteristic stratification done on the basis of the bureaucratic set up, what Rudyard Kipling called the “chain of command” 3 The type of Anglo-Indian Society may be represented through the following figure.

From the figure above it becomes quite clear that the sense of hierarchy and gradation were quite high in the Anglo-Indian society in India. Even the quarters, of Anglo-Indian officials, as is evident from heir descriptions in the novels were quite carefully constructed to keep these families well guarded by any influence of Indian society. Each of these quarters was surrounded by a compound segregating it from the outer world. Within the compound a cow-house, servants’ barracks and garden were laid out. This type of distinguished distance from the Indian society made them pay heavily by landing and stranding them into the sand of loneliness, emotional hunger, separation syndrome, etc. The only entertainment, by involvement in the society/community was to be derived through a visit to the club and occasional theatricals or concerts and picnics to places of interest. Although a library was generally attached to these clubs it held only a limited stock of books, which were not available.
on demand as they were issued to the members on 'first indent first service basis'. As a result the members of the club were compelled to indulge in other entertainments like dinners, dance and bridges and other light exercises such as tennis, polo, badminton, shooting parties etc. Therefore as far as social Image of British life in India, in the works of Anglo-Indian writers, especially women writers, is concerned the readers are repeatedly supplied with heavily worked out phenomenal details of such scenes, which, often appears to be the readers'-burden (to parody the phrase white man's burden) of Anglo-Indian fiction. It was at such parties and picnics that many marriageable girls developed and strengthened their contact with the young men after they were duly introduced by their chaperons.

In the novels, of Mrs. B.M. Croker, which present invariably the social life of British colonizers in India, we come across their doings and dealings among themselves as well as the natives.

In, Mr. Jervis (1897), we have the description of grand dinner wherein Mark Jervis came to India to meet his father. Mark Jervis was left in England with his uncle Mr. Daniel Pollitt a great businessman. Mark Jervis was accompanied by Mr. Clarence Waring, brother of Mrs. Pollitt. Clarence was in service in India. After coming to India Mark Jervis developed acquaintance and even love with Miss Honor Gordon, whom he had met on the train from Bombay. Very soon Mark Jervis became successful in tracing the whereabouts of his father. Senior Jervis stayed at "Pela Kothi" as a farmer. Meanwhile Mr. Clarence Waring, a spendthrift who ran into irreparable loans and debts. He overdrew £4,500 from uncle Pollitt's account and disappeared even without settling his bills. This he had done when Mark Jervis had gone to meet his father at "Pela Kothi". This kind of perfidious behaviour of Captain Waring forced uncle Pollitt to visit India. Soon after his coming over here he went to Pela Kothi. In honour of his brother-in-law the senior Jervis arranged a sumptuous dinner in the sylvan, serene, and silent Himalayan home. Here is the description.
In honour of the new arrival, the Khansamah sent up a remarkably well-cooked dinner, not at all a jungle menu. There was excellent soup, fresh from a mountain "tal" (a lake), entrée's, a brace of hill partridges, sweets, yellow cream, fruit, and black coffee. The Claret was a still further agreeable surprise; it had been laid in by a connoisseur, and imported direct from Bordeaux via Pondicherry.4

In, In Old Madras (1913), we see the vivid description of hospitality and grand dinner hosted by the Tallboys. Captain Mallender came to India in search of his uncle who had disappeared mysteriously in this country. Soon after his arrival in India he stayed with the Tallboys. Colonel Frederick Tallboys was a wing officer in Old Madras Staff Corps. Married to Fanny, a 'wealthy and worshipping wife' he was quite well off. They were in good position and automatically commanded good respect in the regiment. The Tallboys were known for their hospitality in the community. Very often they were looked upon as source of support by many people, especially young girls. Mrs. Tallboys was a matchmaking mistress. Therefore the home of the Tallboys was usually like a humming beehive with a bevy of young girls and youthful gay-hearted young men. Invariably they used to offer grand dinner and gala-like balls and organized innumerable tournaments upon which the colonel Frederick Presided by reason of his holding an important position of sponsorer of tournaments. Here is the description:

Here on the arrival of the General, his wife and his A.D.C., ... The remainder of the company rapidly poured in, and as Mallender stood by his partner watching the crowd, he was struck by the elegance of the ladies' frocks, their fashionable air, and their diamonds; - among men, the military element predominated; from the General's scarlet and be medalled coat, to uniforms of sombre rifle green or gorgeous Indian cavalry- altogether a gay and goodly gathering (emphasis added) 5

... at an oval table, glittering with crystal and silver and embellished by exquisite flowers and fruits. In the background stood a row of well-drilled attendants, commanded and marshaled by the gold and white butler.

The newcomer (Mr. Mallender) noted the dainty appoints and careful details, pointed menus, crested Venetian glass, and three superb epergnes ... (emphasis added) 6
At such a grand dinner hall Captain Mallender encountered many important ladies all dressed in grand and gorgeous manner, who enjoyed thoroughly such occasions ogling around at innumerable young men who breathed out boisterously of their recent adventures in brimming spirits. Captain Mallender fell in conversation with Mrs. Lena Villars who wore fashionable frock and talked quite eloquently with another lady, Nancy Brander. Here are the bits of their conversation.

“Yes, I like this poor despised old city and its ways,” here she cast a glance round the circle of guests, the band of well-trained servants, the delicacies that were being offered, and the champagne that, like a popular novel, was enjoying a brisk circulation.

“I do love it; it’s all so leisurely, and so comfortable. Give me comfort, and I ask no more!”

... 

“I appreciate large houses,” she continued; “the food, the servants, who all speak English...” ?

“Oh, I, I see you are not aware that this old city is celebrated for its cuisine, and Sunday tiffins. The native is a born cook, and our French predecessors instilled into him some very sound ideas, with respect to sauces, soups, soufflé s and omelettes. (Emphasis added). No doubt, formerly, the nabob, who lived here, regaled himself and friends on rich food, mountainous pilaus and molten curries. Those days are gone; also the times when the very boldest woman dared not enter that chamber of horrors, - her cookhouse. ...

... Now the menu is in French, the food is of the daintiest description ... the sudden incursion of half a dozen unexpected guests at a moments notice has no appreciable effect on the chief's temper! ... it is good thing to encourage your cook, put him on his mettle and, so to speak lard him with flattery! So much for cooks, and their employers! ..."  

Almost in the same minute details, the description of the games of light entertainment and exercise that the Anglo-Indian community indulged in India is given in the novel after novel. Novel being the major genre imbued with social element never refrains from offering such details of the doings of these Anglo-Indian officials. Here is the description of a polo tournament.
After two postponements, the polo tournament at last came off, and provided the community with an exciting entertainment. (Emphasis added) Colonel and Mrs. Tallboys never missed a single match; he being umpire, and a much-respected authority on the polo-ground, here this brilliant performer was in his element. The little man knew most of the players well, and was acquainted with the personal character, merits or delinquencies, of every competing pony. The final between the Chaffinches and the Marauders, brought all Madras to the Island, on a certain Thursday afternoon. Both teams were in magnificent form, after a severely contested match the Chaffinches won six goals to five, amidst shouts and yell of applause (Emphasis added).

Subsequently Captain Byng received the cup at the gracious hands of Her Excellency, and when Mallander joined the party from Hooper's Gardens, he was accorded an ample share of praise; for his straight hitting, and fine driving power, had more than once saved the game. Colonel Tallboys rode about from group to group on his smart pony, a proud and happy man, and Mrs. Villars, looking lovely in a great feathered hat, gazed at the hero with her inspiring eyes, and whispered “shabash!”

Another important feature of Anglo-Indian social life is its excessive indulgence in gambling which was accepted as a kind of taboo at such dinner parties, which were hosted from time to time. Quite invariably after the company of diners was treated with sumptuous feast and wine there used to be bridge. (To bridge the body with sleep?) Both, men and women took not only active but also excessive interest and indulgence in them. Some times these bridges were continued till late in the night and drained the purses of the players empty landing them into debts and leaving them defaulters. Many times the players turned paupers and brushed their shoulders with serious scrapes, an aspect of Anglo-Indian life, which has already been dealt in the previous chapter. Here is one of such descriptions, which many times run from page to page.

... Mrs. Brander fell to his lot-as a partner, for her play was famous. Here was a lady who made no mistakes, never lost her head, and knew the history of every card... made a delightful picture, as she dealt out the pack with flying jeweled fingers. At first, all the best of the red suits seemed to fall to her and her partner. By and by, the luck turned, the fortunate couple were slammed once again; the lady made, reckless declarations in the true gambler's spirit, ever hoping to retrieve her luck- and lost the rubber, and fifty rupees.
The serious, stern, and business-like bridgers played “auction” with grim consternation; here was no whining, no court martial on indifferent partners. At another table sat Sir William Bream, Mrs. Tallboys, Colonel Harris, and Miss Miller. It is conceded that cards develop one’s real disposition, and expose our worst failings; such as envy, jealousy, tyranny, ingratitude, meanness, avarice, and cowardice. Of course, as he anticipated, she had played the wrong card, and lost both game and rubber.

Bridge continued with unabated zeal till nearly one O’clock, (emphasis added) when the General, remembering an early inspection, rose...

Hospitality is the hallmark of Anglo-Indian social life. Home is a place where hospitality gets displayed in its true stature. Their sense of superiority and race consciousness made the Anglo-Indians the most hospitable community at least to their own countrymen. Most of the first arrived Anglo-Indian families that got settled in India breathed the air of hospitality and sympathetic affection for the newly arrived young men and women on whatever errand in India. In the vast body of Anglo-Indian fiction we come across this element invariably interspersed. In the novels of Mrs. B. M. Croker also we come across innumerable references to the Anglo-Indian hospitality and sympathetic affection towards the fellow-countrymen. Quite often the well-to-do wives of the Anglo-Indian officials offered to chaperon many young girls, usually poor relations. Also the young people who came to India on their personal purposes often sought shelter with their distant relations. In, Mr. Jervis (1897), we see the hospitality and the homely treatment getting documented. Mark Jervis was left in England with his uncle Daniel Pollitt since he was a child of five. There he was brought up in comforts, as his uncle was a business magnet. His father left him in England soon after his wife’s (Lucy, sister of Pollitt and Mark’s mother) death and returned to India and married Mercedes and settled here. Mark Jervis as he grew up developed a desire to see and meet his father. Therefore much against the protestations of his uncle, Mr. Pollitt, he came to India accompanied by Captain Waring, brother of Mrs. Pollitt. Captain Waring was a spendthrift and went on spending the money of Mark Jervis. Meanwhile Mark met Miss Honor Gordon at Shirani who was acquainted with him on the train earlier from...
Bombay to Allahabad. Their contact being renewed Miss. Gordon was attracted towards Mark Jervis. They decided to get married. Meanwhile Mark Jervis met his father. His father being old and infirm desired his son to stand by him and support him. Further his refusal to be taken to England forced the young man to stay there at “Pela Kothi”, which meant sacrifice of Miss. Gordon. Therefore Mark Jervis asked her to forget him and moved to his father’s place. Meanwhile Captain Waring overdrew □4,500 from uncle Pollitt’s account. This further forced the old man to come over to India and convince his nephew to follow him to England. During the time he met Miss. Gordon and came to know everything about Mark Jervis, Captain Waring and also their love affair. He stayed with the Brandes, uncle and aunt of Miss Gordon. He was really surprised by the kind of hospitality and the homely treatment given by them. After this he went to the place of Mark Jervis and his father. Here are his words of appreciation of the Brandes for the kind of familial treatment imbued with hospitality.

I inquired about on hotel, and she declared that there was none, and I must come to her uncle’s; he and her aunt would be very glad to see me, for Mr. Jervis was a particular friend of theirs. And is he not a particular friend of yours too? I asked as pointedly, as I knew how. And she looked straight in the face, and said ‘Yes’. I stayed with the Brandes, to make a long story short, and I was delighted with my visit. I now know what people mean when they talk, of Indian hospitality and Indian friends. I believe I am getting quite attached to the country (emphasis added) 11

That the old and early-arrived Anglo-Indians helped the new arrivals is reflected in, Babes in the Wood (1910), Captain Trafford, appointed as a gazetted Assistant Conservator of Forests, arrived in India. While traveling by train to his place of work he met Richard Kennedy, who shared his luncheon with Philip Trafford “who had brought nothing in the shape of refreshment” (emphasis added) 12 and then took him to his house. During the conversation he also mentioned how Anglo-Indians helped one another in this unfamiliar land, where such a sort of support goes a long way in pulling things on for a stranger. Here are his words.
"The old hands help them. In this country we all help one another—it is our unwritten law. (Emphasis added). But I say, didn’t your mother give you spoons, and sheets, and things?"

...

"... You would better put up with us for the might indeed, for several nights. My wife will help you, and teach you how to run a house, get you servants, and lend you bedding."

...

"... We are all strangers in a strange land. I am an old hand; my wife has mothered half the boys within fifty miles, one more or less is nothing.

In, In Old Madras (1913), also we come across the hospitality of the Anglo-Indian community. Captain Mallender who had come to India in search of his missing uncle stayed with the Tallboys. Their residence was like a beehive, always echoing with the sound of cups and saucers, dancing steps and sound of voices of the innumerable guests that poured in constantly. Here are two passages of observation, one by Captain Mallender, and the other by, Sir William.

1) The easy manner in which his cousin’s great establishment was maintained was marvelous to Mallender. Three or four or half a dozen guests appeared to make no difference in the perfect domestic arrangements; (Emphasis added) every thing went on wheels, everyone was looked after, everyone was free to do precisely what they pleased. Undoubtedly the head of the household was a born organizer, and manager; a woman of amazing tact, kindness, and self-control.

2) "My Cousins," announced Sir William, ... "are the most hospitable people, in a hospitable country; they keep open house, have a first-class cook, entertain enormously, and do you royally!." (Emphasis added).

If it is the big-hearted hospitality that gets displayed in, Babes in the Wood (1910), in the case Mr. Philip Trafford, it is the case of dropping in of guests at odd hours that too without any prior intimation, a common phenomenon constantly combated and complained by an Anglo-Indian family, and the kind of circumstances that cropped up by such happenings, get mirrored in, Quicksands (1915), in a tone of light humour.

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Miss. Eva Lingard came to India to stay with her brother Mr. Ronald who served in a regiment at Secunderbad. After spending sometimes with the old and experienced women of the station, like Mrs. Soames etc., and finding the quarter No. 30 vacant she got established there independently. Though an inexperienced girl, she managed the home in a wonderful manner, treated the guests who dropped in though at odd hours, usually unwarranted, to their satisfaction and maintained the dignity of the quarter. Here are her words tinged with light humour about the fix that a host was thrust at such moments.

There was sure to be somebody dropping in for breakfast, lunch or dinner. *In India these casual guests make practically no difference in the menu, just a little more water to the soup, another cutlet and another savoury.* (Emphasis added) My cook was really a treasure... he took a real pride in his work. I, too, cooked, and had installed a small stove in the back verandah, ... I experimented with recipes and made delicious meringues, rock cakes, and original savouries. The little dinners at No. 30 enjoyed quite a regimental reputation.

Sympathy is another important aspect of Anglo-Indian social life. Sympathy slackens the chords of suffering. Many times we come across the characters that are well laved in sympathy and shower it lavishly on their fellow beings to make their life bearable. In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), sympathy of one white person towards another white person gets fore grounded in the moments of suffering. Mr. Jack Talbot came to India searching for an employment. He sought the one in the railway- as a guard, passing in India as John Vernon. Once on duty accidentally he met his friend Captain Breakspeare. Captain Breakspeare once issued him a telegram asking him to detain a girl, Miss. Beatrice Arminger who was running away from home after a row with her stepmother. Accordingly Jack Talbot prevented the girl from journeying ahead and sent her back to her father. Shortly after this they met at Ooty and exchanged confidences. At that time Vernon spoke his past. He said that being unable to qualify for the military service in India he incurred the wrath of his uncle Rotherham who turned him away from the home to face many odd circumstances. He also spoke of the suffering he swallowed in this sub-
continent. On hearing this, the girl was overwhelmed with sympathy for Vernon. Here are her words charged with sympathy for the young man.

"You see, I was poor— a mere boy, barely twentyone, and circumstances, were too strong for me. Perhaps, if it were to happen now—" 

"Yes," she interposed, "now it would be different, for my experience is that you are stronger than circumstances. Oh, Mr. Vernon, I do feel so very, very sorry for you!" As she looked at him gravely, her glance seemed full of sympathy that longed to express itself in a torrent of words: (Emphasis added).

"Thank you, Miss. Arminger. I had no idea when I met you today, that within a couple of hours I should be telling you my affairs. Something I cannot exactly define, made me open my mouth for once, to one who was herself so frank and so sympathetic."(Emphasis added) 17

Often mercifulness is praised as an attribute of the Almighty. The giver and the given get encompassed in the halo of clemency. The display of clemency exhibited in the social life of Anglo-Indian community gets encaptured and mirrored in many novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. In, In Old Madras (1913), Captain Mallender, who came to India in search of his missing uncle was made to wander to different places. His agents Shumi Lal & Co. directed him to Panjeevarram giving him the information that his uncle stayed there. Mallender searched the place. It was a big bungalow surrounded by towering walls with wide wooden gates. In the guise of a photographer he entered the bungalow and won the hearts of the inmates. Immediately he was encountered by the master of the big bungalow. It was owned by Major Rochfort. Who was acquainted with Mallender and in a short while he recognized the latter, got quite familiar and friendly talk ensued between them. Major Rochfort poured out his secret of double family before Mallender over the decanter of wine. He said that he mistook Mallender for a probable detective employed by his wife Sophy Cosby and sent out here to dig the secret of his prolonged stay in India. He also said that he fell in love with Maddalena de Rosa, a Eurasian girl and married her. For some years he stayed with her in which period she gave birth to two children. Then he went away to England and
married Sophy Cosby a rich heiress and settled there. During his second visit to India he met Maddalena and stayed with her for some time again. After his return to England a message arrived that Maddalena gave birth to a female child and died. This pushed him into double game. He employed a sergeant's widow Mrs. Dixon to look after the children. Yet he was constantly worried and anxious about the settlement of the children. Meanwhile he continued to visit India and spend month after month here giving his wife false pretext of looking after the coffee plantation though he didn’t own a single bush. But recently his wife began to compel him to take her too to see the plantation, which became a morsel too gig for the mouth of Major Rochfort. Exactly at this time Sophy Cosby wrote to Rochfort that she had come down to India. This further intensified the tension of the middle-aged man. Therefore he requested Captain Mallender to come forward with an idea of facing his wife. Mallender asked him to write a letter of confession and further suggested that he himself would carry it to Mrs. Rochfort and convince her of the situation acting as in arbitrator. He became successful in the errand. The lady was overwhelmed with affection for the motherless children and love for her husband though a little disturbed in the beginning. She came forward to the children and arranged for their education and settlement, declaring that her husband "took the name of Smith, out here-for-for-for family reasons." 18 This kind of clement attitude exhibited by Sophy Cosby both surprised and pleased Rochfort beyond words. Here are his words of applause towards his wife to Mallender.

"She is a saint, Mallender, and you were right. Oh, why did I not speak ages ago! It would have saved me years of worry, misery, and anxiety; but I was a coward; I can face a stiff country but an awkward situation. No! Sophy has forgiven me, I start to-day with a clean slate, and she is going to take the children.

... it was just her own goodness. (Emphasis added) 19

It has already been said and seen that the Anglo-Indian families often organized grand dinners wherein innumerable people of the station
belonging to different social and official grades gathered and indulged for long hours in dining, wining, dancing and gambling. Before the dinner proper, during and after the dinner they indulged in easy conversation. The topic of such conversations was usually connected with and centered on their own community, its weals and woes. For an onlooker, outsider or a new arrival such parties and banquets revealed the self-centeredness of Anglo Indians. In many novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across this phenomenon mirrored-well. The Cat's-Paw (1902), shows the self-centeredness of Anglo-Indians wherein, we come across the character of Miss Pamela Ferrars who came to India and stayed with the Hassalls. During her stay with them a grand treat was organized by Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall where innumerable guests got gathered and conversed constantly. Here is what young Pamela observed with much wonderment.

...I had ample time to observe when my partner was drawn into the vortex of general conversation, and Colonel Hassall, on my other hand, was deep in a discussion with Colonel Metcalfe respecting the recent riot in the “Gorah” Bazaar. These Anglo-Indians with their self-centered interests and local allusions, were a revelation to me. (Emphasis added)  

The fact that social life of the Anglo-Indians in India was not altogether free from suffering, and troubles also gets reflected repeatedly in Anglo-Indian fiction. In the novels of B.M. Crocker also we witness the characters undergoing difficulties in diverse forms. Very often these characters are forced to travel through the tornado of difficulties not because of their own decisions and doings but because of others, their fellow beings. In the story “Mrs. Raymond” we come across the suffering of protagonist. The eponymous character, Mrs. Raymond was the youngest daughter of a dominant widow who kept an inn, which was frequented by many people. The young girl was very much attracted towards young Joe, the boatman, her cousin. But her mother who decided everything for her daughters without ever caring for their taste decided that this girl must marry the man of her choice. The man of her choice was extraordinarily rich and helped her a lot financially. She did not care even to trace the nativity of the man of her choice. He was a half-caste native, born of a
Persian woman but well educated in England. She got her youngest daughter married off to this rich, liberal but unknown youth quietly. The young man soon after their wedding, as he was rich, took her to several places of tourists’ interest and young men’s entertainment, revealing little of his darker aspect. He was a man of suspicion. He ill-treated her. On her journey to India, she met some white ladies and narrated her story before them. When she was familiar with them and other white men on the ship he grew jealous of her and locked her up in the cabin well guarded by his servant Ahmed Khan. He drugged her with soporific potion. The white ladies thought of relieving her from the kind of fiendish clutches of her husband as soon as they reached the shore. But before their plan was materialized she was carried away closed in a doolie. Here are the agonized words of Mrs. Raymond before her fellow countrywomen.

"... Mr. Raymond is very angry with me, and he frightens me. He cannot endure me to speak to any one, scarcely even to you: and he told me that if I ever spoke to Captain Fuller again he would lock me up in my cabin. He is quite capable of it. (Emphasis added) Ah! What would I not give to be at home? Shall I ever see our dear hills and lakes again?"

"... but you see mother is a strong-minded woman, and manages us all. I never chose a dress for myself, ... he was very liberal to mother; he bought her a lease of the house ... if I was only back again ... with Susan and Lizzie, I would never ask to see a diamond, or a horse, or a silk dress..."

If Mrs. Raymond was pushed into the marriage bond without her consent by her mother and thereby made to swallow the suffering, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), fore grounds the suffering hurled on the young girl. Miss. Pamela Ferrars was drawn to India by Walter. Walter had sent her the photograph of some other man declaring to be his own; he had also copied down the letters of some other person. All this became known to her after coming over here. Meanwhile she met Mr. Maxwell Thorold a rising civilian whose photograph Walter had sent. On meeting him she was put to shame herself. As she was a girl of self-respect she could not yield to the threats of Walter and declared that she was ready to face her life
squarely and barely alone whatever it threw before her. Though Maxwell offered to help her she refused politely in the beginning. But luck or fate as if, it were they became face to face again and again. But the course of life of Pamela Ferrars was not easy one. Before they finally settled their marriage they had to face innumerable difficulties. She wandered a lot and ultimately Maxwell Thorold got her employment in the palace of Royapetta as a tutor to the royal children. Even her life at the palace was not happy one. All the while she was spied by the old Rani Sundaram and forced by her to persuade Maxwell Thorold as he refused to make the payment for the much-coveted Jasra pearls. During one such talk he took the opportunity and proposed to her. Knowing full well that her life was a great fight against odds he said that he was ready to fight for her for the rest of her life. He also believed that there was a hand of luck or fate that played a vital role in bringing them together. Here are his words.

"... You and I have been thrown together, not as other girls and men out here... in the very din and stress of the battle of life- (emphasis added) first in the plague camp now among the intrigues of a native court. You have, I must be allowed to say, borne the brunt with a splendid courage; but now I want you to allow me to be your champion and to fight all your battles. ... I am afraid you think me hard and ambitious, and I remember how cruelly you used to snub me... Yet for the last year my sole hope and ambition has been to marry Pamela Ferrars. If I do not succeed, life will have nothing left for me. I lost trace of you for a while, in spite of my anxious endeavours to find you, and, when I caught sight of you... I said to myself, this is not luck; it is fate. It was almost as if fate had intended you for me, instead of Watty." 22

In, The Company's Servant (1907), also we come across the character of Captain Jack Talbot that is enshrouded by untold miseries in this unfamiliar country. Jack Talbot was a boy of fifteen when his father died. Therefore he was taken by Lord Rotherham his step uncle. There he proved a meddlesome boy. He was not so good in his studies and lessons. He wounded the favourite horse of his uncle to make matters worse he was made a scapegoat of the theft of miniatures from his uncle's cupboard and their sale by his stepsister Lucilla who was his senior. All these put together became responsible for his being fired out of the country. He was sent with little amount (£25) to India to search for his livelihood. After
coming over here he joined the Railways as a guard. Then once on duty he was met by his old pal and also classmate Captain Tony Breakspeare. He was asked many questions by the old classmate regarding the circumstances that drove him away from home and the life here. He in India he passed with the name of Vernon, and was known by that name among his colleagues. He faced the life of innumerable difficulties and disgrace. Here are his words before the old friend.

"... I have got a stone round my neck like a half-drowned dog- I’ve not struggled up till now, and now I will- it means everything. For six years, I’ve done time- hard labour for another person- and now I am going to turn."

...I have been in the words of David, ‘a worm and no man- the very scorn and out caste of the people’. 23

The troubles hurled at the young girl Miss Barbie Miller in, In Old Madras (1913), are the result of her mother’s decision to marry her off to Colonel Harris who was much older than her and an odd match. Her mother’s decision was unquestionable. As the Colonel helped the family with liberal hands, her mother settled the marriage even without consulting the girl and caring least for her emotions and interest. The case of Miss. Barbie is much akin to that of Mrs. Raymond in that eponymous story. The young girl shared her feelings with her companion Miss. Ada Sim. Here are her words of anguish.

"I am afraid Colonel Harris has offered to pay for my trousseau, and I know that he has ‘settled’ ... one or two big bills, and given mother a lovely diamond ring. Really, he is most generous; ... I over heard mother telling Mrs. Fiske that the wedding is to take place in the Cathedral early one morning, ... Honestly, I could not feel more wretched if I were going to be hanged- (emphasis added) indeed, I don’t think I would mind!’ 24

... I am no match for mother; she is so fiercely determined, so cruel and so strong. ... I almost wish I had been born an orphan, and if mother does go home, and leaves me behind, I hope, I may never, never, see her again” 25

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Marriage as an institution has been praised by every civilization. Held in high respect, by human society, marriage bond has been unbreakable in spite of everything said and done. Although marriage has been known as convenient contract between two individuals sociologically and legally, neither the eminent sociologist nor the enlightened legal expert completely exempt the emotional attachment that creeps into the contact or contract between the individuals. It is not simply a union of two individuals but many other things such as religion, culture, conviction and commitment etc. A novelist, depicting the lives of individuals, their creed, deed and word, takes immense interest in these elements Mrs. B.M. Croker, whose novels “describe Anglo-Indian life... most of them have for their theme the trails and difficulties of loving couples who are destined to be happy in the end”, discuss the theme of love and marriage and the ancilliary pleasures and problems that get entwined with and crop up in them abundantly and repeatedly. In all such discussions and depictions she glorifies the connubial commitment and familial fidelity. The loving couples are seen to be caught into the whirlpool of troubles that are created by the vicious persons around them. Usually such incarnations of wickedness are either the half-castes or the widows or the girls who meet with failures in their amatory affairs. Sometimes the ill-natured elderly women bite the ears of young girls who are deep in love, about the mercenary minutes of man and members of his family. In, Proper Pride (1885), the complacent connubial life of Sir. Reginald Mostyn Fairfax and Alice Saville were disturbed by Miss. Mason Charlotte. Miss. Mason Charlotte was the daughter of a retired commissariat officer, settled in India after his retirement. After their marriage and happy honeymoon, settling his wife at Lootan Park, Border-shire Sir Reginald intended to move to Cannes. During his stay at the station at Cheetapore Miss. Mason “had taken an immense fancy to him- a fancy he by no means reciprocated” and even scorned. This had made her boil with rage caused by humiliation. When she came to know that Sir Reginald had been married to a beautiful girl, she said to herself “I will have my innings. I will drop a shell into his camp that will astonish him, to say the least of it, and I will light the match at once.” With this thought she bribed the
clerk of the local church and got the church register and some spare copies of the printed certificates. Further with the help of a friend Mrs. Chambers she became successful in getting an imitation certificate of wedding of Sir. Reginald Fairfax prepared. Shortly after this, she posted it to England to cause bereavement and untold miseries to the man who did no wrong to her and to the innocent girl who had never met her, or whom she had never seen. Here is the description of the document.

... the certificate was in a round clerky hand, as if copied by that functionary. It was finished, and, villaneous document as it was, was in every respect to all appearance an authorized and legal copy of a certificate of marriage. 29

The very evening the old clerk came, collected the register and his ten rupees, the bribe for helping Miss Mason with the register, and consumed the heavy quantity of arrack and in the tipsy mood upset the burning paraffin lamp and was burnt himself along with his residence and the register completely. Hugh Parry whose name was used for attestation of the false marriage was also dead and the witnesses had sailed away to Australia. This kept the culprit and the accomplice in the corner of perfect protection and eternally untraceable position. By documenting such a thing, though a perfect piece of imagination, the novelist has captured the image of her contemporary Anglo-Indian social life and the kind of scams that were woven by wicked hearts here successfully, as India was far orient, and what happened here was scarcely ever known to the people in England, they fell an easy prey to the false message or mistaken missives that acted many times as a missile and shattered the security of the families. Thus the novel also holds mirror to the contamination of the churches and sordidity of the church officials who, due to their silly gains, sacrificed their purity and trustworthiness, to the malevolent minds.

According to Anglo-Indian ladies money played a vital role in establishing a matrimonial alliance. The average belief of an Anglo-Indian woman was that a girl must marry or be married off to a man of enough money in order to derive the true delight in life. This theme is repeatedly handled by most Anglo-Indian women novelists. In the novels of Mrs.
B.M. Croker also come across elderly women characters often indulging in the moments of advice to young girls while choosing their life partners and thus create an image of Anglo-Indian social institution of marriage as a matter of mercenary convenience according to experienced women. In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), the idea that money is important in marriage gets discussed; wherein we see Miss Beatrice Arminger greatly attracted towards Vernon (Jack Talbot) a guard on the railways. She was drawn towards him for his sheer simplicity, straightforwardness and unhypocritical attitude. But her stepmother Mrs. Arminger desired her to marry Sir Granville Boggin, a rich man who was excessively fascinated by the girl. So the mother of Miss. Beatrice asked Mrs. Seymour- Wenslade to advise the girl. Here are the bits of conversation between the girl and the elderly woman.

"But you would be walking after thirty-thousand a year!"

"No, indeed; the money bags would have to walk after me."

"Well, I would be the duchess of Demonville for a big income My dear girl, money means so much in these days-rank, brains, beauty are nothing without it. (Emphasis added)

"I know that money means a great deal to you Lucilla".

"Yes, I confess that it stands for a good time- and I do enjoy a good time."

"And also lovely clothes, and furs, and diamonds, cigarettes and maids and motors."

"That is true- I like to be able to order, order, order, and never count the cost. To see other women staring and glaring at my lace, sables and pearls- I that having a good time, and I have known what it was to have a bad one. Oh, my dear, such a dull strict home, no end of questions and worries, and but little money. My father says it is a sin, to give sixty guineas for a dress."

"So do I," said Beatrice; I quite agree with him."
"...I confess I am rather lucky- lucky at Bridge, and at racing. I generally get all I want, but even so, life is dull and tiresome and a grind ..."

"... Lucilla you really are insatiable. It is wrong- it is wicked to be so thankless; think of others."

"Oh, my dear, I never do that! Enough to do, to think of myself and Bertie. ... Here he fusses about his health; at home he fusses about his tenants and responsibilities, and his mother- such an odious old creature, with mouth like mussel, and sharp tongue. His sisters with thin high noses and thin high voices- and opinions – we have them all at Christmas, and it is too ghostly for words: ... (emphasis added) no smoking, no gambling; politics and gardening, village nurses and roses, ... I generally pretend I have a bad chill and remain in my room. After their departure, I gave myself a week at Claridge's to recover my mental equilibrium. Yes, I do loathe the 'in-laws.' Don't marry any man but an orphan- a wealthy orphan- bien entendu." (Emphasis added) 30

If its the rancorous young and unsatisfied Miss. Mason’s imitation certificate that becomes an instrument of severance of loving couple in Proper Pride, it’s the acrimonious advice of an elderly lady Mrs. Ffinch that introduces the rupture of newly wedded couple in Given in Marriage (1916). Captain Derek Danvers Mayne visited the Fairplains coffee estate with an intention of spending his holidays in shooting. But by bad luck, he was attacked by a ferocious panther. When he was passing through the forest with Laurence Travers, the host. Soon the host rushed to his rescue and got seriously wounded in the fight with the animal. The wound was so mortal that it pushed him imminent to death. He was greatly worried about the future of his motherless daughter Miss. Eleanora Nancy. Observing this, Captain Mayne proposed to marry Nancy. Immediately the man on the deathbed consented to this and they got married. Shortly after the ceremony the wounded man breathed his last leaving his daughter in inexplicable shock. The neighbours gathered quickly and the dead was offered an honourable funeral in the serene scented forest. But soon Nancy became introvert and slowly developed a sense of aversion and hatred towards Mayne. She abandoned him completely. Shortly after this Mrs. Julia Ffinch a woman of forty years appeared on the Fairplains. She loved pulling strings and directing others’ affairs. As soon as she appeared on
Fairplains she declared that she would take Nancy with her. On hearing that Captain Mayne had married Nancy, she announced vehemently that it was not at all a marriage. According to her Mayne married Nancy with a sense of fulfilling his debt to the dying man. There was nothing between Nancy and Mayne in the shape of similarity. Here are her words:

"Nancy, I have come to the conclusion, that you and Captain Mayne can never be happy together. ... He married you simply to fulfill what he considered a duty, the payment of an enormous debt! He belongs (emphasis added) to a totally different class—country people. I know his uncle—and I know his mother—a odious, overbearing, cat! A Super Cat! ... they will forget the true reason for the match, and declare that he has been 'run in.' He has assured me more than once, that he had no intention of marrying, ... I know from my own experience, that an officer hampered by a wife with no fortune, no helpful connections, is too heavily weighted. 31 (Emphasis added)

Speaking this and many other words repeatedly meaning vehemently that there was no love or emotional bond between Captain Mayne and Nancy she became successful in severing the conjugal bond between Nancy and Mayne and in inducing her to quit the Fairplains at the earliest opportunity, which Nancy effected immediately the morning that followed. And Captain Mayne was left to moan and with all the honour for the bond of marriage arranged for payment of £250, which would be paid half yearly. He remained unmarried for the rest of his life promising her not to come in her way, forgetting completely that their marriage was a nightmare.

Another important ramification of social life of the Anglo-Indian community in India is the familial worries that bothered the master or mistress of the family according to the case. The head of the family had to confront with many things once he established the family in this alien land and ambience. First of all before the children came into this world he had only himself and his woman to care and worry for. But once the little ones came, from bringing them up with good health in their infancy, in the uncongenial and unhygienic atmosphere, to providing them with good education and settling them well in life was the responsibility that always
pushed these Anglo-Indian families into the moments of anxiety. This kind of familial worries and concern for the posterity form the major theme of the novels by Mrs. B.M. Crocker. In *In Old Madras* (1913), major Rochfort worried about the settlement of his children. When Captain Mallender, who was known to him, happened to meet him in the course of searching for his missing uncle in India, he was very much pleased to see his old acquaintance and over the decanter of wine he poured out the worry about his children and their settlement that kept him bothering constantly. Here are his words of concern and worry.

"... The boys go to Doveton College, and this is their holidays. They are clever little chaps; I get capital reports of them both, ultimately they will find good billets, and be all right. It's little Mota I am thinking of. *She learns next to nothing beyond reading and writing and the love of her own way; not a bit like her mother – there- takes after mine. The child ought to go to England, and the boys too.* (Emphasis added) She'd be accepted; but how could I account for them? *I have saved a little, and made my will, but if anything happened to me, what would became of the children?*" (Emphasis added) 32

Many times the white persons in the infancy of their arrival to India held the view that India offered them a home of hope and happiness. But very soon the innumerable difficulties, physical as well as physiological uneasiness that was hurled on the path of their life drove them towards disillusionment as their parents called it. As a result they regarded the life here as a sort of comfortable exile. In spite of their exalted position, repeated visits to the spots of tourists' interest and excursionists' enjoyment they loathed this life and terrible loneliness and a sense of alienation gripped them. "An interesting result of this strong sense of alienation is often an accentuated self-consciousness, leading, in the minds of the more sensitive characters, to an all-enveloping feeling of frustration and failure. The notion that one is not living a normal life, but a hopelessly unnatural one, that one is all the time condemned..." 33 In her novels Mrs. B.M. Croker, while discussing this theme of alienation and frustration of Indian life here and there she also comes forward with small tips of advice for such new enthusiasts to overcome this giant despair.
Mr. Jervis (1897), presents the picture of suffering and the sense of alienation of the white man. Mr. Pelham Brande and Sarabella came to India soon after their marriage. Describing their earlier days, delights and difficulties, Mrs. B.M. Croker gives a long and lively picture, as if a kind of introduction of it, to other fellow-country men who intended to come over to the East. Here is the authorial comment on the predicament.

As a rule, junior civilians are dispatched without ruth, to lonely jungle districts, where they never see another white face for weeks, and their only associates are their native subordinates, their staff of domestics, and the simple dwellers in the neighbouring villages. Now and then they may chance on an opium official, or a forest officer, and exchange cheroots, and newspapers; but these meetings are rare. After a busy university career, after an immense strain on the mental faculties, necessary to passing severe examination, the dead sameness of that life, the silence and loneliness of the jungle (agrivated by the artless prattle of the office baboo) is enough to unhinge the strongest mind. (Emphasis added). Miles and miles from the human haunts of his countrymen, from books and telegrams, and the stir and excitement of accustomed associations, the plunge from the roar of the London streets, and life at pressure to the life in a solitary up-country district, is indeed a desperate one; especially if the new-comer’s eye and ears are not open to the great book of nature—if he sees no beauty in stately peepul trees, tracks of waving grain, venerable temples, and splendid sunsets; if he does not care to beat for pig, or shoot the thirsty snipe, but merely sits in his tent door in the cool of the evening, his labours over, and languishes for polo, cards and theatres. Then he may well curse his lot; he is undeniably in a bad way. 34

The above shown passage while holding mirror to the kind of life that the new-arrivals in India had to embrace, also serves as a piece of advice to them to be prepared for the kind of life if they desired to go to India. In the same novel Mr. Jervis, who came to India to meet his father who had settled here and from whom he was separated when he was a school-going boy. After coming over to India struggling hard against many odds he detected the spot of settlement of his father. His father, Old Major Jervis, had settled after his retirement at the “Pela Kothi” or “Yellow House” amidst the Himalayas. After reaching the place, he found his father seriously ill. He requested his father to repatriate. But the old man objected to this proposal and on the contrary pressed the young man
to remain with him. To please the old man, young Jervis accepted this and stayed in that far off place which was totally cut off from the outer world. He had to confront with giant despair and utter alienation where no white face was to be seen, except the ice-capped Himalayas and the harrowing Himalayan valleys. Here is the description of his loneliness.

Six weeks had crawled by with all his occupation Mark found time desperately hard to kill; he felt as if he had lived his present life for at least six years. (Emphasis added) The monsoon had broken, and on some days the torrents compelled him to remain indoors; and whilst sheets of rain and hurricanes of wind swept valley, an appalling loneliness settled down upon the miserable young man. His father passed many hours in sleep and he had not a soul with whom to exchange a word. (Emphasis added) 35

The young men who came to India searching for employment and the young girls who desired to be married to the well to do young men here had to confront with innumerable problems once they found in this ambience. In the novel The Cat’s-Paw (1902), we see Mrs. Croker discussing the loneliness of a white girl in India. Miss Pamela Ferrars came to India with an intention of marrying Mr. Walter Thorold her former friend. But Walter Thorold had cheated her by sending the photograph of some one and writing the letters copied from another’s. Besides he was reduced to a drunkard. During her meeting with him he mentioned, on being asked by her as to the reason of his behaviour, that he did it with an intention of dragging her to India. Further he pressed her to marry him and even threatened her to black mail. But she was a girl who loved self-honour. She declared that it was not possible for her to marry him and get along, she also announced emphatically that she would find a position and earn enough money for her passage back to home and there in England she would be a pianist or music teacher. With this she left her host’s (Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall’s) home and moved in search of a position in the light of her self-honour and self-reliance. But her path was not pleasant one. For some period she stayed with Mrs. Evans, the wife of a Forest Official, with whom she had made friends during her voyage. Then because of the death of the kind lady she moved to Poona and then to Madras, after serving at a plague camp where she had to encounter Mr.
Maxwell Thorold, who was very much drawn towards her. He later employed her as a tutor to the royal children of the Royapetta palace where he was employed as a political agent. Here is the description of her loneliness.

...I received sixty rupees a month; I was earning my living, I was seeing India; and as soon as I had saved sufficient money I would return to England, for *I began to realize that a girl without friends, relations, or ties was an anomaly in the Far East.* (Emphasis added) In a year's time I should have my passage-money, and, with a small sum in hand, would start as a professional pianist in London, or a music teacher.

and she was not free from this giant despair and the serrated sense of loneliness even at the palace of Royapetta. Here are the words of Maxwell to her when she accepted the appointment of a position of a teacher to the Royal children.

"... *You will have a life of confinement;* (emphasis added) you will be in a strange atmosphere, a Hindoo Zenana, among a number of idle, crafty, gossiping, pester women. ... *You will rarely see another white face but mine. You will have to bind yourself down for at least two years. You will have to put up with some disagreeable; no, it is not all jam.* ... (Emphasis added)

Jack Talbot's (John Vernon), suffering loneliness and humiliation in India forms the major theme of the novel, *The Company's Servant* (1907). He came to India searching for employment. After his father's death with frightful financial loss, when he was about fifteen he joined his uncle Lord Rotherham. Lord Rotherham was a strict disciplinarian. Jack was not so good in his school. He injured the favourite horse of his uncle and to top all he was accused of theft of some miniatures of the family and with little amount he was fired out of the country. After his joining the service in the Railways as guard he lived the life of drudgery, keeping himself aloof and away from the society considering himself "an earthen pot knocked about among brass one". In spite of his friend's (Captain Tony Breakspeare) repeated asking to join the society he spent repetitive ruminative moments of diffidence, inferiority complex and loneliness.
During his stay at Ooty, Breakspeare, who too, happened to be there, took him to the tennis ground, when he requested his friend

...not to introduce him to any one, and stood aloof in silence, (emphasis added)Whilst Captain Breakspeare talked to many acquaintances, or was hailed by his men friends. Vernon as he listened to the jargon, and endeavoured to become accustomed to a once familiar entourage, ventured to assure himself that every eye was not fastened upon him; that he "looked" noticing his rough hands, nor finding him anything out of the common. (Emphasis added) 39

Also on another occasion, when Breakspeare spoke of giving Vernon a big push into the sophisticated and polished society and make him float there buoyantly by introducing him to many men of importance. Mentioning this when he said that many of his friends from Bangalore, who had seen Vernon wandering with the former, desired his company and requested Breakspeare to bring Vernon to them here is his reaction.

"Very kind of them Tony, but for one thing, I've no cards. I suppose 'Mr. John Vernon, head Guard, Tani-Kul Junction, 'would make them stare, and I have made up my mind to lie low. I shall pay no visits, accept no invitations, never sit at any one's table. I made a mistake in going with you. ..." 40

That disillusionment was a decided factor to descend in the lives of white damsels as well as dames in India gets treated repeatedly, in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. If the kind of disillusionment and desperation descended in the life of Miss. Pamela Ferrars before her marriage, pushing her into the mire of untold miseries and loneliness it dawned upon Lady Torquilstone and Mrs. Julia Lamerton Ffinch after their marriage and coming over to India in, *Given in Marriage* (1916). Captain Derek Danvers Mayne came to the Fairplains Coffee estate with an intention of spending his holidays in shooting. After his arrivals at the breakfast table, while enjoying the reputed Fairplains' Coffee he saw the kind of amicable attachment between the host, Mr. Laurence Travers, and his daughter, Miss Eleanor Nancy. This made him reflect upon the domestic atmosphere of his own home. His thoughts went to his mother Lady Torquilstone who had married his father Derek Mayne and followed him to
India. Soon after her arrival she loathed the lonely and eventless life here and went back to England to marry Lord Torquilstone no sooner than her husband, father of Junior Mayne, died in Jubbulpore, of cholera. Here is the description of the lady’s attitude.

Lady Torquilstone, an only child and heiress, among her many suitors, had, to the disappointment of her parent, accepted handsome Derek Mayne, a mere officer- and not even an eldest son! and accompanied him when he joined his regiment in India. As soon as the glamour of new life, and a new world, had worn off, the lady drooped. In India, she found a dreadful spirit of equality- no nicely partitioned sets, only the sternest rule of “precedence”, in short, from her point of view, no “society” whatever! (Emphasis added)

Money failed to give her the prominent position, she considered to be her right, she was merely Mrs. Derek Mayne, a Captain’s wife, and one of the herd! Unfortunately the marriage was not a success; the heiress was discontented, and irritable, she snubbed and tyrannized over her good-natured husband,...

The case of another woman is almost the same. Mrs. Julia Lamerton, had married Hector Ffinch, a flourishing tea-planter. Soon after their marriage she accompanied him to India. But she was very much disappointed at the kind of life she was given. “Clouds Rest”, where she stayed, was quite out of the way and offered fewer opportunities for social interaction with the community. Before coming to India she had planned to invite her five sisters one after the other and marry them off with astonishing success. Here is the description of her life of loneliness in the midst of the South Indian Blue Mountains the Nilaghiris, the abode of silence and solace.

After... a quiet wedding and handsome settlements, he (Mr. Hector) carried her off his bride to the East. India fell far beneath the lady’s expectations: a vivid imagination had misled her; (emphasis added) at “Clouds Rest” she found no gay, amusing cantonment, ... merely a vast tea estate, a large half-empty bungalow, and a tribe of brown retainers ... Hector, was a heavy and immovable as a block of granite; she, as mobile and restless, as a bit of quicksilver.

For a time, she secretly wept, and bitterly bewailed her fate. ...”Clouds Rest” was as hopeless (from a matrimonial point of view) as any dead and- alive rural village.
... she ... pleaded ... for the company of guests, for a motor, for quantities of new furniture, ... To all these requests Hector lent a favourable ear; ... realized what the change of surroundings meant to a member of a large and talkative family, and any amount of lively society.

The couple had now been married twelve years; - and in spite of ... many gay excursion to the plains, Julia Ffinch was beginning to weary, of this comfortable exile; (emphasis added) she could never be happy, without a certain amount of excitement- excitement was as necessary to her well-being, as petrol to an engine. 42

Like the floral field, the world of women, created by women novelists, in the garden of Anglo-Indian fiction, draws our unfailing attention, as it offers diverse pictures of feminine nature. Mrs. B.M. Croker, whose contribution to the field is conspicuously magnanimous amounting to forty-six works, has enriched the field in her own way. The fictional world created by this distinguished novelist is thickly populated by the heroines rather than the heroes. They are cast in such a mould and effulgence that the heroes become dim and dull before them. They remain long in the minds of the readers. In the creation of these female characters the novelist shows an indomitable interest in feminine nature. These heroines, painted carefully, are inducted into such adventurous predicament that they show various aspects of their moral stance, view of life and psychodynamics.

In, The Cat's Paw (1902), we come across the character of Miss. Pamela Ferrars who was made by Watty Thorold to suffer by being dragged to India through the enticement of marriage. As a result of his cheating her she decided to choose her own way of earning the bread and left Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall's home. Thenceforward she had to pass through innumerable difficulties and a chain of suffering concatenated by fate as she regarded it. The callous hand of fate drove her to different places: a plague camp, then to Poona, where she served a peevish lady and then to Mrs. Rosario's residence and after that she entered the palace of Royapetta as tuitor to the royal children. In the plague camp she met an apathetic and stern apothecary Mr. Erasmus. She was looked down upon
and spoken harshly to by him. He issued harsh orders and exploited Miss Pamela. Here is an instance of how her life in the camp was.

As for the outside world, I thought of it but little; my interests in life and death were enclosed within the chuppers of the women's ward. *I saw Erasmus constantly, some times as often as a dozen times a day; I was scolded, scouted at and lectured at* ... (emphasis added) 43

Another instance of a girl who suffered at the camp was that of the lady doctor's at the camp. She was a poor girl from a big family compelled to earn-money in order to pull the family. It was the sheer necessity that dragged her along. Here are her words.

"... I am a poor woman; I have only my profession. *I have relations to support, and also I am saving to marry. Oh, Yes, I'm not going to be an old maid. – Don't you make any mistake about that. I'm engaged to a nice young fellow in a broker’s office in Calcutta, ... so steady and so fond of me." ... "My profession cost me a lot of cash and five years' hard work in Calcutta..." 44

In the same novel we witness Miss. Pamela Ferrar’s difficulties at Mrs. Rosario’s residence and at the court of Royapetta where she suffered loneliness and humiliation.

If Miss. Pamela Ferrar’s suffering is the result of wicked Walter’s cheating her, the suffering that was hurled into the life of Miss. Jean is the result of bad luck in the story “Jean and Jamie.” Miss Jean was the only daughter of Sandy Leith. After his death, Mrs. Sandy tenderly cared for her daughter. Jamie was her schoolmate. Ever since their school days they started to love each other. As Jamie grew up so grew up his love for the girl. After completion of education he went to India to work as a subordinate on a tea estate in Assam. Shortly after his departure, the mother of Miss. Jean too died. Therefore the girl worked in a shoe shop. After some time Jamie wrote her to come over to India to marry and settle with him. He had asked her to travel by a cheap steamer *Lochinvar*. Her Captain, Donald Cram was a thorough fatherly personality. Therefore many people traveled by the liner to India at a cheap rate. After reaching India she was very anxious to meet her Jamie. But alas! due to some
accident he was seriously wounded and detained at the hospital for treatment as his head was seriously wounded. But the unlucky girl waited long for his arrival in vain and ultimately she was compelled by the circumstances to marry Captain Donald Cram, who was much older than her and faced untold miseries. During the moments of such suffering, as she had no money to journey back home, she though of securing some employment in an office in Calcutta, as a typist. Mrs. MacLean with whom she stayed, said, "No, no: they were all baboos- native clerks- no such thing as a European woman doing typewriting. It was awful hard for a girl to get employment in the East Indies...". Here is the description of her suffering.

"...The whole affair was a puzzle- a nine days' wonder and during those nine days, his broken hearted bride remained at Mrs. MacLean's boarding-house in complete seclusion, a prey to a most remarkable variety of sensations: fear for Jamie's fate, anger with Jamie. She suffered from the pangs of deeply wounded pride, from shame, for anxiety respecting her own future. (Emphasis added) All she possessed in the world was twenty pounds and a good outfit, for Jamie had commanded her “not to pinch” declaring that it was for him to do the saving."

Mrs. B.M. Croker captures the difficulties and the suffering that the white girls faced in India. In the story "Imitation Pearls", we come across the character of Miss Letty, a poor girl who traveled to Naini Tal with an intention of joining the Hoopers as a governess to the family. Her life with the Hoopers was not altogether a happy one. Here is a case wherein a white girl is exploited by a white family in India. By making this picture mirror Mrs. B.M. Croker holds the mirror to her contemporary social norms. Here is the description of the routine she was expected to carry on.

"...My quarters were at the back of the house-two gloomy rooms looking straight into rocks on the hillside, and when on wet days the rain streamed down, the prospect was excessively depressing.

Here I endeavoured to teach the children, and here we had our meals. We breakfasted together, afterwards there were lessons... then more lessons and another walk, supper, and to bed. Our outings were restricted, ... we were never permitted to descend and mix with the gay and giddy crowd who were playing tennis, or polo, boating, shopping, or riding. I found that I was expected not only to teach
the little girls, mend their clothes and be their ever-constant companion, but to wash the peevish Maltese dog, and, when there was company, was pressed into service to trim lamps, and arrange flowers. (Emphasis added) 47

While discussing the hospitality of the Anglo-Indian social life in India we have already been introduced to some women who looked after the new-arrivals with tender affection and motherly love. Here is one more picture from The Chaperon (1907), wherein we see Mrs. Armine Doyle, wife of Gordon Brakespeare, who was held by many young men of the station Cheetapore in high respect. She was successful in winning the hearts. Here is the description of her sympathetic involvement and interest in the affairs of the young men.

Many a time the subalterns of her husband’s regiment would bring her their grievances, love affairs, and troubles, and look for her sympathy and advice. ... (Emphasis added) Armine understood their various cases with a curious intuition that was possibly Celtic. She had a remedy for most of her patients- sometimes it was joke, sometimes a word of advice, sometimes a promise of help, sometimes an invitation to dinner. Not a few young men, looking back upon their first experience of India, kept their memory of Armine Brakespeare well tended- so to speak and green. 48

It is not only that women in Anglo-Indian social system were merely merciful maidens for young men, listening to their problems and perilous positions or predicaments, but many times they also became a fly in their ointment, propelling a problematic element in their lives. Mrs. B.M. Croker captures the reflection of such persons also in her works. The story “Found in the Office Table” draws the attention of the readers for one special thing that it is written in the epistolary manner. Further the narrator also speaks of the reason for writing this particular story. “It occurred to me that there was a lesson to be learnt... believing that it would prove a wholesome warning to all meddling middle-aged matrons, (emphasis added) and idle young men”. 49 In the story we come across the character of Mrs. Thurston Ludlow who insinuated her brother-in-law Lewis Ludlow into matrimonial alliance between two girls namely Miss. Sucie Lyster and Miss. Lucy Hayes. He got encouraged and roused to write to these two young girls who came to marry him at the same place
and on the same day. Being unable to withstand the situation finally he disappeared to Colombo and then he flew for Melbourne, leaving his sister-in-law to face the horrible situation herself, declaring that it was after all her own idea.

Here is what he wrote before disappearing from the scene.

... Two girls arriving from England to marry me, on the same day! I go cold and hot when I think of it. To cope the situation, is utterly beyond my capacity. I leave you to arrange matters- to meet the ladies when they land, and explain, what you will; for, after all, the whole thing was your idea- your "happy thought"! As for me, the doctor has given me three month's sick certificate, and I leave here to-night for Colombo- where I shall catch the mail for Melbourne.

Your unlucky brother,

Lewis Ludlow

With these various pictures of women characters we also come across the pictures of women seen through the eyes of men, their husbands, surrounding neighbours etc., occasionally in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. In, *In Old Madras* (1913), Major Rochfort, had fallen in love with a Eurasian beauty Miss. Maddalena de Rosa, as a result of this affair he had to purchase a bungalow and establish her. Then he went home and married Miss. Sophy Cosby and never breathed a word about his former love before her. He went on making repeated trips to India under the pretext of visiting coffee estate. She smelt the affair and therefore began to press him to take her to India. During his conversation with Mallender who visited him he spoke of it and also about his wife Sophy Cosby. Here is his observation on his wife.

...*For one thing, she is as jealous as the devil.* (Emphasis added) If I speak to a good-looking woman more than once, she's down on me like bricks. When some confounded gossip told her that I was always riding with that pretty Mrs. Chester- you remember her- by Jove, she took to coming herself! The ruling passion, stronger than the fear of death. Sophy cannot ride for nuts, but she's as plucky as the deuce. On the other hand, *anything in the shape of a scandal, floors her; she knows nothing of life, nor a men's lives; poor dear, good woman, she thinks we are saints.* ... *She has been awfully generous to me; paid my debts, and gives me a free hand..."*(Emphasis added)
Another important ramification of the British social life in India is the description of the life of women and widows who took to hard working for one or another reason. B.M. Croker does not fail to capture this aspect of the British social life in India too. She deals with Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law syndrome and the husbands who lived a happy life of good earning but left their wife and children in the lurch due to their falling prey to gambling etc.

In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), there is picture of loneliness and hard working of Mrs. Mary Holland. Mr. Vernon or Jack Talbot worked as a head guard on the railways at Tani-Kul junction. His friend Tom Holland was a mechanic on the railways. He had married Mary. Mary was a self-reliant hard working lady. She was a daughter of a poor man, in England. She had left home quite early in her youthful days, soon after completion of the course in nursing the ailing patients, to become a nurse in some hill station hospital. The austere life had made her reserve and grave. Therefore, though she attended the local Railway Institute gatherings and balls she did not take active participation in the ones. On the contrary she remained always an observer in aloofness, like a lonely flower in the midst a green leafy branch. “Mrs. Holland did not dance: but not to appear at the Institute would have but added to her character of being “stuck-up”. She was an almost solitary wall flower.” (Emphasis added) 52 Though she was quite an attractive lady in her thirties neither plump, old nor lame she kept away from the society though in the midst of it. Here is the description of the lady.

Mary Holland, was the daughter of a poor man of good family; she had left home to earn her bread, and after going through the usual hospital training had come to India, where some years of hard work and broken her health. (Emphasis added) In a little hospital, in a hill station, she made the acquaintance of Holland on leave, a respectable well-to-do mechanic of the yeomanry class. As “Sister Mary” he had worshipped her from afar: circumstance favoured him; ultimately they had been married very quietly in Bombay…” 53

If Mary Holland left her home, parents and friends early in her youthful days, fought against poverty and odds and became successful in
life to get married with a mechanic in the railways. The story, "The Missing Link", depicts suffering of a widow. Mrs. Mill's life was enshrouded into the life of a widow when she was just twenty-three. She was compelled to work hard to earn the bread for her two children and herself by joining the department of Pensions as an employee. Here are her words to Miss. Roseneath before whom she narrated her story, who entered her house during a rainy evening.

When I was about seventeen I was married from Kiddirpore, to Mills, an engineer on the railway... He was drowned in the Hoogly... left me a widow of three and twenty, with two children, and I had to cast about to earn their bread and mine. ...(Emphasis added) I got a post - a curious one, you'll say- I was appointed to visit zenanas, and ascertain that the Government pensioners were alive to draw their pay, and not having made it over to substitutes, after their death."

An aidless widow she fought hard to earn the daily bread and saw that her children were well provided for their health and education. She toured and traveled to several spots on duty leaving the children consumed constantly by the anxiety. Her little daughter Dora died in her absence. And her son was well educated, put into fine employment drew an enormous pay. But he did not care to look after his mother and become a source of soothing and solace in her old age. To make matters worse her daughter-in-law also loathed her. Therefore the aidless old widow was compelled to live alone reviewing the roll of memories. Here are her words of anguish before Miss. Roseneath's sister (Mrs. Grey) who asked about her son Mr. Ernest (who 'errs' his 'nest', not Earnest).

"But your son?" inquired Cissie! "Where is he"

"Oh, he has a fine appointment, and draws good pay." She answered. "He is fair like his father. His wife is the daughter of an officer; she does not care to see me." - She sighed, profoundly, and her voice seemed to die away, (emphasis added) as she added- "she thinks me very dark- but sometimes I creep up to Mussori just to have a glimpse of my grand children..."

If Mrs. Mills, a widow struggled hard with the problems, earned her bread and educated her son with the salary drawn from the Government
Treasury and retired for a peaceful pensioner's life to be spent in loneliness with enough civic comforts at the concomitant of Beetapore, the suffering of Mrs. Bourne, gets depicted in, *In Old Madras* (1913). She was a widow of Major Bourne, an unpractical, easy-going Army man, who passed away pushing his wife into a dire mire of misery in the midst of the Western Ghauts, is still more moving. After receiving a serious wound in his adventure with the terrible man-eating horse of Mr. Rakar at Wellunga Captain Mallender was transported to the Bonagerry estate on the Western Ghauts. The estate was managed by Tom, son of the Old General Beamish, there was also Jessie with them. Tom would speak of the coffee plantation, harvest, profit etc. Slowly there was improvement in the health of Captain Mallender. During a conversation Tom said to Mallender that he would take him to his neighbours as soon as he was fit to move. He also said that the immediate and imminent neighbour was a woman who managed the plantation. To the surprise expressed by Mallender as to the lady's managing an estate here is the description given by Tom.

"Running a big plantation for all its worth, - and working like a Trojan. (Emphasis added) I am her adviser. Her husband, Major Bourne, died four years ago, a good, unpractical, easy-going Army man, and left her with a heavily- mortgaged property, two boys, and not a penny."

"By Jove!"

"Well, she faced the situation, sold off her jewellery, piano, and ponies, and started to make the place pay. She bought cows, and supplies good butter, she set up a bakery, and makes bread and cakes; knits socks, and sells them, and has lots of custom. I never saw a more determined or hardworking creature. (Emphasis added) Now the boys are at school; some mortgages are paid off; she has engaged a lady help, and is going ahead like steam. It was rather expected she'd marry again, but she's not that sort- her mind is dead set on Harvey and Jim."  

Mrs. B.M. Croker, pictures the internal rivalry the white people themselves. We have already witnessed in the previous pages of this chapter how a white girl Miss. Letty who came to India and joined the Hoopers as a governess and suffered. The white family kept her totally
and ignorably below. They made her perform the insignificant errands such as washing the dog etc., while providing her the least facilities.

In, *Angel* (1901), Mrs. Eleanor Gordon, the wife of Mr. Donald Gordon, the commissioner of the district, is seen pestered by Mr. Alan Lindsay, a Collector of the district. Mrs. Gordon was junior to her husband by seventeen years. Moreover her husband was always submerged in his own affairs of administration. Observing this Alan Lindsay, who was once nursed by Mrs. Gordon, renewed his contacts and intensified his companionship with her. She, on her part, took interest in his company with matronly affection. Soon their contact was misused by Mr. Lindsay who began to use inadvertent innuendos to sever the loving couple. Sensing this Mrs. Gordon prayed Mrs. Angel, her best friend, to intrude and save her character from being assassinated by the callous Collector before the foul smell of false adultery reached the public nostrils, saying before her “he will keep on writing to me, although I never answered his letters. I think it is so cruel of him: and he comes here everyday.” After this request is made before Angel she stooped to advise Mr. Lindsay and authoritatively asked him to release Mrs. Gordon from his cruel clutches. On hearing her advising him angrily he said that he considered her as if she were talking to a dog. Here are her words to the wicked man.

“I have a great respect for some dogs,” replied Angel; “you have no respect for Elinor's wishes. Her mind is fixed, she will never see you again; will you force her to leave Marwar?” (Emphasis added)

“I wish I could force her to leave it with me.”

“There, you waste your time and breath? She has a strong will, she is passionately sorry for herself and you—she is at the same time deeply humiliated to find that she, a married woman, could suffer such anguish. If you have any regard for her, any love for her, I beseech you to leave Marwar. (Emphasis added) She is ill, she is miserable, she—oh, if you only saw her as I saw her, you would never hesitate, - you cruel man.”

In, *The Chaperon* (1907), also we come across the theme of a 'white against a white'. If it is only the attempt of a man of malevolent desire to encroach upon the connubial life of Mrs. Gordon and her husband, and to
separate them, in Angel (1901), it is an abominable attempt of a white man and a white woman that became responsible in causing the bereavement between Capt. Gordon Brakespeare and Mrs. Armine in the novel. Together, Capt. Cuthbert Hogarth and Mrs. Dora Taylor tried to disturb the peaceful conjugal life of the couple. True it was that Gordon Brakespeare, who was much overridden by his mad desire for hunting among the Himalayas, left his wife alone and away for not only weeks but also months. The wicked brace took the best opportunity and succeeded in bringing about the separation of the Gordons in an unjust and unjustifiable way. By bringing about their separation one tried to marry Mrs. Gordon while the other secretly cherished a desire of marrying Mr. Gordon. Before Captain Gordon Brakespeare started to proceed to undertake hunting trips among the Himalayas, he arranged for his wife’s stay at Landscape cottage at Murree. There Mrs. Gordon “was beginning to be uncomfortable and nervous with regard to Hogarth’s attitude, for he made no secret of the fact that he was desperately in love with her, ...” 59 when, praising her as an unappreciated angel for whom Brakespeare had no room in his heart except sport he made satanic advances the following conversation ensued between them.

“Such a man as Brakespeare has no right to marry”, (emphasis added) he remarked...

“And you have no right to say such things to me”, (emphasis added) rejoined Armine sharply. “If I am satisfied and happy-“

“But anyone with half an eye can see that you are not happy,” ... He leaves you to come to balls and dances alone, ... He never has time to ride with you, he has even given up coming to church, ... He is a shamefully neglectful husband. He was away for months last year he is away now. Goodness knows when you will see him again! Why not turn him out of your life, why waste your best days and your youth; come to one who adores the very sole of your slipper, and would look upon it as the greatest happiness the world could offer if he might join his life to yours. (Emphasis added) What do you say?

“I say that I suppose you are asking me to run away with you?” ... “Instead of which I shall run away from you. You must never come to my house and never, never speak to me again”... 60
Almost in the same tenor runs the advice given by the wicked lady Dora Taylor. Here is the description of one.

Dora Taylor, was exceedingly eloquent on the same subject. *It was her intention to separate the pair* … (Emphasis added) when she gravely conferred with her kinsman and told him that *his wife was giddy, fond of admiration, shallow and extravagant*; on the other hand, she imparted to Armine her opinion that *Brakespeare’s neglect was the talk of the regiment and the station*. (Emphasis added) She would not have believed it possible that Gordon would have proved such an indifferent husband if she had not seen it with her own eyes. The truth was *he should never have married*...[^64]

Thus we witness Mrs. B.M. Croker presenting various aspects of social life of the Anglo-Indians in India in its true colour and stature.

### 4.2 FEMINIST STANCE OF MRS. B.M. CROKER.

Like the world of women characters created by William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens the world of women characters created by B.M. Croker is a variegated one. Her heroines, while breathing the air of freedom buoyantly for themselves reveal an ardent love for emulative emancipation of women. They gainsay anything in the shape of dominance, protest against the oppressive mastery of the men and exhibit their courage commendably by taking the oath of self-respect and self-reliance, while claiming equality with men wherever possible. Thus making her women characters to come forward with emphatic statements of self-assertion Mrs. B.M. Croker displays her feminist stance much before the days when the winds of feminism began to lash against the shores of literature.

In, *A Bird of Passage* (1893), we come across the character of Miss Helen Denis, who displays her self-assertion and self-honour. She was, like many other girls created by Mrs. B.M. Croker, a motherless child. After completion of education she joined her father Tom Denis at Port Blair. Being the girl in her teens and exquisitely beautiful she caught the attention of many a young men. She developed acquaintance of Mr. Gilbert Lisle. Further they loved each other. But the dangerous man Mr.
James Quentin caused the separation of the lovers by his foul play. Meanwhile her father’s death left her lonely in the world. Gilbert Lisle, finding her to be engaged, by a false proof shown to him by James Quentin, sailed away to different places cutting the communication completely off. The girl was compelled to return home after settling her father’s affairs at Port Blair. She joined her aunt (father’s sister) Julia and was ill treated by her and her daughters. Ultimately she secured a position of a schoolteacher at Malvern House managed by Mrs. Kane. Where “she rose early, and went to rest late, her mind was at its fullest tension all day long; she was working at too high pressure, the strain was beyond her physical powers, and the consequence was, she broke down.” The doctor who treated her recommended strongly that she must be allowed long leave and a good rest. Therefore Mrs. Kane said that she must get back home for a change of place and rest. But Miss Helen Denis beaming with pride in the midst of her ill health sans any substantial relation except her aunt of whom she had had enough already, refused to admit herself once again under the roof of her aunt. Here are her words charged with self-respect.

“But I have no home, Mrs. Kane- I am an orphan,” (Emphasis added) she returned gravely. “I’m not nearly as ill as I seem, in fact I’m not ill at all! There is nothing the matter with me, I’m as strong as a horse.” (Emphasis added) You must not mind my looks!”

“Would you not like to go to your aunt’s for a week or two? ...”

“... I would ten times rather go to the poor-house”. ... “Excuse me, perhaps I’m a little hasty, but I’m proud, and I, if I must come to beggary, prefer public charity, to the private benevolence of relations.” (Emphasis added)

Shortly after this, on hearing that her niece was seriously ill her aunt visited her not to take her to her home but to inform her that her uncle Mr. Milachi Sheridan had come forward to shelter her at Crowmore Castle in Ireland. Helen Denis moved into that abode after much expostulations and advice. She joined the abode of her uncle. There also she worked hard lending her hand into every needful area. Gilbert Lisle returned to England and was given information about Helen’s predicament.
by Mrs. Durand, a lady who stayed once at Port Blair and was well acquainted with the affair between Mr. Lisle and Mrs. Helen. One day he discovered Helen while she was engaged in the act of selling as a market girl in Terryscreen Market Square. She too had seen him but immediately ignored and pretended to be engaged in her work. After returning home, when she mentioned it before her cousin Miss. Dido, the latter said that she would not have behaved like that with a man for whom she had cared once in her life. But Helen Denis, a girl of self-honour held different view. She was taught well and more of the world and its ways by world itself. Those blows of poor life had hardened her and made her a girl of granite heart sans emotion and passion or even a stroke of sentiment. She had decided not to confide her self into any hands male or female. She had planned to remain perennially self-reliant. Here are her words.

"... Your illusions have never been shattered. The last two years have hardened me. I seem to stand-alone in the World. I have no protector but Helen Denis. (Emphasis added) I use my natural weapon, my tongue, rather mercilessly sharp, cutting speeches seem to slip out of my mouth unawares, and they hurt no one half as much as they do me, afterwards- when I am sorry!" 64

Much akin to the thought of self-reliance of Miss Helen Denis run the thoughts of self-reliance of Miss Honor Gordon in, Mr. Jervis (1897). Mrs. Carrie, a widow of Mr. Gordon, lived in Hoyle, in the Southern part of England with her three daughters namely Miss Jessie, Miss Flora or Farie and Miss. Honor, aged twenty-six, twenty-two and twenty respectively. The family lived in all its simplicity. When Mr. Pelham Brande, her brother, in civil service in India, wrote to the family asking to send the prettiest of the girls to India with an intention of adopting the one and settling in life, the family was pushed into the excitement as to who of three daughters must be sent. They held a discussion at the family table and ultimately it was decided that the middle daughter Miss. Flora or Fairy must go to India. But soon the neighbouring ladies gathered at the residence of Mrs. Carrie Gordon and suggested that instead of her she must send her youngest daughter Miss. Honor Gordon. But this was stiffly opposed by Farie. Therefore Honor decided to sacrifice. However the local
rector interfered and advised Honor. He said “you have spoiled Fairy among you... she must learn to give up, like other people. It is very wrong to sacrifice yourself to the whims and fancies of your sister; in the long they will become a yoke of dreadful bondage. Remember that you are not a puppet, nor an idiot, but a free, rational agent.” 65 advising her in these words of affection and concern for her he further questioned her how would she manage after the death of her mother whose health was deteriorating day by day and with her death her pension also would die. To this here is Honor Gordon’s reply, to the religious man of experience, tinged with thick taint of self-honoured emancipation of woman.

“I suppose we can work. Every woman ought to be able to earn her bread – even if it is without butter”. (Emphasis added) 66

To this view of Honor the old man of worldly wisdom fell in appreciation of her idea that for their emancipation women must learn to be independent and earn their bread as if it were a first lesson. The girl’s words also indicate that the path of women’s emancipation is not pleasant one but it is filled with difficulties. It is hinted at by her in her use of ending part of her statement. During the days of Croker it was even difficult to air such views in public. This view gets underscored when the rector said:

“Honor I did not know that you held these emancipated views. I hope you won’t let any other man hear you airing them...” 67

As if to show how difficult it was for women during her times to come forward with their convictions, in the highly opinionated society, that was characterized by male dominance, Mrs. B.M. Croker weaves the dialogues that consist of men’s views on freedom of women occasionally in her works. Here is one such culled from the novel Mr. Jervis (1897). The young people of Shirani arranged the bachelors’ ball. In view of it, the club members especially young boys and girls got busy in decorating it, dividing themselves into groups. Different items including the dish and fish of supreme quality were ordered from different reputed sources and distant places. Observing the fervent preparations in the club Dr. Loyd the
Medical officer at Shirani made a comment while reading newspaper about the fervour there was in the air. And soon Mr. Pelham Brande who was reading the *Calcutta Journal* joined him in the conversation, who was a little later joined by Colonel Sladen. Here is what they talked.

"...you are right; our luxurious tastes are centuries old; but we have advanced in other ways. Science, for instance. There have been splendid discoveries."

"..."

"Do you mean to say that we have not advanced?" demanded the other, deliberately laying down his paper.

"Yes," admitted Mr. Brande; "We have telephones, sewing machines, bicycles, telegrams; I doubt if they have made us happier than our forefathers. Women have advanced- that is certain. A century ago they were content to live in one place and in a condition of torpid ignorance- (emphasis added) they were satisfied that their métier was to sit at home, and cook and sew. Now, we have changed all that. I am reading an article by a woman, "... which is amazingly brilliant, lucid and daring." (Emphasis added)

"Oh, they are daring enough- fools rush in, you know."

"Meaning that we are angels! Thank you, Loyd," rejoined Mr. Brande, ... "This article is quite in your own line. The subject is heredity, the turning question of the day and hour. How pitiless it is, this heredity," ... the only certain and unfailing legacy.! Strange how a voice, a trick, a taste, the shape of a feature, or a finger is-handed down..."

"..."

"I wish that a taste for cooking had been handed down in my wife's family" Cried Colonel Sladen, suddenly plunging headlong into the conversation. ..."

...

"What is that you were saying about the advance of women, eh, Brande? It's the greatest rot and nonsense this scribbling and posing about the equality of the sexes... Women must be kept in their proper places- their sphere is home, the nursery and kitchen." (Emphasis added)

"..."
“Yes, I say,” ... “that this growing independence should be nipped, and at once. Women are pushing themselves into our places-doctors, decorators, members of school boards, senior wranglers, journalists. I don’t know that they will want next.” (Emphasis added) 68

As if to hold the dialogic trio to situational satire Miss. Valpy entered the room with her troop of decorators to announce that it must be immediately vacated for them because they intended to fumigate it thoroughly as it was intended for tea room on the occasion of forthcoming bachelors’ ball. With murmurs Colonel Sladen slid out of the room.

The sense of protest of a young girl is enunciated more effectively in, Some One Else (1902), which deals with partial references to India. Mr. Adrian Brabazon, a well-to-do person got married to Mrs. Sarah, widow of Mr. Jupp after the death of his first wife who had left with four children namely Florian, Augusta, Haidee and Edward. He left this world and every bit of his property in the hands of his second wife commanding her to look after the four children till they attained majority. But the lady concentrated fully on the wealth and ill-treated the children. Florian and Gussy (Augusta) were passive and pacifists; they never raised their voice against their mother. Edward did not perform well in the school. He failed again and again and ultimately joined the military. This was considered a dishonourable deed by the lady. So she called everybody of the family and asked them to suspend their correspondence with him and he must be considered dead and declared that his name was rounded off from the family register. Gussy and Florian remained silent. Silence meant acceptance. But Haidee who had swallowed the insults hurled upon her silently till now protested to this forceful command of the stepmother with all the boldness. Her bold behaviour became a big block on the path of pride of the power-mongering lady. Here is what the girl said.

“Mrs. Brabazon,” she continued, her courage now wound up by a super human effort, looking at her step mother with a fiery spot on either cheek, and speaking in a clear, but rather shaky voice, surely you cannot forget that Teddy is our brother, and will always be so as long as he lives. He is not dead to us; at least he is not dead to
me and I hope he will be spared for the next fifty years”, gaining boldness as she went on, and speaking in a firmer tone. “I think it only right and honourable to tell you, that I will never give him up; that I shall write to him, whenever I get the chance! His being a private makes no difference whatever; he is my brother all the same. It was not his fault he could not pass; he did try, and he wanted so much to be a soldier.”

That the desire to be self-reliant brought Mary Holland in, *The Company’s Servant* (1907), to India and made her, self-dependent and ultimately she got settled in her life as has already been discussed in the previous pages of this chapter. Her struggle to be a self-reliant lady was also surely an outcome of feminist stance of woman’s emancipation the air of which she breathed freely.

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), we meet Miss Barbara Miller, daughter of the Millers, who refused to be forced by her parents to marry much against her own interest, Mr. Colonel Harris who was much older than her. Since he was instrumental in settling many bills of the family and relieving it from the financial worry as Colonel Miller was a retired person and rolling in debts. Moreover Colonel’s perpetual present of ornaments to Mrs. Miller was perhaps the strong point of settling the marriage of her daughter with Colonel Harris though he was an odd match. But the girl became stiff and refused to marry him. She said the same before Colonel Harris who was shocked to see her declare so. Here are her words spoken before Captain Mallender who met her later and asked her as to her having remained unmarred.

“...I simply couldn’t! I screwed up my courage, and told him so, ... as I was determined, furious; - so was mother. Within an hour she packed up my clothes, and sent me off in a gharry to the Chaplain’s wife in the fort, with a letter to ask her to get me, into some charitable institution, as my parents disowned me. (Emphasis added) I believe there were other dreadful things in the letter. Father was kinder, he came to see me and say good-bye, and gave me a little money, and told me to write to him at home... and said, ‘This is none of my doing, Barbie- but your mother is too strong for us!”

Though her decision of declining the marriage arranged by her parents led to her being disowned by them, Miss. Barbie Miller did not let
her decision dilute, didn’t lose her courage and change her conviction. True it was, repercussions of the refusal of the marriage left her a refugee and ultimately she had to seek employment as a lady help to Mrs. Bourne on her coffee estate and establish herself a self-reliant girl and emerge victorious in life. Thus she displayed her boldness in saying no to the decision of the dominant parent. A mother in this case! Here Mrs. B.M. Croker seems unveil the truth that very often a woman becomes responsible in rousing the emancipatory ideas in a woman by mortifying the womanhood.

Another important profile of B.M. Croker’s feministic stance is her documentation of the attitude of men towards women, as to the latter’s’ liberty and their free movement in society, the criticism of such behaviour often forms an important theme of conversation of male characters. Her observation that men’s attitude, however educated and advanced they are, towards women is often opinionated and lopsided, gets underscored in many works. Sometimes she makes, her women characters comment, criticize and condemn such attitude of men. In the story “Mrs. Raymond” we see a constellation of characters holding conversation on the subject of sanction and curtailment of liberty to women both in the east and the west. In the story we witness the Raymonds, recently married. Mrs. Raymond being young and energetic, enthusiastically indulged in the company of co-passengers especially an experienced lady, on board. This was sneered at by her husband and he began to control her movements and mixing up with the society. In the meanwhile the party reached Port Said and they all planned a fancy ball. But Mrs. Raymond did not dress up, join and dance with the ladies. Observing her remaining away and aloof the elderly lady Mrs. Sharpe asked her as to her remaining away without joining the troop of the dancers. Mrs. Raymond said that she was interested to dance but her husband did not like her dancing with other men. Mr. Raymond, a cruel man, who in the later part of the story forced his wife to drink the sleep-inducing drug and kept her in confinement, who was there intruded and commented vehemently on the liberty and licence of the western ladies. He said emphatically that it was not suitable on the part of the married
women to dance wearing the odd dress. Soon the old lady fell in conversation with him about the predicament of other women, especially Indian women who were segregated from the society and were forced to domestic seclusion. Here is the dialogue that ensued between them

"... Although the world does not see them, our mothers and wives pull all the strings from behind the purdah. No family matter is settled without them, be it weddings, purchase of land or jewels, all those affairs are generally arranged by them; they are far and more deferred to in money matters, than European Women, (emphasis added) who are often beaten, and almost always neglected or ignored where business is in question. An old lady like you, were she of my people, would have great authority. And they have ample variety; they drive about from one Zenana to another, and hear all the news and drink coffee with their friends. Nor are they debarred from male society; (emphasis added) they see their husbands and brothers and uncles. Once a woman is married, why should she desire to see another man than her husband? There is where the great mistake is made in your country; were you ladies kept in strict seclusion, there would be no disgrace, none of those shocking scandals that become more common every day". (Emphasis added)

"Have you never any?" I demanded in my tartest tone.

"Rarely. Rarely, very rarely."

"And when one is discovered, what happens?"

"... I maintain here to you, ... that our Zenana life, our women's lives, is infinitely superior to yours. Where women smoke and drink, and shoot and hunt, and have their liberty, and make a very bad use of it – ours have sufficient liberty, but no licence." (Emphasis added)

"And yet many cannot read or write, and spend their days playing childish games, dressing dolls, quarrelling, or eating sweets; their minds are a blank." (Emphasis added)

"Better than be full of wickedness."

"And yet you read French novels yourself; you have had a good education; you have seen the world. A woman is to be shut up between four walls, spending her days like some wound-up, mechanical toy. Is she not as much a human being as you are?"

"No; She is inferior" (Emphasis added) was his astounding statement.
“Thank you” I replied, with an arctic bow.

“But she is well watched and cared,” he calmly proceeded, “and is very happy in her home and has enormous influence.”

“And yet she may not sit in her husband’s presence; and when he enters a room must stand with her face to the wall!” (Emphasis added)

From the dialogue it becomes clear that men however educated and advanced, goaded by their selfishness, desire to hold woman rather low. In capturing the views such as the one cited above and that of Colonel Sladen and others in the previous pages, Mrs. B.M. Croker tries to capture the veritable picture of the predicament of a woman during her time and it is not far from the consideration even in the contemporary society.

As an aspect of her feministic stance, Mrs. B.M. Croker makes her characters spell out repeatedly the selfishness of men and the gender discrimination that gets displayed thereby. At such moments the characters also come forward with a view that all the while, men, in whatever role, as a father, a husband, a brother etc., are not the sole protectors of women. While coming forward with such views her female characters gainsay the inevitability of man and his companionship for the woman, a tendency that is regarded as the hallmark of progressive society of our contemporary times.

In the novel The Chaperon (1907) we come across this view that the males always dominated a woman getting underscored at two different places by two characters, one young and one old. Mrs. Mary Ann Webb was the wife of a farmer. She was enormously rich. She was very much worried about the marriage of her only daughter Miss. Victoria Webb (Noonie). In fact she had made it a part of her prayer. But the girl was uneducated and was regarded as ‘a rough diamond’. She had a strong desire for travel, and to know the world. When she was keenly bent upon, in search of a suitable companion, Mrs. Watkins promised her to secure one. When she brought the news to her mother who said that she was more interested in seeing her daughter married and settled with her husband

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rather than wandering on foreign shores and soil. To this desire of her mother here is the reaction of the girl.

“Well, you know yourself, Mum, that every day you tell me that your heart's so weak and that you may die at any moment, and you ask what's to become of me without what you call 'a natural protector' which means a husband. I am not so sure that husbands are always protectors!” (Emphasis added) 72

In this statement of Noonie Webb we may see a girl's disbelief in man as protector, or husband as a protector. Though she was an inexperienced and uneducated lass the enunciation of her feminist standpoint goes a far way.

In the same novel Mrs. B.M. Croker shows the selfish attitude of men and their desire to dominate the women. Miss. Daphne took more interest in Mrs. Dene, (Mrs. Armiger Gordon), and therefore took pleasure in her company and invited to her aunt Mrs. Blenkinsop without knowing that she was her actual mother. Mrs. Blenkinsop, during the conversation over a cup of tea spoke of the relationship between the girl Daphne and herself. She said that although she was Gordon Brakespeare's sister she never saw her sister-in-law. Further she also spoke of the bereavement that took place between the husband and the wife. She least knew that the woman to whom she spoke was none but her brother's wife. Further she spoke of the selfishness of Gordon Brakespeare her brother, who ultimately led to the separation of husband and wife and as a result the child Miss. Daphne was left with them. Here are her words about her brother's selfish behaviour.

“... the old craving for sport and wandering seized him our father was the same. When he was not in the lines or on parade he was always yearning to be away and for all her beauty and charm, his Irish wife seemed to have but a feeble hold on him. I think I must admit that (emphasis added) Gordon is selfish like most men; yes although he is my own brother. His heads and his shooting, and his polo, and his regiment filled his life- there was no room in it for her” 73
Almost in the same tenor runs the description of the station club of Secunderabad, where into women were occasionally permitted. Mrs. Soames describes before Miss. Eva Lingard the discrimination that was in vogue, in *Quicksands* (1915). The lady took the girl to the club. On the way she spoke about it's glorious appearance. At that time she spoke of the discrimination observed by men because women were not allowed into it on special occasions.

"... The club is supplied with the latest improvements in the matter of ventilation and comfort. No London club has better billiard tables, more luxurious armchairs, or a superior cook. *We women are not suffered to set foot in it, except on special occasions, such as receptions and balls; mankind are a greedy, selfish pack, who keep the best of everything for themselves!* ..." (Emphasis added)

From the above description the kind of selfishness of men and their dominance over women and interest in detaining their damsels from enjoying even the civic amenities in par with them becomes evident and as such made the women to raise their finger of feminist criticism of the male dominance over them.

Assertion of self and defence of one's own just ideas and airing them out clearly though not clamorously without allowing them to get suffocated at the bottom of their glottis without simply yielding to the yoke male dominance is another important property of the female characters delineated by Mrs. B.M. Croker. In, *Angel* (1901), the eponymous heroine wages relentless battle against the evil advances of Allan Lindsay when he tried to entice Mrs. Eleanor Gordon, though she herself considered that she was ignored by her husband Philip Gascoigne. On being asked by Mrs. Gordon, she held a private talk with Allan Lindsay and spoke vehemently to him to leave Mrs. Gordon from his callous clutches and go away to England. Her holding a private conversation with Lindsay puffs the waves of doubt regarding his wife in the mind of Philip Gascoigne. So he summoned her into conversation and demanded explanation about her meeting Mr. Lindsay privately. At that time she told that Alan Lindsay dwindled the image of Mrs. Gordon by dragging her forcefully into the trap of love and thereby tried to sever the
couple, at the same time commenting and criticizing the unemotional attitude of Mr. Gordon towards his wife. Here is what she said before her husband with effusive emotion and burning passion.

“They are absolutely suited to each other,” ... made for one another – their ideas and tastes are identical, but that wooden old wretch (husband of Mrs. Gordon) [parenthesis added] who always recalls the God Odin to me, sits between them and bars their road to happiness.” ... “it seems a perfectly hopeless muddle, there are two lives wrecked for a life which is selfish, stolid, emotionless, and cruel. If I were Elinor, I should run away with Alan Lindsay; why should I sacrifice everything to a greedy solid block of self, who merely regards his wife as a cook-housekeeper, without wages – a housekeeper who may never dare to give warning?” 75

Thus while giving explanation of her conversation with Alan Lindsay before her husband also she hints at to him that she must not be taken for granted and put to seclusion and exploitation by him. Her fervent words at the end of the passage emphasize her self-assertion and protestive nature against dominance of the men.

Miss. Pamela’s character also emerges as fearless adventurous, self-asserting girl in, The Cat’s-Paw (1902). Walter Thorold, who had reduced to a state of drunkard and to add to this he was in deep debts, sent her the false photograph and pilfered letters, and dragged her out of England by spreading before here the enticing net of matrimony. She was flabbergasted with the reality after coming over here and staying out with Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall. When the girl found out that she was cheated by Walter and his aunt Augusta she out rightly rejected to marry Walter Thorold. In the first place he tried to force her to marry him and threatened her that her life would be a tragedy if she went home or stayed here without relations and financial back up. But when she became stiff and unyielding he requested her saying, “... it is for you to save me, you always helped me. You are my last chance. ... You are my only hope; if you desert me, I shall go to the devil... You can’t desert me. Think of my whole life!” 76 In spite his beseeching she remained hard on him saying, “... what claim have you on me? Not love-you don’t love me. As for myself I’d rather work among the crops for a copper a day, like the
women of this country, than be your wife" (emphasis added). As a last resort, seeing herself landing into difficulty Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall intruded to advise her. Despite the old lady’s good words of affectionate advice she remained determined and refused to enter into matrimonial bond with Watty. Asked by the lady as to her plan regarding her future. Here are her words.

“I will look for a situation at once.”

“Ah, easier said than done. You may get a post as a nursery governess – twenty rupees a month, and your dhoby.”

“Well, I can but try.” I answered bravely.

“And so you have resolved to break off the match- your determination is fixed?”

“Yes, irrevocably fixed.” I repeated. (Emphasis added)

In her firm expressions we witness the determination of the damsel and her assertive nature though she was hedged in by innumerable difficulties as are found enumerated by the experienced lady as well as expectant Watty.

In, *Her Own People* (1905), Miss. Verona Chandos also voices her self-decided feelings regarding her matrimony. She displays her self-assertion and personal interest marrying Brian Salwey a person of her choice. She came to India with an intention of joining her own people. After coming over here she was disillusioned to find that her mother was a Eurasian lady and her father was a disgraced white man. During her stay here she became a source of solace to her father. She also developed acquaintance and friendship with Mrs. Lepell and love with her nephew Brain Salwey a police officer. Her mother carried the money lending business under the guise and a false name of “Saloo” and ultimately she was caught by Brian Salwey. At that moment she revealed another secret that Miss. Verona was not her real daughter. She was a daughter of an English couple. In the narration given by her it was made known that she was the granddaughter of an Earl. Finding this Mrs. Lepell wondered what
the people in England might say if she, being a well-known match-making woman, settled the marriage of rich girl with her own nephew. To this doubt raised by Mrs. Lepell, the girl with all confidence and courage said that she married not for anybody's sake but for her own sake. Here is the conversation that ensued between the girl and the elderly lady.

"Verona, you are most exasperating creature! Do please think of what will be said of me at home- of the match-making woman who took time by the forelock, and arranged it all with her own nephew- such a wretched party! Think of what your grand father will say!"

"No, indeed, I've already had two sets of grand-fathers, and I don't care what any one says- I shall marry to please myself." (Emphasis added)

"I intend to marry Brian," continued Verona in a firm voice, "who, when I was a nobody treated me like a Princess- and loved me for myself." (Emphasis added)

"And you will come out here once more, to be the wife of a police wallah!"

"Yes". (Emphasis added)

It is not only the air of freedom, self-respect, self-reliance and self assertion that the characters created by Mrs. B.M. Croker breathe, but they also reveal rebellious nature against the ignorance of men, their dominance, exploitation and ill-treatment. In, The Chaperon (1907), we come across the novelist showing the rebellious and protective nature of Mrs. Armine Doyle. A docile daughter of a clergyman, married to Mr. Gordon, Mrs. Armine gave him all the possible happiness that a faithful, obedient wife could. But Gordan Brakespeare, goaded by his sheer desire for hunting and sport left her alone for weeks, fortnights and months. During the days of his absence from her, she faced untold miseries and repeated attempts of Captain Hogarth, who tried to encourage her to do away with her husband, blaming him an unworthy husband to such a gem of wife. More than once he had inveigled her to elope with him. But she had resisted all such alien elements with commendable courage and
confidence. In the meanwhile there occurred her birthday celebration. Mr. Gordon who had promised her that he would join her for her birth day at Murree, where he had left her before going to hunting in the Himalayan Valleys did not come back on the occasion and left her in the lurch to become a laughing stock of the station. She had decorated the bungalow, dressed herself in the favourite colour of her husband ordered his favourite soup and savoury. “Hour after hour passed and Armine sat in the Veranda with her parrots and dogs, anxiously listening for a well-known foot step. But in vain she watched and listened, the only sound to greet her ear was the Chokedar’s cough”. 80 Next morning she received a telegram, which announced that her husband was very near to his success and needed another fortnight. Here is her picture after reading and re-reading the telegram.

The result of this telegram was that Armine went into the drawing room and sat on the sofa, and having read and re-read the wire remained motionless for half an hour-in a condition of dull misery. What was the use of closing her eyes and playing the ostrich with herself? After all Dora Taylor was right, and so was Captain Hogarth. However, she would give Gordon one more chance- that is to say, she would wait a whole fortnight before taking a definite step. What the definite step was to be she did not precisely know, but she was resolved that she would not continue to live like this, to be treated as a mere nonentity, a pretty doll. (Emphasis added) She had savings ... Apparently it would be all the same to Gordon whether she was in Murree or England! For the present she resolved to put a good face upon circumstances, and no one at a gay afternoon picnic would have suspected that the beautiful Mrs. Brakespeare- a model wife, the gayest of the gay, was secretly nursing an act of domestic rebellion. (Emphasis added) 81

Thus her husband’s sheer ignorance and indifference to her made her contemplate a domestic rebellion in spite her being a peace-loving daughter of a religious rector and loyal wife of sport-loving Gordon Brakespeare. Thus though the act of rebellion does not take at the physical level but it gets enacted at psychological level of the suffering and supple female characters. Yet their suffering is not endured silently.

In spite of so much revolutionary and rebellious ideas that the characters created by B.M. Croker embody, sometimes, her feminist
stance, perhaps as she wrote during the days of transition, continuous confrontation against the convention-bound strangling Victorian value system, naturally appears to be ambivalent. In the story "Mrs. Raymond", we witness Mr. Raymond who was highly critical of the European values and the kind of liberty and licence issued to women, didn’t allow his wife to join the troop of dancers at Port Said. Moreover he held his wife in confinement and did not allow her to join the people on board while forcefully pouring the sleep inducing potion down her throat. Mean while as the young lady did not make appearance in public the other white ladies were surprised as to her absence. Mrs. Sharpe and Mrs. Paulet held a long conversation about the predicament of the girl. At the conversation when Mrs. Sharpe proposed that the kind of callous behaviour of Mr. Raymond must be reported to the Captain of the ship, here is her reaction.

“No; a man’s cabin is his castle, and his wife is his private property. (Emphasis added) We cannot break in and see her against his will” 82

No staunch feminist would allow the use of the word “property” for a wife. Strangely these words stand diametrically opposed to the view expressed by Mrs. Gordon in, The Chaperon (1907), wherein her anger exploded at the kind of indifference displayed by her husband towards her as if she were a “nonentity.”

Here is one more instance of her ambivalence in her feminist stance. In, Quicksands (1915), Miss Eva Lingard is surprised at her uncle’s attitude towards her, who treated her almost like a young boy. She came to her aunt Wilhelmina’s house at Torrington. When she arrived and reached the house, her aunt and her daughter were away from home. When she met her uncle in the library he was very much pleased to find Miss. Eva at his residence. After dinner together they walked about the place. Then her uncle spoke to her quite genially. The girl was surprised to find her uncle talking to her, as if she were a young man, forgetting her to be a girl, here is the description:
"...We became great friends, Uncle imparted to me in confidence... I think- as he smoked an excellent cigar by the fire in the library- uncle forgot that his listener was only a girl, and talked to me as freely as one man to another" (emphasis added). 83

Thus it becomes a clear fact from the above passage that girls were held low in many cases as compared to their counter parts.

Thus writing in the period of the late Victorian and early twentieth century Mrs. B.M. Croker presents the predicament of women and pass a plea for women’s emancipation from economic slavery. She also seems to make a sort of bold appeal for women’s freedom from the shackles of convention. They were the days when the women were not free still to speak or write or even think as they pleased. The women were judged by man made standards of an ideal womanhood, the idol, the paragon, of womanly ideals, which Coventry Patmore described as the Angel in the House, in a flattering way of designating a woman who was merely a slave, and as such was expected to be totally sweet and serviceable and thus remained a symbol of domestic dependence and drudgery. According to the women who wrote during this period such an angel in the house must be destroyed. And thus they made repeated appeals for intellectual and economic freedom. Virginia Wolf, said, "... it was an experience that was bound to befall all women at that time. Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer". 84 Further speaking of the other problems that bothered a woman writer she wrote "the consciousness of what men will say of a woman who speaks the truth about her passions... they are impeded by the extreme conventionality of other sex." 85

Considering the conditions, contentions and conventional contrabands when Mrs. B.M. Croker wrote, the kind of concern she reveals for woman’s emancipation and their cause in the quantum of her works, goes a long way and deserves serious attention. What she has done in the face of incessant odds is really a laudable job.
4.3 RACE, COLOUR AND CASTE

Influence of geographical conditions, plays a vital role in the composition of mental make up, social set up, and also linguistic expressions of a population residing in a particular region. Situated in the neighbourhood of the North Pole Northern Europe in general and England in particular is endowed with short summers, and sharp and lengthy winters. This factor contributed to a greater extent to the dermatological different appearance of the population of that region due to deficit of melanin content in their pigment. Further, perhaps due to long winter nights, the general fear of man, of dark nights, might have yielded place to the rise of the phrases like dark deeds, dark forces, black magic wherein dark stands for evil and devil. Evil acts were supposed to be prompted from the Devil. On the contrary the good deeds were supposed to be infused into human heart by the angels, which were supposed to be white and bright. The Angels, being white and bright, represented innocence and immaculateness; Devils being dark represented evil and avariciousness. (Cf. Marlowe's Dr. Faustus). Therefore all that was dark came to be regarded as devil, evil, dirt, and finally detestable. In the course of time when England emerged as a colonizer of the dark skinned people this view of life assumed the form of a lethal weapon in the quiver of the colonizers against their colonies. Especially, where the situation is Indian and African, this view emerged as 'Prospero-Caliban-nexus'. Moreover, "Owing to the increasing European contact with the darker races, the question of race had now come to be of growing interest and thinking on it was largely shaped by a rather loose application to it of current evolutionary theories. Doctrines such as Natural Selection and Survival of the Fittest were applied wholesale to the study of races and the idea of progress, and this led to the popular acceptance of the convenient notion of a regular hierarchy of races, with the white (of course) at the top and the darker ones at the bottom. 86

English people during their occupation of India always attempted to emerge as leaders and a dominant race. To be dominant they held the view
that they must keep and maintain good health of muscular strength, purity of their blood and culture. In order to do this they were always expected to retain their identity, and succeed in whatever odd situation they were likely to find themselves while detesting and despising everything that was Indian and alien. Such images of English men and women are carved carefully in the pages of fiction of Mrs. B.M. Croker who again and again shows such men and women in her novels.

In, *A Bird of Passage* (1893), we have this display of race complex and the exclusive victory of the white man and girl over Aboo Sait in the abandoned ship at the shores of Port Blair. Aboo Sait though strong enough and showed a surprising resistance to Gilbert Lisle's counter attack ultimately got vanquished by him and remained dominated. This has already been discussed in the previous pages of this work.

The idea that the colonies were a fertile locale that required a special attention of the colonizer, also contributed to the solidarity of the sense of superiority of their race among the whites. "The Orient existed as a place isolated from the mainstream of European progress in the sciences, arts, and commerce", 87 gets resounded in the novel *Mr. Jervis* (1897). The novel discusses the sense of superiority of the white race as was held by the Britishers. Mr. Pelham Brande's words about the Hindus and Mahomedans and their manners and mentality and the English men's attempt to improve them which are quoted already in the previous discussion elsewhere in this thesis are full of racial bias and charged with the sense of superiority of the British race. In some other place in the same novel we come across the juxtaposition of the characters of Mr. Fernandez and Mr. Jervis, the junior, in terms of the race. Mr. Fernandez was cousin of Mrs. Mercedes, the second wife of Senior Jervis. He tormented Mr. Jervis for money, as he was a great spendthrift. When Mr. Jervis, the junior visited his father and was greatly moved by the attachment of the old man with this country, immediately went to Shiriani settled his affairs and came back to his father's place, Pelakothi or "Yellow House". His return to the place was a bitter morsel to Mr.
Fernandez as it prevented him from sucking the money from the old man. He was also surprised at the commitment of the young Englishman (Mr. Jervis) to his duty towards his father as a son, which had brought him back to the lonely life among the Himalayas. Here is the authorial comment on their characters.

Fernandez may have belied himself, but the chances were that his own estimate of his character was correct. There is much in heredity. He came of an easy-going, voluptuous, volatile stock, as his soft fat face, loose mouth, and merry but unsteady eye indicated, *His companion was descended from another and stronger nation; his character was cast in a sterner mould; he was the scion of a race of soldiers, who had fought, suffered and died for a cause. Jervis’s square jaw, resolute glance, and firmly cut thin lips told a tale of where the flesh had warred against the spirit and not prevailed.* (Emphasis added)

Sometimes the women characters also reveal their domineering nature and express their race consciousness and superiority over the characters of other race. In, *The Cat’s-Paw* (1902), Pamela Ferrars, believes in the superiority of her race and thinks that the whites are always taller and domineering than the natives or the other race. After facing the life of a sort of an ordeal at the plague camp she joined the abode of Mrs. Rosario’s cheap boarding house. There she met Mr. Ibrahim a Persian doctor and dealer in pearls, who took much freedom with her and dragged her into the conversation and began to enter into her personal affairs turning his looks into lasciviousness. This made her feel a little disturbed and her ‘whole soul revolted’. She “was instantly sensible of a glow beginning from... toes and creeping like a hot wave to the crown...” and was unable to suppress her anger and spoke harshly to him and said that she must be allowed to go to her room, and when she stood up she felt herself so domineering that the man of other race became dwarf before her. Here is the description.

“He drew back hastily, almost as if I had struck him, and I could see that he was again surprised. *As I spoke, I had risen to my full height; I was taller than he was. I felt the dominant race surging through my veins; the looks, the insinuations, the attitude of this sleek, dark Eastern roused me and carried me beyond my surroundings.* (Emphasis added)
While holding the Indians ethnically aliens their life style was also viewed as delinquent. What a white man was afraid of more was Indianization of his own mind. Therefore the white man was taught by his group to despise everything Indian. Deviation from the dictates of his group meant a threat to it. Therefore such persons were driven out of the group and considered as dropouts. “The keystone to maintaining their position of leadership... is, after all, in the English blood and the important thing is to keep the blood ‘pure’. For this reason inter marriage is dangerous. Equally dangerous, however, is the adoption of Indian customs and attitudes... the strength of the British lay in being British through and through” 91 was the strong view held by the British during late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such a case of Mrs. Nussiband, a mutiny lady, in Mr. Jervis (1897) who embraced Indian life and attitude in order to save her life, considered herself dead to her community, has already been discussed. In, In Old Madras (1973), we may see the theme of race-conflict because of a white person’s marriage with a native woman. Senior Mallender married an Indian a Karnatakian lady Puvaka and named her as Mrs. Alida. Yet she is referred to as “a woman of another race, and outlook”. 92 As result he had to face the hatred of the lady’s race and ultimately mutilated by them he was compelled to live in incognito, completely cut off from his people. Captain Mallender, (young Mallender) who searched for him thoroughly in several parts of India, became successful in his intended mission in the end. Finally when he faced his uncle, the latter was so much a deformed creature that it was impossible for Mallender to recognize him. The uncle also introduced his wife and narrated the story of how he fell in love with a native lady, got married with her and faced innumerable difficulties including the conflict of the two races because of his marriage with her. Certainly his words are charged with the feeling of repentance for leaving the beaten path and traveling through the road untrodden by his race. Here is the description

I was absolutely infatuated, so poor child, was she I knew very well that her people would never consent to our marriage,- nor mine either, for that matter, but I threw such trifles to the winds! As for
my family, my regiment and my future, I never gave them a thought.93

One of the ramifications of the British sense of superiority is their colour consciousness, which runs almost parallel to their race consciousness. In spite of the interpretations of innumerable scholars, ethnologists and interested zealots, who had tried hard to convince the western whites to come out of their cocoon of prejudice based on race and colour, and in spite of the beliefs of the humanist writers that a text is a consequence of a context laved in the immaculate water of imagination, the influence of the predecessors and past masters, the pressures of the contemporary conventions and cannons curtail the creative freedom of a writer “... there is a reluctance to allow that political, institutional and ideological constraints act in the same manner on the individual author.” 94 It has already been said that all that was black became abhorrent to the Europeans. When they, encountered the people of black skin the latter were associated with evil and regarded as evil incarnate. Therefore all that was black, inky and dark became disgusting and was regarded as destructive element to them, the milk white hind like race to borrow a term from Dryden.

Writer after writer went on alluding to colour consciousness in their works, and connotatively expressed their racial prejudice through their characters. In the novels and the stories of B.M. Croker also we come across allusions to colour consciousness as much as she refers to racial prejudice of the white rulers. In, The Company’s Servant (1907), we come across allusions to colour consciousness. Apart from grown up men the children, who imitated their parents, are also shown to be conscious of their white colour and the sense of superiority. Vernon (Jack Talbot) who worked as a head guard on the railways at Tani-Kul stayed with the Coffeys. In the locality there were children like Pedro, a black boy, Claris, Ermentrude Jacks, Reginald Murphy and Bobbie Beard. These children took much liberty with Mr. Vernon as he enjoyed their company during his leisure hours. They were indulging in the games. ‘Railway’ was the favourite game of these children naturally as they all happened to be
children of the railway workers. Mr. Vernon would lend them his ticket puncher and observe them with enough amusement as they enjoyed playing different roles. On this occasion when they requested him to lend them his ticket puncher he suggested them a different game, the game of soldiers. During their game when Castro suggested to something Claris accused him as a black boy. This goes to show the fact that the feeling of colour consciousness and the sense of superiority of the whites ran high in the Anglo-Indian social circle. Here is the description of the conversation that ensued among the kids—during the game of soldiers suggested by Vernon.

“Oh, yes, and we’ll be two officers’ ladies, eagerly supplemented Clarice. I’ll be the one with the long veil, and streeling dress,” and she began to strut up and down, calling with great arrogance:

“Ayah- ayah! Now where is that ayah!”

“No, that’s no officer’s lady,” objected her sister, ‘yer doing Mrs. Dancock when she walks past Madame Tanzy in the Gardens, with her head in the air and a smell under her nose.”

“Yah! We don’t want no girls’ rot”. Cried Pedro, precipitating himself into the subject, “lets be Afghans!”

“You can be a Hafghan if ye like,” said Clarice with withering scorn, “You being black, ‘a Kali Admi’! (Emphasis added) but we are white, and play white games”. 95

In, Babes in the Wood (1910), we come across the colour conscious nourished by Miss. Milly and others. Miss. Millicent or Milly came to India to join her brother Philip Trafford who worked here as Assistant Conservator of Forests. Soon after her joining him, Philip took her to the abode of Miss Joan Hampton. There he introduced his sister to Miss. Joan Hampton who was brought up with her father’s sisters in England. After meeting her Miss. Milly was accompanied by Eliot Scrubby and Mr. Julian Tristram. She wandered to different places in their company. On these occasions whenever she came across, a black person her feeling of colour consciousness is fore grounded in spite of her being “crazy to see the jungle and something of camp life, and very keen about Natural History and Ethnology...”96 Her colour consciousness and the sense of superiority
get expressed in more than one place in the novel when she visited and conversed with many natives. At the moment of her introduction to Miss. Joan Hampton, Hampton herself was greatly humiliated, by the presence of her Indian sister Lily, who was extremely unhappy about the colour of Miss Lily. "A distant hint or a sneer at "black blood", brought colour to her thin cheeks". Shortly after this she visited the orphanage at the Baxters "when conducted among them, she found that they were forty in numbers ranging from three to seventeen, dark in complexion and some what stunted in figure, wearing the chignon cloth, and glass bangles of their race." (Emphasis added) There is, at another point in the novel the reference to the colour of Indian Gonds when Miss. Milly had camped at a grove, with her ardent desire for the knowledge of Indian native life she visited the Gonds. In order to reach the place of the Gonds they (Mr. Scruby and herself) had to travel through a dense forest by a bullock cart, "guided by Jadoo- a well known Gond. This short dark thick-set man of cast-iron constitution and the eye of a hawk, the ear of hare- led the way-along the wood-cutters' track" (Emphasis added)

Thus both the girls, Miss. Joan Hampton and Miss. Milly display their abhorrence to black colour in this novel rather explicitly, as does Miss. Verona in, *Her Own People* (1905), towards her mother and sisters who were black.

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also the colour consciousness and the discrimination and distancing the black person gets alluded to. When Captain Mallender visited Wellunga during the course of his excursion in search of his missing uncle he met General Beamish. There he saw Miss. Tara, daughter of the general and in the course conversation with her feels that she was black and belonged to the other race. On the same station there was another family the family of Beaufort. The family took interest in Mallender and invited him for tea and tennis. Introducing the family when Tam said, "...Captain Beaufort has to do with the roads, his wife is never on show. I fancy she is a bit too dark- (emphasis added) these people get darker as they age. It's awfully rough on them, I must say!"
This sort of observations of the white characters on the part of the black characters, go to show the idea that dark is always despicable and detestable.

The colour consciousness of the whites and their abhorrence towards dark colour reaches its zenith when they are compared to the "black boots"\(^{101}\) worn by the white in the story "The Old Contonment", wherein the narrator asked Mr. Bethune about the English families, with an intention of making friends, craving for companionship. Likewise in the story "The Missing Link" Mrs. Mills remained estranged from her son and grandchildren due to her dark skin. Her daughter-in-law prevented her from her home showing her disgust for her mother-in-law. Mrs. Mills saying that her daughter-in-law "is the daughter of an officer; she does not care to me, and does not wish her friends to see me", \(^{102}\) underscores the view.

Thus the colour consciousness of the white man and his prejudiced attitude towards the black man, which led to strict segregation of the whites from the milieu of the Indian life in Anglo-Indian social setup, reveals the utter insularity of the Anglo-Indians.

Caste, though the very basis and a dominant element of Indian social stratification, could not claim as much attention of the British novelists as the race and colour did. The reason for this may be that the latter two helped the British in maintaining their identity, insularity and above all the sense of superiority paving the way for their power mongering nature. Moreover the social distinctions that cropped up because of caste remained far from the rational purview of the whites. Consequently these authors seem to have generalized their view about Indian caste system, and portrayed the Hindus as mild, effeminate and even unable to hold the positions of power, yielding themselves to Fatalism. Therefore the "the Hindu was disliked... he was a coward in the eyes of a people who valued physical bravery." \(^{103}\) Thus we find a very passive picture of Hindus wherever they appear in the pages of fiction. In the novels of B.M. Crocker we come across references to caste system.

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Unlike the writers who generalize she seems to have an inveterate knowledge of Indian caste system, and its interior social segmentation, and the social inequality among the lower castes, polytheism etc. In, novel Mr. Jervis (1897), Pelham Brande, whose views have already been discussed in the previous pages says, “the Hindus are naturally devout people, and must have a religion. Some are theists, agnostics, some mere coarse idolaters, who even in these days have devil worship and witch burning.... Among the Hindus, whose caste is so firm, the social condition of the lower orders is so wretched (Emphasis added) and unchangeable...”104

In the story “The Old Contonment” we come across the strict observance of caste by the Brahmins, which underscores their orthodoxy. The narrator’s (Mrs. Milman) husband was posted to Ahnomore (Ah! no more?) station. She desired the acquaintance of the localities and the neighbours. Therefore she asked Mr. Bethune about the neighbours. Then he said there were two-three families, two Eurasian families and a native Brahmin family. Then Mrs. Milman said that in that case it would be helpful for her to see an Indian household. To this hopeful proposal of the narrator Mr. Bethune said that the Brahmin families were strictly secluded and hardly entertained a white person into their premises. Here is the observation by Mr. Bethune

“You will never do that here. These west coast Brahmins are extraordinarily strict. They have it all their own way- in these parts and look on Europeans as the mud under their feet” (Emphasis added) 105

Quite shortly after this Mrs. Milman came to know of the existence of a girl, Miss. Aralee in the said Brahmin family. She was the daughter of Narayan’s (head of the Brahmin family) sister who had married a European by name, Mr. Nemo. However after coming to know about the girl, she visited the family of the zamindar in his absence, made friends with the wife of Narayana, and requested her to send Aralee to her residence, as she happened to be lonely. Then she thought of helping the girl by way of her release. When her letter, sent to the family came back
undelivered with a message that Miss Aralee had left the place and gone
where not known. Therefore Mrs. Milman herself got the confirmation and
here is her observation on the Brahmin family “There is nothing in this
world so impenetrable as a Brahmin’s household.” (Emphasis added) 106

Apart from this we have one more reference to the Brahmin caste in,
Quicksands (1915), which refers to the Brahmans as ‘venerable’ people.
Ronnie fought and saved the lives of two venerable Brahmans from
Conjeveram when there was an outbreak in the jail where Ronnie was
kept. Thus whenever the Hindu characters appear they are made to appear
in the dim light.

When we turn our attention from the references to and depiction of
the caste system to Mohammadan situation the sky changes. The British
authors accommodate the Mohammadan element with enough big­
heartedness. “Because they admired the Muslim and believed that they
understood him better, the British writers dealt with this group to an
abnormally large degree.” 107 This type of more homeliness of the British
with Muslims is probably because of the similarities between the two.
Both the populations ruled India. In other words, the British felt that like
themselves, the Muslims, had come and colonized India in the past, and
believed unlike Indians, in one God. In the works of B.M. Croker we come
across many references to Mohammadans. Most of the Mohammadan
characters are loyal servants, cooks and attendants to their masters and
their wives. Sometimes they are also regarded incorrigible fanatics, but
however her attitude towards Mohammadans seems to be ambivalent. In,
Mr. Jervis (1897). Mr. Pelham Brande, whose response to Indian social
milieu has already been documented in the earlier part, observes,
“Mohomedans never change, and never will change, ... see themselves
from another point of view... all are alike, where severe ascetism is not
necessary, and there are no out castes, but scope for indulgence of any
ambition...” 108

In the story “The Little Brass God” Croker documents the age-old
inveterate hatred of Mohammedans for the Hindu Gods. The Hindus, being
idolaters are found to worship different images of gods not only installed at the temples but also at their family sanctum sanctorum. Mrs. Ann Jane Tilly, in the story, was about to return home as her husband retired from the service as the collector of Kooti. She asked her ayah, Munia, a Mohammedan old woman to pack everything. The maidservant packed everything perfectly including the decorative things of different shape and figure except one little image of brass God. On asking her as to her not packing the little brass piece she said that it was terribly bad thing, and it would bring bad luck to those who possessed it. She further said that the lady must neither take it home nor give it anybody. This attitude of the ayah towards the image of Goddess Kali certainly goes to show her hatred of the Hindu gods, which seems to have been transmitted from generation to generation since the days of Mohammad of Gazani, which Croker does not fail to document, which goes a long way to show her power of keen observation. Here are the words of the ayah,

"Throw it away, mem sahib- never taking it with you! Don’t give it to anyone; who ever owns this goddess will have-oh! Plenty, plenty, plenty bad luck- soon, soon, die!" 109

Mohammadans are not depicted in the dim light of fanaticism, but they are also depicted as humane and helpful characters in several places of her world of fiction. In, *Quicksands* (1915), Mrs. B.M. Croker documents the humaneness and helping nature of the Mohammadans. Zora, a widowed daughter of a minister of the Nizam’s court at Secunderbad stood as a great source of support and lent a hand of help to a white character. Miss Eva, sister of Mr. Ronald Lingard was greatly disturbed when her brother was punished, arrested and sent to jail at Bangalore due to his involvement in scandal. At such moments of disgrace and disappointment Zora cheered Eva with good words. When Miss. Eva proposed to go to Bangalore leaving her jewels, additional dresses and other belongings at Zora’s residence the latter approved the proposal and assisted Eva actively by lending her own car and accompanying the English girl up to Wadi. Here is the description.

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...Zora’s big motor glided into the compound. My boxes were placed upon the roof- a tiffin basket also - and Zora herself accompanied me down to Wadi, closely veiled. She gave me much sweet sympathy and many wise injunctions, saw me into a comfortable carriage in the Madras mail, and behold me launched into a new world. (Emphasis added) 110

Thus from the above observations and discussion it becomes clear that Mrs. B.M. Croker took enough interest in Indian social system, including the stratification of Indian society while trying to understand it sympathetically.

4.4 DEPICTION OF EURASIAN LIFE

In the first place it was the attraction for Indian spices that brought the white men to India, then it was the attraction for gold and wealth that motivated them further to continue their stay, then there was the attraction for ruling the ignorant people of this land as they sensed the internal insecurity in the political field and quarrels among the princely states that tied them to India for more than two centuries as ruling masters. Throughout their stay after acquiring the political power, they were always afraid of contamination of their blood and race, as a result of which they wove various theories of race and colour and wished to guard the purity of their race. It was during this period that the white man’s union with Indian women came to be hated vitally, though it was an accepted fact in the near past- due to itinerary inconveniences to England. Despite their race-conscious-ness and disgust towards all that was Indian, including the men and women of this land they were drawn towards Indian damsels in order to satiate their carnal thirst, as they were held despicably away from their families and suffered emotional hunger. At such a point of circumstances many white men married Indian women, and as a result of this union of the persons of two different races there emerged a hybrid community, strangely unwanted and disowned by both the communities, which had come into existence as a child of necessity for the white man. This community was known as Eurasian community. But bad luck as it were, the Eurasians were supposed by the father community to possess those bad elements of both the races while being blackish in appearance.
and dwarfish in altitude. They therefore, considered them as an ominous character, a fly in their ointment and began to hate them. They belonged no particular race. They also came to hate themselves their cultural and racial in-between ness, what Homi Bhabha calls “a third-space” or “place of hybridity”, “... that is new, neither the one nor the other properly alienates” itself. The Eurasians were held as a hybrid race, as an expression of the inevitable ambivalence of the colonial ambience. As an outcome of partial opposition and partial acceptance the race became suspendable and suspectable by both the sides of its parent races. It became a swing tied between two trees. It was “the eternal gull”. Thus held as an anomalous and an alloyed element “Eurasians were shown as debased and without dignity as shrill and cringing, a warning against the mixing of the races. ‘Going native’ was an abandonment of true standards” by several Anglo-Indian novelists. But it was an exigency of the colonizer that dragged the other race into union and led to cultural dislocation of both the races and paved the way for “the notion of in-between-ness conjured up by the term ‘hybridity’.

The case of a Eurasian in the colonial context was akin to a crow in the dove’s nest. As he was despised by the whites so was he detested by the Indians who held him to be a Kachcha bachcha. The kind of rebuff received at the hands of both the races automatically made a Eurasian despondent. Therefore all the while, whenever we encounter the Eurasian characters in the novels of Mrs. B. M. Croker, we witness their craving for recognition in the society. Even in the matters of language they come forward with their own Creole, which waits still to be addressed linguistically and assessed critically in Anglo-Indian fiction an aspect of which is attempted at the chapter dealing with technique in this thesis.

Held at bay by the British, the Eurasians are always displayed to possess a desire to be conspicuous in the flow of society. They are shown to have made their residences invariably at the big bungalows once owned by the British officers. This again goes to symbolize the fact of their being an appendage to the British community in India. Though occupied
there big but empty bungalows their life is represented to be enveloped by
the poverty. But, without being daunted by the fact of their poverty the
Eurasians always struggled hard to show themselves as equals to their
counterparts- the British. This identity crises and their indomitable desire
to deserve recognition and mention motivated them to move into various
fields like acquisition of membership to the local clubs, holding positions
of power in the institutions, acting as merchants, marriage and match
makers and even money lenders though alleged to tread the track of
immorality, meaning all the while well but doing ill. In the novels of Mrs.
B.M. Croker we come across such and many other images of Eurasian life.

In, *Her Own People* (1905), we witness a Eurasian character Mrs.
Chandos. Who marries a white man Paul Chandos and consequently spoils
his life by contaminating his racial purity. Rosa was the daughter of a
moneylender. Married to Paul Chandos, she indulged in money-lending
business rather secretly. Miss Verona, her supposed daughter, who stayed
away from parents with Madame de Godez, a fabulously rich widow in
England, came to India to join to her own people. Soon after her arrival
she went to meet her grandmother Nani Lopez. The old woman was very
much pleased to meet her granddaughter. During the meeting the old
woman talked of many things including the household of her daughter and
her nature also. The Nani knew very well about the daughter’s craving for
recognition and in order to realize her ends what the woman did. Mrs.
Chandos had even made her own plans about the money, (three hundred
pounds) which belonged to Miss Verona. She ordered the ayah to bring the
big leather bag of the girl in which she had kept the money. Here is the
conversation, which throws light on the personality of Mrs. Chandos.

“She is wonderful, your mother”, remarked the old woman; “so
sharp about money! Such a manager! Great show outside, and
pinching in the belly; but she will have it thus, since there are so
many to feed, and young girls to marry.

“Yes” assented her daughter mechanically.
"Arl-day she works so hard in the office next door, doing figures and accounts. She owns a few little houses in the bazaar, and adds on to the pay. It is not much, two hundred a month."

"Pounds?" suggested her companion.

"No, rupees — that is to say, shillings. But she is a manager."

"Well, here it is," panted Mrs. Chandos, pushing open the door with her foot, and entering bag in hand; "now let us see the money" 115

If Mrs. Rosa Chandos indulged in money-lending business in order to improve her position and thereby claim equal social status with the white people of Rajapore station in the novel discussed above, Madame Tanzy, wife of a Fitter on the railway line, in, The Company's Servant (1907), aspired to equal and even surpass the whites at the station of Tani-Kul. Although her husband was a fitter whose monthly income never crossed only one hundred and fifty rupees a month she behaved as if she were a wife of some great officer. Her manner of appearance in the society and addressing the people in the neighbourhood in the voice charged with grandiose notions made Mrs. Jessie Sharratt, a well educated, cultured lady, wife of the station master whose salary was much higher than that of Mr. Tanzy, creep under the conviction that she was being pushed to periphery by Madame Tanzy in spite of her unquestioned officially superior position. Madame Tanzy, did all that was possible to achieve in the shape of social profit and held an exalted position in the society by presiding over important functions and capturing the key positions in several institutions and events such as tennis match, station balls etc. Here is the description:

...Madame Tanzy was secretly undermining her (Mrs. Sharratt's throne, and working against her, "moleing", as she expressed it, and incessantly labouring to come out on top; now with a card party, now with a new dress, (emphasis added) and sooner or later with a splendid match for Rosita... Madame Tanzy was a little lying busy body, with a finger in every one's pie, and carried on and dressed and talked, just as if she was some grand Mem Sahib...(emphasis added). Madame delighted in organization: she managed triumphantly the Book Club, and the Mutton Club; promoted theatricals and maintained the stage wardrobe. She was also the treasurer and secretary of badminton, tennis and whist tournaments;
collected and disposed of the money for prizes- and oh, greatest boon of all- secured a weekly supply of fresh vegetables from Bangalore, which she retailed to a grateful, and greedy community.

Why, it may be asked, did Madame undertake all these offices, and so much unnecessary trouble? Was it for the pure love of her fellow creatures? By no means; the position of general providence of literature, amusements, green vegetables, and tender joints, assured her a position of importance....

As a moral and social guide, Madame Tanzy was readily forthcoming, and prepared at a moment’s notice to console, advise, encourage or, above all arbitrate.¹¹⁶

Perennially pestered by the problem of poverty, the Eurasian community gets pictured in the pages of Anglo-Indian fiction, always leading a life of frugality and simplicity. As has already been remarked the Eurasian communities stayed usually in those bungalows, which once belonged to the well to do officers of the British Government. As they were big buildings it was not possible for these Eurasians even to keep them in good condition. They were dark, damp and sometimes infested by scorpions, rats and serpents, their corners covered with festoons of cobwebs. In, The Cat’s-Paw (1902), we see Miss. Pamela Ferrars staying with Mrs. Rosario, before searching a job at the palace of Royapetta. Mrs. Rosario ran a cheap-rate, boarding house at Crundall’s Road, Madras. As Miss Pamela Ferrars was left with limited money she was compelled to seek some cheap hotel. Helped by the railway guard she joined the residence of Mrs. Rossario that was like a beehive of many Eurasians. Here is the description of the economical life and also the style of life of these Eurasians.

...I subsequently heard that these spacious old bungalows were, in former days, the quarters of officers commanding native regiments. The compound was covered with dusty grass, holes... The fine drawing-room, ... was now dilapidated, frouzy, and mean. (Emphasis added) The walls were of a deep rose shade, the colour of carbolic tooth powder, and covered with great streaks of damp, flaring oleographs and paper fans. The curtains, once white were red with dust. (Emphasis added) A cottage piano stood out draped with what looked like a muslin dress. There were plenty of cane chairs in all stages of age and deformity, a round table covered with photographs and shells, but not one flower, book, or plant, ... a
brave display of dust, (emphasis added) and the smell of cocoanut oil penetrated the entire establishment, ... 117

After entering this big bungalow and after waiting for a considerable time, the old lady, Mrs. Rosario, appeared before Miss. Pamela Ferrars. The latter introduced herself to the lady and mentioned the circumstances she had found herself in. Further she requested the old lady to provide for her boarding and lodging till she found a job. Then the girl was taken round the house by way of showing it and the place that might be sanctioned to her. Here is the description of the ugly place where Miss Pamela was to dump her luggage and stay.

“It is for your bed. Now there is an old dressing-room off here, the roof is not safe, and it is full of white ants; it might do to keep your things...” (Emphasis added)

I looked into this tumble-down bower with and dismay— it was long narrow, and bare, and the red-tiled roof and the rafters were caked with the ravages of white ants! ... (Emphasis added)

“We will move your boxes as soon as the place is swept out, and we must get bricks to raise them off the floor, otherwise the white ants will eat the bottom out of them in a few hours. ... (Emphasis added)118

Having thus, got settled at Rosario’s, Pamela lived an utterly simple life. Eurasians were compelled to live low not only in the matters of facilities that are necessary to make the life happy but also in the matters of culinary comforts due to their dire poverty. They ate simple food that was almost equal to the food that the Indian natives ate and the amusements they indulged in were also of little investment. Here is the description of one.

“We go to the band, or the park, or the theater, or we have company at home or dance. We clear the drawing room and some one plays. We breakfast (emphasis added) at eight for the young gentlemen-just coffee and country bacon and third-class fish.” (Emphasis added)

“third-class fish!” I repeated, “what is that?”
“Cheap fish- what the natives eat. You cannot expect much for one rupee day, can you? - though some houses take annas. *We dine at seven- stewed beef and curry, and country vegetables. ...* (Emphasis added)

Though their life was troubled by dire poverty the Eurasians never learnt to live within their limited resources. Their desire, to show that they lived socially equal life to that of the whites, many times motivated them to borrow recklessly regardless of the worry of repayment. In, *The Company’s Servant* (1902), we come across Rosita Fontaine, a beautiful Eurasian girl, a coquette, who had attracted Vernon very much. She was a selfish and fashionable girl. She stayed with her aunt Madame Tanzy on the station at Tani-Kul. In spite of her aunt’s poor and frugal position she spent money extravagantly, for her fashionable dress, colourful ribbons, scents, sweets, powder and pearls. Naturally she ran into constant demand for money the supply of which was beyond the capacity of the purse of her aunt. She went on borrowing money carelessly from her acquaintances giving false but convincing and credible reasons to them. Here are her painted words to Vernon who met her much long after the promised time before whom she placed demand for the money.

“... And now you have been so very unkind, I want you to do something to make up,” and she stroked his sleeve gently.

“I do not mean to be unkind- how could I ever be unkind to you? And surely you know, I will do anything to please you.”

“You will!” drawing in her breath, “anything?”

“Why of course- how can you doubt me?”

For a moment she gazed at him with eyes softly suffused and suddenly laying her hand on his, she said:

Then lend me three hundred rupees? ” (Emphasis added)

The request came not merely as a surprise, it was distinctly in the nature of a shock but Vernon was a master of his countenance.

“Certainly” he answered, with admirable self-possession, “when do you want it?”

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"At once—oh, you kind good fellow! It is not for myself—no, do you think I would ask for it? But for a great friend of mine—poor girl—my greatest friend. She is in awful trouble, with no one to help her, and if she does not find this money to pay to her debts, she will be disgraced, and says she will take poison."

Almost in the same way, the poverty that enwrapped the family of the Castellas in, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), forced Mrs. Castellas to go in for borrowing. Mrs. Castellas, regardless of her poverty, went on inviting and entertaining the guests constantly. In spite of her daughter, Miss Joan's repeated requests, to lessen the family expenditure, which went up and up due to repeated visits of several guests, she went on indulging in extravagance. Ultimately she was compelled to borrow money from Mr. Philip Trafford. Borrowing from the neighbours and acquaintances was always a detestable job for Miss Joan. Therefore Mrs. Castellas met Mr. Trafford stealthily and appealed to him to lend money whimpering before the acquaintance like a child. Here are her words of request, when she held him in the interview.

"I wanted to have a word with you alone," she panted, glancing anxiously round the room, then seating herself. "You see, at home, the others are there, so I slipped out. Of course they think I am in bed ill, and indeed it is where I ought to be. I am that bad with my heart—but—", looking at him steadily, "you know I feel to you like a mother, or I would not ask you this. My darling boy, *I want you to lend me money.* (Emphasis added).

...I know we have been foolish, always expecting—always disappointed, I cannot think ... And now I am in shocking trouble. I gave a promise to Joan, and I have broken it. Yes, I have!"

"I- I agreed to no more debts, no more orders or credit; but it was too much! I was so used to the other, I could not break the habit; and it seems so hard that some people should have all they want, and we nothing at all. ... *We owe nearly three years-two hundred rupees*—(emphasis added) and wherever am to get it?"

... It is almost life and death, for if Joan found out I owe all this money and have not kept to our agreement, ...

...
The interview ended in Mrs. Castella’s receiving a cheque for one hundred and fifty rupees and fifty rupees in notes. ...

In spite of the praise worthy “contribution of the Eurasians to the development of modern India... that they had entered the Railway and Telegraph Departments which they served with distinction” they were despised as cheats, liers and secretive impostors especially in matters of money. This nature of the Eurasian community gets fore grounded whenever the life of Eurasians in tackled in their novels by the British writers during the period of their rule. This kind of attitude of the British authors seems to be in tune partly with the racial prejudice that was more in the air during the nineteenth century and partly also to warn the British community to guard themselves well from the Eurasians. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we see this nature of the Eurasians discussed and depicted repeatedly. In, *Mr. Jervis* (1897), Mrs. B.M. Croker depicts the money mindedness of the Eurasian women. Mark Jervis visited the “Pela Kothi” or Yellow-House where his father had settled. During that time the old man spoke of many things before his son, of his past and present life including his second wife Mrs. Mercedes a half-caste woman. Here are his words about the nature and attitude of the woman.

“...I was happy enough with Mercedes; we led a gay, roving, extravagant life. We had plenty of friends, plenty of spirits, plenty of money. Mercedes had no relations, but one, thank God; a greasy looking cousin in Calcutta. Lord forgive me, I hate him! My wife had a kind, warm heart, but she was passionate, excitable- and jealous. She allowed her feelings too much liberty; she slapped another woman’s face at a public ball, she slippered her servants, she ran up huge bills, and she could never speak the truth. She actually preferred to tell a lie even when she had nothing to gain by it. (Emphasis added) Can you imagine such a thing? However we have all our faults; and she was a good soul, though she was not like your mother. They say, a man prefers his first wife, a woman her second husband...”

In, *The Cat’s Paw* (1902), the novelist has depicted the cheating nature of the Eurasians. We see Miss. Pamela Ferrars staying at a cheap boarding house run by Mrs. Rosario at Crundall’s road Vepery at Madras. It was like a beehive of Eurasians. Soon after her entry there into she was introduced to Miss. Lily Lyster- Montfort. Miss. Lily was Mrs. Rosario’s
niece and she acted as a housekeeper. Though she worked for her aunt, Lily did not shun from cheating her aunt wherever possible. Miss. Ferrars observed it and was surprised at the kind of cheating behaviour directed by Miss. Lily towards her own aunt. Here are the words that go to describe the cheating nature of Lily:

*I discovered as time went on, that Lily had received many bribes, small but regular, from the charcoal, man, the butcher, and the grocer; also that she made a “good thing” out of waste-paper, old bottles, and bones, and carried away a nice purse, privately presented...* (Emphasis added)  

In, *Her Own People* (1905), also we have a similar picture of a Eurasian cheating the public as a moneylender. Mrs. Rosa Chandos, carried out the money lending and usurping business secretly. Goaded by her invincible love for money she indulged in the business while hiding it even from her husband. She had employed a native, Abdul Buk, with whose support and holding whom in the front she carried out the business successfully remaining always away from the hand of the law as she had assumed the pseudonym of Saloo. However Brian Salwey the superintendent of police chased the mystery and identified her and exposed her to the world. Here is the description about her after unraveling the secret of her profession and personality.

...That Abdul Buk’s many ledgers had been examined, and he stood exposed as a cheat, a swindler, and thief. He was a true wolf in sheep’s clothing, who had contrived to pass himself off as an inoffensive, if somewhat garrulous old man. Terrified by his situation... had confessed all, and figuratively given away his employer. His employer- incredible as it seemed- was Mrs. Chandos.

*It was she, who for twenty long years had been the chief usurer in Rajahpore; she it was who had lent money, taken bonds, charged huge interest, extorted pitilessly, ground down the faces of the poor, and was very wealthy. It seemed in conceivable, but was proved beyond doubt that Rosa Chandos was no other than the notorious “Saloo.”*... (Emphasis added)

She had a large amount of capital secured in her mother’s name, in the Bank of Bengal, as well as shares in half the good things in
India. She had impressed deeds and papers, which did not belong to her...

Once again in the novel *The Company's Servant* (1907), we have the picture of a cheating Eurasian girl. We see Rosita Fontaine purchasing things like cosmetics, and many other novelties necessary to make her the center of attraction of the station. She purchased all her requirements on credit basis from Pilchai-Moothoo-Pillay neither bothering to make the payment nor bringing it to her aunt’s notice. When the bill amounted to two hundred eighty-nine rupees, two annas and three pice he was compelled by his brother to bring it to the knowledge of Madame Tanzy, aunt of Rosita. Madame Tanzy who was money minded maiden refused to share the responsibility of payment. Then she summoned Rosita before her and held the interview with her regarding the affair. Here is the description of their conversation, which throws light on the Eurasian character in general and the characters of the aunt and her niece in particular.

When Rosita was confronted with the bill she merely shrugged her shoulders and laughed. But laughing should not now avail her! Her aunt, for once, was thoroughly roused. *Money was her fetish, she inherited her reverence for it from her thrifty parents; a horrible fear invaded her. Rosita was under age- was she responsible for her debts? Must her careful savings be swept away to pay for the wicked girl’s secret squanderings? Never; she felt inspired by the spirit of a wild animal in danger of losing her one cub.* (Emphasis added)

“And who is going to pay this bill?” She demanded as she flaunted the long strip of paper before her niece’s eyes.

“I am sure I don’t know!” Replied Rosita, ...

...  

*And how dare you run up such bill, and get all those grand things, you deceiving devil?”* (Emphasis added) “But why not get things?” argued Rosita. Everyone does it-Mrs. Beard owes Pillay five hundred rupees- and she is an orphanage girl!”

“Mrs. Beard has a husband; Beard as engine driver is drawing four hundred a month, and doing overtime in cotton season- and you have not one pice except what I give you!”
“You don’t give me much, do you? Rejoined her niece, with a defiant smile.

“And what lies you told about the bangle sent with no name!” (Emphasis added) Casting up eyes and hands in pious appeal to heaven, Madame Tanzy ejaculated, “Ai you Sami! Ai you Sami! what lies! What lies!” (Emphasis added)

“Every one tells lies” declared Rosita boldly; “Mrs. Notting tells lies about her age- you also tell lies. You told Mrs. Duke the melons were four annas; and you know you only pay two, so, so why blame me? (Emphasis added) At least, I do not cheat!”

Yes, you are a living cheat,” (emphasis added) cried her aunt furiously. You cheat the men out of presents, the girls out of their lovers, the hawkers out of their money- you make everyone slave for you for nothing, you cheat... (Emphasis added)

You call me a cheat” she panted, “me, to whom you owe your bread?”

“It is true about the melons; repeated the girl, dealing a stout blow, “yes and the mangoes-and you make a lot on the Mutton Club too. (Emphasis added) They all say so! ...”

Many times the cheating nature of the Eurasians did, not only envelop the financial world but it also spread its ill-tempered tentacles to the world of young men to lead and leave them into emotional smothering. In the novel discussed above Rosita Fontaine, a coquette of Tani-Kul station had disturbed the sleep of young men in the locality. Vernon was particularly attracted towards her. Therefore he demanded a photograph of the girl. Like Vernon, the fact not known to him, other young men of the station placed an indent for the one. But Rosita who cherished a sadistic pleasure in her heart, decided to make the young men of the station quarrel over the point. Therefore she declared that she would hold a tennis match and who won the singles her photograph would go to him. When she mentioned of her plan to her friends, many of them advised her to abandon the idea.

But Rosita was not ready to follow any such piece of advice. Here is the description of her attitude.

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Rosita made no attempt to combat this indictments, she merely clasped her hands behind her head, looked up at the ceiling-cloth, and laughed. She was secretly possessed by the instincts of the savage woman, or wild animal, who takes a fierce delight in seeing the other sex contending for her favours, yes, even to the death. Rosita enjoyed nothing so much, as to behold two scowling at one another, for the sake of a smile from herself, and it was her constant practice, to pit her lovers against one another.\footnote{127}

In, *Given in Marriage* (1916), also there is a picture of the perfidious nature of the Eurasian character. We see the character of a half-caste Doria working on the Fairplains estate. Laurence Travers, the owner of the estate was compelled to leave the estate again and again in order to travel England to visit motherless little daughter, Nancy. His wife had died of long standing heart disease. Naturally this gave a wide berth for the foul play of Doria, the manager who cheated his master and disappeared packing every thing and pocketing all the money without leaving any trace behind. Here is the description of his perfidy.

...the child was... An irresistible magnet, that drew him to England, and often at the most critical seasons. There he had no occupation; here his coffee estate was going to pot. Other planters warned him, but in spite of all they could say, he would leave as manager, one, Doria, a cunning half-caste- such an oily persuasive rascal- to take on his job. (Emphasis added)

"There had been bad seasons and losses,- common to the whole community, and this fellow urged Travers to raise a mortgage, and Travers, who wanted a ready money, and was dying to be off home, agreed and departed. Then Doria, left to his own devices, set about to rob and plunder in the most shameless way; he pocketed a who season’s profits, also large arrears of debts- and cleared out, leaving no address" (Emphasis added)\footnote{128}

Though the Eurasians, goaded by their sheer desire for recognition indulged in moneymaking business, though they were supposed to be secretive, cheating and envious, the white men again and again got attracted by their beauty. They could not resist the temptation of being drawn towards the Eurasian women. It was supposed that they, combining the worst qualities of both the races, were models of malevolent mental make up. But in spite of such negative aspect of their personality the Eurasian girls are often depicted to possess provocative personality. They
are depicted like an attractive mechanical toy nice to look at from a distance but dangerous and ready to explode if handled carelessly. Mrs. B.M. Croker has depicted many Eurasian characters, especially young and marriageable girls in such a lascivious light. In, *Her Own People* (1905), the simultaneous attractiveness and dangerousness of the Eurasian girls is depicted. Paul Chandos married a half-caste Eurasian Rosa Lopez in order to get released from debts and bonds of Rosa's father Mr. Juan Lopez. Miss Rosa was not an ordinary girl. She was exquisitely beautiful. He agreed to marry her. Here is the description of Miss Rosa Chandos in her youth when introduced to Paul at a ball.

"...She was twenty years of age, the belle of the evening- and by all accounts distractingly pretty." (Emphasis added)

...  

"...She was handsome. Her complexion was a pale olive; her teeth, hair and figure, all most attractive; she danced like a sylph, ... (emphasis added) she waltzed with him half the night, and subsequently made all the advances... Miss Rosa was... desperately in love with the handsome young cavalry officer..."\(^{129}\)

In the same novel we come across the character Miss. Dominga Chandos, daughter of Paul and Rosa Chandos. She was ineffably beautiful and seductively attractive. She had attracted the attention of many young men at the station of Rajahpore. Here is the description of her ensnaring beauty.

Dominga was more of a Chandos than a Lopez, and her appearance was not altogether out of keeping with a long line of patrician ancestors. Her head was small and well set on, and her *air was distinctly imperious*.... (Emphasis added) Besides these advantages she had magnificent hair and a thin delicate profile...\(^{130}\)

In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), the same theme is continued. Rosita Fontaine attracted the young men of Tani-Kul station by her extraordinarily distracting beauty. To play with the emotions of young men in the locality, to make them quarrel over the cause of winning her hand and favour was her special delight, as delightful as enjoying a treat. She placed an indent for this with one man and for that with another. The
young men could simply never say no to her request. Here is the description of her beauty.

There was no flaw in her graceful figure, the chiseled perfection of her features, or her radiant smile. On present occasion, her exquisite face, and dark romantic eyes, were shaded by the charming hat of soft pink muslin; she also wore a dainty cambric gown, and an air of enchanting innocence.\textsuperscript{131}

The young girl of such evocative beauty had disturbed the equanimity of mind of Vernon, almost a stoic person. She had ensnared him by her beauty. She extracted many things from Vernon including money promising him all the while that she would marry him only. Believing her words fully he held her interests and aspirations first and always tried to supply whatever she demanded. But in spite of such flawlessly courteous behaviour and uncomplaining and ever consenting man as Vernon was, she cheated him and secretly carried on the affair with Charlie Booth and settled the marriage with him. This hurt Vernon very much. Here is his rumination about the girl after seeing her locked in embracing arms of Charlie Booth.

... a light in which stood revealed the real Rosita, a heartless coquette, a girl of moods and changes, an artist in emotions, who enjoyed playing scenes in real life for her own amusement; ... Rosita had been acting with Simpson, Pereira and himself ... but with respect to Charlie booth she was temporarily in earnest. \textit{The spell of her beauty, her bewitching air, her haunting eyes and vibrating voice} held Vernon in its grip. (Emphasis added) Before his vision arose a gliding figure, in gauzy skirts, the glancing feet, the dazzling smile; in his ears rang the siren’s song... \textsuperscript{132}

\textit{In Old Madras} (1913), also repeats the theme of attractiveness of a Eurasian girl. Major Rochfort was irresistibly attracted towards a Eurasian girl Miss. Maddalena de Rosa. During the early days of his arrival to India as a subaltern, when he was quartered in Madras he met the Eurasian beauty. Unrecoverably attracted towards her, he loved her and stayed with her happily. Even he had children from her. At this time the regiment was ordered home. He settled some money on Maddalena and went home. There he married Sophy Cosby and stayed happily making repeated trips to India, on different pretexts and was thus compelled to lead a double
life. So much magnetic was the attraction that held him with Maddalena, the Eurasian. Here is the description- given by him before Captain Mallender the hero of the novel.

... At a sergeant’s Ball I made the acquaintance of Maddalena de Rosa She was a Eurasian about sixteen and quite distractingly pretty...” (emphasis added) and we fell in love on the spot! I shall never forget Maddie that might, with her pink dress, her little string of mock pearls, and her wonderful eyes! ... (emphasis added) her eyes did the business- and we danced together most of the evening...”

As long as they stayed in India the white men were always afraid of getting their race mixed and therefore contaminated. Though, motivated, at moments, by their flesh, and relished the relationship with the Eurasian women, the thought of their dark children that would descend in to the world as a result of such marriages, their future generation treated with cruelty and condemned to the life of bleakness because of their blackness shook the thoughts of the white man and shunned him, from entering into marriage bond with them. The Literature and the practitioners of literature vested with the responsibility of guiding the society and mending the thoughts of the readers, always attempted to provide corrective measures. The Anglo-Indian fictionists have not only held always the union between a white person and a Eurasian unapproved but also as an eternal inconvenience and a thing doomed. The white person caught in the mesh of marriage with a half-caste or a Eurasian was considered an antisocial element and was clipped off from the community and condemned. The writers have mirrored such characters as doomed permanently and reduced to nonentities in the pages of fiction. Mrs. B.M. Croker, too, has come forward, with the delineation of such characters repeatedly in her works.

In the story “The Khitmatgar” we have a picture of how a white man Mr. Jackson marrying a Eurasian girl Fernanda suffers untold miseries. Jackson suffered many financial frictions and professional perils, peregrinated to several places as a pauper, and ultimately entered Panipore station as a photographer. The author has emphatically documented the fact that added to his prodigality and excessive gambling was, his
marriage with Miss. Fernanda Braganza, a half-caste woman daughter of musician without any education, energy or money. Here is the description of his relentless travels in search of fortune.

...He had been in turn planter, then planter's clerk, house agent, tonga agent; he had tried touting for a tailoring firm and manufacturing hill jams; and here he was at fifty years of age, with a half-cast wife, a couple of dusky children, and scarcely an anna in his pocket. Undoubtedly he had put the coping-stone on his misfortunes when he took for his bride the pretty slatternly daughter of a piano-tuner, a girl without education, without energy, and without a penny. (Emphasis added) 134.

In, Her Own People (1905), the same theme of racial contamination and the consequent suffering is continued. Paul Chandos married a half-caste Eurasian woman Miss. Rosa Lopez, in order to be relieved from the clutches of the moneylender. He stood a surety to the debts of his cousin Sidney Chandos in order to set him free from financial problems. The cousin cheated him and went away to England without ever bothering to repay the loans with Mr. Juan Lopez, the notorious moneylender of Rajahapore. Juan Lopez came forward with a proposal that in case Paul married his daughter, he would release him from all debts and bonds. There was no way for Paul to save himself. He entered into the matrimonial bond in order to be released from the financial bondage. As a result of his marriage he became socially a collapse. Most friends avoided him. As a result of this disgrace he became opium addict. His daughter Verona, on her arrival to India with a desire to unite with her own people was disillusioned to find her mother and sisters black in their complexion beyond description. Here is her rumination about her father.

...Her father- oh! Why had he married a woman of such a race? Now, she understood his constrained manner, his ashamed silence and his down cast air, why he seemed to shun his former associates and to withdraw from society like some social outlaw... (Emphasis added) the broken down gentleman lethargic and dumb...135

It is a reiterated fact that Charlie Booth in, The Company's Servant (1907), was caught in the mesh of attraction of Eurasian girl, Rosita Fontaine. In order to satisfy her unending demands for money and
materials he indulged in corruption and was ultimately dragged into the enquiry and found guilty. Being unable to face the situation squarely he rushed to the railway track, and committed suicide by falling across the wheels of rushing railway-engine. In the same novel Gojar (Algernon Craven) also went down in the social ladder did many menial jobs because of his marriage with a half-caste Cashmeri woman after whose death he was reduced into a drunkard and finally an opium addict. Here are his words of confession before Vernon.

"... I fell in love, and married a beautiful Eurasian, (emphasis added) half-Cashmeri, half English- a good woman, too when she died, I was distracted, and went to the bad. I showed my respect for her memory by taking to drink, and from drink naturally I went to pieces. I drank and drank, I upset his Highness's coach, I drugged his race-horses, I played the mischief, and was very properly flung out ... a waiter in Calcutta hotel, a 'super' in a Calcutta theatre ... fired out for drunkenness... sank into the purlieus of the China Bazaar in Moulmein. Here another loafer long since dead-introduced me to the land of dreams, Ganja, and a new phase of life was opened to me. I struggled to keep soul and body together... (emphasis added) finally in black town, Madras, I fell sick and was taken to the station Hospital-...”

In, In Old Madras (1913), also we see the theme of suffering of a white man due to his marriage with a Eurasian. Major Rochfort, whose bungalow Captain Mallender visited, narrated his story of dual life. He fell in love with a Eurasian beauty, had children from her. But the children were very dark. Then he went to England, married Sophy Cosby. But the hold of Eurasian Maddalena de Rosa was so strong on him that he went on visiting her giving false reasons of visiting his plantation here, to his wife in England. When she doubted his repeated visits to India and insisted upon accompanying him, thenceforward his fear of being found as a cheat by his wife and his sense of guilt begin to haunt him. In the mean while his wife's arrival to India precipitated the difficulties. He narrated everything in detail before Mallander. This gets dramatized in the novel in a moving manner. He requested Mallender to arbitrate and settle the matter. Here are his words before Mallender.

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"Every two or three years I come out to see my coffee, that is what I call it. I may tell you, that I don't own a bush! ... I have an awful idea that Sophy has her suspicions; (emphasis added) she cross questions me so closely about my coffee and crops... Recently it has seemed to me that my wife has been looking at me curiously; of course this may only be my own guilty conscience! ...(Emphasis added) She wishes to visit the estate... I am half afraid she will keep her word, ... I dare say she will divorce me."\textsuperscript{137}

The fact that life became miserable by entering into a marriage bond with a Eurasian is not shown as particularly applicable and restricted with the male section of the white society. Mrs. B. M. Croker has shown the fact that life of many white women, widows especially; became miserable by their marriage with Eurasian men. Generally in such cases the poverty and frugal life style, economic constraints are more highlighted rather than the emotional estrangement and other entanglements that pester the connubial life. In the case of men, the marriage with Eurasians led to the state of social collapse and addiction to unhealthy habits. In the story “The Missing Link” we see Mrs. Mills married to Mr. Mills an engineer on the railway when she was seventeen. But alas! She became a widow with two children to be supported when she was twenty-three. Then she worked in the department of pension in order to raise and rear her children up. But the saddening fact is that when she was old and infirm she was despised by her own son and daughter-in-law and was detained from seeing her grand children. Her son was fair and tall chap married the daughter of an officer. The daughter-in-law did not like the mother-in-law because of her being dark and a Eurasian. Here is the description about her son and daughter-in-law.

"... He is fair like his father. His wife is the daughter of an officer; she does not care to see me, and does not wish her friends to see me." (Emphasis added), she sighed, profoundly, and her voice seemed to die away, as she added- "she thinks me very dark..."\textsuperscript{138}

In, \textit{Babes in the Wood} (1910), we get the picture of the suffering of a white woman because of her marriage with a Eurasian man. Mrs. Castellas was an English widow (Mrs. Lucy Hampton) of a great literary man. After the death of her first husband she left her daughter Miss. Joan Hampton with her former husband's relations and married Mr. Castellas, a
Eurasian student of medical science. Then she came to India and was compelled to embrace the life of economy in every aspect of her life as all the plans and projects of Mr. Castellas, which being the Jutemill, Coalmine, Jam factory, Newspapers, Milk Farm, and finally Perfume distillery failed and landed the family in misery. After some years Joan joined her parents with genuine desire to meet and stay with them. The girl had her own amount of 100 pounds, which she added to the family purse for expenditure. But all the while the family was suffering from deficit of resources. But Mrs. Castellas went on entertaining the guests who dined and wined at the Castellas. But the girl Joan, who managed the household, was always held under stress. She even sold her pony Sirdar in order to settle many bills. In spite of this it was difficult for them to pull on. Therefore the girl held a meeting with her mother and asked her to minimize the expenditure. Here are the words of the girl to her mother.

“...The club subscription- ten rupees a month-guests, wine, whisky, tinned stores, hams- all very expensive. We must live as frugally as natives. We do, - when alone.”

... I want you in future to promise me you will invite no guests to dine or lunch or visit, run no bills whatever, here or elsewhere- and leave all the money troubles on my shoulders”

The misery and frugality of life resultant of the marriage of white woman with Eurasian man gets reflected in, *Quicksands* (1915) also. In the novel Eva moved to Bangalore to see her brother Ronnie who, after being proved guilty of misappropriation of regimental funds, was arrested and sent there. In Bangalore she stayed with Mrs. de Castro who had married a Eurasian clerk. After entering her abode Miss. Eva was really surprised and was compelled to live low as Mrs. de Castro lived. Here are the words of Eva that describe the simple and frugal life of Mrs. de Castro.

I soon discovered that Mrs. de Castro kept but few servants The so-called “boy”, a man of forty, combined the offices of cook and waiter. To me the food was unfamiliar, and consisted of peculiar
pillau, tank fish, and curries of the most starting varieties; our fruit was pomegranates and custard apples. 140

Invariably in almost all the novels discussed above the white characters reveal their inveterate hatred towards the Eurasians whenever there arose occasions. This kind of hatred of the white men born of their racial prejudice made the life of the Eurasians many times utterly tragic. This gets reflected in the novels.

In spite of having said so much about the Eurasians almost in the tone of diatribe and having depicted their life full of poverty, cheapness, their being a borrowing but never repaying, and cheating population, their young girls extraordinarily attractive, and union with such women of unwanted and abandoned race a disgraceful thing, the Eurasian predicament in colonial India seems to have raised a wave of sympathy, created a soft corner in the heart of Mrs. B.M. Croker as a novelist of compassionate and humanist perspective towards the suffering, a dominant theme in her novels. On different occasions through several characters she has expressed this sympathetic stance towards Eurasians. Here are examples of such opinions from two of her books. In, *The Cat's Paw* (1902), Miss Pamela Ferrars joined Mrs. Rosario's abode. When Mr. Thorold met her and requested her to help him by accepting the job of tutor for the royal children at Royapetta palace where he was appointed as a Political Agent. On her acceptance of the job he proposed that she must join the service of the palace from an English family. Here are his words

"... It is essential that you should join the court of Royapetta from the house of an English lady"

"A half-caste boarding house would never do," I said with a smile.

" No; you know how natives despise and hate Eurasians and the saying that 'God made the white man, and the He made the Blackman; and the devil made the half-caste."

"Yes; but I don’t agree with it. It is as false as many other sayings..." 141
In the statement of Miss. Pamela Ferrars we witness a sort of sympathy for the Eurasians even more than the natives could feel if they had any they would have decided to accept the half-caste.

Almost in the same tone, we witness, Mrs. Milman appreciate the good nature of the Eurasians. She remembers the good and helping nature of the Eurasians she received at the old contonment of Ahnomore. Here are her words about the Mackintoshes:

Two of these girls were married, and three remained at home. They were all dark talkative, and inquisitive but good natured. They gave me a sitting... advised me to wash my hair with areca-nut to keep it fair...142

Thus in the final analysis, it emerges that the Eurasians were despised by both the races and as such both the communities distanced them heaping upon them all the possible viles and wickedness.

4.5 BEAMS OF HUMANISM AND EDUCATION

While achieving ultimately the higher stages of wisdom and truth that govern our lives art entertains and instructs the readers by presenting before them the elegant, fantastic and fanciful situations. Art, being a branch of culture, embraces the cultural spheres, which are sometimes inward conditions of the spirit and mind. Though the spheres of culture are inwrought they are to be gleaned from the world around through sympathetic involvement and participation in it. Sympathy towards and interest in man and his doings in life is its important aspect. At this juncture we enter into the frontiers of humanism. Humanism adheres to human interest, human world and human affairs. "A humanist studies human nature and human affairs and his religion is to humanize, that is, to endow compassion and comprehension on those who have seen the vision fade away into the light of common day".143 Mrs. B. M. Croker, many times appears to be inspired by humanistic surge. Her characters in spite of being dominated by their clannish ideas, racial prejudice and severe sense of apathy towards Indians and, all that is Indian often come forward with humanistic dialect according to the need of the hour.

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In, *Mr. Jervis*, (1897), the humanistic treatment the whites like Mr. Jervis and Honor towards the suffering in spite of their racial difference. We witness Honor Gordon and Mr. Jervis traveling towards Allahabad from Bombay. On the way their train got detained due to collision of two goods engines. Therefore they were compelled to walk for three miles in order to reach the next station. It was a pitch-dark night. As Honor Gordon was alone and the place totally unfamiliar to her Mr. Jervis offered her company. As they walked ahead talking in darkness they reached the spot of collision. Further they came to a gate and level crossing. There the gatekeeper was seriously wounded. There was a considerable crowd before the hut of the gateman. At the sight of the sobbing gateman’s woman Mr. Jervis’s heart was at once overwhelmed with compassion. Seeking the permission of the co-passenger he entered into the hut and saw the man who had received mortal wound at the back of his head. Some natives were trying herb and charm while they waited for an apothecary from the neighbouring station Okara, which was an hour’s journey from there. Therefore after coming back to his companion, Miss. Honour Gordon, he proposed that he would attend the wounded man and carry out the first aid. He therefore requested the girl to wait outside as the inside of the hut was very hot and she might feel uncomfortable (inside) there. But the girl, though she had been there, not only there, at the spot, but in India itself, for the first time, said that she could not bear to hear the other man’s painful twisting and groaning. She too desired to attend the wounds of the suffering as she had a little knowledge of nursing and ‘first aid’, saying so she drew out a pair of scissors, sticking-plaster and a little bottle of eau-de-cologne from her bag and walked with him to attend the wounded stranger. This gesture of both the white persons goes to show their sense of concern for humanity and an attempt to relieve the suffering from pain purely on humanitarian ground, though they had neither seen nor met the wounded person previously. Here is the description of their doctoring the wounded gateman.

By the light of a small earthen lamp, which smoked horribly, she distinguished the figure of a man crouching on the edge of a
charpoy; he was breathing in hard hoarse gasps and bleeding from a
great gash above his eye.

... Some kind of a bandage was the first thing Honor asked for, and
asked for in vain; she then quickly unwound the puggaree from her
toopee and tore it into three parts. (Emphasis added) Then she
bathed and bandaged the man's head with quick and sympathetic
fingers, (emphasis added) whilst Jervis held the lamp, offering
suggestions, and looked on, no less impressed than amazed; he had
hitherto had an idea that girls always screamed and shrank away
from the sight of blood and horrors.

This girl, though undeniably white, was as cool and self possessed,
as firm, yet gentle, as any capable professional nurse.

The scalded arm and hand- a shocking spectacle-were attended by
both. The great thing was to exclude the air and give the sufferer at
least temporary relief. With some native flour, a bandage was deftly
applied, the arm placed in sling, and the patient's head was bathed
with water and eau-de-cologne. Fanned assiduously by the girl's
fan, he began to feel restored, he had been given heart, he had been
assured that his hurts were not mortal, and presently he languidly
declared himself better. (Emphasis added) 144

If the sight of wounded and the suffering gateman that makes the
heart of Miss. Honor Gordon and Mr. Jervis bulge and become big inflated
with humanism in the novel discussed above, it is the reference to
suffering of the population of patients who were harrowed by the horrible
pestilence-plague, that fills the heart of Miss. Pamela Ferrars with
compassion and sympathy. Her sense of service to the suffering becomes a
blazing fire to consume the suffering of her fellow creatures, in, The Cat's
Paw (1902). Miss Pamela Ferrars came to India hoping to marry Mr.
Walter Thorold. But she found, after coming over here, that he had
cheated her. Therefore she declined to marry him in spite of his forces and
decided to live on her own by finding a situation. She went to her friend
Mrs. Evans, wife of a forest official and stayed with her. But bad luck as
it were the kind lady passed away. Therefore Miss. Pamela moved towards
Poona along with her ayah in search of a situation there. But bad luck
chased the girl like her own shadow. On the way her ayah fell a prey to
plague at a travellers' bungalow. To make matters still worse her cart man
(Byle-Wallah) ran away. It was at such a panic-stricken moment that she met Maxwell Thorold was appointed as officer in charge of the plague camp. He told her that the district was infected with the plague. Further he also spoke of the plague camp affairs and the camp proper. Soon the girl proposed to appoint her and give her the chance of a situation. But Maxwell protested her proposal and said that it was jeopardizing to enter the plague camp. But the girl said that even if it meant a claim on her life she did not bother. She held the view that it was a death for a good cause. Further she argued that one must rise above all prejudices at the face of suffering of the fellow beings and must be ready to undergo the risk of any amount of danger including the sacrifice of one’s own life. Here is the conversation between the officer and the girl.

... “have you a right to refuse my services? You are not to think of your own prejudices, but the wants of those miserable creatures.” (Emphasis added).

“I must consider you, Miss. Ferrars, as well as them,” he said. “You are impetuous, impulsive, imperious,” and he smiled; “You are girl, accustomed to a sheltered home in England, and yet you ask me to suffer you to... the horrors of a plague camp, from whence you will emerge aged, heart sore and saddened.”

“I cannot age so much in a couple of months,” I protested, “and I hope that my heart is with suffering always.” (Emphasis added).

... “You will be entirely in the women’s hospital, and have a small cupboard to yourself; you will have coarse food, long hours- the head apothecary will be your tyrant.

“It is well to be warned,” I answered quickly. “I don’t expect luxuries- I am prepared for anything.” (Emphasis added).

“You may get the plague and die.” (Emphasis added).
"And if I do, I shall die in a good cause," I proclaimed stoutly. "I am alone in the world—mine is a sort of spare life. I have no parents, no near relatives; I shall not be the means of putting anyone into mourning; and I am of age, and answerable only to my conscience and myself" (Emphasis added)

From the citations above it becomes clear that in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across the characters that are well laved in the light of humanism. Though this aspect gets reflected in many other novels only two dealing with India are treated here due to constraints of scope.

Since the sphere of culture encompasses all that goes to cause prosperity to a man as a member of society, who undergoes improvement and instruction through the process of socialization, education also gets attached to society indivisibly as it acts as an agency of socialization. Therefore as an element of improving human beings, education, has a social basis. Education not only liberates a man from ignorance but also uplifts once socially and morally. Educating one's self as well as the others will contribute to the amelioration of the society. A person, especially a writer, is often affected by the system and the dominant theories that are more in the air during the contemporary days. Mrs. B.M. Croker, in the moments of depiction of her characters and their predicament contextually makes references to education and educational system. In that she seems to be much attracted and influenced by the educationists like Probell, Madame Maria Montessori and other prominent educationists who introduced the sweeping reforms in the field during her days. We may discern this influence on her reflected in, The Cat's-Paw (1902), wherein Miss Pamela Ferrars the heroine was appointed as tutor to the children of the royal palace of Royapetta. There she had to teach the three children namely the young rajah Kodappa, and his sisters Lucksmi and Varuna.

Mr. Maxwell Thorold was appointed by the company Sirkar as the political agent at the palace of Royapetta. As the king Kodappa was quite young he was to be taught. The responsibility of providing education to the royal children was vested with Thorold. Therefore he asked Miss.
Pamela Ferrars to help him by accepting the position of a tutor to the royal children. Pamela entered the palace as a teacher with a large supply of books and other study materials. Pamela taught the royal children not only the art of reading, writing and calculating, but also behaviour pattern. Here is the description.

My three pupils, the Rajah Kodappa, and his sisters, Lucksmi and Varuna, were docile little people... The eldest girl was sharp, clever, and observant, but a minx. Varuna aged five, was soft, round, infantile and dull; ... The little sovereign, Kodappa was extremely intelligent... delicate, inquisitive and terribly restless.

I had been accorded carte blanche in the matter of books, and had brought with me a large consignment from Higginbotham's in Madras: Kindergarten publications, pictures, stories, maps. It was my aim to offer instruction and amusement combined, and in this I was confident I should succeed.... (Emphasis added)

... "Your Royal Highness” I said firmly...” must learn never to repeat to one person what another said of him.”

“But it's what we do all day.” “...Where is the harm? What else can one talk of?”

“Many things, as you will find out when you read books. At any rate, I must insist that you never repeat remarks to me.”146

In the same novel she also gives a picture of the impact of partiality shown by the teachers towards their students. The case shows how the partiality displayed by the teachers towards their taught is going to affect the innocent minds of the children. The children who suffer the partiality of teachers are likely to develop aversion towards learning. This idea gets dramatized in the case Mardie a little girl at the Rosario's, a cheap-rate boarding house where Miss. Pamela Ferrars had sought shelter. Soon after her entry into the abode of Mrs. Rosario she saw the child twaddling. A little later we hear Mrs. Rosario is giving explanation before Pamela regarding Mardie’s not going to school. Here is the explanation given by Mrs. Rosario.

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..."Oh my Pamella! What trouble these children are. Mardie won't go to school because she was not promoted last term. Teacher says. She cannot be promoted, but I don't know why. Oh, these teachers, they promote just those they please! Mardie girl ought have had a prize at Christmas, but they would not give her one." (Emphasis added) 147

Education has an in excludable tie with the society. Man, since his being positioned in the society, is expected to follow certain set of pattern accepted and cherished by it. Put to the process of socialization and conditioning man acquires these modes and social etiquettes. This sociological basis of education has a clear impact on the moulding of behaviour, personality and personal culture of an individual. If the behaviour of any individual is contradictory to these accepted traditions, ideals and codes of attitude that individual is condemned and scolded out by other members of the group or society however higher social position he may be holding. This situation gets dramatized in the story “The Moonshine Picnic”. In the story we come across the character of Mr. Tennant. Tennant was a strict judge posted to the station of Cheetapore. He was brought up in strict, disciplinary scholastic atmosphere, which had made him idiotically idiosyncrat, solitary, contemplative, and speculative about astronomy and stargazing. He did not like society and scarcely got mixed up in the society. His sole interests were his hobby and his own work. Paying least attention to the people and practices around him he was notoriously absent minded. But he was coaxed by Captain Carthew to host a moonshine picnic on a certain Saturday. To make him a laughing stock of the station as it were his forgetfulness and absent-mindedness drove him into the realm of oblivion of his promise to the community. The whole community gathered at the fixed spot in order to dine, wine, dance, and derive the best possible delight in the moonlight. But the absence of the host, hot dishes and drinks compelled them to come back with hungry, hollow stomachs and go to bed. He was insulted by the harsh words of Mrs. Potts whom he had forgotten to invite. She said, "...I really think it's shameful of the Government to thrust such impossible old fossils upon civilized society!" 148 Frightened by the probable dire repercussions he was left in the maddening moments and being unable to face the friction with
the community he quit the station stealthily quite early in the morning, leaving his affairs and auction of accessories to his butler. Here is the description of the person.

... he disappeared- plunged once more into a particular study of the planet Mars- and was not seen again for the reminder of the week. *Astronomy was ten times more interesting than station society. What is the universe? What are these worlds? What is our real place in the marvelous plan? These matters were of a more burning interest than commonplace acquaintances and commonplace requirements.* (Emphasis added)

The happy Saturday... Sundown and moonrise. By half-past six, numbers of landaus, dog-carts, victorias, and even bicycles dotted the long, straight road, which led from Cheetapore contonment...

... beaming with pleased anticipation of a right merry evening... strange to say, there was no sign, so far, of their host; stranger still, as far as could be discovered, there was no symptom whatever of any preparation for supper...

...

By half-past eight... recalled the fact that Mr. Tennant was notoriously absentminded- and invariably late...

...

...The great hungry cortege- a long and melancholy train- started in the still cool night for Cheetapore, arriving at their separate bungalows about midnight...

...

... plunged in thought ... what were the people of Cheetapore to him? To go for once dinnerless would be a wholesome discipline and undoubtedly benefit their digestions! ... ... drove off with unusual celerity, casting occasional looks behind him, as if he half expected to find the whole station following him in furious pursuit... never again seen by any of his outraged guests...

4.6 DEPICTION OF LITTLE CULTURES AND RURAL INDIA

Expansion of Christianity, through conversion, as has already been pointed out else where, in the earlier pages, was a major part of the agenda of Imperialistic rulers as long as they held the reigns of
administration in this ancient country. This zeal of the white men for conversion, as many number of people as possible, drove them towards such human habitations of India, which, according to them, were far beyond from the very periphery of socialization, civilization and cultural contours. These little groups of tribal settlements were the point of attraction for the white men. They regarded them as fertile field for conversion. Therefore they were confident in winning over these sections of Indian population. If the missionaries were driven to such tribal settlements with their conversionist zeal, the other members of the white community were driven to the forests where these people had settled with sheer curiosity to know the life style and practices of these forest dwellers. The Anglo-Indian fictionist often alluded to the tribal life and little cultures in order to exhibit his knowledge of India and Indian communities “to make available to his compatriots a considerable range of unusual experience and still more valuable, a kind of literature capable of helping... understanding...”150 In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across ample allusions to these little cultures and depiction of rural India. The tribal communities, which are regarded by sociologists as “collection of families or groups of the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation...”151 attracted her attention due to their unique practices and life style remaining quite quarantine from the influence of urban life. She has documented their customs in the light of candour. She has registered her responses to the life style, beliefs and practices of the tribes who reside in the central zone which consists of the table land and the mountainous region between the Gangetic plains in the north and the Krishna river in the South (the Gonds and the Santhals), and the Todas and the Moplahs of the South and West Coast reign and also the tribes of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. At moments she even goes to the extent of announcing the hard truth that these tribals were the aborigines of India and the founders of Indian life style, on whose religion and culture the edifice of modern pan Indian culture or the Hindu culture has been erected.
The entire wing of tribal life is governed by religious beliefs. They hold the view, like all other people, that there is some superior power and it presides, pervades and predominates over all the activities of their life. Therefore they show submission and devotion coupled with complete dependence on such supernatural powers may they be manes of ancestors, devils or any other power that constitute a special feature of these tribal communities. In this regard they rely on magic and religion. Mrs. B.M. Croker, seems to have been well acquainted with Herbert Spenserian theory of Manism or worship of ghosts. This gets reflected in the depiction of the tribal life that she has documented in the novels. The beliefs, faiths and practices which are often the consequences, more of magic and religion, which appear mysterious and strange to the contemporary mind, form the very basis of the tribal little cultures. In, A Bird of Passage (1893), we see Mrs. Croker alluding to the practice of the funerals among the Andamanese tribes. Miss. Helen Denis, soon after her arrival participated in the Generals’ tennis and won the appreciation of the onlookers. Very soon the General approached her with a telescope and talked about the surrounding islands and the inhabitants therein and their practices. Then the conversation that ensued there among the other characters throws light on the tribal life. They talk about the primitive practices and odd customs of the dwellers of the islands. Here are the bits of the conversation.

"...They are certainly most mysterious aborigines, for they do not resemble the Hindoos on one side, nor the Malays on the other. They are more like stunted niggers-you never see a man above five feet, some not more then four."

"..."

"They have very odd customs, have they not?" (Emphasis added) asked Helen.

"Yes," replied the General; "their mode of sepulture, for instance, is peculiar. When a man dies, they simply put his body up a tree" (Emphasis added)

"...

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"And when the fowls of the air have picked his bones, they remove the remains, and present his skull to the widow, who wears it round her neck, slung to a string." (Emphasis added)

“But will freely part with it at anytime,” added Dr. Melone, who had now joined the group, “Aye, even in the early days of her affliction, in consideration of a bottle of rum.”

“And pray what about the men?” inquired Helen, jealous for her sex.

“Oh, their tastes are comparatively simple,” responded the doctor; “they are all a prey to a devouring passion for- you will never guess what- tall hats! (Emphasis added) I believe some firm in Calcutta drives a brisk trade with this place and the Nicobars, bartering old tiles for cocoanuts. When a chief dies, he can have no nobler monument in the eyes of his survivors than a pile of tall hats impaled above his grave. They are almost the only article they care about, and I suppose they have an idea that endows them with dignity and height; besides the hat a few rags, a necklace of human finger-bones, and their costume is complete”. (Emphasis added) 152

In, The Cat’s Paw (1902), also we come across allusions to the tribal life of the Gonds of the Central India. Miss. Pamela Ferrars, after abandoning the abode of Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall entered the home of Mrs. Evans, the wife of a forest official, with whom she had made friends during her journey. Mrs. Evans was a very kind lady, not only to the people of her community but also to the neighbouring Gonds. She was a popular woman among them. She even knew their language and spoke to the tribals in their language and took interest in their troubles and suggested solutions. She knew a little of nursing and medicine. During the camping with her husband she carried a supply of simple medicines and treated the ailments while listening to their difficulties. She offered them many gifts. The tribals held her in high respect and looked forward to her annual arrival. They called her the “Forest Lady”. Here is the description given by the young girl who accompanied her during one such camping.

...Among these villagers the “Forest Lady”, who had come among them annually for so many years, was well known. As soon we were established they flocked to welcome us bringing their children and grandchildren and offering of flowers and fruits. Mrs. Evans appeared to know all about them and addressed many by name... was familiar with their family affairs, their feuds, grievances, triumphs, hopes and ailments. She was never without a supply of
simple medicines, and set up a small dispensary... cases came to her for relief!- some with elephantiasis or leprosy, others who had been mauled by bears or leopards, and crowds of little children suffering from every infantile ailment,- and with these the Forest Lady was especially successful! She spoke the outlandish Gond tongue, entered into the women's interests, endowed them small gifts... The parents... the children and one and all were devoted to the gracious Forest Lady...

Likewise in, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), we come across the depiction of tribal life in more than one place. In the novel the author also avers that the tribals were the aborigines of India. Philip Trafford, Eliot Scruby, Maguire and Dr. Collins fall into a deep conversation about their contemporary conditions of colonial India. When doctor Collins spoke of the condition and activities prevailing and the attitude and activities of the natives towards the British rule Scruby said that it was by all means India for the Indians. This made the doctor to expound on the matter as to who were the Indians. According to the learned man the aborigines of India were the tribal communities, such as the Gonds, the Todas etc., who were driven to the mountainous regions to live the life of utter primitivism. Here are his words.

"But who *are* the Indians, and the true and original lords of the soil? Not these clamouring Bengalis, though I believe *some* are Dravidian, or turbulent Marathis, but *aborigines such as the Gonds, the dark races of the South, the Todas, the Mopilhas of the West Coast, those whom the conquering Aryans and Scythians have driven down to the seashore-or into the forest fastnesses.*" (Emphasis added)

... the forest folk are peaceful enough," announced Scruby in a cheerful voice.

"Yes," agreed the doctor, "There's nothing of the modern strenuous life about *them*! They have the ideas and manners of early ages. For instance, the *Gonds, the flat-faced primitive aborigines, were here long before the Aryan invasion. They are simple as then in their customs, and believe in good hunting, strange gods and devils.* (Emphasis added) The Santhals, another race nearer Calcutta, are fine fellows, carry themselves valorously, and speak the truth."
In the same novel Milly, sister of Trafford, who joined him later 
took more interest in India and Indian native's life. She developed 
acquaintance and familiarity with an elderly woman of the tribal 
settlement of Kukdikhapa or the Village of Fowls. Along with Eliot 
Scruby, in the absence of her brother, she visited the village. Here she 
wanted to ask the elderly woman if she had found the bangles for which 
the white girl had developed fascination. Here is the description of the 
village and the event and conversation that ensued at the visit.

... a straggling lane, lined with wattled huts, for the most part 
standing little plots of cotton plants, onions, gourds and chilis. ...

There is not much to be seen in a Gond dwelling; a plastered mud 
floor, a charpoy reared against the wall, cooking pots, an axe, iron 
spoon, a hasi, or sickle, and a broom. There was also on a shelf a 
multitude of little figures. (Emphasis added)

"Do see," cried Milly, introducing them with a wave of her hand, 
"the family gods!" (Emphasis added)

She turned and appealed to the old woman in broken Gondi, who 
nodded and beamed upon her.

"The souls of departed relatives are represented by these tiny 
stones; imagine that lump of Vermillion a soul! (Emphasis added). 
And why Vermillion? I wonder what colour my soul would be?"

Then Milly waited to get the much-desired bangle. As the old 
woman of the settlement was engaged in enquiry about the bangles and 
their rate, the other Gondi woman talked about Milly and Scruby. She was 
surprised to know that Milly, in spite of her being extraordinarily 
beautiful and grown up was still unmarried while her little grand daughter 
a small child was married. Here is the description of the Gondi woman and 
girls and their attitude towards Milly.

... the Gondi, a broad squat figure with a flat face, coarse black 
hair, her sole garment a rusty red sari did not even wear the usual 
chowli or jacket. The pride and glory of her existence was 
extraordinary profusion of coloured glass bangles, which half 
covered her muscular arms. ...(Emphasis added)
"If the lady is not married," proclaimed the elder woman in Gondi, "wherefore will not the young man who is with her, take her to wife? Behold the marriage token!" and with a sudden jerk she dragged down a long wreath of withered mango leaves from the lintel of the door, and, deftly casting it over Milly's head, pointed to her companion. (Emphasis added) Scruby understood Gondi—... and instantly became crimson.

...she moved towards the door, and the Gondi girl, stirred by an irrepressible impulse, suddenly stooped and laid her matted head on Milly's neat tan shoe. ...\footnote{156}

Mrs. B.M. Croker seems to be quite well acquainted with the dormitory system of these tribes. Usually each tribe is said to have had such practice of erecting a dormitory or a building of a public character, which resembled our contemporary yuvaka mandala and yuvati mandala (young members' club) that intended to teach the young men of a particular tribe. They taught the young men their responsibility towards their tribal community and kept them always organized and available for public service, for collective defence of their tribal community while developing a sense of belongingness and discipline. In the novel being discussed above we come across a reference to, almost akin to this kind of system that was prevailing among the Santhalis, whom she praised for their truthfulness through one of her characters. Here is a description given by Scruby of one of the activities that was conducted in the dormitory.

"The Santhalis have one peculiar custom," added Scruby: "Once a year, the head of every family in a village assembles his relatives under his roof. They shut themselves up, stuff their ears, and sit on the floor together, and there shriek all the abominable words and bad stories they know. This goes on for hours, till they are absolutely worn out, gasping and speechless." \footnote{157}

There are also cross-references to the hill-people of the Himalayas who assist the hunters and the hill-climbers in the Himalayan ranges by carrying the heavy load of these people in, The Chaperon (1907), wherein Armine remembers her husband assisted by these hill men. In the story "The Fatal Paragraph" Cecil Brandon falls a prey to the Lokele tribe well
known for their cannibalism, who “wore necklaces of the teeth of those whom they had eaten” since the locale of last story is Africa a passing observation is made here.  

One of the general observations, made by the eminent researchers and Critics, of Anglo-Indian Literature, like Oaten, Greenberger and Benita Parry etc., that often gets stuck to the shoulders of Anglo-Indian fictionists is that their picturing of India is limited only to the city life of their stations and their picturing of rural India suffers from deficit of details and as a consequence it is not as copious as their picturing of the urban life. This goes to show that their acquaintance and familiarity with Indian rural life was very little and scanty. But this observation falls short to apply fully to the writings of Mrs. B.M. Croker, as she stands altogether on a unique pedestal. She reveals an indomitable interest in and keen perception of different aspects of rural Indian life. We come across abundant pictures of Indian rural, agrarian life in her works at several places.

The story “The Dak Bungalow at Dakor” offers the true picture of a village wherein we come across two ladies Mrs. Loyd and Mrs. Julia Goodchild traveling by bullock-tonga to join their husbands for celebration of Christmas in the forest. At fixed places they changed their bullocks and continued their journey. But they came at such a place that it was not possible for them to procure a pair of bullocks. Therefore they ordered their servant Abdul to procure a pair immediately and drive behind them fast to over take them, while they walked slowly. During their walk to reach the village they passed through a picturesque scenic beauty before they reached the next village. Here is the description of village locality.

Our road was dry and sandy, and lay through a perfectly flat country... in distant dips in the landscape we beheld noble topes of forest trees and a few red-roofed dwellings-the abodes of the tillers the soil; but on the whole, the country was silent and lonely; the few people encountered driving their primitive little carts stared at us... the insolent crows and lazy blue buffaloes all gazed at us in undisguised amazement as we wended our way (emphasis added)
through this monotonous and melancholy scene. ... At length we came in sight of a large village that stretched in a ragged way at either side of the road. There were the usual little mud hovels, shops displaying, say two bunches of plantains and a few handfuls of grain, the usual collection of gaunt red pariah dogs, naked children (emphasis added) and unearthly-looking cats and poultry.\textsuperscript{159}

In the same way we come across at many places many descriptions of villages wherein the hovels, huts, and hideous blue buffaloes swimming in the ponds, house-tops covered by creepers, pumpkins, and the narrow, squalid streets littered by dirt and dark naked children get figured vividly.

It is not only with offering the description of populated villages that Mrs. B.M. Croker remains satisfied but she also offers the description of deserted, decimated and destroyed villages due to diseases like plague, cholera, drought and devil in her works. In the story “If you see Her Face” we see the description a deserted village. Daniel Gregson, the political agent to the rajah of Oonomore and his junior assistant Percy Goring got detained at Kori, on their way to attend Delhi durbar, due to break on the line because of collapse of a bridge on the route. As they had to wait there till the day after they plan to hunt in the locality, which was a deserted village. Here is the description of the one.

Truly a bleak, desolate-looking region, and save one or two miserable huts and some thorn bushes, there was no sign of tree or human habitation. At last they came in sight of wretched village – the once prosperous hanger-on of the now deserted hunting palace—that showed its delicate stone pinnacles behind a high wall; ...\textsuperscript{160}

While describing the villages, and various quarters of the village that are narrow and covered by dust and dirt she also describes the neighbourhood of the rural settlements which enskirt them. Usually Indian rural settlement is nothing but a collection of cropped up huts and cottages in the midst of fields wherein the villagers work hard to earn their daily bread with much praised patient waiting in full trust in the Providence. In, \textit{The Cat’s-Paw} (1902), Mrs. Croker presents the neighbourhood of a village before the readers. In the novel we see Miss. Pamela Ferrars working at the plague camp, as she paid more attention and
nursed the ailing with affection, they often looked up her for support. This put her to unending duty almost around the clock save some hours for her personal comforts. Her unselfish and attentive service to the patients drew the attention, of the lady doctor Mrs. J. Manuel at the camp. She appreciated her endurance. In order to refresh herself she took short and sharp walk every evening in the neighbourhood, which was a vast cultivated land. She enjoyed the beauty of the locale very much. Here is the description.

...Around it stretched the vast plain, with its bare brown fields, where man and beast laboured incessantly-ploughing, harrowing, sowing; and then the cultivator, his work accomplished, waits, with the eternal patience (emphasis added) of his race, for what the gods may send-rain and plenty, or drought and death. ...

Mrs. Croker also documents the routine of rural life which she seems have seen very keenly. The daily activities of the villagers stuffed into the pages of her novels go far a way in discerning her first hand knowledge of rural life of Indian farmers, their wives and children. In, Angel (1901), we get the picture of the activities of the villagers, wherein the protagonist of the same name joined the Gordons during their camping tour of the district. After her coming back from England she had acquired much knowledge of India. This camping tour added more to that. Her keen desire to know the most of it motivated her very often to take the little jaunts into the neighbouring villages during the camping time. Her knowledge of the language of the locality helped her to get mixed into the people and make enquiries if necessary. Here is the description of what she observed.

This long leisurely tour ... brought Angel into more intimate touch with India than in all the previous years she had been in the country. Her knowledge of the language was an immense assistance to her; she had a keen enjoyment of the picturesque, a quick eye for character, and the rural life and scenery offered her a profoundly interesting study. (Emphasis added) Many an afternoon, ... she took long walks or rides in its vicinity. These excursions offered her more pleasure.

...
But Angel required more variety—more actual life. She made her way into the huts of the peasant women, and talked to them eagerly, as they spun, or ground millet, or she joined the children among the crops, as they scared the flocks of monkeys and parrots and cut grass for their buffaloes. (Emphasis added) Some were old friends she had made two years previously, and one and all welcomed the fair lady, and confided to her their joys, sorrows, and their schemes. How well she appeared to understand; ...162

Here is one more reference to the activities of village women and children culled from *The Cat’s-Paw* (1902). In the novel Miss. Pamela Ferrars after being relieved from the plague camp journeyed towards Dassi. On the way she saw the fields wherein the crops were full-grown and the women and children busy in shooing away the birds that troubled them. Here is the description.

The road which through a flat and fertile country, was bordered by acacias and other flowering trees; and perched on rustic platforms, amongst seas of yellow grain, sat women and children vigorously whirling their wood clappers to scare the deer, wild pig and flashing flocks of green parrots which boldly descended on the crops. ...(Emphasis added)163

In the novel *Given in Marriage* (1916) we come across the reference to the life of a planter in vivid details like roll call of coolies, weeding, picking, then visiting the factory, processing the coffee weighing it, dispatching it to market. She has also documented the troubles of the planters like bad weather, problem coolies’ availability etc.

Mrs. Croker has documented the annual routine also of the peasants. While documenting the details of the life and life style of the Indian peasantry she displays enough empathy and understanding towards the simplicity of the village life, and especially their beliefs and eventlessness of these children of soil with enough smell of soil. In, *Angel* (1901), we get the picture of the Indian rural community engaged in traditional activities and tour as a part of their annual diversion. Angel, the protagonist, joined the Gordons and a group of camping tour of the district. Alan Lindsay explained many things about rural life of India before Miss. Cuffe. Here, in the description wherein we witness the polytheism, poverty, patience and patrotalty of the Indians and their firm
belief in tradition and commitment to the age-old values in spite of endless suffering.

Here is the description of rural life a rendered by Mr. Lindsay.

"... the peasant's mental horizon is rather limited," said Mr. Lindsay, "He has some sort of belief in a Providence, whose benevolence is shown in restricting malignant heavenly powers from doing mischief."

... he trusts in a host of godlings who inhabit the pile of stones, which from the village shrine. (Emphasis added) He believes that he would live for ever, were it not that some devil or witch plots against his life.

... He believes that it is good to feed a Brahmin, that it is wrong to tell a lie, (Emphasis added) unless to benefit yourself. He believes, that if he does an impious act he may be reborn as a rat or a worm, he believes that woman is an inferior creature (Emphasis added) whom you may bully with impunity. With a man, you must be more careful.

... And the women, how do they live? Have they no amusements?” inquired Miss. Cuffe. ...

"Amusements" They do not know the meaning of the word. They work- ... from dawn till dark-helping their husbands with the cultivation of the land, drawing water, cooking, weaving- they are hags at thirty and their only release from drudgery is an occasional pilgrimage. ... (Emphasis added) marching for days packed in a country cart which crawls along from weak to weak ... at last they reach their goal Hurdwar- or Benares. They bathe and worship and offer sacrifice- it is the one event of their lives, - ...

...they wear the same fashion for twenty centuries, their food never varies, a little pepper and spices, the only relish- the plough, the spinning wheel, and loom, remain unchanged in a thousand years; ... (Emphasis added).

"Poor creatures," exclaimed Miss. Cuffe, “what lives of hideous toil. I suppose they don’t know what happiness and love mean?”
"Oh yes they are sufficiently happy when they bring off a good bargain and they love their plot of land, their ancestral acre, with a fierce devouring ardour, passing the love of women." 164

Along with the references shown above the readers come across many passing remarks on the women labouring in the fields for a copper coin, workers resting in the middle of their drudgery in the topes, and the farmers, their wives and children working in the fields, or the young boys driving their cattle or goats to graze in the pastures or returning in the evening kicking up clouds of dust behind them etc in many other works of Mrs. B.M. Croker which go to show her interest in the doings of the people of the rural areas in India.

Another dominant image of rural India we witness in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker is that of the impregnable backwardness of Indian villages. The Indian villages, sleeping serenely in the lap of scenic beauty are hardly reachable spots. There were no proper roads, which compelled the dwellers of villages to remain the permanent pedestrians, riders of donkeys, bullock, and other animals including the horses and carts. The heroes and heroines of her novels often met and registered their responses to such a life of unbeatable backwardness, as far as travel facilities and transport conveniences in India are concerned. The Cat's-Paw (1902), registers the fact that Indian villages lack travel facilities and therefore remain backward. Miss. Pamela Ferrars decided to go to her former acquaintance Mrs. Evans abandoning the residence of Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall after being cheated by Walter Thorold. Accordingly she wrote to Mrs. Evans at Lohara, and traveled to Mirapur station. There she met Mr. Evans who took her into the cow-cart explaining what a cow-cart meant. Then they traveled towards the residence of Mr. Evans. On the way Miss. Pamela Ferrars saw many things, which brought her face to face with the real Indian scenes and rural serenity of the locality. Here is the description of what she saw along the road

On the whole, I must confess that I enjoyed this expedition; the tonga was comfortable, if the pace was leisurely, and here was real India at last! – the primitive country, looking much as it had done for thousands of years; no bicycles or Victorias flashed by, but we
met lumbering carts with wooden wheels, all in one piece- like cheeses- people riding asses, or afoot, driving herds of sheep and goats, identical in appearance with pictures in our old family Bible. ... (Emphasis added)

In, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), also we come across the description of rural India where people were still unquestionably antiquarian in appearance and attitude. Soon after his arrival in India Philip Trafford, accompanied his friend Eliot Scruby who took him by way of introducing the locality, the neighbours and the jurisdiction of the forest that was to be governed by him. The equestrians traveled through the forest and then joined the main road, which was littered with the long train of carts carrying cargo and troops of travelers and load of pots and pans. Here is the description.

...Here were long long lines of creaking bullock carts, the drivers incognito their brown blankets drawn over their heads, strings of pack bullocks laden with rice and grain, ekkas packed to the roof and not a few family parties on the move on foot, (emphasis added) carrying their bundles and cooking pots—...

The fact that the rural people of India, in spite of their diligence and drudgery confronting constantly with famine, poverty and pestilence, loved puerile as well as puissant pleasures, which demanded enough muscular strength and physical potency, also attracted the attention of Mrs. B.M. Croker. In many of her works we notice her alluding to such items again and again. She refers to the rustic games and amusements such as wrestling, cock fighting, kite flying and cart-racing etc., in her short stories and novels as and when occasion arises in the course of capturing India and Indian life in the colour of candour. In, *Her Own People* (1905), one witnesses the recordation of rural entertainments. Miss. Verona visited the sugar works in the company of Mrs. Lepell, the Barwells and Brian Salwey and others. The party was guided through the works by Mr. Tom Lepell, the manager of the sugar factory at Rajahpore. He explained everything- the processing of sugarcane into sugar. During the time he showed the Indian farmers and their rows of carts drawn in by buffaloes. The party asked many questions about the sugar cane, sugar juice, molasses, loafsugar etc., and then observing the farmers Mrs. Barwell
asked as to the amusements of the villagers. Mr. Lepell said that the villagers had their own amusements. Here is the conversation between the man and the lady.

"Have they never any amusements?" inquired Mrs. Barwell, ...

"Yes; those who are pretty well off excel in wrestling matches; they have quail and cock-fighting, and they are all fond of cards and gambling and kite-flying; (emphasis added) said Mr. Lepell...

In, Babes in the Wood (1910), we come across the description of the event of annual Cattle-races at the village of Gaikhuri or 'Cows' Hoof', the day after the “Til Sankrant.” Mr. Eliot Scruby, the sponsor and promoter of such excursions, organized a trip to Gaikhuri. He invited Mr. Trafford, and Miss. Joan Hampton to join him to witness the races. The trio went to the village and saw many things from the dress of the people to the danger of the race. They derived much pleasure from the race even betting among them. Here is the description.

The village of the 'Cows' Hoof' was large, red-tiled, straggling, and embowered in venerable papal trees. Immediately outside its borders a vast concourse were already assembled; also many horned cattle in carts, not a few “ekkas” and equestrians- riding the usual cow-hocked country “tat”; vendors of fruit, jallabies (native sweets) and fiery Daru spirit, were thrusting through the crowd and offering their wares with a brazen lung power that rose high above the confused babble of the multitude. (Emphasis added)

The English spectators were drawn upon a knoll... commanded a capital view of the course.

Eleven competitors had assembled for the first event, and at a casual glance carts and bullocks appeared to be inextricably mixed in one solid block, but ultimately were disentangled, sorted, and arranged in line. The jabbering rose higher and yet higher, the crowd swayed to and fro, as the drivers stood erect, awaiting the signal to start. (Emphasis added)

..."Some of these cattle are surprisingly fast, and take a lot of driving, and there is a nice cheery, happy-go-lucky air about the whole business. (Emphasis added) But no nonsense with regard to the stakes! They are deposited with stakeholders before the race, ...

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...I hope there will be no accidents or bad smashes; last year two men were killed (emphasis added)

“Oh, Mr. Scruby” protested Joan, if I’d known these races were so dangerous, I’d never have come.”

The ground is soft and going good. It’s only dangerous when the drivers have too much of that abominable Daru; then they are mad, and drive into or over, anything. Now they are off!.

Oh, I say, there’s an upset already! No harm done. Hurrah- here they came!”

As he spoke, a veritable tornado of cattle and dust, whirling wheels, blows, and yells swept by them.

“What the duns have bolted- ...” “a red pair are leading- no, by Jove! there’s a wheel off.

What a capsize! Yes another cart down on the top of them too!”

Thus standing on altogether a unique pedestal among the practitioners of Anglo-India fiction Mrs. B.M. Croker offers a varied picture of rural India from geographical description to agriculture centered rustic life of rural Indians while showing their ardent nature of praiseworthy endurance in spite of various odd situations like droughts and disease, penury and usury and exploitation and exhaustion.

4.7 IMAGE OF INDIAN BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS

In spite of their long stay on this land, their contact with the population of this land and their language, as administrators, the British could not penetrate deep into the life of Indians. This is perhaps because of their contextual coming into proximity of the people that precluded them from understanding India completely. Commenting on this phenomenon Bhupal Singh writes, “the study of Anglo-Indian fiction suggests that the Englishmen have a poor, even contemptuous opinion of Indian character and little patience with their ‘Aryan friend’.”

Thanks to the attempts of the Anglo-Indian fictionist in documenting the behaviour patterns of Indians in their works, however small the quantum is. Their contact with Indians and Indian life was not only contextual but
it was also very limited in range as far as the number of people concerned. The Indians with whom the British authors on India, especially women, as they constitute the majority among the novelists, came in contact were generally servants. Automatically they documented the behaviour patterns of these people. Occasionally they also refer to the people and public and their behaviour as seen from distance at the public places such as railway platforms and the buzz of the busy bazaars. The behaviour of the human beings is often regarded as the result of one's response to environment. “It includes not only motor activities like walking, playing, digging... but also such activities as give us knowledge as perceiving, remembering, imagining or reasoning and emotional activities like feeling happy, sad or angry.”

The novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker make up the mosaic of the mentality of Indians belonging to various levels from pedestrians, passengers and formers to servants, sirens and spiritual practitioners. She has documented various aspects of the patterns of behaviour of these people like their cringing behaviour, stinginess, selfishness, selfless loyalty, insincerity, scandal spreading nature etc. Thus her depiction holds up a kaleidoscopic view of Indian life and behaviour pattern.

In, Mr. Jervis (1897), we see the obsequious behaviour and the loyalty of Indians. Mark Jervis came to India to meet his father who had been attracted by Indian beauty and married her and settled here. Mark came to India in the company of Mr. Clarence Waring. After reaching Bombay together they traveled towards Poona where Mr. Byng, a friend of Waring stayed. They went there to meet the latter. Mark was surprised at the obsequious behaviour of Indian passengers over board and hawkers and coolies later in train. If the Indian co-passengers attached much importance to him and overwhelmed him with invitations the hawkers and horse dealers vied about him to persuade him to purchase their wares. When major Byng asked Mr. Jervis how he liked Indian life and ambience. Here is what he described of them.
"So far I loathe it," ... "Ever since I landed, I have lived in a state of torment."

"..."

"... human mosquitoes! Touts, hawkers, beggars, jewelers, horse-dealers. They all set upon me from the moment I arrived. Ever since then, my life is burthen to me. It was pretty bad on board ship. Some of our fellow travelers seemed to think I was a great celebrity, instead of the common or ordinary passenger; (emphasis added) they loaded me with civil speeches, and the day we got into Bombay. I was nearly buried alive in invitations, people were so sorry to part with me! 171

The same Mark Jervis, in the same novel who was greatly surprised at the obsequious behaviour of the Indians, as is evident from the instance above, was greatly affected at the narration of incompatible loyalty of Osman, "an alien in blood, a Mahomedan in faith, a poor, unenlightened, faithful sowar...", 172 towards Major Jervis, the senior. When Mr. Jervis, the junior, met his father at Pelakothi, the old and ailing man narrated everything of his past life. In the course of conversation he also said that Mr. Fernandez and Fuzzil Houss the head agriculturist jointly waited for him to die, and if Osman had lived the affairs would have assumed different shape and colour. Further the old man requested Mark to stand by him as a source of support in his old age. At that time Mark asked him who this Osman was? The old man said that he was a great source of help to whom he would turn in any moment of need and further emphasized that had the Mohammadan lived he would not have requested his son to stay with him. So much was the attachment of the white man with the Indian. He goes to the extent of appreciating him so much that his presence would have compensated for the company of his son. At this point A.J. Greenberger's observation that "an Indian's loyalty to the British did not necessarily make him a morally superior individual- it was simply excepted of him" falls short to be applied in the presence case at least. 173

"He was a sowar in my regiment- a Sikh- we had known each other for half a life time, and he was more to me than a brother. (Emphasis added). We joined the same month, we left the same day. He gave up home, country, people, and followed my fortunes, and
"died in my arms last week." (Emphasis added) Here Major Jervis's voice became almost inaudible.

"We had braved heat an snow, fire and water, together, and in the long evenings here whilst I smoked my pipe, he would talk to me by the hour of the old regiment; such talk is better than any book. *If Osman had lived, I never would have summoned you-no, never;* (emphasis added) he stayed with me till death took him, and you must remain here till death takes *me*"  

In, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), also we come across the obsequiousness and humbleness of Indian natives as well as the servants at more than one place. Mrs. Croker makes her characters observe the ambience as well as people quite keenly. In the novel the picaresque heroine Miss. Pamela Ferrars wandered to different places where she saw life around her with her eyes wide open. She saw the humbleness of the Indian coolies at Mrs. Elizabeth's house. The coolies and the ayahs ran with all the obsequiousness at the call of the white master or lady. They were all half clad, bare footed worked in dust and dirt and cold, careless of their body. After leaving the Hassalls she joined Mrs. Evans, the wife of a forest official. She traveled to Lohara by train and there she was met by Mr. Evans. He informed her of the remaining forty miles journey by bullock tonga. She got into the one with him and soon got used to its rickety jolting journey and the practice of exchanging the bullocks at every five miles, where a fresh pair waited along with their masters. After yoking the bullocks to the cart their owners raced behind them. She was really surprised at the humbleness of the natives and does not fail to observe it. Here is the description.

...he indicated a two-wheeled vehicle with an immense white awning and a pole, on either side of which lay a large red bullock, comfortably chewing the cud. These were immediately stirred up by their driver, ... my luggage was piled up behind... shouts and whip crackings, we were paddling out of the station at the rate of five miles an hour.

...*

...*Every five miles we halted at a village and changed bullocks. The fresh pair were always in waiting and their owners- strange, wild
people of the Gond race—generally ran along with us like dogs, (emphasis added) until we arrived at the next stage. ...\footnote{175}

In the same novel we also witness Miss. Ferrar’s documentation of in maculate devotion of the Gonds towards Mrs. Evans who also doctored their diseases and delighted their children with little presents of toys and toffees occasionally. At the appearance of Mrs. Evans in a particular locality, the localities approached her with their wives and children and grandchildren and offered her, floral tribute and fruit, presents of innumerable types, as if she were their veritable \textit{Vana devata}.

The obsequious attitude of the natives gets observed and documented in, \textit{Babes in the Wood} (1910), also by Miss. Milly Trafford. Miss. Milly came to India to join her brother Philip, an officer in the department of forests. She was very much attracted by the simple style of the Gonds. Once during a camp nearby the Gondi village, she visited it with an intention of getting a bangle. When she visited the village the villagers were awestruck to find a white girl with her trailing skirt among their cottages. At the moment of her departure even one of the Gondi girls laid her forehead at shoe-points of the white girl. Here is the description of the attitude of the children as well as the grown up people of the settlement.

\begin{quote}
The doorway was block\ldots up with a crowd of women and children (emphasis added) staring at the white Miss. Sahib with the white gown.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
The Gondi girl came forward, and \textit{shooed them away, as if she were driving fowl} for a moment they dispersed, but immediately returned, precisely the same as a flock of persistent inquisitive chickens... (Emphasis added)
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
... the Gondi girl, stirred by an irrepressible impulse, suddenly stooped and laid her matted head on Milly’s neat tan shoe, ...\footnote{176}
\end{quote}

This kind of image of loyalty and humble attitudes of the Indian natives and the servants wearing the brass badged belt and salaaming the very foot of the steps whereupon the white master stood gets mirrored...
invariably in every work of Mrs. B.M. Croker. For instance we may show the other works like *In Old Madras* (1913), *Quicksands* (1915) *The Chaperon*, and *Odds and Ends* (1919) etc. The kind of respectful attitude of the natives towards the whites made them hold themselves all the while in exalted position.

Held in the exalted position the British employed Indians for various purposes, as accomplice and attendants. Goaded all the while by their sense of superiority they held Indians low, mean, untrustworthy and perfidious at whatever position they were inducted. If they were servants their attitude and sense of duty was always held irresponsible and unpunctual. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across such documentations in various places. In, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), Miss. Pamela Ferrars, joined the service of Mrs. de Villars, a freaky lady at Poona. As soon as Pamela’s joining took place, the lady decided to go to Japan. As a consequence she was compelled to go towards south to seek some situation there at Madras. But before she started from Poona she found that her purse that contained her recent earning with addition of some more to which, she planned to go home, was wisely picked by the servant Ahmed. Here is the account.

... Ahmed, a bearer in whom Mrs. de Villars reposed great faith, but whom I never could endure. However, he looked after my baggage, put all my small parcels into an empty carriage with his own hands, and, in short, made himself extremely useful. ... he was so quick and clever, as well as noiseless and inscrutable. (Emphasis added) I was the only passenger in my compartment, and I seated myself in the window, from whence I responded to Ahmed's profound salamis, and there I remained motionless for several hours. ...At last I turned to arrange my belongings and to get a cloak, for the evening was chilly. I moved aside my bag, and, as I did so, I discovered that there was something peculiar about it. Yes; the inner pocket and flap containing my money and letters had been neatly cut out with a pair of scissors. Ahmed had made this bag his special charge, and I now recalled his smile as he received my “buchseesh”.

In the same novel we come across a reference to the cheating behaviour of the servants when Mrs. Rosario speaks before Pamela Ferrars about the servants mixing water while milking the cows, if left by
themselves unsuperintended. It is not only the cheating behaviour of the servants that gets documented in her novels but she also documents the cheating and back-biting behaviour of the palace people when Pamela worked as a tutor to the royal children at the palace of Royapetta in the novel.

In, *The Company’s Servant* (1907), we witness two Indian characters namely Arokasawmy and Rungasawmy who are held to be turpitudinous in their attitude towards the white man. They were accomplices in the anti-governmental activities of leaking official secrets out to some espionage by Mr. Carlo Mocatto. Carlo Mocatto was about to return England and exactly at the moment when he was about to board the train at Bowen-Villay station, he was caught by the government officials who were after him. He tried to dodge them by false explanation. But they were quite tenacious and announced that they had dug deep into the secrets of his affairs and further urged him to surrender, declaring that there were witnesses, his native accomplices, to prove his involvement in the affair. As the officers mentioned the names of Mr. Arokasawmy and Rungasawmy and also their confession by way of their written documents he was nonplussed and muttered “Ah, I see, muttered the culprit, with a suppressed groan, “serves me right for trusting natives. I submit- Yes, I’ll go quietly- I’ll give no trouble; ...(emphasis added). 178 This observation of Carlo Mocatto, goes to show the fact that Indians were always held to be untrustworthy.

Very often Indians who worked as servants with the whites were regarded as irresponsible and non-communicative in their attitude. Sometimes the natives who were appointed as messengers are also depicted to communicate the messages to wrong persons in wrong way especially when they were asked to carry the verbal messages. In, novel *The Company’s Servant* (1907), we come across such an instance of wrong delivery of message. Here is the description of fear and surprise in the household of the Armingers on seeing a messenger in their compound.
the Armingers drove up to their door, after a late dinner at the General’s, they found, that a servant with a stick and lantern, was awaiting them in the verandah. He proved to be Mrs. Wenslade's butler, with a verbal message; which like most such messages, in India, is either wrongly delivered or given to the wrong person. (Emphasis added) In the present instance the message... 

The Indian servants, appointed in the domestic service, were usually illiterate and whenever asked to deliver a verbal message to any other person delivered either wrongly or to wrong persons and thus they exhibited their irresponsibility and unreliability in their duty. This necessitated the white masters and mistresses to expedite their servants with written messages. In, *Quicksands* (1915), we see the irresponsible behaviour of Indian servants. Miss. Eva Lingard participated in staging a drama entitled *The Scrap of Paper* in the local club at Silliram. She played the minor role of a servant and Mrs. Hayes-Billington the major role. As the performance took long hours she went to bed after one o’clock in the morning. When she woke up rather late in the morning she received a note from Mrs. Hayes-Billington not to disturb the latter due to severe headache. At such a point of time an observation on Indian servants’ attitude towards duty made by her underscores the white persons’ assessment of Indian servants’ behaviour. Here is what she observed.

... Verbal messages are uncertain in India, and even to some one in the same house you send a penciled note or “chit”. I had received a chit to say “Have an awful headache, do not expect me to see me till quite late D.B.”

It is not only the irresponsible and careless behaviour of the native servants that gets recorded in the novels of Mrs. B. M. Croker but her keen observation prompted her to document the other profiles of Indians’ behaviour also, such as commotion and confusion created by the natives, curiosity and an indomitable interest of the natives in the affairs of others, especially their employers. *The Company’s Servant* (1907), reflects the curiosity and irrepressible interest in the affairs of others. The Armingers, after receiving a message through the servant, in the odd time at half-past eleven in the night, that Mrs. Wenslade was seriously sick, Mrs. Arminger ran along the way breathlessly and soon came back to announce that it was...
Miss. Beatrice Arminger, who Mrs. Wenslade desired, but not the former. Accordingly when the girl entered the premises of Mrs. Wenslade's abode she was practically pushed into confusion and excitement. The atmosphere was full of confused voices of the servants who were sitting on their haunches in the verandah. Here is the description of the situation created by them in the ghastly night.

... The atmosphere of the place conveyed an impression of subdued commotion. Servants instead of being sound asleep in their godowns, were squatting around the verandah chewing betel nut and muttering in groups- the air was electrical and quivered with excitement. (Emphasis added)\(^{181}\)

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also we see the eagerness and anxiety of Indian servants towards their white masters getting displayed. Captain Mallender became successful in his enterprises of searching his missing uncle. After meeting his uncle in his old mansion he came back to Hooper's Gardens. There during the conversation Nancy questioned him why he delayed in returning. When the question was raised by her, the servants, who were there, displayed their curiosity to know where Mallender went and what he did etc., glanced at him significantly with hungry eyes and ears for the details of his movements. Here is the picture of the situation.

"I had some business to attend to. I will tell you all about it afterwards," and the traveler glanced significantly at the eager-eyed attendants, who were as anxious to hear Captain Mallender's news, as any of the company. Why all this bobbery and trouble, and coming and going? What had he been doing? They asked one another, ... (Emphasis added)\(^ {182}\)

In, *The Chaperon* (1907), we come across the natives' interest in others' affairs. Mrs. Armine was unjustifiably ignored by her husband Mr. Gordon Brakespeare. Mr. Gordon driven by his mad desire for shikari left his young wife lonely for longer period procrastinating his visit. Captain Hogarth misused the courteous behavior of Mrs. Armine and began to make-advances. She resisted severely. But by the foul misgivings of Mrs. Dora Taylor he mistook his faithful wife and the appearances around her. In spite of her innocent pleading he abused her of infidelity in their
conjugal life. He turned deaf ear to her appeals. So she left him. Here is the description of the reaction of the servants when the arguments and appeals between the husband and wife took place.

He went out into the veranda and summoned his bearer, who appeared before him as if by magic; but the truth was, that all the servants and been made aware of the Sahib’s return, and were assembled enmasse in the dim gloom of the compound anxiously awaiting developments. ... (Emphasis added) They were aware that the Mem Sahib had ordered a tonga for four O’clock in the morning, and that all her things were packed down to her hair brushes. The native mind- ever ready to put bad construction on such affairs- was willing to believe that Mrs. Brakespeare had been on the point of running away with the good looking gunner officer. They had often seen him hanging about after nightfall, though he had never ventured into the bungalow. (Emphasis added) 183

In some of her works she shows the Indian characters that are very often goaded by their greed and are made to act as instruments in intrigues. A Bird of Passage (1893), shows the fact that many times the greedy nature of Indian servants making them instruments of intrigue. Miss. Helen’s entry galvanized the atmosphere of Port Blair. She was acquainted with and attracted by Gilbert Lisle. But Mr. Quentin, a man of malevolent desires, though a friendly man with Gilbert Lisle, intended to marry Helen. During the adventure on the wreck Gilbert Lisle had decorated the hand of Miss. Helen Denis by slipping a ring on the finger of the latter. The ring was a rare thing found on the wreck. During the conversation with Gilbert, Quentin mentioned that the Denis girl was engaged to him. But when the former doubted the veracity of the narration the latter said that the would produce some tangible and physical proof of the engagement. Then he talked to Abdul, his servant to meet his wife Fatima, who was the maidservant of Miss. Helen Denis. He enticed Abdul with a buksheesh of twenty rupees to procure the ring that belonged to Helen. Here the novelist intends to show the point that for these servants getting a little amount was a matter of more importance and adventure no matter who ever got separated from their serpentine enterprise of intrusion. Here is the description.
Abdul was a dark, oily-looking, sly person, who was generally to be trusted—when his own interests did not clash with his employer.

... 

“Go off, now, this moment, ... to Ross... and speak to Fatima, and tell her. ... 

“Tell her to give you that queer gold ring Missy wears- no stones, a pattern like this,”... “I want it as ‘muster’ for another, just to look at; for a present for Missy, and give it back to-day. Mind you, Abdul, never letting Missy know: if you do or if Fatima says one word, you get nothing: if you and she manage the job well, you shall have twenty rupees!” (Emphasis added) 

...

“Then be off at once, and let me, see you back by seven O’ clock; and don’t attempt to show your face without that or nor rupees you understand?”

“...Vanished on his errand, an errand that was much to his taste. A little mystery or intrigue, and the prospects of a good many rupees appeals to the native mind in a very direct fashion. (Emphasis added) 

In, *Given in Marriage* (1916), also we come across the greedy nature of Indian servants getting documented and displayed. Captain Mayne who came to Fairplains got married to Eleanora Nancy Travers. Nancy simply agreed to marry him to please her father who was on deathbed. But soon after the marriage her father passed away. She did not want to carry along with her husband Mayne. Therefore she left the estate and joined Mrs. Jane Simpson, an old nurse who had looked after her during her childhood and now stayed at Coimbatore. She was a woman of discipline and expected everything to happen in accordance with proper plans and schemes. She was very much surprised at the hurried marriage of Nancy and therefore desired the information the about sudden marriage through her ayah. In the description given by the ayah we see the greed of the servants for money. Here are her words.

“Mayne Sahib and the Missy, standing before the Padre, both looking too sorry. Mayne, he very nice gentleman, this butler telling, a good Sahib, and no evil liver,—everyone liking. He money
got, too. Yesterday giving me twenty rupees," and the ayah's black eyes glistened greedily. (Emphasis added) 185

It is rather impossible to imagine Anglo-India or Anglo-Indian social life without train and journey by train. Life itself is often described as a journey by eminent philosophers. Train journey is a starting point of expedition into the untravelled territory. Automatically a journey consists of innumerable moments of pain, failures and frustrations. “The railway scene is a sharp, concrete model of the celebrated oriental confusion as the train itself is a symbol Indian filth and anarchy, and the train journey a race into waste...”186

In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker, we see her characters, like their creator, who was a relentless traveler, traveling and trundling by train always. And consequently they document everything that they saw of the people in course of their tour. In, The Cat’s-Paw (1902), Indians’ desire to travel regardless of travel arrangement with big bundles is reflected. Miss. Pamela Ferrars, after undergoing a harrowing experience at the plague camp of Yellowgade or Yellagode traveled towards Poona and from there she journeyed towards Madras to stay at a cheap boarding house of Mrs. Rosario. As she traveled towards Madras she sensed its approach very soon. As soon as she found herself in the platform, which, was crammed with crowd of people she saw their behaviour. Here is the description of the people and their behaviour as she saw.

In a very few minutes I found myself in the middle of the tumult and clamour of a great Indian terminus, and was jostled hither and thither by hordes of passengers with their bundles, baskets, and cooking chatties, children and even favourite fowl. I noticed one old woman with a pet hen under her arm! It was like the exodus of a tribe, or ten tribes. The native of India has a passion for traveling and is able to enjoy it at a small cost.187

In, The Company’s Servant (1907), we may see a team of tourists and their friends who had come to send the pilgrims off creating enough din on the platform. Mr. Vernon worked as a railway guard- on Tani-Kul station. The station was overflowing with natives especially during the pilgrimage season as it connected the line to Tirupati. The natives carried
their big bundles of luggage. The native women dressed in their colourful red saris with glaring borders, their brown children who usually created enough and even unendurable din thronged the platform. Here is one of the many descriptions in the novel.

...Indeed the platform was now in possession of natives who had hitherto been sitting on their heels, patient motionless- enjoying from a distance the... varied sights; these thronged in, with horde of friends to speed them, carrying their worldly goods in bundles, and arguing and gesticulating and wrangling. Finally their deafening and maddening confusion, they were herded into long third-class carriages, and rested content. To a native a journey is a festivity and an agreeable and exhilarating recreation. (Emphasis added) The Indian lines carry third-class passengers in enormous members, and at marvelously low rates, and this “Special,” which conveyed pilgrims for Tirupati, presently steamed out of the station, so cramned, that the very windows were seething mass of arms and heads. (Emphasis added) 188

Always there was an irresistible infatuation among the British, towards Indian feminine beauty. In various novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker that deal with Anglo-Indian life, we come across the characters that were caught into the cataract of beauty of Indian women. In all such tales such characters are shown to get themselves degraded and floating in the bazaar, which “is a metaphor for pleasure and vice, the repository of India’s corruptions drawing weak white men and women into its vile embrace.” 189 Such characters are always shown to have forgotten all about their prestigious past, pedigree, people, land and language. During course of the narration in the novels some one or the other character is made to comment on such renegades. Mr. Jervis (1897) shows the fact that Indian women always attracted the white men by their lascivious and evocative behaviour. The eponymous hero came to India, much against his uncle, Daniel Pollitt’s protest, to meet his father who had married an Indian woman and settled here. When there was some financial defalcation the uncle himself was forced to follow his nephew to India. Uncle Pollitt, soon after his arrival went straight to “Pela Kothi”, the place of the senior Jervis’s settlement. The old Jervis was much pleased to find his erstwhile brother-in-law, brother of his first wife, in his abode. He treated him sumptuously with grand dinner and talked to him restlessly. He talked to
him for longer hours, of his experiences and adventures. He also narrated of the young men who were attracted by Indian brown beauties and beautiful brunettes. Here is his narration to the brother-in-law.

...Chronicles of hair breadth escapes, tiger shooting, and elephant catching; ... stories of native life; of an English noble man who lived in bazaar, earning his bread by repairing carts and ekkas; of a young officer of good family and fortune, who had lost his head about a native girl, and abandoned his country, profession, and religion, and had adopted her people and embraced her faith; (Emphasis added) how, in vain, his wealthy English relatives had brought him to return to them; how they had come out to seek him—had argued and implored and finally prevailed on him to abandon his associates; and how ere they had reached Bombay, they had lost him—he unable to break the spell of the siren, had escaped to his old haunts. (Emphasis added) ...

Mr. Croker seems to be very much acquainted with extraordinary beauty associated with Nayar women of the South India. She often makes references to their beauty in her works. In, Her Own People (1905), Mr. Paul Chandos married a native woman, Rosa Lopez, of course, a half-caste and spoiled himself, his fortune and family honour. Mr. Tom Lapell, a general manager of the local sugar factory at Rajahpore knew all about him and the circumstances that pushed him to the abyss of abnormality and incognito. To this family of Paul Chandos after many years, arrived Miss. Verona from England. Brian Salwey, a police officer of the district and also the nephew of Mrs. Elizabeth Lepell, took interest in the girl. During the conversation about the family of the Chandoses Mr. Lepell spoke about the ancestry of Mrs. Chandos. He said that Nani Lopez, her mother was a native beauty, a daughter of a “Temple girl from the west coast who had sung and danced before the gods” but one degree above the ayah attracted Juan Lopez’s attention and got married with him. At the moment the manager of the factory said that Indian dancers at the temples (the devadasis) were extraordinarily attractive. He also, of course, spoke of the dangers of such marriages between two absolutely alien races holding Paul’s case alone as an example. Here are his words attributed to the beauty of native ladies.

“Chandos looked hang-dog, and thoroughly ashamed of himself...”
"An unfortunate man, I am always sorry for him," remarked Mr. Lepell.... "I happen to know his history."

...I've seen some lovely Nair women on the west coast, handsomer than you could find; slim and graceful, with wheaten coloured skins and perfect features. (Emphasis added)\textsuperscript{192}

In the story "The Old Contonment" also we come across the reference to the theme of white mans' attraction for Nair woman and getting married to her according to the Brahminical rites of marriage.

In, \textit{In Old Madras} (1913), we see the novelist dealing with the same theme of attraction of Indian women. We witness Captain Mallender, who came to India in search of his uncle who disappeared mysteriously thirty years' ago from the time of his arrival. He visited Brown and Brown Co when he explained the circumstances under which his uncle disappeared and his intended search, Mr. Fleming collecting all the necessary details from young Mallender tried to dissuade him from his intention. He explained many things to the anxious young Mallender and said that Indian life presented before a white man innumerable enticements. Of them attraction of Oriental Women is one and a very dominant thing. Here are his words.

"... Oriental life has an irresistible fascination for some natures; (emphasis added) the glamour, the relief from convention, and the tyranny of the starched collar, the lure of attractive and voluptuous women, (emphasis added) idleness ease, luxury, drugs! I could tell you of an officer who went crazy about a beautiful Kashmiri, and actually abandoned his regiment and his nationality, in order to live as a native! (Emphasis added) twice, his friends came from England to fetch him home, and each time he escaped- even at the eleventh hour in Bombay plunged into the bazaars, hid his identity, and was lost in every sense.\textsuperscript{193}

In the same novel, when Captain Mallender, after undergoing a chain of difficulties, became successful in tracing his uncle and his hiding place, came to know of his lure and love for a royal lady of this land. The uncle himself narrated the circumstances under which he found himself irresistibly drawn towards her. He also recounted the repercussions of the
inter-racial marriage and the predicament that pushed him into untold difficulties including the physical mutilation. Here is the narration of the old man in the evening of his life.

"...The Princes was sixteen years of age, and amazingly beautiful; never had I seen such a face, and I fell madly in love with her on the spot. (Emphasis added) The Princess Puvaka spoke a little English, I a little Canarese, ... I was absolutely infatuated, so, poor child, was she. I knew very well that her people would never consent to our marriage, - nor mine either, for that matter, but I threw such trifles to the winds! As for my family, my regiment, and my future I never gave them a thought. ...(Emphasis added) I decided to elope to Madras, there to get married, and see what turned up? I had money, she had astounding beauty. ... Our plans were on the point of maturing, when one night moonlight, we suddenly found ourselves betrayed and surprised... infuriated kinsmen fell upon me like savages, I made a hard fight- (emphasis added) but it was no good, one to fifty; when they had over powered me and bound me fast, they cut off my nose, ears, eyelids, and upper lip..."

In the story "Jean and Jamie" also we come across a reference to the element of fear of white persons of getting attracted by Indian women. Jean Leith a young girl loved Jamie Fraser, her classmate ever since her teenage years. Jamie journeyed to India to seek employment. Then, Jean was asked by him to join at the earliest convenient date. She came to India by Lochinvar, a cargo ship that transported the travelers also at cheap rate under the guardianship of Captain Cram. In spite of his trustworthy words of promise to escort her to his place Jamie failed to meet her at Calcutta. Therefore Captain Cram took her to Mrs. MacLean, a widow of his acquaintance, who ran a boarding house. There she remained for a time and yet there was no trace of Jamie. Mrs. MacLean comforted her affectionately. During the conversation she suggested Jean to return home when her promising young man did not come to see her. She doubted some thing bad might have occurred to Jamie. Jean wept and wailed- and asked Mrs. MacLean to believe her and if still she doubted the girl proposed to show her the letters of her lover at that moment the old widow said that India has innumerable enticements for enterprising young Englishmen in the form of drugs and damsels. Here are her words to the young girl who was bewildered beyond words.
“Ay, ay, me dear; but India lays queer hold of some young lads, and changes their nature. Who's to tell that he has not made up with some half-caste cutty? They are awful handsome, and wheedling. He may be married to her. (Emphasis added)"

Thus we see Mrs. B.M. Croker documenting and mirroring the various behaviour patterns of Indian servants and the natives on several occasions as have been discussed.

4.8 DEPICTION OF FOOD HABITS, LIFE STYLE E.T.C.

Description of dishes and dress comprises an important motif of Anglo-Indian fiction. India, being a land of diverse life style, diverse dish items and dress patterns attracted the attention of the white men to a considerable extent. It is a historically known fact that India was united and came under the single polity during the period of the British, after a long gap of centuries since the days of the Mughals. As, India was divided into various provinces for administrative conveniences the British officials were transferred from one province or presidency to another. This provided the white families with a chance to acquaint themselves with various geo-physical and socio-cultural differences of this land. Their relentless desire to know more of India was further strengthened by their restless travel, which was made easy by the railways laid out by the Company Sirkar. They observed the various aspects of Indian life like dishes, dress and deportment during their official tours as well as ordinary moments of travel.

Food is an important aspect of human life that brings together the partakers and makes the bridge of friendship and affinity sturdier so also the dress. The whites during their stay here as a part of administrative exigency were brought face to face with Indian life. Some of them, especially the novelists showed an indomitable interest in such details of life style, in order to show the fact to their fellow countrymen at home, that they knew so much about Indian ways of life, they often used to refer to food items that consisted of the part of Indian natives' life, of the respective province or presidency they were posted to or visited.
In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker, we come across such references to the description of Indian food habits such as eating with fingers and dress pattern of women such as saris of enormous length wound around the waist especially of the South, which contribute in their own way in creating the Indian ethos. She often refers to the food items, vegetables and the dress that are typically South Indian. Such sort of typical items of food and the way of eating them with their own hands washed cleanly often attracted the attention of the other western writers like Pearl S. Buck, who too makes references to Indian style of eating with fingers. "...I had got used to eating with my right hand, I liked it as well. After all what is so clean as one’s own right hand washed? And from babyhood the Indian children are taught that the right hand is for clean services, such as eating, and the left hand may perform the more lowly tasks. Another cleanliness was that our food was served on fresh green banana leaves instead of plates. Well-cooked rice piled on a green leaf is a pleasant sight and stimulates the appetite. In any household where caste was observed the food was placed on such leaves...”

In, The Cat’s-Paw (1902), we witness novelist drawing our attention to the South Indian styles of dress and food items like rice etc. Miss. Pamela was compelled to move towards Madras when Mrs. de Villars with whom she worked, decided to join her husband in Japan. As both of them reached Poona railway station, Mrs. de Villar’s train left sooner than Pamela’s, she had to wait for her train for sometime this provided her a chance to observe the native people on the platform, their dress and the items of food they carried with them and enjoyed. She observed the difference in food from chupatties to flaky fuming rice, a tempting sight for hungry person and dress from brown and woolen covering to thin muslin garments. As she was bound for Madras she also thought of the prospect of her own self. Here is the description.

I had caught a glimpse of the North-West, the Central Provinces, and the Deccan, and now I was about to visit the oldest presidency: the real plamy, idol-worshipping tropics, where instead of brown blankets and chupatties, the costume was muslin and the food was rice. I traveled by a later train...
Shortly after this she journeyed towards Madras. There she joined the residence of Mrs. Rosario, which harboured its paid guests at a remarkably cheap rate. As she was robbed of her little money she was compelled to enter the Eurasian bungalow. There she found shelter at amazingly cheap rate for her boarding and lodging. Though it was a tumble down at any moment sort of place, it was respectable and a secured one. There she had to remain contented at the low quality food served during the afternoons and evenings. There was group of eighteen members whose predicament was no better than Pamela’s. Here is the depiction of the life there.

...We were a company of eighteen, chiefly young people; but I noticed a bent old woman and a worn and shrunken elderly man. The food was liberal, if not precisely dainty: stewed beef, curried dal (as feared), plantain fritters, and native vegetables, turnip-y “Knol-Kolh” and sticky brinjalls- (emphasis added) neither of them to my taste...\(^{198}\)

Here is one more reference to the South Indian style of food, in, *Her Own People* (1905), wherein we see Miss. Verona coming to India with an indomitable desire to get united with her father, mother and sister. But on coming here she was disillusioned to find them, except her father, dark and dwarf, beyond description. She met many people in the neighbourhood after her arrival. Being unable to adjust with the environment she fell seriously ill. The old Mrs. Lopez (Nani) became excessively attached to the girl and nursed her through her illness. She stayed in the room of Miss. Verona. She ate and slept with her granddaughter. She narrated many things to cheer the girl. Consequently, the girl was given a chance to glance into the native life style and food matters and manners. The Nani ate the rice mixing it, with the *saru* wherein the pieces of meat were mixed, with her own fingers, declaring that she enjoyed eating with her own hands though she knew the art using the forks, spoons and knife. Here is the description of the Nani’s meal-enjoyment.

...Nani loved curry and rice- oh, such curry and rice, as never was tasted on sea or shore in the western hemisphere! The meal was served in two bowls - the curry, consisting of pieces of meat or fowl thick rich yellow gravy, charged with all manner of spices and
condiments, so hot. Verona once ventured to taste a mouthful, and the result was a gasping, a spluttering, and several irrepressible tears. For here was the real true and only curry (no English make-believe), but such as was eaten by the natives on the West Coast. One bowl contained the notable comestible, and the other was filled with flaky rice. Into the curry Mrs. Lopez plunged a plump and eager hand, seized a morsel, then she dipped the same hand into the rice; in a moment it became a neat and shapely ball; the next instant it had disappeared for ever in her mouth. (Emphasis added).

Nani continued the process until both bowls were empty, not a trace of curry or even a grain of rice remained. It was all assimilated with extraordinary dexterity and dispatch. When the meal had ended and the bowls had been removed, Nani would declare:

"After such food one can seat oneself like a king! Now, that is how we are intended to eat; it is the best way, and see, I make no mess-no more than you and your bread and butter. I can use a knife and fork as well as any one, but the fingers are best. Wash them, and there is no trouble..." (Emphasis added).199

In, The Company's Servant (1907), also we are provided with a reference to the South Indian food items such as brinjal curry, buffalo butter, pongul etc. when Vernon, asked by his friend Mr. Breakspeare, stopped Miss. Beatrice who traveled alone with an intention of going home much against the protestation of the members of her family. Vernon became successful in detaining and detraining her on Tani-Kul platform announcing that here was time for refreshment. Then he inveigled her towards the refreshment room and then towards the ladies' waiting room. There is reference to the pongal, which is typically South Indian in taint and taste on the tariff board displayed at the refreshment booth. There unto the waiting-room he followed her followed by a Goanese hotel boy carrying tray filled with refreshment of the South Indian flavaour savour and colour. Here is description.

...He discovered her seated at a table in the empty waiting-room, her gloves removed, her veil thrown back. He was immediately followed by a Goanese boy, who carried a tray on which was displayed the inevitable cold fowl, bread, buffalo butter, lemonade, and a bunch of Cabul grapes.200

It is not only the surplus attraction and attention coupled with curiosity for Indian food items that her characters come forward always,
but sometimes they also reveal their distaste and loathsome feeling for the alien food. In the same novel, Vernon who had spent many years in the Southern part of India, who had known much about the ways of that part of the world, felt that his interest in it had got diluted due to monotony perhaps. When he visited Ooty his friend Breakspeare took him to the Club for dinner. During the dinner when his friend appreciated the items and announced that one did not get such splendid items as and when one wished for, Vernon expressed his distaste for the food items and said that he was tired of this kind of food. Here are his words.

“Dinner,” repeated the stranger, “I should say not. *We never dine in Tani-Kul; we merely feed. I am not greedy, but I confess that I am rather tired of goat, and Brinjals, and egg curry*” (Emphasis added)

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), which is set, once again, in the south, we come across repeated references to the South Indian food items such as home made bread, butter, fruits leathery chappatties, black coffee, red coloured mango chutney in spite of its salivating appearance must not be sneezed at etc. Captain Mallender came to India searching for his mysteriously missing uncle. Soon after his coming over here he joined the Tallboys. Colonel Frederick Tallboys held the important position in the Company Sirkar. The Tallboys took Mallender to the club for tiffin promising him the first-rate prawn curry of India. There, Mallender enjoyed his first meal of the South Indian dish after his bad breakfast. At the same time we see Colonel Tallboy speaking of the speciality of the eats of the South. Here is the description of the items served to him at the table.

Tiffin was excellent, the prawn curry-maintained its high reputation; Mallender, who had breakfasted on *sour grey bread, buffalo butter, and bad coffee was ravenously hungry, and thoroughly appreciated this his first genuine meal in India, served, too, in a cool, lofty dining-room, (emphasis added) with tempered sea-breezes, and deft white-clad waiters.
"... Do you notice the servants' quaint dress? Real Old Madras fashion, and the quantities of chutney offered—another specialty—soon you will know your way about and become acquainted with our bar trick, and Saturday's prunes and cream."^{202}

*Quicksands* (1915), once again presents before the readers the South Indian food items and fruits such as *pillau*, pomegranate and custard apples, as with strong Mysore coffee. When Ronnie Lingard was accused of misappropriation of the regimental funds and being tried and found guilty was sent to Bangalore on punishment. In order to be a source of emotional support to him, the sister of Ronnie, Miss. Eva Lingard, came to Bangalore and stayed there at a cheap rented, boarding house of Mrs. de Castro. There the food served was rather substandard and malnutritious. She was forced to compromise with it. In the novel we also come across a reference to the excellent Mysore coffee with its unique fragrance. Here is the description of the frugal meal that contained South Indian food items.

...To me the food was unfamiliar, and consisted of peculiar pillau, tank fish, and curries of the most startling varieties; our fruit was pomegranates and custard apples. (Emphasis added)^{203}

Like innumerable references to food items of India, dress of Indians also gets referred to in various novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. As there are scarcely Indian characters except servants and ayahs employed in the world of her fiction the image of Indian drapery is very slender. Moreover, wherever the reference is made, it often alludes to the garments of women seen from distance, on the railway platforms, public places, etc. She also makes her characters to take an indomitable fascination for Indian Women's dress and bangles.

In, *Mr. Jervis* (1897), we come across many references to Indian dress patterns such as red sari, turban etc. We see Miss. Honor Gordon coming to India to join her aunt and uncle the Brandes. On the way from Bombay to Calcutta the train she had boarded got detained due to collision of two goods trains. Therefore the passengers had to walk for some distance in order to reach the nearby railway station. As she was a stranger, she sat alone in the compartment not knowing what to do. At that
time Mark Jervis joined her and escorted her. On the way, in the darkness, as it was night, she saw the Indian native passengers moving before her in line carrying their luggage on their heads with a lantern dangling in their hands. In the darkness even she beheld them with their dress. Here is the description of the natives.

A short distance ahead were groups of chattering natives—women with red dresses and brass lotahs, which caught the light of their hand-lanterns (a lantern is to a native what an umbrella is to a Briton); (emphasis added) turbaned, long legged men, who carried bundles, lamps, and sticks...204

In, The Cat's-Paw (1902), we witness the novelist making reference to South Indian dress pattern, especially of women. Her comment on the art of wearing sari is very interesting. As it is a picaresque novel the heroine Miss. Pamela Ferrars wandered to different places. And naturally, she saw India and Indian natives quite widely. Therefore the novel consists of various references to Indian dress patterns, which sprinkled in the course of narration, make it lively. Miss. Pamela after leaving the house of Mrs. Rosario joined the Dalrymples where she saw the ayah “in a snowy saree with deep gold border (the special pattern prized of fashionable ayahs), her little short-sleeved silk jacket her gold ear-rings and necklace...”.205 Shortly after this stay with the Dalrymples she joined the palace of Royapetta as a tuitor to the royal children there. Soon after joining the service there she met the two queens namely Rani Gindia and Rani Sundaram. Though both the queens were the widows they attired differently. The former being still young wore crimson silk with enough gold work and jeweled embroidery, while the latter wore white dress. “She wore her saree drawn up between shrunken legs, after the manner of high-caste Brahmin women of the south...”206 Here is the description as seen by Miss. Pamela.

Her Highness was a pretty creature of about my own age, with soft indolent languid eyes; ... she wore, although a widow, a crimson silk cloth, strings of pearls, and a bodice heavy with gold and jeweled embroidery, her, waist girdled by emeralds, and many bangles of great price jingled on her beautiful arms. ... (Emphasis added) She was not the only woman present. There was shabby,
aged beldame wrapped in a white cloth which almost covered her from head to foot; ... (emphasis added)

In the same novel when Miss. Pamela came to know that Mr. Thorold the regent was poisoned secretly as he had refused the payment for the much coveted jasra pearls. On being informed by Moona Sawmy who said that he knew a native apothecary who treated for such things. Therefore Miss. Pamela Ferrars decided to consult the one in disguise, by wearing the sari of Moona Sawmy's daughter. In her view, the sari of Indians' was a cloth in twenty-six yards of length without a single hook or string to fasten it around the waist. The novelist makes the heroine announce that to wear such a one enough artistic dexterity is required on the part of the wearer. However she wound it around her waist with much difficulty and ultimately set out feeling herself an inexplicable joy. Here is the description.

... I twisted my hair into smallest compass, I had hardly made these arrangements before Moonasawmy ... flung a dark saree to me over the screen. I had learnt once, for amusement, how to invest myself into this graceful garment; it is quite an art. To a strange hand, twenty-six yards of narrow material without hook or string would have presented a hopeless puzzle; but in a few minutes I was ready. (Emphasis added) I did know myself, and as I stepped out from behind the screen Moonasawmy started visibly. "It is well," he said, "keep the saree drawn down, ..."

In the story "The Old Contonment" Mrs. Milman's husband was posted to an old and dilapidated station called Ahnomore. Mr. Bethune spoke about the station and said that there was not a European face or family in the neighbourhood with whom she could develop friendship. At the same time he made a mention of existence of a Brahmin family in the vicinity but all the while its gates were closed for outsiders. But Mrs. Milman said emphatically that she could maintain friendship with the Brahmin zamindar's household. And accordingly she visited the Brahmin family one day. Much to her surprise she saw there a white girl. After coming to know about her Mrs. Milman requested the Brahmin zamindar's wife Ravi to send the girl to her, as she was alone at her quarter. During
her visit to the family she saw the garment of the Brahmin woman. Here is the description.

Ravi—a stout youngish woman—was seated cross-legged on a string bed; her hair was adorned with bosses of gold, her arms with many bangles, her nose and ears with jeweled rings. She wore a rich arrange silk saree (the Brahmin colour), ... (emphasis added) 209

In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), also we come across many references to the South Indians’ dress pattern, as it is set in the southern part of our country. Vernon, the hero of the novel, had once saved Gojar (Algernon Craven), from being drowned into a mysterious tank while under the spell of opium, to which the latter had fallen a prey. Since then a sort of affinity had developed between them. Gojar had told everything about his past before Vernon. He had also warned and saved Vernon from the clutches of attraction of Rosita Fontaine revealing everything about her including her ancestry. So Vernon had respect for Gojar. After his return to Tani-Kul from Ooty where he had gone during his leave, Vernon came to know that Gojar was ill. Therefore Vernon went to see Gojar at bazaar where he lived as a result of his going down in the social ladder because of his opium addiction. Vernon traced the residence of Gojar, which was at the end of lane in the principal street of the market. As he knocked on the door it was opened by a woman in a sari of deep Indian colour and design. Here is the description of the dame in the dress and jewellery.

...The visitor knocked on the door, which, after a long wait, was opened by a little shriveled old woman in a gorgeous red silk saree, with a deep gold border, (emphasis added) handsome rings depended from the lobes of her ears, and a cabochon emerald dangled from her flat nose. She also wore a heavy gold chain, and a tinkling of silver anklets and bangles emphasized her importance. ...(Emphasis added) 210

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), we come across references to the South Indian dress patterns that are in vogue among the Karnatakian lady in general, and a Coorgy lady in particular. Mallender after wondering relentlessly to several places in search of his uncle became successful in tracing the place of his residence, which was in Madras only. He met the
messenger according to the information given in the letter sent to him by
the Brown and Co. The messenger ushered him into the car, which
immediately began to glide along the crowded streets of Madras. The car
entered into a vast compound and stopped under a portico. When the door
of the car was flung open he saw a tall Coorg lady Puvaka, married by his
uncle and named as Alida by him. At the moment when he saw her she
wore a rich satin sari and ornaments of several type. Here is the
description.

The door of the car was flung open, as Mallender alighted the sentry
presented arms, and he was invited to ascend to the verandah. A
peon held a flaming lamp at the head of the marble stairs, where
stood a tall slender woman, evidently awaiting him. She wore a
richly embroidered satin sari, and massive gold ornaments. In this
dress, the now experienced eye of the traveler recognized the
costume of a high-born Coorg lady or Princess. (Emphasis added)\(^\text{211}\)

Along with her capturing and picturing the sights of beautifully
patterned dresses of Indian natives Mrs. B.M. Croker’s eyes also capture
and reflect every thing in the pages of her books at what ever their pupils
look, like a camera lens, and hold out the pictures of the inside activities
of the natives’ families, contacts among the members of the Indian
families and even the structures of the building, rooms, sanitary system
such as bath room and ventilation facility etc. In many of her novels we
come across such references. Here are some discussed.

In, Mr. Jervis (1897), we witness Mrs. B.M. Croker offering enough
insights into the relationship among the members of the families and the
exploitation by the mother-in-law in India. When Nussiband and her other
companions were assailed by the Indian mutineers on the Bhaglpore Road
and wounded severely and left there to their fate, she was taken by the
owner of sugarcane field while hiding in it. When she found herself with
him into Lucknow city, in her attempt to dodge him, she entered into a
native family compound and there she was arrested by the owner of the
family and was forcefully married to his half-witted son. As a result she
underwent ill treatment at the hands of the mother-in-law. There she had
enough insight into the insides of the native family and its exploitation of

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the members. Here are her words of woe spoken before Miss. Honor Gordon.

... Oh, I know native life. The fierce tyranny of the old women, of the mother-in-law, their tongues, their spite, their pitiless cruelty. (Emphasis added) How many vengeances were wreaked on me? In those days I was stupefied and half crazy. No I had no feeling; I was in the midst of a strange people; ... 212

If it is the tyranny and exploitation of the native families that gets documented in the novel quoted above, in, The Cat's-Paw (1902), we come across the reference to the insides of the native families at many places. Due to fear of length only the dominant ones are documented. When Miss. Pamela Ferrars joined the cheap boarding house of Mrs. Rosario, soon after her entry into the abode of the old lady she occupied the room shown to her. She observed that her bedroom was almost attached to the bathroom. Here is the description of the one.

... There, leaving my three companions fast asleep and had... Every bed room in the East has at least one bath-room adjoining, and I should have revelled in my cold tub in a rough half-barrel, but for the weird monstrosities and hairy spiders- creatures as large as crabs (emphasis added) with wormy legs, which studded the low walls, and filled me with loathing and horror. 213

What a picture of reality with lively description of Indian bathroom the novelist provides the readers with!

In the quotation above if we witness the structure of bathroom of a cheap-boarding house run by a woman we are brought face to face with the structure, antiquarian glory and fine furniture of the palace of Royapetta when Miss. Pamela Ferrars entered the royal residence as a tutor to the young children there in the same novel. She was surprised at the wealth and the air of primitiveness that enwrapped the royal house. Here is the description of its structure and interior affairs and activities and also the kind of grimness that gripped the inmates as well as new entrants.
The iron-studded door stood open at last... I was now inside the palace, and totally cut off from the outer world, ... a world here- a world seething with curiosity, intrigue and tyranny?

The lofty hall we entered was evidently one of the state apartments, the floor was entirely covered... enormous chandeliers of cut glass hung ... many coloured crystal balls dangled aimlessly... the walls were lined with crude portraits of the ancestors of the present Rajah- generally represented on superb horses covered with jewelled trappings, and themselves attired to correspond. There was a rich suite of gilt furniture... a table of solid silver (emphasis added) stood in conspicuous position. But for its magnificence the place had a dingy and neglected appearance. The light was faint and came from Venetian shutters as usual high in the wall. ... (Emphasis added) three similar apartments, all glittering dimly with dusty chandeliers, into an immense room with a marble floor, and lined with mirrors strangely set in brilliantly coloured plaster.

... long passage lit by small windows here and there was a niche blackened with smoke of ages from the primitive lamp with floating wick; ... in the twilight still proceeded steadily, and passed through a net work of passages and stairs through lines of empty chambers; (emphasis added) finally I was...214

It is the magnificence and majesty yet dinginess and grimness that gets documented and displayed in the novel discussed above. In the story "Old Contonment" we are given the description of the inside view of the South Indian Brahmin family in spite of her open and avowed declaration "There is nothing in this world so impenetrable as a Brahmin's house hold!" 215 Though she speaks respectfully of the Brahmins in other works such a as Angel and Quicksands etc., she does not spare to criticize them when it comes to the matter of sanity and practices in the household. In the story Mrs. Milman's husband was posted to the station where there was no European family at all, except two Eurasian families and a native Brahmin family. Mrs. Milman visited Mrs. Benny wife of a Eurasian official and gathered the news of the existence of a white-faced girl in the Brahmin family. She was curious to see the girl and know more about her. So once she seized the opportunity and visited the South Indian Brahmin family. This is what she saw there, as she entered into the premises.
The courtyard next door was disappointing—squalid, not to say dirty, full of natives, and sleek white cattle, carts, ploughs, palanquins, and noisome odours... Indoors, was all dim, there was a dense atmosphere of oil and insense: faded garlands hung in door ways, (emphasis added) and many eyes watched me stealthily as I passed into the presence of Ravi.  

As and when the motif permits, Mrs. B.M. Croker makes reference to some unique practices and observance of social values such as sacrifice, tolerance and fidelity in connubial life alluding to fate when one’s life is made a chain difficulties and defeats etc., in her works. In, *In Old Madras* (1913), we see Mrs. B. M. Croker underscoring the patience of Indian woman and holding mirror to the inner beauty of her character. When Puvaka ‘the flower sister’ an Ikeri Princess, *Kannada Kuvari* married Senior Mallender, her people grew angry towards the couple and fell upon them like savages and wounded the white man mortally. As he was mutilated beyond treatment he decided not to show his face to his countrymen. But the unselfish love and patient attention of Puvaka restored him to life. He appraised the virtue and value of Puvaka’s patience before Captain Mallender, alluding to their marriage he opined it was performed by fate. Here are his words of applause of Puvaka as a paragon of patience.

I was determined to put an end to myself, but Alida [Senior Mallender called Puvaka by that name] barred that way. *She has been my good angel, a miracle of patience, and forbearance, has made me a home, cultivated the English language, and (emphasis added) mitigated my life in death.* ...

... I was done for. I have paid the price of my folly; and yet *Alida is a treasure. She endures my fits of depression, my irritable, exacting, temper.* (Emphasis added) Sometimes I tell myself that *her fate has been the worst.* ...  

In the same novel we are given to understanding that Maddalena de Rosa’s grand mother occasionally visited Rochfort’s bungalow and offered floral tribute to the photo of her granddaughter, sighed, moaned and shed tears and then turning to her great grand daughter Mota and cracked her
In this way we see Mrs. B. M. Croker documenting the behaviour patterns of Indians in her novels as and when necessary. Such behaviour patterns show the emotional makeup of the people.

4.9 DEPICTION OF FAIRS AND FESTIVALS, RITES AND RITUALS

As was the attention of the Anglo-Indians in general and the writers in particular drawn towards the different dishes and dress patterns of Indian natives so also was their interest drawn towards the practices and performances of Indians that were in vogue then. Stemming from the ancient tradition ever since the Vedic period, the beliefs, the practices and performances of Indians assumed the form of sturdy rituals. These rituals, encountering various elements and influences, some times alien and absolutely new and some times reshaped and simplified on the basis of existing ones, in order to make them suitable to the needs of time by various reformers and social thinkers, the line of whom commences from the Enlightened Buddha and Mahaveera and down to venerated Vivekananda and Dayananda Saraswathi, Raja Rama Mohan Roy and the Mahatma Gandhi, etc., continued to influence and dominate the personal, familial and social life of an individual. In spite of their re-formation and re-shaping they appeared quite strange and repulsive to western eyes. This is perhaps due to the cultural background they were provided with and trained in. Holding these practices as strange and sometimes even abhorrent they tried to interpret them based on their own cultural background. Naturally the yardstick, applied by them to measure the performances and practices being alien, fell short some times in showing the exactitude of their meaning. Thus a sort of vacuum of darkness was created in the area of the white understanding as regards the Indian ethos. "...their view was that of outsiders reacting to entities which they did not fully understand and which were often repugnant to their own tastes". This automatically made the aliens to dub the Indian practices as mean, meaningless and ascribe them to occultism. Practices and performances of
a people are often regarded as the products of geographical influences. These later enter into the realm of culture and create the cultural ethos of that particular population. Anglo-Indian writers who encountered the culture of this land tried to document such cultural elements in their works as a part of their craft to create orient ambience and exhibit their acquaintance with the Orient. In the novels of Mrs. B. M. Croker we come across innumerable references to such practices and performances of Indians. She alludes to the sacraments and practices such as funerals, marriages, child marriages, familial as well communal, festivals, - purdah, sati, etc., which are discussed in detail by the writers of Sootras discussed in the first chapter.

Human society, whether cultured and urbane or uncultured and tribal has developed a practice of offering an honourable funeral according to their own tradition. The practices and rituals that are observed by a particular community and race differ from the other. Such practices of natives are documented in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. Thus they hold mirror to the practices of Indian community. In, A Bird of Passage (1893), we witness the depiction of funeral during one of the conversations the general speaks of various things about the life of the Andamanese natives before Miss. Helen Denis, a newly arrived girl at the station. As to her remark about the odd customs of these natives, he spoke about their funeral. His narration throws light on the natives’ practice of ancestor- worship, which consisted of offering the objects and recipes favourable to the dead. Here is his remark.

“Yes” replied the General; “their mode of sepulture, for instance, is peculiar. When a man dies they simply put his body up a tree.”

... 

“And when the fowls of the air have picked his bones, they remove the remains, and present his skull to the widow, who wears it round her neck, slung to a string.”

... 
"...When a chief dies, he can have no nobler monument in the eyes of his survivors than a pile of tall hats impaled above his grave."

Another important thing, that Mrs. B.M. Croker does not forget to document about the funerals in India, is the promptitude with which they are carried out. Her comment, in this regard in other novels also, made casually, is surely tinged with a kind of objection about the speedy dispatch of the corpses to the cemetery. It is true that the dead body, shrouded in white is not kept among the living for days, as is the practice in the western countries. It is not possible in the East to do so, because of the geographical condition of India where hot weather is persistent. Due to the hot weather the dead body gets rotten immediately and begins to emit putrescence, which may contaminate the atmosphere. This resulted in the quickness of funerals unlike in the west. However many Anglo-Indian novelists comment on this practice of early performance of funerals in India, almost in a tone of objection. In the same novel we see Mrs. B. M. Croker alluding to the quickness of funerals in India. A Bird of Passage (1893) Colonel Denis, father of Helen Denis died suddenly leaving the girl alone in alien ambience, his funeral was carried out with a documentable immediacy according to the western point of view. Here is the description.

...There were so many sad arrangements to be made. The General himself superintended everything with regard to the funeral, which was to take place at Sun down, as was the invariable custom in the East. There, there is no gradual parting as in England, where white-covered dead lies amid the living for days. In India such hospitality is never shown to death. He is thrust forth the very day he comes. ...

(Emphasis added)

To think that you may be laughing and talking with a relative, friend, or neighbour, one evening that they have been in the very best of health, as little anticipating the one great change as yourself, and that by the very next night, they may be dead and buried. In Eastern countries, there seems to be almost a cruel promptness about the funerals, but it is inevitable. (Emphasis added) By five O’ clock everything was ready in the bungalow.

India being a land of diversity one encounters different practices even in offering funerals and performances of post-funeral rituals. If some communities have developed the practice of burying the dead while others
have embraced the practice of committing the corpses to the fire in the first place and then collect the remains of bones and deposit them into the rivers and yet others simply throw away the cadavers into the rivers. This practice of committing the very cadavers or half burnt bones to the rivers has its roots in the belief among the Indians that by observing this rite the dead are propitiated and sanctioned salvation, probably because of the scriptural directions that body is composed of five elements and the five elements go back to their former places and get immersed with them after the death. This practice of committing the dead to the rivers seems to be observed by Mrs. B.M. Croker. She has documented the fact of skeletons sailing away in the water. In the story “The Secret of the Amulet” Kareem wore an amulet round his neck. It contained the document that Fateh Din had buried enormous gold on the edge of Goompti river because of the seriously wounded camel. Mr. Colebrook, the collector, who employed Kareem, unraveled the mystery of the hidden treasure and in collaboration with the boy he visited the spot with an intention of unearthing the wealth. At that time Goompti river was flowing to the brim. The flood of the waters carried corpses and skeletons. Here is the description.

...the Goomptee is a sacred river; on the sand on the far bank lay a bleached white skeleton, (Emphasis added) and here, among the tangled water-plants was an old charpoy, legs upward, on which some corpse had once been committed to the holy stream. (Emphasis added) 221.

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also there is a cross reference to the practice of reserving certain parts of forest and dedicating them to the ancestral gods, where haunting and wanderings were prohibited. For these forests were believed to be the favourite haunts of these gods and whoever met them perchance would suffer untold miseries.

Seclusion of women as a peculiar practice in Indian social system often gets alluded to by the Anglo-Indian novelists in their works. Mrs. B.M. Croker makes repeated references to the *purdah* system by which Indian women were held in seclusion. Wherever possible in her works she takes a critical stance at the practice, she makes many times her women
characters to comment upon the practice and hold it a stigma of the world of women. In the story “Mrs. Raymond” we come across the reference to this practice of Purdah Nashin. A white girl, the eponymous heroine, was inveigled into marriage by a native. When the newly wedded young girl began to move about freely with the co-passengers on the ship during their journey to India he resented it and tried to control her movements. Observing this the other elderly women passengers like Mrs. Becky Sharpe, Louisa etc., took interest in her. Mrs. Raymond took pride in her extraordinary jewellery and the prospect of happy life as was promised by her husband. Then Mrs. Sharpe spoke to her genially and asked to what part of India she was bound for? In what part of the country was her husband’s station situated? etc. When the girl mumbled vague replies she advised the girl regarding the life of India and warned her not to allow her husband to hold her in confinement behind the purdah and make her a purdah Nashin. On hearing the unfamiliar word the girl questioned the middle-aged matron what was the meaning of purdah Nashin. Here is the elderly woman’s elaboration.

...It’s a type you don’t come across in England. A woman who is kept secluded from the world in her husband’s house, who lives and dies there, and never uncovers her face when out-of-doors, and never sees or speaks to any man but her husband, or her father, or her sons.” (Emphasis added)

...; they lead an uncommonly dull life, I fancy, those domestic prisoners. Even when she drives out, the grand lady has all the carriage blinds pulled down, just as the common woman sits behind the drawn curtains of an humble ekka. When they travel by rail, as they do on a pilgrimage, there is such a fuss; they are carried into the station in a dooly and when they get into their compartment there is quite a high screen round them. It is so funny, and most of them are hideous old hags, as ugly as sin; but I suppose they like the commotion.”

... There is generally some lynx- eyed old grandmother, who is worse than ten jailers. As she was kept down in her youth, and shut
away from all delights of the world, she now avenges herself on others. She rules the Zenana with a rod of iron...222

Thus giving the elaborate description of the sinister practice Mrs. Sharpe contrived with other elderly women to save Mrs. Raymond from the clutches of the native and the possibility of being confined. But before their schemes materialize she was carried away in a dooly. Thus the situation symbolizes that India can’t be converted completely and remains away from alien influence.

In, *The Cat’s-Paw* (1902), also we come across the reference to the purdah system that was in vogue. But the novel, major portion of which being set in the Southern parts of India, presents before the reader one important aspect of the system that it was not adhered to in this part as strictly as in the North. Miss. Pamela Ferrars, after joining the palace of Royapetta as the tutor to the royal children there, was disgusted with the seclusion she was pushed into. She craved outings. Rani Gindia liked Miss. Ferrars very much. She even requested Pamela to accompany her whenever she went out in a closed carriage. Once she took her to visit the old fort and temples that were in the vicinity of Royapetta. At such outings whenever there was no one to see, the Rani would remove her purdah and smoothen her hair or suffer her beauty get burnt by the scorching Sun who poured the burning bright light. Here is the allusion to the ride.

...We drove to various ancient forts, tombs, and temples that were scattered within twenty miles of Royapetta; the landau would be open, and as we tore along Her Highness suffered the wind to blow her delicate face and ruffle her smooth hair, when there was no eye to see. *The Princesses of Southern India- where the track of the conqueror has not so often passed- are less strictly veiled than their sisters in the north.* (Emphasis added) More often I had the two little Ranis for my companies on these expeditions...223

Remaining the backbone of human civilization, ever since times immemorial when man assumed gregarious life style, marriage, as a custom is the most accepted and honoured institution of human society. Since Vedic period Indians have attached greater importance to marriage.
According to Indian belief a man who remains unmarried is likely to remain in a world of dilemma in this life as well as after death. After death his mane begins to wander in the air, as he is not offered the obsequial rituals. Thus Indians, especially the Hindus regarded the marriage not merely as a union of male and female for propagation of race, but also a religious sacrament and, social obligation. It is the third end of human life, (Kama) therefore the performance of marriage gained so much popularity. Marriage in antiquity as has already been noted in the first chapter was arranged and solemnized by the parents of both the bride and bride-groom after seeking consent of both, who were usually grown up and expected to be matured enough. There is no reference to the customs of child marriage in the Vedic and epic period. Though Manudharmashastra recommended that the consent of the bride- and bridegroom must be sought at the time of marriage, in due course the parents began to hasten their children into wedlock before they attained the age of maturity or puberty. According to Dr. Hunter, “the Mohammedan rule in India enhanced the custom of child marriage. Muslim atrocities perpetuated on Hindu woman drove the population to adopt child marriage as a measure of safety, because the Muslims were reluctant to violate any woman who has already married.” 224 Of course to this political exigency were added the social causes, like joint family, lack of education, fear of inter caste marriage and intercourse. No daughter and no dough (na roti-na beti) was the idea of the Hindus; and economic causes such as agricultural assistance, domestic drudgery etc., joined their hands in popularizing the child marriage. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across many references to Indian marriages their way of performance and processions at the time including the child marriages. In, Mr. Jervis (1897), we come across the description of the entertainment and enjoyment derived at the time of marriage. Mr. Jervis, after coming to know that his father stayed at ‘Pela Kothi’ went there and met the old man. The old man, describing the predicament in which he was, requested his son to stand by him as a source of support abandoning everything including his love and the lovely world. To this request instead of reacting at once the young man demanded some period of forty-eight hours to come
to a decision. He was racked between love and duty. As he could not sleep in his room, he opened the door and came out. There he saw the servants engaged in entertainment illuminating the whole compound with torches burning brightly. On enquiring Fuzzil, the head agriculturist, he found that they were enjoying the tamasha for the marriage of his wife's brother's son. Here is the description.

Suddenly he became aware of a great noise and brilliant light outside; laughing, loud chattering and the complacent humming of dissipated tom-toms! The compound was illuminated by a large fire, and half a dozen flaming torches, and crowded with a mob of natives, who were enjoying, with intense appreciation, the solemn gyrations, and shrill high-pitched sings of a couple of tawdry nautch girls. The surrounding go-downs were full of animated visitors. One was evidently a drinking den, whilst in another were gamblers. Standing in the shadow on the steps, unnoticed, Jervis surveyed these orgies entirely at his leisure. ... Mean while Fuzzil was solemnly superintending the nautch, and applauding occasionally, with fitful, tipsy condescension. 225

In, *The Cat’s Paw* (1902), we come across the reference to the custom of child marriage. When Miss. Pamela Ferrars joined the palace of Royapetta as a tutor to the royal children, she was constantly pestered by Rani Sundaram to convince Mr. Maxwell Thorold to make the payment for the much-coveted Jasra pearls. Soon after her joining the palace she was struck by the strange atmosphere. Slowly she got used to the practices and people of the palace. Shortly after her joining Thorold called on her and asked as to her settlement there in the palace. During the conversation she enquired about stay of many women and the bustle there. At that moment he told her that Miss. Ferrar’s pupil Lucksmi, although a girl of seven was to be married shortly. Here is what they talked.

“And the women who swarm like flies, who are they?”

“Relatives, servants, slaves,” he answered briefly.

“They too are idle, and spend their days gossiping, bathing, eating.”

“Yes, eating up the people and the revenues. At some courts women are extremely accomplished; they read English as well as Indian literature, they play the piano and the Vina, and embroider; but here
we are old fashioned, because the chief influence is old. ... *Lucksmi your pupil is to be married first moon in March."

"And she is seven years of age."

"Yes, it is the custom. (Emphasis added) She is making a good marriage, though she has not a large dower." 226

And as the date fixed, for the marriage, by the astrologer approached the whole palace became electrified. In order to entertain the dwellers of the palace and hustle them into action of preparations for the marriage a grand nautch by the temple girls from Tripura was arranged. The foreign girl Miss. Ferrars suffers from ambivalent attitude as to the appreciation of the dance. Due to her taste being culturally rooted in alien soil she could not understand the *mudras* employed by the Indian classic dancers. Here is the description.

It was the first week of March...inexplicable movement within the sleepy old palace... was a grand nautch held in the open court yard. On this occasion the marble lattices of the women’s galleries were packed with closely pressed faces, for *it was a coveted sight to behold the celebrated temple girls from Tripura, whose dancing was held to have no equal in Southern India.* (Emphasis added) The men-folk sat below in the open court, imperturbable and passive, though no doubt they enjoyed the drumming of the tom-toms, the fire works and the frantic strains of weird native music. (Emphasis added) For my part, I had my own solitary post of observation, from which I could see without being seen. *I found the nautch excessively disappointing- a few shuffling steps to and fro, a simpering and posturing, a waving aloft of shapely banded arms, all to the nasal twanging of a hideous accompaniment;* (emphasis added) but I appreciated the fire works and the fire-balloons, and as I watched these latter sailing in fleets over the dark starry sky, ... 227

In the same novel we also come across a reference to the custom of darkening the teeth and eyelids by the women. A reference to darkening of teeth, though a practice, that prevails among the tribal and other people belonging to little culture groups is rarely found among the people of advanced communities, is staggering the imagination and appears rather strange whereas darkening of eye-lids (application of kajal) is considerable.

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In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also we witness Mrs. B.M. Croker alluding to early marriage and the marriage procession. Captain Mallender employed Chinna- Sawmy, a boy of sixteen years of age. The boy wandered with the master to various places wherever Mallender went searching for his uncle. Unluckily when Mallender met with an accident at Wellunga, the boy looked after him with all the care and attention. Then he wished retirement from the service of Mallender. Before going away from Mallender he begged for the camera of his master. Mallender presented him with it with all the pleasure when he parted from him. Very soon after this Chinna-Sawmy established himself as photographer and opened a studio in Madras, “under the name of Charley Sammy, British Photographer from Oxford Street, London” and got married too. Anthony brought this news to Mallender. But Mallender did not believe Anthony. He argued that Chinna Sawmy was merely a child and it was not possible for him to marry so soon. But much to his surprise within two days after this talk Chinna – Sawmy himself appeared before Mallender with his newly wedded wife. Here is the conversation between Anthony and Mallender and the description of Chinna-Sawmy’s visit to his former master and benefactor.

“Why, what nonsense!” protested his master with a laugh, “he is only child! (Emphasis added) Has he been kidnapped?”

“He is sixteen Saar, very small size; the girl, she is four years old, Hindoo low caste. (Emphasis added) Chinna Swamy’s rich uncle, he this marriage making, and plenty big feast, and fireworks giving.”

Two days later, the bridegroom appeared, to make his obeisance, and acknowledgements to his late employer. ... He looked (a surprising experience) almost shame faced, as he rode up on a lean cow-hocked pony with a profusion of yellow garlands round his neck, accomplished by a large cortege, and a band, so to speak, of tom-toms. After an interchange of compliments and good wishes, with gifts of fruit, cigarettes, and sweets, Chinna-Sawmy and suite were dismissed from the scene in order to carouse, generally make merry, dance... (Emphasis added)

Festivals form an important aspect of social life. They break the monotony of routine and bestow freshness upon life. They bring and breed a sense of belongingness among the members of a particular family or
community. Festivals are performed at two levels—familial and communal. Bringing and binding the people together they strengthen the cords of harmony of family life and communal life. They also hold the mirror to the attitude of the people towards life. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across reference to the performance of such festivals. In, *The Cat’s Paw* (1902), we come across a reference to the grand celebration of the festival of Deepavali in the royal family of Royapetta. Miss. Pamela Ferrars when joined the Royal family of Royapetta as tuitor to the royal children. Slowly she got used to the new atmosphere of the traditional Hindu family. Her students also began to show remarkable progress in their learning. It was at the time that the most important festival of the Hindus—Devali occurred. The Festival has three-fold importance for a Hindu. In the first place it is associated with the myth of Lord Krishna’s liberating the bevy of women whom the demon Naraka had held in duress and thus symbolizes the importance of liberation and the victory of the virtuous over the wicked; in the second it consists of lighting the lamp which dispel the darkness naturally, it symbolizes the Hindu faith that life must be a journey from darkness to light; and in the third place it consists of the worship of Kubera—the God of Wealth which symbolizes the welcome of wealth as the festival falls in the season of harvest. Here is the description of what the white girl saw.

The first break in the monotony of routine was the occasion of the "divali," or Feast of Lantern: it is the annual festival in honour of Lucksmi, goddess of prosperity, when every Hindoo displays a light in his house in order to propitiate her favour for the coming year; it is when a Hindoo city looks its best. The whole interior of the palace was humming like one huge hive. The little Rajah, with the sacred ashes daubed upon his fore head, was carried down to do puja in the "Tosha Khana," or treasure house. A durbar was held in the great hall, and at night the city and bazaar was a blaze of lights. The masses of dusty glass chandeliers in the state rooms now came into use and exhibited thousands of flaming candles. ...

If it is the depiction of familial festival in the novel discussed above, in, *The Company’s Servant* (1907), we come across the reference to the performance of the communal festival of Vijayawada. Such festivals or performances are held annually in every village or town in honour of the
presiding deity usually mother goddess of that particular locality. Such annual fairs have their own folk-beliefs, and are enwrapped in their own rituals woven around a myth or legend. In the novel we come across the reference of the fair held in honour of the mother goddess Kanaka Durga of Vijayawada. Here is the description by Gojar given before Vernon.

"Once disguised as a native, I was present at the great annual festival at "Vezwada," continued Gojar. "It was after sundown many baskets of rice were contributed by the citizens to the sacrificial pile. On this pile, a drove of buffaloes was killed by the Poojaris, the animals' heads were hacked off, the carcasses carried away for food- all but one foreleg, which was placed in the brutes' mouths. Then two enormous carts were loaded with red rice, and stacked with the gruesome trophies; at the four corners of each, were high iron stakes, on which were impaled alternately four live pigs, and live lambs. The carts were led through the Bazaars, the rice distributed by the Poojaris to be scattered over the land, and set before the next sundown. The scene was horrible; I shall never forget the hideous processing, the maddening tom-toms, the blare of horns, and frantic crowds, and the flaring torches illuminating the red dripping carts with their writhing, shrieking victims."

(Emphasis added)231

We also come across many indirect references to the practice of the system of sati and sacrifices and other self-torturing practices that the natives involved in the name of customs. The Cats'-Paw (1902), depicts human sacrifices. During her stay at the Royapetta palace, Miss. Pamela Ferrars met Ibrahim, whom she had encountered at Mrs. Rosario's residence. On meeting him she inquired him as to his arrival there. His mention that he had been there into the palace on his business of the sale of the Jasra pearls. He even showed them to her. Then during the course of the conversation he said that he was surprised to see her in the palace, which was a black hole managed and maneuvered by an ogress like Rani Sundaram. He also mentioned that she used many people as means to her ends. Then he mentioned an incident in rather low tone how a rajah, whom the palace owed a huge sum of money, was pushed into a dark chamber and starved to death. At the conversation he also spoke of the immolation of the human beings at the temple on the hilltop situated in the vicinity of the city of Royapetta. He alluded too to the antiquity and the sources of such practices to be found in the Atharvana Veda, which is supposed to be
imbued with many practices of sorcery and charms. Here is what the Mohammadan said.

“... It is long ago, too, since human sacrifices were offered in that little bare temple on the hill above the city... hundreds of captives, and now and then a young girl. Hook-swinging is still in the land, so is trial by ordeal, and so is magic and the black art. (Emphasis added)

“...”

“... I tell you this for a truth- the fourth book of the Vedas has been found, but its existence is a profound secret...”

In the story “On the Grand Trunk Road” also we come across cross references to the evil practice of sati and burying the girls alive along with a reference to the inhuman social practice of offering the children to the wild beasts in order to propitiate the animals or other evil element. The author documents the tragedies and accidents and other bad events that claimed the lives of innumerable innocents to which the ancient road has remained a mute witness. At the face of the story we witness the storyteller speaking how the road has been a witness rather dumb to the act of a procession that led the glorified girl to the pyre of her husband and burnt her heartlessly. Her allusion to the fact of the girls carried in the procession to perform Sati were drugged, shows the fact of her knowing the details of the system and holds up the mirror to the practice. At the same she uses the word ‘immortal’, which makes the reader to search for a ray of ambivalence in her attitude to the practice. Here is the description.

...acclaiming crowds, accompanying the drugged and half-frenzied girl to the wood pile, there to perform the immortal act of Suttee. (Emphasis added)

In, Her Own People (1905) also, during a conversation between Brian Salwey and Verona, we come across a cross reference to Sati which was once in vogue in India. In the story “On the Grand Trunk Road” we also come across the reference to the practice of burying the girl alive with enormous gold. The skeleton was found while digging the ground in
order to sink a well in the premises of the big bungalow. When the
labourers who came across the old underground house well bricked,
reported their master who was surprised to find a skeleton covered with
enormous gold. The master's wife, who saw the skeleton shrieked loudly
with fear, but the chief worker said, "The cause was jealously.
Mohammedans used to punish their wives thus..."\textsuperscript{234}

In another place in the same story we see a couple, evidently an
officer, colonel Lindsay and his wife, who traveled on the Grand Trunk
Road, dismounting from their horses to enjoy the beauty of the river and
the sunset. As they began to pace slowly they heard a muffled cry of a
child in the undergrowth in the neighbourhood. Goaded by the curiosity
and overwhelmed by their kindness to relieve the suffering they tore
through the forest and much to their surprise they saw a little female baby
of about eight months old. Of course they took the child, adopted and
tended her grow Here is the description of the baby as they saw before
adopting.

...they heard the cry, and, guided by it, discovered at the water's
edge a pretty little girl of about eight months old- almost as fair as
an English child. She was wrapped in the finest of muslin and wore
gold bangles on her wrists and ankles, but though undoubtedly an
infant of high caste and wealthy parentage, she had been left at the
river side, an offering to the wild beast. (Emphasis added)

...a welcome meal to the first famishing hyena or prowling panther,
with which the neighbourhood swarmed.\textsuperscript{235}

Mr. B.M. Croker as a woman novelist took much interest in the
doings of women and makes reference to the practice of Indian women's
wearing the colourful bangles on their round shapely arms wherever
opportunity permits. In, \textit{Babes in the Wood} (1910), also we come across a
reference to the practice of Indian women wearing the bangles. Milly who
came to India to join her brother took excessive fascination for the
bangles. She took Eliot Scruby to the Gondi settlement in order to procure
the ones. At that time the novelist also refers to the practice of
solemnizing the marriage probably among the Gonds. The practice may
consist of decorating the bride with the wreath of mango leaves. The
Gondi woman who saw Milly and Scruby together, on observing that they were not married felt them a proper match. And therefore threw the wreath of mango leaves on Milly’s head saying something in Gondi— which Scruby understood and became crimson. Here is the description of wearing bangles and mango wreath.

...The pride and glory of her existence was an extraordinary profusion of coloured glass bangles, which half-covered her muscular arms. (Emphasis added)

... “Wherefore will not the young man who is with her, take her to wife? Behold the marriage token!” and with a sudden jerk she dragged down a long wreath of wreathed mango leaves from the lintel of the door, and, deftly casting over Milly’s head, pointed to her companion. ... (Emphasis added)

Thus, Mrs. B.M. Croker, in the depiction of the above elements of culture and Indian ethos in her works not merely desires to display her acquaintance with Indian practices and performances but also exhibits an immaculate sympathy, which enables her to rise above the ordinary artists. Because “... all cultures were organically and internally coherent, bound together by a spirit of Klima, or national idea which an outsider could penetrate only by historical sympathy. ... accessible only to an observer who sacrificed his prejudices”}

4.10 DEPICTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS AND OTHER IMAGES OF INDIA

The white men’s desire, to dominate over the Indians and hold them under their subjugation, so many times pushed them into innumerable perils and ordeals. So long as they stayed here they were forced by the environment to pledge their own freedom and feelings as hostages to all powerful and ever enervating geographical influences. Their life was one frightening ordeal, unending battle with the predicament they were thrust themselves into. Anglo Indian fiction abounds in descriptions that constitute various images of India. One often comes across in the pages of fiction the allusions to seasons—summer, rainy winter etc.; to wild creatures like tigers, panthers bears etc.; to poisonous pestering creatures
like serpents, scorpions, spiders, bats, ants, white ants, mosquitoes, bed bugs etc.; to dangerous diseases like cholera, typhoid, malaria and plague which claimed the lives of innumerable innocents immediately after their onset. Along with such descriptions of India as a land of danger and death one also comes across allusions to the attractive aspects of the scenic beauty of Indian forests, gorgeous dawns, arresting sunsets, magnificent moonlit nights etc., as also the exotic and mysterious caves, wells, tanks and temples. It was this land of beauty that provided a vast playground for the western playboys and girls with unending opportunities of hunting and adventures. India was an evergreen marriage market for a beautiful girl and an arena for exercise of muscular strength for an adventurer. Thus wandering in the course of adventures they encountered the distinguishable diversity and staggering contrast in Indian life, land, lore and lure. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker also we come across this kind of myriad image of India captured in its true taint and stature. It would be viable, valuable and worthwhile a labour to undertake to study her works in this aspect wherein they seem a veritable mine.

The tyrant like tropical atmosphere was an unbearable and unbeatable element that a white person encountered soon after his stepping into this land. India being situated in the tropical belt received enormous heat from the Sun. The Sun seemed to pour all his energy endlessly in the form of heat on this continent. As a result of this relentless heat the upper layers of the earth become extremely dry and the particles begin to float in the air in the form of dust. The dust driven off from the earth gets deposited on the sweltered parts of human body and become clammy. This leads to putrescence and begins to irritate the persons. This sense of irritation further was augmented by the white man's sense of alienation and exile, which in their turn prompted his feelings to consider this land hellish. Therefore repeated reference to the heat and dust of India. The dust particles deposited on things and clothes caused nauseating sense dirt. For a white person if heat is the source of life in his home country, in India it was his unconquerable enemy that pushed him often imminent to death. Indian glaring Sun disturbed the equanimity of
the whites and disentangled their nerves and very often made them appear odd creatures amidst their own countrymen- or community. They grew augmented, argumentative and occasionally quarrelsome too. The ineffable heat of India many times led to diseases like fever, neuralgia, apoplexy and other sorts of illness. Invariably, in each and every Indian novel of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across the references and comments made by the characters about the heat, dust, dirt and disease that envelop the life in India. In order to control the prolixity of the thesis instances from every book are constrained, concentrating only on the dominant passages- from the books, which deal more, or fully with Indian locale.

During the summer season Indian ground turns into one solid burning hot plate turning the atmosphere into a fiery furnace. This hot climate of India is documented to affect the population so much so that the borderlines of social distinctions or gradations were blurred and gave a big push to the fellow feeling and sense of belongingness. As a result of scorching summer the well-to-do English families migrated to the hill stations and other cooler regions. Only those who could afford the expenditure and who were bound by bureaucratic set up to their posts constituted the scanty population of the stations. Here is the description of Ramghur station in Angel (1901) during one such summer.

The hot weather was in full possession of Ramghur, and, as a natural consequence, the station became deserted. Various bragging individuals, who had announced their determination to "face it this year", had at the first boom of its artillery- that fierce midday blast,- closed their bungalows, distributed their pets and flowers, lent their cows, and carriages, among their friends, and departed precipitately to cooler regions. It was a sickly season; ... Only those whom duty or poverty chained to the contonment, were to be found at their posts, and these were to be seen, very late or very early, driving about the dusty roads, with haggard white faces.

It is a well-established fact, that one hot weather endured in the company, draws people more nearly together than a dozen cold seasons. There is a general relaxing of stiffness, a putting off of armour, a reliance an one another, and a liberal exchange of sympathy and secrets;-- undoubtedly a fellow- feeling makes one wondrous kind. (Emphasis added) For example, if a cynic happened to remark what friends two sharply contrasting ladies had become,
"Oh, they spent a hot weather together in Kalipore" would be accepted as an unanswerable reply. Moreover, it is undisputed, that some of the best matrimonial prizes have been snatched out of the heat of the plains, by maidens who clung to their parents, and braved the consequences. (Emphasis added) Thus, they occasionally made the acquaintance of some bored and solitary bachelor, who, failing to obtain leave, presently consoled himself with a wife.

... Every where beyond the gardens the atmosphere was that of brick and kiln within, among the trees, shrubs, and glistening foliage plants, the nostrils were greeted by the smell of hot earth... an aroma peculiar to India...

*Her Own People* (1905), describes the hot climate of India. We see Miss. Verona Chandos remaining at the station of Rajahpore, in spite of forceful invitation of Mrs. Lepell to accompany her to Naini Tal. The purpose of the girl’s remaining at the station was to ascertain the tales told to her about Indian hot weather and its enervating effect. Here is what she witnessed during the summer.

The hot weather had driven most of the residents in Rajahpore to the hills. Mrs. Lepell had departed to Naini Tal, having vainly urged Verona to accompany her, but Verona refused to leave home, and boldly declared that she would like to find out if the tales about the season were true? The crops were reaped; where yellow grain and green vetches had flourished was now but miles and miles of a substance resembling red sandstone. The trees were leafless; the hot wind roared about the country, driving clouds of sulphur-coloured dust before it, and the thermometer was over a hundred in the shade. (Emphasis added) The doors of the bungalow were fitted with transferable screens made of matting; over these a coolie poured water continually, in order to establish a damp atmosphere. (Emphasis added)

In the same novel we come across one of the characters commenting the on effect of the hot weather on the natives. The character says that the season (summer) being an idle time makes the natives talkative, argumentative and even quarrelsome. At this time the old feuds brooded over become revived and provoke the people to many amoral and amorous acts.

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Here is one more description of the hot climate of India from the novel *Quicksands* (1915) as witnessed by Miss. Milly, a new entrant into Indian station under the chaperoning of Mrs. Hayes- Billington, whom she had joined with the intention of meeting her brother Ronnie Lingard.

It was no doubt owing to its lofty situation that Silliram dried up rapidly; (emphasis added) the roads no longer merely red mud, the cascades of running water ceased to brawl, and the all reviving Sun had apparently brought the whole population into the open air- also their wardrobes. In almost every compound one noticed long strings of male and female garments flittering (emphasis added) in the breeze.240

In the same way one comes across innumerable references to Indian hot weather in every novel of Mrs. B.M. Croker, as and when the occasion arises.

As much there are repeated allusions to the unbearable hot weather of India so much also are the allusions to the suffocating dust that is a by­product of the heat. In, *Proper Pride* (1885), we get the picture of heat and dust of India. Sir Reginald Fairfax and Captain Vaughan were to join the Seventeenth Hussars at Camelabad, in India. After journeying towards the East, and reaching Bombay they journeyed towards Camelabad in the dust and heat. Here is the description of their journey.

Sir Reginald Fairfax and Captain Vaughan, Seventeenth Hussars, along with the draft in their charge, were forwarded to Camelabad; and after a wearisome three­days' journey, half­blinded with glare and smothered with dust, (emphasis added) they found themselves (figuratively speaking) in the arms of their brother 'Braves.' ... 241

*Mr. Jervis* (1897), also describes the heat and dust of India. Miss. Honor Gordon came to India to join Mrs. Brande. Soon after joining the Brandes, Honor got introduced to many new things and slowly got used to the East. She would drive in the evening in the landau of Mrs. Hodson, this is what she saw during one of such drives.

...She saw many novel sights, as she drove in the cool of the evening in Mrs. Hodson's roomy landau, along the broad planted roads of Allahabad, and watched the bheesties watering the
scorching white dust, which actually appeared to steam and bubble; (emphasis added) she beheld rattling ekkas, crammed with passengers, and drawn by one wicked-looking, ill-used pony; orderlies on fretting camels; ... It was extremely warm; the so-called "evening breeze" consisted of puffs of hot wind, with a dash of sand. (Emphasis added) Most of the Allahabad ladies were already on the hills.

Here is one more description of the dusty atmosphere of the station of Pahari, during the summer season where Milly found herself after coming to India to meet her brother Philip Trafford. She observed how the summer brought the people together in spite of their social distinctions.

The hot weather in a little up-country station usually brings the remnant that are left into closer and more sympathetic touch. After the long sweltering hours spent in a darkened bungalow (whilst scorching winds roar through along the roads), (emphasis added) the community forgather at...243

Anglo Indian fiction abounds in the description of the dirt that the whites came across in the towns and cities of India and thereby underscores the fact that Indians lacked the sense of sanity. "Complaints against the dirt, the smell and the squalor of Indian towns and bazaars are ubiquitous."244 Such complaints are uttered by several characters in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. The Cat's Paw (1902), once again presents the dust and squalor of India. When Miss. Pamela Ferrars sought a situation as a tutor at the palace of Royapetta, to the royal children there, she arrived at the city with a baggage of books to join the job. Here is the description of her journey through the ancient city of Royapetta.

We soon left the station of Bowenpillay and clouds of white dust behind us, and drove away towards some distant hills at the speed of a fire-engine, galloping along at a breakneck pace-everything, ... clearing nervously out of our road... I noticed fertile crops of rice and cotton, dense toddy and mango topes, as well as numerous pagoda shaped temples for I was in a Hindoo state. After more than an hour's galloping we reached Royapetta, a large straggling city, exhibiting many more temples, also narrow streets blocked with traffic and sacred cows, gay bazaars- loud with tongues and tom-toms-stagnant tanks, flat houses...(emphasis added)245
In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), also we come across the reference to dirt and squalor of India in many places. In the novel, the hero, Vernon worked on the railways as a guard. His friend Captain Breakspeare met him on duty after long many years of their parting in England. Before the friend Vernon said that he was getting on well in the job, when the former asked him to quit the job as a guard and join him. At that time the military man commented on the dirt and squalor of Indian railways. Here is his comment.

“Oh, ... you, Jack Talbot, a crack rider and cricketer, ‘getting on’ as a guard on a scorching Indian railway. Here, let’s clear out of this place- it stinks of cocoanut oil- and come over to my tent.” (Emphasis added)  

Indian life tormented the white man not only with its blood-sucking summer, nauseating dust and squalor but also threatened him with agonizing diseases like cholera, malaria, typhoid, plague, diarrhea, apoplexy, neuralgia etc. We get this image of India amply reflected in the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. For instance in, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), we come across the reference to Malaria and plague. Miss. Pamela Ferrars worked at a Plague camp at Yallagode, before she joined the cheap boarding house at Mrs. Rosario’s. When she joined the plague camp Erasmus the apothecary gave enough information (instruction!) to the girl as to the way of diagnosing the disease. Then the girl, instructed by him, attended the innumerable patients who suffered from the deadly disease. Here is the picture of the plague camp, which goes to show the white man’s image of India as a land of disease and death.

..., "When a case is brought, shall I tell you how you will know the plague?"

...

“For an example, when a woman is shivering and looks frightened-as well she may- when her neck is swollen out ... that is the bubonic form. When her head aches, her eyes are red, her pulse is quick, quick, quick- that is also the plague. When she raves and screams and struggles, it is the same- with fever. When she is drowsy, and
cannot speak plainly, it is again the plague; and the most fatal sign of all is stupor.”

“...”

“... I will tell you more. Good nursing is important; good milk diet, as per rule; also four ounces of rum, constant poultices, and lot of fresh air. Pull down all their rasais and purdahs and stuffy coverings....”

...There were, unfortunately, many serious cases: rows and rows of women and children, stretched on charpoys, in all stages of the plague; and when I moved among the sickening and the dying, ...

We come across the reference to cholera and its decimating effect in various novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker. Of the two dominant pictures - one from Mr. Jervis (1897) and In Old Madras (1913) one is used for instance here. In, In Old Madras (1913), we see Mrs. B.M. Croker offering the picture of a graveyard wherein buried the dead bodies of many soldiers and others who were hit by cholera. Captain Mallender visited an old contonment called Wellunga in search of his missing uncle. The contonment was decimated by the deadly disease cholera two times. After reaching the spot, during a morning walk he came across a high walled enclosure. As he entered it eagerly he was harrowed by the sight inside. It was full of graves of young men who had died early in their lives falling a prey to cholera even without seeing their thirtieth year. Here is the description of the graveyard and tombstones.

... a vast walled enclosure, which proved to be the cemetery. Is anything in the world more forsaken, and forgotten, than an up country burial-place in India, where rest unremembered, and unknown, the unconscious builders of Empire? Here, the explorer aimlessly wandered, among flat gravestones, huge tombs of various forms, and sizes, pyramidal, bomb-shaped, or square, all of either stucco or red sandstone, and all gradually crumbling in the fierce tropical Sun. ... Scarcely one of these had seen thirty years. Many headstones bore no names; but a gigantic red tomb, recorded the intelligence that seventy- eight of the men, and non-commissioned officers of the Green Dragon Regiment, who died of cholera, were there interred. (Emphasis added)
One of the ramifications of the image of India as a bad land is that of the allusions to its being inhabited by poisonous, creatures like serpents, several types of scorpions, frogs and the pests like mosquitoes, ants, white ants etc. All the while during their stay, the white persons, especially the ladies were bothered by these dangers waiting inside their residences as well as at their doorsteps. In the novel *The Cat’s Paw* (1902) we see Miss. Pamela Ferrars describing her encounter with a cobra, during her participation in a moonlight picnic to an old disused bungalow, which was situated on the hilltop at Palaveram. Here is the description.

... Mrs. Josephs gave an ear-splitting yell, for there, *carefully coiled up in Eulalie’s train, was a large cobra!* (Emphasis added) She had probably been sitting close to his hole, the heat of her body had allured him to make a nest in her gown, and she had carried him safely into the bungalow. ... *In a second he had reared himself and erected his horrible hood, prepared to strike. He stood up two feet above the floor, a beautiful but terrible object, ...* No one dared move, yet death was in our midst. *We were chiefly women in the snake’s vicinity, ... what a scene ensued!* – *Some shrieked, some were simply rigid, paralyzed with fear, one girl fainted- ...* (Emphasis added) there was not a second, no, nor half a second, to lose ere the fatal blow fell on someone. I looked round for a weapon- stick, parasol. Behind me on the table lay Frederick’s best umbrella. I snatched it up and hit the creature over the head with all my strength. ... I had struck in a vulnerable spot, the snake’s back was broken, and it suddenly subsided into furious hissings, and hideous and impotent writhings. At least, it could no longer pursuer or strike. ...*249*

In, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), also we come across the projection of the image of India as a land of wild animals, serpents and scorpions in many places. When Trafford stayed with the Kennedys they warned him of snakes and scorpions. During the early days of his arrival to India as a forest officer the protagonist Philip Trafford is taken to the home of the Castellas by Eliot Scruby. There during the conversation Mrs. Castellas, who had married a Eurasian after her first husband’s death, and accompanied her second husband to India, spoke of the difficulties of Indian life, she also spoke of the panthers and scorpion and serpents. Here are here words.
"... I heard one [the panther] blowing under the bathroom door when Bessie had her puppies; and I have seen snakes in the go-downs, and no end of scorpions - the black, and yellow bad kind - and I, who used to faint at home if I came across a cockroach! (Emphasis added)"

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), we get the image of India as a land of serpents, mosquitoes and dangerous creatures. Captain Mallander visited Panjeverram in one of his tours to strange places, which he undertook in search of his uncle. The place was, though in the vicinity of Madras was far from the civic amenities. He stayed in an old and dilapidated dak bungalow where he was thrust into innumerable odds. He could not contract with sleep in the night because of the music of mosquitoes and sweltering atmosphere and also partly for the fear of snakes which Anthony reported to have seen in the bathroom. Here is the description.

Early the next morning, after a truly miserable night - thanks to the heat, mosquitoes and the skirmishing of toddy cats in the ceiling cloth, (Emphasis added) the adventurer went forth to reconnoitre and make observations. ... In India the elements assist old Father Time with amazing zeal and success. The blasting hot winds, the blistering Sun, torrents of tropical downpour and the perpetual ravages of legions of white ants, soon occasion surprising changes in an uninhabited dwelling. ...(Emphasis added)

In, *Quicksands* (1915), we come across reference to scorpions in many places. We see Miss. Eva Lingard accompanying the Billingtons to India in order to meet her brother. Soon after her arrival to India she felt the life here rather uncomfortable. She stayed with the Billingtons at Silliram. As it was a rainy season she had to struggle with many insects and serpents. She appreciated the ayahs concern for her safety. The Madrassee ayah was quite convenient and handy as she spoke English and drove away the frogs and other venomous creatures from her room. Here is the description.

...My English-speaking Madrassee ayah was sympathetic and even motherly; she turned out the frogs that hopped about my room, destroyed several promising nests of white ants, and slew a venomous looking black scorpion... (Emphasis added)
In the story “The Red Bungalow” also we come across the reference to the white ladies’ fear of snakes. In the story Mrs. Netta arrived to Kulu and stayed for some time with the Drummonds. Then she sought a big and independent building called the Red Bungalow. She asked Mrs. Elizabeth to accompany her to have a look at the building and examine it, before it was white washed and made neat. Together they went to the bungalow. When they reached it Mrs. Elizabeth was afraid to walk as freely as Mrs. Netta, for the fear of snakes as it was a long-abandoned bungalow. Here is her remark about the snakes that might abound there.

...picking up her dainty skirts, she led they way thither through lose stones and hard yellow grass. As I have a rooted antipathy to dark and uninhabited places, possibly the haunt of snakes and scorpions. (Emphasis added) I failed to attend her, but leaving the baboo to continue his duty...

Another important view that India is a land of inexplicable swiftness gets recorded repeatedly by Mrs. B.M. Croker in her novels a point, which has already been referred to elsewhere in the thesis. Being a phlegmatic race, inhabiting the cooler region the British felt it rather uncomfortable to adjust with Indian atmosphere, which is prone to obliterate the memories of happenings. In, Angel (1901), we get the picture of swiftness of things that blur the memory. Mrs. Lena Wilkinson, mother of the heroine of the novel died of swift attack of fever. She was buried immediately after her death, and very soon forgotten by the community and even her favourite tailor. Here is the allusion to the obliteration of her memory in a very short period.

Since Angel had left Ramghur the hot winds of three seasons had swept over her mother’s grave, killed the plants in pots, and defaced the lettering on the cheap headstone. (Mr. Shafto was in error for once). The dead woman who lay beneath, was absolutely forgotten, (emphasis added) even by her dirzee, who now owned a thriving shop in the bazaar. A community fluctuates in an Indian station more than any part of the Empire (Emphasis added) and to the present inhabitants of the cantonment, the name of Lena Wilkinson failed to conjure up any figure whatever...

In, The Cat’s-Paw (1902), also we see the novelist alluding to the quickness of occurrences and events in India. Miss. Pamela Ferrars came
to India with an intention of marrying Mr. Walter Thorold. Soon after her arrival she found shelter at Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall. When the girl entered the bungalow Mrs. Elizabeth was not there. The girl was a little disturbed at the happenings she had to encounter soon after her entry into this land. In order to regain the equanimity of her mind she decided to indulge in prayer. Exactly at this time Mrs. Elizabeth Hassall came home and addressed the girl. She said that she had already sent out the invitations and the marriage was to be solemnized immediately. The girl was surprised at the kind of hasty movements of the things around her and said that the time given to her to acquaint herself with Walter was very short as she was meeting him after a long gap. The elderly woman said that in India things occurred very fast. Here are her words to the girl.

"I sent out all the invitations the moment the Smyrna was signaled, and the wedding will be an Saturday at two O' clock, so that will give you and Watty time to improve each other's acquaintance."

"A week is not a very long time" I said helplessly. (Emphasis added)

"A week is ample," she rejoined with energy.

"Many girls are married in Bombay an hour after they land- buried the day they die: We manage all these things promptly in India. (Emphasis added) I have got you a capital ayah."

...  

"I intend to have a large garden party," ... "... I have issued two hundred invitations; the place wants shaking up." 255

Here is one more instance of the settlement of life of an Indian station to its normalcy after the tragic incident of Charlie Booth's death by falling across to the wheels of rushing railway express from The Company's Servant (1907).

And then by very gradual degrees, the dejected junction resumed its poise, and its normal condition. Nowhere else, as in India does society so speedily recover from the shattering shocks of scandals and tragedies; (emphasis added) yet it is not that those are not felt most poignantly at the moment... there is no time to stand still, and contemplate disasters; events march rapidly. India is the land of
change of moving on. Are we not here today and gone tomorrow? (Emphasis added)256.

In, Quicksands (1915), also we come across the allusion to India as a land of haste. Miss. Eva accompanied Mrs. Hayes- Billington to India to join her brother Ronnie Lingard who was in the service of the company Sirkar at the station of Secunderbad. Miss. Eva, in the early days of her arrival stayed at Silliram at “The Dovecot” with the Billingtons. Mrs. Billington was a divorcee with bad character. Ronnie Lingard was given information of his sister’s arrival and her stay with the notorious lady. He did not want his sister to be chaperoned by a lady with a stigma on her character. So he immediately came to the place and asked his sister to pack quickly and accompany him to Secunderbad. There was enough hurry in packing the things and moving with him. She thought that it might cause inconvenience to her ayah. But on finding her accepting the proposal of her journey as a matter of ordinary occurrence and hurrying through packing the things she was surprised. Here the novelist seems to opine that there is something in the very air of India, which pushes the things forward with all the haste. Not only that the people are in tune with the hasty movements and quick fluctuations but also, they are disturbed if there are no such things. Here is the observation of the girl.

Mary was evidently accustomed to these hasty departures. (Emphasis added) She was a Deccanee woman, she informed me, and not sorry to return to her own country. With astonishing celerity she began to collect... to sort and to fold. Natives love the excitement and hurry-scurry of a hasty move. A native cook welcomes, rather than otherwise, an unexpected addition to a dinner; a butler is never more in his element than when improvising a hasty tamasha, an abruptly arranged Shikar party, or an early morning supper! 257

The image that India is a land of exorcists, snake-charmers, fakirs, sadhus and sadhaks with esoteric exercises, mystic and mysterious powers endowed with the knowledge of occult sciences and occult rituals and siddhis who helped the population of this sub-continent in fulfilling their worldly desires such as protection from diseases and dreadful draughts and getting daughters and sons and winning their feuds, foretelling their
future etc., caught the attention of the Anglo-Indian novelists to a considerable extent. One also witnesses the references to the mysterious elements associated with the land itself. Such a wonderful land having had its past enwrapped in untold antiquity, always threw threats on the path of the whites. “All of them wore away the European discreetness and rationality of time, space, and personal identity. In the Orient one suddenly confronted unimaginable antiquity, inhuman beauty, boundless distance.” 258 This image of India forms the important yarn of the texture of Crokerian world of fiction.

In, Mr. Jervis (1897), and The Company’s Servant (1907) we come across references the to the mysterious element attached with the land of India. If in the first novel Miss. Gordon finds the landscape and surrounding hills mysterious, in the second Gojar (Algernon Craven), the night watchman at Tani-Kul junction, who had fallen a prey to narcotic drug- Ganja, another mysterious element about India, found in one of the mysterious tanks, that are supposed to be found at different parts of India. Such tanks are death traps laid out by nature. They are full of twining and twisting tendrilled creepers or weeds that entwine any object that gives them a sway- and slowly drag the object or the person down till the one is completely drowned and drawn to the boggy bottom. Found himself in to one such tanks, under the influence of Ganja- Gojar was however saved by Vernon who happened to pass through the place by a strange piece of good luck. Here is the description of the mysterious tank.

...these treacherous depths. Beneath the innocent lotus lily, lay a particular species of deadly weed, which once set in motion by any falling body swayed to and fro, and gradually and inflexibly encircled it with murderous green tentacles. This cruel, floating snare, had been the cause of the death of many unsuspicous folk who had come to bathe, or rashly adventured the recovery of lost game. It gripped its victim like some living, crawling thing, clung fast to the limbs of the swimmer and when he was rendered powerless, slowly drew him to the oozy green depths, above which the pretty pink lotus flowers flaunted so serenely. 259
In the same novel though we came across reference to India as a land of mystery at many other places only the dominant one is instanced above.

One comes across many references to India as a land of antiquity and ancient glory, in, In Old Madras (1913), wherein we view the image of India as an ancient land. We see Captain Mallender conversing with General Beamish an old man retired from the service, during his visit to Wellunga. The old man talked many things about India and Indian life. During the talk he said that India is an ancient land. Here are the bits of conversation.

"...This is an historical part of the world, although it looks so tame now- the children know every inch of it for miles. Tell me, are you interested in Indian history?"

"I can’t say I am, Sir, I know very little about it. Clive- Plassy- Warren Hastings- that’s all”.

"...I’ve read a lot- especially of those dealing with the invasion of Alexander, nearly three hundred years before Christ, (emphasis added) then came the Moghul Empire, and the Cholas, they all made their way into these parts.”

"Not much sign of them now, is there?"

"...great monuments, temples, and fortresses, such as still recall ancient Hindostan" (emphasis added) 

Here is one more description of Bombay, an ancient Indian city, as seen by Miss. Eva Lingard in Quicksands (1915). She traveled to India in the company of Mrs. Hayes Billington. She was laved in happiness to see the shores and streets of Mumbai.

Bombay gave me my first sight of the ancient and picturesque East. I was fascinated by the quaint native craft at the quays, the crowds of people in gay and varied costumes, the painted bullock carts, the jingling trams, packed so tightly, the fine imposing public buildings and the beautiful bay-... 

In, Angel (1901), we witness Mrs. B.M. Croker alluding to India as a land of snake charmers, magicwallahs, and these being endowed with
some esoteric powers could prophesy things. Such persons were very often employed to entertain the white ladies by the officials. When the heroine Angel accompanied the Gordans on their tour of the district Mr. Lindsay the collector of the district offered to entertain the ladies by employing a soothsayer, a fakir who looked rather grave absolutely exotic and who was always under the influence of Bhang. But his fame as a fortuneteller had traveled far and wide. Here is the description of the one.

The Fakir was an old man, singularly emaciated. He wore a simple loincloth and a row of huge beads; his legs were bandy, his voice was bass, his hair matted, in his eyes there was a piercing look bordering on madness. He came straight up to Lindsay and salaamed, ...

...

...the half-naked Fakir, with his mop of tangled hair, his starting ribs, his wild black eyes, his chest and forehead daubed with ashes...

In, Her Own People (1905), The Company's Servant (1907) and Babes in the Wood (1910) etc we come across the reference to the mysterious hold of opium and other narcotics on the whites. These narcotic drugs were powerful enough to hold the white man in their unbreakable grips. Once got introduced to them these whites would turn into their own world like the lotus-eaters of that island, in the poem by Tennyson, forget their social standing and reach the bottom of the ladder. In The Company's Servant (1907) Gojar fell a prey to Ganja and facing innumerable troubles went down the social ladder. He lived rather low in the interior of the bazaar masquerading like a native. He had wandered to several parts of this sub continent and spoke of many mysterious elements of Indian life.

The novel Her Own People (1905), opens before the readers the world of opium and its influence. Paul Chandos was compelled to marry a half-caste Eurasian Rosa by the circumstances, and became a social disgrace. To forget the ignominious circumstance he entered into the
world of opium. He thus remained an abandoned person. Here is the
description of the opium pills.

He had a secret—those little dark-brown pills, which a trusty native
apothecity prepared. The secret was called “Opium”; (emphasis
added) he took it in order to dream, and to banish misery and care;
and the gracious alchemy of the drug transmuted his poor
surroundings like an enchanter’s (emphasis added) wand. ...263

In, Babes in the Wood (1910), we come across the allusion to
another mysterious element that the king of Jambore fell a prey to. It was
a mysterious drink mudduck. The white man’s (Eliot Scruby’s) abhorrence
and fear is reflected in his explanation about it.

The worst sort of drug going. It’s made up of opium and the
pounded cinders of the babool tree. There is some deadly quality in
this combination. (Emphasis added) A man who drinks whisky
schrab may still fight long, and even a man who takes Ganja—always
provided they both work; but a fellow who takes the mudduck pills
is done for! 264

The image of India as a land of occult sciences and occult practices
not only mastered and practiced by sadhus, sadhaks and Fakirs but also by
some hags and viragoes in a very secret way gets alluded to in the novels
of Mrs. B. M. Croker. In, The Cat’s-Paw (1902), we come across a
reference to such a practice of poisoning the persons, which affected in a
mysterious manner consuming the health of the person secretly and
slowly. Mr. Maxwell Thorold, who was appointed as the political agent in
the princely state of Royapetta, opposed the proposal of purchase of pearls
by Rani Sundaram, the old queen and grand mother of Raja Kodappa, in
spite of the Royal family’s owning enough wealth and long standing heavy
loans. Therefore she asked Miss. Pamela Ferrars, who was appointed by
Thorold to teach the royal children, and whom Rani Sundaram thought to
be the beloved of Mr. Thorold, to interfere and persuade him to consent.
But in spite of all such insinuations when Mr. Thorold remained stiff she
dealt in poison and consequently his health began to deteriorate. Knowing
this through Moonasawmy Miss. Ferrars consulted the local poison cleaner
who said that Indians are the untrustworthiest race who have mastered
many mysterious things. Such as poison etc., which are beyond the reach
of scientific and rational analysis, characteristic to European mind. Here are his words.

“Mr. Thorold has unfortunately taken a deadly poison.”... “the effect is enervating, intense lassitude, loss of sleep, of memory, of appetite—a wasting fever; and, worst of all, he is dying of starvation. Some one who has a spite against him has done this, ... I once knew a cook who administered a love-philtre to his master in order to gain his favour; but it killed him. These natives are too fond of tampering with poisons.”...(Emphasis added)

...

“...the English doctor will not suffer me to prescribe, and yet I can administer the one little seed—the priceless herbal seed, known only to adepts in herbs.” (Emphasis added)

In, Her Own People (1905), also we witness the allusion to this kind of still more occult a practice of application of ink on the palm of an individual and observing the things, a unique practice observed by the hunters of ancient and hidden wealth. In the novel, Brian Salwey, the Deputy Superintendent of Police of Rajahpore, was disturbed very much by the usurer under the name of “Saloo”. In spite of his wise, disguised hunting the usurer had remained far from the land of the law. When he talked of it with Miss. Verona she suggested that he must try with her grandmother who would peep into the ink pool, though the practice was a riddle for the girl. Further she asked for more of it with Brian Salwey. Here are the bits of conversation.

“If you were to consult my grandmother, she would advise you to look in the ink pool”

“No doubt! rejoined Salway with a short laugh. “Have you ever seen her appeal to it?”

“No’ but she believes in it, implicitly. It is magic. Is it not?”

“And black magic at that. I am myself orthodox, but I must admit that I have witnessed some extraordinary and utterly unaccountable things out here in the East”. (Emphasis added)

“Tell me, please, about the ink pool!”

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"Oh, when a native wants to find out something, he gets hold of a small boy, bribes him with promises, takes him to some quiet spot, pours ink into the palm of his hand and commands him to look, and to report what he sees. (Emphasis added)"

In, *The Company's Servant* (1907), also we come across a cross reference to the practice of poisoning, made by Gojar, while speaking about the death of his wife. The doctor called it cholera but to him it was the effect of spiteful poison dealt by a native.

Embarking and entering Indian peninsula was akin to unlocking endless opportunities especially for a person with a flair for out door and adventurous life. Though the image that India as a land of hunting, sport, fortune pastime and promise occurs before the eyes of the readers in many novels of B.M. Croker, at several places only the dominant ones are instanced here lest the length becomes a burden. In the novels like *A Bird of Passage* (1886), *Mr. Jervis* (1897), *Angel* (1901), *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), *Her Own People* (1905), *The Company's Servant* (1907), *Babes in the Wood* (1910), *In Old Madras* (1913), etc., we come across innumerable references to India as a land of promise, romance, enchantment, opportunities etc. *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), presents the image of India as a land of promise. Miss. Pamela Ferrars came to India alone. While embarking the ship though she was alone soon she established intimacy with Mrs. Evans and others. After journeying six thousand miles on the back of the salty water she reached India at Bombay. What vibrations she received as soon as she found herself in Indian air and ambience is likely to be the utterance of many more Anglo-Indians, men or women, boys or girls. Here is what she felt when she first saw Bombay harbour.

...I awoke one morning early to find that we were swinging at anchor in Bombay harbour. As my companions were still sound asleep, I dressed noiselessly, and hurried up on deck. There were the wide bay, the islands, the palms, the long rows of white buildings, and the motley collection of shipping and boats which Mrs. Evans had described. Overall there lay a soft golden haze; the glamour of the East had already touched me. Here was India! The mere name thrilled my imagination. Viewed from the sea, it appeared to be land of promise, romance and enchantment.
Elsewhere in the same novel Captain Mallard articulates that India is a land of regrets, of great surprise and also of good fortune.

Indulgence in sport and hunting is a ritual without which a white man’s voyage to India appeared incomplete to him. In fact killing a wild animal in Indian jungles is often interpreted as an act of accomplishment of white mastery over Indian ambience. In many novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker, we come across white young men carrying a gun over their shoulders in their hunting suit tearing among the forests of India. In, *The Chaperon* (1907), we witness the description of India as a land of hunting and amusement derived thereof. Gordon Brakespeare’s hunger for hunting the Makhor- a rare animal that inhabits the Himalayan ranges put his wife to untold miseries and inexplicably separated from him. He had participated in many shooting trips and yet remained unsatisfied so much so that it pushed him into the declivity of bereavement from his beloved wife and delightful daughter’s company. Here is the description- given by Major Lynch before Mr. Seymour Scrope.

“Brakespeare was a great shikari- a celebrated shot. Big game was his passion; when he got leave he would go off tiger-shooting, elephant-shooting, or even up to Tibet, and send his wife to Nani Tal or Simla. Then he took craze for the Himalayas, (emphasis added) and went to Gilgit, Pir Pangal, and the Sulaman range”. Scrope who was not a sportsman, exclaimed, “The man must have been demented!”

“There are a good many of his class out in India. It’s wonderful how the fascination of shooting big game lays hold on a fellow. ... (Emphasis added)”

The novel is full of innumerable allusion to the image of India as a land of hunting and sport. Here is one more of the reiterated references to the hunting and sporting life of the white men as an important aspect- in, *Babes in the Wood* (1910). Philip Trafford, in the early days of his arrival stayed with the Kennedys. During and after the dinner his attention was fixed on the trophies- heads and horns that decorated the hall wall of Mr.
Kennedy. Later the Kennedys talked about them as well as the sportive life of India. This is what they narrated before the new arrival— as to his question where and how the trophies, arrayed on the wall, were shot.

“About four miles away in the Kohur jungle, in the rains— but that was years ago—before the line was opened. These tracts of forest remain untouched; splendid natural preserves; but now the sal jungle has been cleared, and game partly exterminated, thanks to trappers and native shikaris with their cheap guns. Yes, this part of India was the real home of big game, where a man has been known to bag his brace of tiger before tiffin— (emphasis added) but the palmy days of shikar are over!”

“All the same, you still get good sport, Dick, or at least your friends do, ”protested Mrs. Kennedy. “You must not damp Mr. Trafford’s hopes, especially as he will be close to a celebrated Reserve.”

Turning to him she added—

“This part of the world has still a reputation, you would be astonished at the number of people— actually smart society people with titles— who come to Dick clamouring for sport; we find them tents and shikaris, and put them up for a couple of days. Shooting is our sole attraction— (emphasis added) but I must say it’s a big draw!”

In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we also come across the image of India as a marriage market. There was, during the days of the Raj, a notion among the British that a marriageable girl sent to India was bound find a hand of man. There was also a counter point to it that the young men, soldiers, civilians, secretaries or in whatever capacities, were troubled by troops of girls and grass widows who were desirous of seeking a spouse. In, Mr. Jervis (1897), when Mark Jervis desired to visit India, his uncle Daniel Pollitt and Mrs. Pollitt objected the proposal severely. However when Captain Waring agreed to take Mark with him both the uncle and aunt warned him to guard himself from many menaces that were reported to be encountered by a new entrant in India. Here are the words of concerned uncle and aunt by way of admonition on to the adamantine and adventurous young man.
"Keep your cherub-book locked up. Don't let a tiger get hold of you, or one of those scheming, husband-hunting women..." (Emphasis added)

...  

"And now, dear boy, do be prudent; don't get into any more entanglements with grass widows; (Emphasis added) don't get into anymore betting or gambling scrapes--..."

In, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), we come across one of the companions of Miss. Milly's mother articulating quite clearly the idea that India is a marriage market. Milly in spite of having attained the age of marriage remained inattentive to the advances of innumerable young men. Her mother never honoured her young daughter's tastes on the contrary eclipsed the latter by her domineering nature. As a token of mild protest Miss. Milly went on rejecting the proposal after proposal that her mother brought for her. The mother was really tired of her daughter's behaviour and finally decided to send her to India where the girl's brother Philip worked for the company Sirkar in the department for forests. When she discussed the matter with one of her friends, here are the words of the person.

"That three is trumpery, two is company! As you cannot get the girl married, ... a tame little creature to be sold in the marriage market. She is not a girl to fall in love yet-..."

...

"It has seemed to me that the present life is a severe strain on you both; though you do keep up appearances so charmingly. Yes- send the girl off to India with a nice out fit, a saddle and some pretty frocks- she may meet her ideal, and pick up someone out there."

(Emphasis added)  

In, *Quicksands* (1915), also we come across reference almost parallel to the one discussed above.

When Mrs. Hayes-Bellington agreed to take Miss. Eva to India her aunt Mrs. Wilhelmina Lingard was very happy. Here is the observation of the woman on Eva's journey to India and the observation of Eva herself.
“Really, my dear Eva,” ... “a girl with your air and appearance, not to speak of connections, ought to marry remarkably well.”

Apparently I was about to be specially exported to India in order to be launched on the marriage market! (Emphasis added) That was my aunt’s ideal.

In the same novel at some other point also we come across the reference to the image of India as a marriage market.

In *Odds and Ends* (1919), a collection of short stories also we come across the reference that India is marriage market and a girl who comes here is bound to win the hand of husband at many places. Here is an instance of the station from the story “The Scarecrow”.

This station is overrun with ladies. The good old days when a white woman was a *rara avis* departed sixty years ago. Even within the last ten, matters have gone from bad to worse- in the way of imported spins. People then had out their relations- now they open their arms to all the world, and take in lodgers- I mean guests! *Guests, whose one idea is that the great Indian empire is merely run in order to afford facilities for flirtation and matrimony:* (emphasis added) and it is not the girls themselves who are the plague- it is the chaperones, and mothers and aunts.

A curious but candid and convincing a fact that dawns upon the readers of Anglo-India fiction is that for the most of Anglo-Indian novelists India meant only the northern parts of India. “Most Anglo-Indian novelists appear to believe that India is a land that lies between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas. The average Anglo-Indian novelist is no Agasthya rishi: he declines to undergo the rigours of crossing the Indy mountains. ... Most of the more prolific woman novelists too write only about the north..."274

Of the illustrious trio-E.W. Savi, Rumer Godden, and F.E. Penny who wrote about different parts of their acquaintance of India, F.E. Penny who like Mrs. B.M. Croker, with whom she was well-acquainted and by whom she was encouraged lived in the South and used the South Indian locale. Mrs. B.M. Croker’s treatment of South Indian ethos, locale and lore fills the apparent hiatus in the matter of treatment of South Indian
food items and habits, dress patterns and behavioural elements. She seems to have considered the south as that part of India where the real and atavistic Indianness is still alive in the form of customs, traditions and practices, because in more than one place we see her characters commenting about the vastness of India and especially about the southern part of India that consists of the real Indians with the real Indianness- and expressing their indomitable love for Madras Presidency- the mother presidency of the British Empire in India. In delineating and alluding to this element she also draws enough contrast between the south and the north, in terms of atmosphere, food, geography, etc. A study of Anglo-Indian fiction in terms of delineation of the life of the South and the North, as it appealed to and is observed by the Anglo Indians seems an interesting and long standing due in the field. We come across this reference to the vastness of India, practices and patterns that are particularly found in the Southern and the Northern parts of India North-South contrast and love of the South in the novels like *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), *Her Own People* (1905), *The Company's Servant* (1907), *Babes in the Wood* (1910), *In Old Madras* (1913) etc.

Although we come across repeated references to the fact that many white people's knowledge of this oriental subcontinent was book-based and consequently their idea of India was that it was no larger than a county or a district. This is evident from the conversations that we read in the course of narration, wherein when one character mentioned that he/she was in India the listener would say that the speaker must have met his nephew or relation who worked in India somewhere not necessarily in the place which the speaker made reference of. In, *The Cat’s-Paw* (1902), we see one of the characters speak that India is not a small place but a vast country, wherein Pamela declined to marry Walter Thorold on finding that he cheated her by sending false photo and letters. But before she met him, she journeyed with Mrs. Evans. Before the benevolent lady parted from her at Bhusaval junction she spoke to her that if the girl was in need of help she might seek it from her. At that time she spoke about the vastness of India. Here are her words.
"...I cannot bear to think of you alone and friendless in this immense strange country- (emphasis added) alone,..."

... "For a friendless girl, I can imagine no place more awful than this vast country. In England she has resources; she can go into an office, become a typewriter, for governess, or... Here there are no openings. She must just drift and drift till she comes to want or worse. And for a pretty girl what temptations." 275

Here is one more instance from The Chaperon (1907). Which emphasizes the idea discussed above. In the conversation between Lady Peveril and Armine (Mrs. Dene now) the latter mentioned that she had had a sharp attack of malaria. On hearing this Lady Peveril said that she must have been in India. Armine agreed. At this the lady questioned her with interest whether she had met her son, whose regiment was stationed at Lucknow. Parenthesized part of the conversation, done by the novelist herself evidences the fact of the vastness of India. Here it is.

"Oh, then you have probably met my son?" (There is a general idea among the untravelled that the great peninsula of India is no larger than a county and that every one more or less bound to meet.) (Emphasis added) "He's a captain in the Blue Lancers, and his regiment is quartered at Lucknow." 276

In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we also come across the instances of the love that the characters display towards Madras Presidency. The characters that visited or hailed from the north come forward with criticism and condemning thoughts towards the presidency. They regard Madras presidency as old and benighted presidency. But some characters vehemently oppose the views of such characters. In, The Cat's-Paw (1902), the idea that, Madras Presidency, or the South India is very comfortable place. We see the character of Dr. Fleming who was the civil surgeon of Madras Presidency, with a flair for archaeology of the South and Dravidian element, always appreciating all that is Madrasi. Here are his words.

..."There you go sneering at the poor old benighted Presidency. The enlightened presidency, I call it, (emphasis added) and at least the
Indian part of India. Give me Madras cooks and servants, Madras hills, Madras antiquities, Madras manners, Madras institutions.”

“Oh, you North-West people are so vain of your cold weather!...”

“So much for the Neilgherry air!” boasted Dr. Fleming. “There is nothing to approach it in you Himalayas, where people are carried about in packing-cases. ... (Emphasis added) 277

The same novel presents the practice of abandoning the well furnished, bungalows with good furniture unused a peculiar practice of the south as observed by the novelist, and also to other contrastive elements in the matter of food, clothing, purdah and behaviour pattern and also the smell of linseed, aniseed, co-coanut oil etc., which are presented as peculiar element of the southern part of India.

Here is one more instance from The Company’s Servant (1907), wherein Vernon appreciates the South Indian life. The locale of the novel is strictly South India, as to the love and peculiarity of the South or Madras Presidency. After his drive with Miss. Arminger Vernon met Mrs. Arminger. There ensued a conversation between them, the subject of which was the life and life-style of the south and the North wherein we see Vernon speaking heart full for the South, here are the clippings of the conversation and description.

... she plied him with sweet cakes, and sweet little questions, talked eloquently of the delights, of her side of India- the Punjab- and made no secret of her hearty contempt for benighted Madras.

“Yet, by all accounts, your hills are not up to these,” said Vernon “And I hear, when you dine out, you don’t go in a brougham, but are carried in a box. When people stay with friends they take their own bedding. I don’t call that exactly civilized. Any way, we are the oldest colony; we conquered India. Madre Dios- Madras- the mother of God, is the mother of Anglo-India, though some of her children treat her with scorn.” (Emphasis added)

“Dear me, you are eloquent! Well, granting your age, the delicious ices at the Madras Club, and good cooks, you cannot say much for
your red dust, white ants, bandicoots, and your railway, can you?"  

In the same novel elsewhere we also come across the reference to the practices that are specially found in the south “where the old gods die hard” and the devils are also worshipped as are observed and reported by Gojar.

The novel, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), shows the importance and speciality of South India and the culture of the south. Dr. Collins also raises the question as to who are the true Indians and aborigines of this land and alludes to many South Indian elements including its antiquity.

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also we see the love of Madras Presidency expressed by different characters. Locale of the novel is once again absolutely South Indian we see many references related to the love of Madras Presidency, tastes, food items atmosphere etc., that are peculiar to the southern part. These are also contrasted with the elements that prevailed in the north.

For the white persons with an eye of aesthetic taste Indian varied landscape with the soil of several colours, dense and impregnable forests with innumerable and unnamable types of trees and dangling creepers, the residence and repository of repose of several wild beasts and poisonous lurking creatures; surrounding the high hills with unidentified caves and caverns, thudding cataracts leaping from the rocks and anointing them were the source of ineffable joy. Equally unforgettable was the experience of the whites at the sight of pine and deodar appareled, cloud-cleaving peaks of the Himalayas with plots of bewildering and mesmerizing floral valleys, dotted here and there with plates of crystal clear cool water, created by rushing brooks and rivulets. Thus although they “could not come to terms with Indians as a human community they found solace in India as a place of glorious scenery, of bright colours, wonderful sounds and fascinating scents”. Mrs. B.M. Croker offers ample depiction of Indian flora and fauna, and other aspect of geographical beauty in her works like “*TO LET* ETC (1893), *Mr. Jervis* (1897), *Angel* (1901), *The
Mr. Jervis (1897), captures the beauty of a lake in the Himalayas in early morning. We see the troop of travelers that consisted of Mrs. Brande, Miss. Honor Gordon, Mr. Jervis and Captain Waring traveling through the mountain ridges in the misty morning along the lake. Here is the description.

...What can be more exquisite than a clear April morning on the lower slopes of the Himalayas? The lake was still and lay half in shadow; the dew glittered among the cherry blossoms, as if they were set in diamonds; (emphasis added) the low rush covered marshes were sprinkled with herds of cattle, and the doves were cooing in the dense woods that overlooked the misty blue planes. ...

In the same novel we come across a description of the beautiful pine-clad picnic spot

Here is one more vivid and picturesque description of Indian jungles from one of the many that run from page to page in, Babes in the Wood (1910), wherein Philip Trafford, the protagonist, observed the Indian forest soon after his taking charge as the conservator of forest. Here is what he saw and became enervated as he rode his white pony, which paced through the less defined path of the dense and mighty woods.

...The perpetual green twilight, the thickness, the brooding mystery of the all-pervading silent jungle, oppressed his senses. Here and there he caught the gleam of a solitary pool, the fresh tracks of deer crossed his path, the snapping of twig, the swish of a wet branch, or the leering countenance of a black faced monkey, reminded him that he was not altogether alone. A little idle breeze made the tall bamboos creak uneasily, and stirred the heavy leaves of the wild plantains; ... this somber forest and unbroken solitude...

...he was actually and truly in the so called “gorgeous East.” Yes, most objects were highly coloured; for instance birds, butterflies, and luxuriant vegetation. The blaze of flowering trees, shrubs, and climbing plants surpassed even his expectations, and he recognized
the real representation of different flora that were hitherto mere illustrations— and a name. For example, two elegant Angans *Hardwickia binata*, handsome jungle giants linked together by chains of large blue convolvuli; a “Shisham”, almost clothed in rose-pink orchids; a prickly “Babul” covered with blossoms; and deep in a thick undergrowth of orange- tinted plants, great bushes of “Petas” displayed masses of magnificent flame-coloured blooms. Brilliant butterflies and birds flew and flitted hither and thither; a superb peacock and his attendant harem trailed majestically (emphasis added) across the track... Undoubtedly there was ample food also for the ear; _flocks of noisy green parrots and well-to-do pigeons occasionally flashed overhead, whilst insolent black-faced monkeys chattered vivaciously, and tossed nuts at the intruder as they leaped from branch to branch._ (Emphasis added)²⁸²

If, *Babes in the Wood* (1910), presents before the reader word-picture of the forests of the Central province *In Old Madras* (1913), presents before the readers the beauty of the forests of South India— the Neilgherries. In the novel we witness a party undertaking a journey to the hill station under the leadership of the Tallboys. When the party reached Coonoor they decided to halt there for a day or two and then resume their travel by mountain train. But Mrs. Brander decided to ride the ghat on her big black horse. Captain Mallander volunteered to escort the lady, as he too was fond of adventure. The equestrians rode their horses through the beautiful forest. Here is the description of the one.

The heat, in the narrow gorge— at the foot of the mountains, was stifling; the very bananas and bamboos looked wilted, and faint. _As the pair rode between dense masses of acacia, babul trees Palmyra palms, and thickets of heavy jungle..._ (Emphasis added) The narrow bridle-path lay through a primeval forest, carpeted in places with moss and maiden hair; here and there, the tree trunks were hidden by gigantic ferns, the sound of running water was never absent, crystal clear streams splashed and tumbled and made tinkling music in the dim light, as they hurried down the hill-side, through a tangle of rock, twisted roots and creepers... (Emphasis added)²⁸³

In the same novel at some other point we come across the depiction of beauty of the hills and forests of the South, which are praised by Mrs. Bourne as surpassing the beauty of even the Himalayas. If they are the ‘Roof of the World’ the Neilgherries are the ‘Window in the West’.

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It is not only in the descriptions of woody patches and dense forest Mrs. B.M. Croker delights, she also shows an extra interest in the depiction of plains, plantations and gardens of the south as well as the north. Her characters were greatly bewitched by the beauty of the landscape during the time of their journey, especially by train. Here are two examples of the beauty of plains sliding past, as seen by her characters from the window of a panting train. In, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), Miss. Pamela Ferrars, came to India in the company of Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Blason, and Hatty. P. Schulyer etc. She parted from them at the junction of Bhusaval and was left alone in the compartment. During the journey this is what she saw.

All day long I traveled in a leisurely, comfortable manner; I had the carriage entirely to myself, and sat at the window- gravely studying India- the mud-walled villages, the creaking well-wheels, the great plains, the flocks and herds, the odd birds, the wide shrunken rivers, (emphasis added) and the neat little railway stations, their platforms crammed with a motley crowd. ...284

*The Company's Servant* (1907), captures the beauty of many spots of the south. We see Vernon returning from his visit to Ooty, Doddabetta etc, during his long leave of six weeks with additional three days. As the mountain train descended and wound at the bends and pushing down slowly along the track that stuck to the ribs of the mountains- this is what we saw from its window.

...Here, as Vernon traveled along- alert and watchful from sheer force of habit- were the labouring bullocks, the Dravidian temples, the strange squadron of great stone horses-well known to all travelers to the Neilgherries and the sturdy dark-skinned natives working in the wet, hush paddy fields- at home in the land, long before Aryan or Mogul! Here were the palms and temples of the South, villages set among broad-leafed tropical plants. This was old-established India; India of tradition, real Hindostan. (Emphasis added) 285

In, *Quicksands* (1915), we witness the beauty of the Lal Bagh captured in worlds. Miss. Eva Lingard found herself in Bangalore in order to stand as a source of emotional support to her brother Ronny Lingard, who was sent there on punishment for misappropriating the regimental
funds. Later on Captain Brian Falkland, her lover come and joined her. They go for a jolly ride through the Lal Bagh. Her observation on the renowned historical garden is quite interesting. Here is the description.

The Lal Bagh, or Red Garden, said to have been laid out by Hyder Ali, is an immense straggling enclosure, full of wonderful exotic plants and great trees shading long walks; it also contains many cages of wild animals. (Emphasis added)

This exhibition never appealed to me. I always felt so sorry for the animals' ... we were entirely surrounded by the beauties of nature; a wonderful profusion of sweet-scented flowering creepers, these and the palms, ferns and forest trees in Hyder Ali's old garden seemed to envelop us in an atmosphere of enchantment and peace. (Emphasis added)

There was the blazing “Sally Bindon”, the “Flame of the Jungle,” the yellow Burmese forest flower, and the rose-pink “Antigone,” with its clusters of blossoms, each and all draping trees and walls in our immediate vicinity, The cloudless sky was of a deep turquoise blue, the air soft and balmy, bulbulis sang in the rose bushes, brilliant buffer flies and dragon flies darted to and fro; the silence was languorous with serenity and ecstasy... (Emphasis added) 286

Mrs. Croker is satisfied not only with the description of the vast plains with lush green paddies, with trees of different heights with colourful flowers surrounded by the birds and butterflies, but she also presents the readers with description of the barren dry plains and the arid unattractive landscape of the neighbouring area of Secunderbad tinged with the light humour about the numerousness of rocks of several shapes. Here is a description from the same novel, discussed above.

The course and stand were the sole attraction to people from the contonments, as this portion of the Deccan is surprisingly ugly, and has to depend for its beauty on sunset and moonlight effects. The land is barren, covered with low growing shrub and enormous red sandstone boulders of every size and shape. So numerous are these that there is a native legend to the effect that when the Creator had completed his work, he discharged all the rubbish in this part of the world. For miles and miles it is a sea of stones, with not even palm or a mango tope to break the monotony. (Emphasis added) 287

In the same novel we come across the descriptions of the beauty of forests, plains etc., at many other places.
The novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker, while presenting before the readers, the lascivious scenery of forests and plains not only in their full bloom of colours during the spring and rainy season but also their naked and denuded beauty during the winter season, hold testimony to Croker's power of keen observation of the ambience. If spring is the season that offers delightful moments to the onlookers through the colour and smell winter also has a power to influence the nature and human mind with its openness and colourlessness. Here is the description of plains in the season when gleaning, gathering and harvesting are just over, from Angel (1901), wherein we see Angel and her uncle Philip ride through the Lucknow road in the evening.

...But to-night all is peace, the moon rides high in the heavens, and the whole landscape seems flooded in silver white ... a current of fresh air, as she sped past tombs, shrines, villages, and between long avenues of trees. The bare flat plains were just forty miles from the foot of the Himalayas, and in the cold weather the scene presented an unbroken stretch of rich cultivation. A see of yellow waves, wheat and barley, sugar cane, feathery white cotton, and acres and acres of poppies. Now crops were gathered, and all that remained was a barren expanse parched to a dull dusty brown. The very trees with their grey trunks and leafless branches, gave the scene a bleak and wintry appearance, although the air was like a furnace. It was a still breathless night, save for the croaking of frogs. ... (Emphasis added)288

The novel also presents before the readers many pictures of Indian forests, valleys and villages sleeping serenely along the valleys of Kumaon, Gharwal etc.

In Babes in the wood (1910), also we come across the depiction of Indian forests during the winter season. Here is the description.

...The road lay amid a truly arid prospect; early in April, the forests are bare, the great trees stripped of their leaves- which form a crackling carpet on the ground around them immense festooning creepers, born of the rains now seared and dead hung entangled in branches, like frayed, forgotten ropes. The air was hot as from a furnace and heavy mokowa,- whose yellow fruit like flowers gave the sole dash of colour to a pervading grey monotony. (Emphasis added)289
The quantum of interest displayed by Mrs. B.M. Croker, in documenting and depicting the beauty of forests and planes in different colour and profile is also revealed in her capturing the beauty of the Himalayas. In many novels we come across the pictures of the Himalayas that arrest the attention of the readers.

Here is the one of many such descriptions of the beauty of the Himalayan forests and valleys from the novel *The Chaperon* (1907), wherein Gordon Brakespeare, a great shikari, wandered among them, much infatuated by the rare animal called makhor. The novel also shows at innumerable places the reverential feeling of natives towards the Himalayas and the Himalayan fauna. Here is the description of the white clad peaks and the kind of mesmerism they cast on the viewers as given by major Lynch.

"...Sport in the plains is exciting enough, but its nothing to the Himalayas. Once the glamour of those hills is felt, you never can get away from it- it holds like a vice. A man goes back again and again. The most terrible precipices and endless climbs have no terrors for him. And it's not the only game, but the amazing beauty of the scenery- the fields of maize, apricot trees laden with ripe fruit, the towering white peaks, the raging rivers, the deodar forests, which perfume the air. The natives say the deodar is God's tree, and the Himalayas are God's mountains. I've made one trip myself, and I honestly believe there's a good deal in what the natives say."

"..."

"They say that the mountains lure one, and that once the spirits like a man, they will never suffer him to escape." 290

Almost invariably in all the novels of Mrs. B.M. Crocker at one or the other place we come across the image of India as a land of wild-beasts get captured as are the other images, like the land of poisonous creatures, diseases, land of hunting etc. In the novels *Mr. Jervis* (1897), *Angel* (1901), *Company's Servant* (1907), *The Chaperon* (1907) *Babes in the Wood* (1910), *In Old Madras* (1913), *Quicksands* (1915), *Given in Marriage* (1916), etc. we are shown the white man struggling with these animals and subduing them. We see the prowling panthers, rib-tearing bears
and man-eating tigers and goring bisons and boars etc., along with less wild animals such as deer, black-faced monkeys and wild cats etc. Here is one of the instances from *Babes in the Wood* (1910), wherein we witness references to many animals. Here is one of the references about the man-eater that lived in the forest of Bandi, who had devoured nearly a hundred members from the locality and also the passing-cart-men.

...The villagers said that along a certain road in the heart of the Bandi used by carters conveying wood and grain to distant depots (these cart-men travel together in a leisurely string of from twenty to forty vehicles), it was a true and painful fact, that on various occasions one of the men had been dragged from his seat and carried off... there was a sudden rush, a wild yell and the victim who was a generally snatched from the middle of the line, was gone! And who dared to follow the tiger- and attempt a rescue? The wretched man’s piercing screams rang in the ears of his trembling companions, as they struggled to control their stampeding cattle.

Many attempts... had been made upon this tiger’s life by matchlocks, hatchets, bows and arrows, and even poison; but the monster- save for the loss of the ear- still roamed the forest unscathed... 291

Along with such references to flora and fauna we come across the references to the trees and bushes like, lemons, orange, tamarind, neem, groves of teak wood, sandal wood, black wood, cardamoms, arrowroot, rare ferns, cactus, pomegranates Sal trees etc., in numerable others crops instanced in the quotations.

The other aspects of the nature like the storms and tornados, forked flashes, rumbling thunders and heavy down pours were also the points of attraction for the whites as much as the forest and floral beauty and the wild animals were. Mrs. B.M. Croker has documented this beauty that nature bestows on Indian life. In her works like *TOLET* ETC (1893), *Angel* (1901), *The Cat’s-Paw* (1902), *Her Own People* (1905), *The Company’s Servant* (1907), *Babes in the Wood* (1910), *In Old Madras* (1913), *Quicksands* (1915) etc., we come across the descriptive passages, that almost assume the poetic beauty studded with depiction of storms and typhoons that upset the ambience; vapour laden thick dark clouds; forked flashes, thumping thunder claps and thunder bolts that reveal the nature

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around in the enveloping darkness and set fire to the green robed senator-like gigantic trees; heavy rains pouring down in solid torrents over the tin roof as if to tear it to pieces, the gushing water currents that chop the hill sides and churn the plains to feed and fill the rivers with floods that carry away all that comes in their way, breaking the bridges and swallowing the roads to paralyze the very system of traffic, ultimately abate the heat hidden in the cracked flake of soil to cause it smile with greenery.

In the story “TO LET”, we see the description of the rain. Miss. Susan joined the picnic group and accompanied the Chalmers and, Mrs. Starkey to a picnic spot, five miles from Kantia. They reached the spot regardless of dark clouds that were gathering slowly. As soon as they reached the spot and began to unpack the things in order to enjoy sumptuously it started to rain heavily and the party was drenched to their skin. Here is the description.

...Alas! on that self same afternoon, the long-expected monsoon broke, and we were nearly drowned... the big blue-black clouds that came slowly, but surely, sailing up from below; it was a way they had had for days, and nothing had come of it! We spread the tablecloth, ... there fell a few huge drops, followed by a vivid flash, and then a tremendous crash of thunder, like a whole park of artillery, that seemed to shake the mountains- and after this the deluge. (Emphasis added) In less than minute we were soaked through; ... only for Captain Chalmers I believe I would have been blown away; as it was, I lost my hat, it was whirled into space. Mrs. Chalmers lost her boa, and Mrs. Starkey, not merely her bonnet, but some portion of hair. (Emphasis added) We were truly in a wretched plight, the water streaming down our faces, and squelching in our boots; (Emphasis added) the little trickling mountain rivulets, were now like racing seas of turbid water; the lightning was almost blinding; the trees rocked dangerously, and lashed one another with their quivering branches. I had never been out in such a storm before, and sincerely hope I never may again... (Emphasis added)

Here is one more description of the rainy season as seen by Miss. Eva Lingard in Silliram hill station- where she found herself in the company of Mrs. Hayes Billington soon after her arrival to India.

It was not merely rain, but a cataract that battered on the roof, roared down the gutters and made large ponds in our little compound. ...(Emphasis added) The atmosphere appeared to consist
entirely of a wet white mist; the roads were ankle deep in red mud, the valley filled with masses of what looked like cotton wool clouds. Europeans on ponies and disguised in makintoshes (emphasis added) occasionally splashed by our gate, and the natives went about with long bare legs, the remainder of their persons entirely shrouded in brown blankets. (Emphasis added)

In other works also we come across many similar pictures. Nor Mrs. B.M. Croker fails to document the refreshing effects of the rains that pour down in torrents, on the Indian hot fed cracked plains. These plains receive life from the clouds, (Cf Shelly's view of clouds) and regain their power of fertility as it were. They consume the calescence of the earth and make it teem with life and lushness. We come across such references at several places in her works. In, *The Cat's-Paw* (1902), we see the description of Indian monsoon. Miss. Pamela Ferrars staying with the Evanses. During her stay in the forest with the middle-aged couple she witnessed many things that were truly Indian- the life of the Gonds, the forests of India in their real density and dangers, and Indian rains. After the hot weather how the rainy season brings the cool breezes and colour to nature too was seen by her. Here is the description of the one.

...The monsoon had broken with tremendous force. It had come with black darkness, a swift, chill wind, forked flashes followed by crashes which made the ground tremble, then more weird illumination which showed torrents of rain and water glistening every where. And oh! How welcome was the smell of the damp earth, the splashing of spouts, the sprouting of greenery, even the croaking of the frogs.

*The hot weather was over at last! Man and beast were alike released, and no longer oppressed by the brooding silence of a brazen sky.* ...(Emphasis added)

In, *Her Own People* (1905), also we get a picturesque description of Indian rains. Miss. Verona was greatly disillusioned by the cruelties of the hot weather and felt repented at her own mistake of refusing the invitation of Mrs. Elizabeth Lepell to accompany her to Naini Tal. She heartily hankered for cool evening breeze. It came to her with the rains. Here is the description.
The rains came at last. For dreary and hopeless months, the country had lain bare and brown; now, almost in a night, the heat-cracked plains were clothed with grass, and the fainting trees and plants were up with young leaves; everywhere was the sound of running water! The ducks quacked triumphantly, as they swam on the former drive; frogs hopped hilariously about the verandah, and even invaded the bed rooms, whilst their relations in the marshes made an uproar that murdered sleep! (Emphasis added) Jurra river, flooded to the brim, brought down on its breast all manner of strange things, including stranded, sand embedded charpoys, that had been the last resting place of corpses—for Jurra was a holy river—and Verona and Pussy, who had languidly rowed about its shrunken, hot-weather dimension, now went farther than before. 295

In, In Old Madras (1913), we have another picture of rainy season and the changes it brought. Captain Mallender visited Panjeverram in search of his uncle. Though he could not find his uncle there, he was forced to stay as he met Mr. Rochfort an old acquaintance. During the period, as it was a rainy season, he saw the changes slowly setting in the nature. Here is the description of what he saw.

The rainy season still continued, though the violence of the monsoon had abated; everything in the shape of vegetation was so refreshed and resuscitated, that one might almost imagine they could see the plants sprouting, hear the sap running, and the leaves unfolding in the tropical surroundings of Panjeverram. The great banyans had renewed their youth; ferns, arums, bamboos, plantains, glistened and dripped and grew, the sun-baked yellow planes were now a vivid green, (emphasis added) dotted with lean appreciative herds, ... the land brought forth frogs. 296

In her novels, Mrs. B.M. Croker also captures the pictures of the turbulent effects of the rains as also with its vitalizing, refreshing and revivifying powers. The white man as the builder of empire had to confront many times with this kind of innumerable troubles hurled at him by this aspect of nature. Many times the Indian rains that descended unwarranted disturbed the system, which the white man had built carefully and painstakingly. The novel Angel (1901), provides the dangerous effects and damages caused by the rains. We witness the character of Philip Gascoigne, who worked as engineer in the department of public works, often pressed into service of repair of roads and rebuilding of the
bridges broken during the rains. Here is the description of damage caused by the rains and deluge.

It was the month of September in the Himalayas when the rains are heaviest, landslips frequent, and whole hillsides crumble and slide into the valley with a sound of thunder, (emphasis added) that Major Gascoigne was summoned up to Kumaon in order to cope with a series of disasters. Bridges had been destroyed by racing torrents, roads were washed away; such floods had not visited these regions for twenty years- so said the hill folk,- and traffic between the stations of Shirani and Chota Bilat was practically at an end. It was not that the roads were impassable, but that there were no roads whatever. The common route by the river (to reach the so-called staircase) was now a boiling torrent, which had risen in its fury, and torn away pieces of the great cart road, and dragged down and swallowed, walls, buttress, bridges. (Emphasis added) Under these circumstances, when troops were waiting to march, and most people were moving towards the plains, transport and traffic were paralysed, and loud was the outcry.297

The Company's Servant (1907), also shows the casualties occurred during the rainy season. Vernon, worked on the railway, as a guard. The novelist recounts the events that filled the span of four years service of Vernon. He had seen many things during the course from crossing of trains to casualties that occurred. He had seen enough of the Indian life and experience. Here is his experience of rainy season.

...in the monsoon, a deluge of rain, wild rivers in flood, and broken bridges; matters which are occasionally the cause of terrible anxiety on the southern lines. A river, may be a peaceable orderly stream, yet within twenty minutes, sudden freshet in the hills, and it is a roaring, whirling torrent, carrying down on its breast, trees, cattle, and huts. For, as all the world knows, the temper of the Water God is ever violent and hasty. (Emphasis added) 298.

In the novels of B.M. Croker we also witness the descriptions of beauty of Indian dawn, sunrise, sunset and moonlight and the starry nights. We often see her describing the moonlight picnics in several of her works, which were some times enjoyed and some times spoiled. In the works like Proper Pride (1885), A Bird of Passage (1893), “TO LET” ETC (1893), Mr. Jervis (1897), Angel (1901) The Cat's Paw (1902) Her Own People (1905), The Company's Servant (1907), Babes in the Wood (1910),
In Old Madras (1913) etc., we come across such references. Although the list is long the citations are made only from the selected ones.

Here is the description of dawn in The Company’s Servant (1907), wherein we see John Vernon working as a guard on the railway at Tani-Kul junction.

In the description we see the dawn that leaves the junction of Tani-Kul in the light of gold.

*Thin* mantle of a tropical night, still encompassed the district of Shezada in Southern India. Yet although the land wrapped in night, dawn was approaching with swift and [fast] foot steps; heralded by the whisperings [of humid] breeze, and the notes of wakening [had] appeared with a sudden flash of yellow [glimmering] along the horizon. (Emphasis added)

The magical moment arrived, there was an imperceptible pause, the curtain of dark [ness] was about to be withdrawn- what would it reveal? (Emphasis added) When shadows were followed, ...the sky became transformed into a blaze of gold there was exposed... feathery palms and towering temples... monotonous plains...

* Square brackets in the quotation show the assumptive insertions of the research scholar because of unclear Xeroxing.

In, novel In Old Madras (1913) also we see the description of morning activities in the city of Madras. Mallender who came to India stayed with the Tallboys, in the early days before he embarked upon the adventure of searching his missing uncle. Here is the description of morning activities as observed by him.

The following morning a sonorous “Five O’ clock saar” awoke Mallander from his too brief slumbers; ... The cool crisp atmosphere felt strange so did the sounds of an unknown tongue, ... A Strong cup of Neilgherry tea, and a cold tub, dispersed his drowsiness. ... through the invigorating air his spirits and energies awoke. Lumbering water-carts were already allying the red dust, and evoking a curious and unfamiliar smell of wet, and pungent earth! (Emphasis added) From all directions people were sallying out for the morning drive; portly cooks attended by obsequious coolies (carrying empty baskets), flocked towards the bazaar, pallid Europe children... to “eat the air,” which at this hour, was deliciously fresh,
the sky incredibly clear and radiant, quivering with brightness and life. At six O' clock, all Madras was astir, and everywhere was activity and bustle. (Emphasis added) ... he was now in tropics!...
banyans to the tulip trees, and tall toddy palms seemed to nod their heavy heads in languid greeting...

The opposite of sunrise is the sunset. Sunset also gets pictured in the novels of Mrs. Croker in its orange colour spreading over the world. In, *Proper Pride* (1885), we see Mrs. B.M. Croker offering the readers description of the sunset. Sir Reginald Faifax came to India after a row with his wife Alice as a result of the false certificate of marriage sent from India. In spite his attempts to convince her of his sincerity and innocence she had remained stiff. This had hurt him. During his stay at Connor he visited a lonely spot in the evening. As it was a fine and fantastic Indian evening his thoughts went back to Alice and soon he decided to be firm and no more influenced or infatuated. The setting Sunset his thoughts in to motion and he said to himself that the setting Sun had set on his folly and infatuation. The next day he would see him an altogether a different man. Here is the description of the Sunset.

As he stood on the steps of the temple, watching the crimson Sun that was slowly sinking beyond the horizon and tinting the arid plains, the distant hills, the old temple and Reginald himself with the gorgeous hues of its departing splendour. (Emphasis added) ‘That Sun’, he exclaimed, as he watched the last little red streak utterly disappear, has set on my folly and weakness...

If the above one is the description of the Sunset of the South, in *Mr. Jervis* (1897), we are given the description of the Sunset that takes place in the snow-clad Himalayas. It is a romantic experience beyond words to witness the setting Sun making the mountains motley moment by moment. When Mark Jervis was at Pela Kothi, his father’s place, he used to undertake repeated visits to the condemned cantonment, which was in the vicinity. While returning home from the condemned cantonment one evening he witnessed the Sunset. Here is what he saw.

One evening Mark descended the hill after a long and very erratic tramp; it was the hour of Sunset; he stood for a few moments captive to the influence of his surroundings- the bluish hills, the amethyst-tinted distance, the quiet smokeless bungalows, nestling among their
flower-choked verandahs, the soft yellow light flooding the entire valley, the (emphasis added) uncanny silence, a silence befitting this forsaken spot.

...

The Sun had drawn away his bright warm cloak foot by foot the grey pall of a short Indian twilight was rapidly spreading over the valley. Shadows advanced stealthily and momentarily, (emphasis added) the woods were inscrutable, and the first cry of jackal rose through the sharp hill air. 302

Here is one more description of Sunset from In Old Madras (1913). During his stay at Bonegherry estate Captain Mallender used to visit Kartairi estate owned by Mrs. Bourne. Miss. Barbie Miller also stayed there. During one of the visits he accompanied Mrs. Bourne and Miss. Barbie to the beautiful spot known as ‘The Window in the West.’ From there one could witness the beauty of Sunset. The spot offered the enchanting beauty of the setting Sun, which seemed that the Sun entered into sea. Here is the description.

...the two remained momentarily transfixed, gazing on the evergreen forests which clothed the long roll downwards, to the undulating teeming plains; steeped in all the glamour of the tropics, a world of absolute peace and plenty lay at their feet Beyond the plains, shimmering in the Sunset, shone the sea; over all, there was a peculiar quality, which is best described as radiance, and the scene, the atmosphere, and spirit of the ocean, seemed somehow to grip one’s heart. (Emphasis added) 303

We come across the depiction of the beauty of Sunset in many stories in the collection The Old Contonment and other stories (1905) also.

She also supplies the readers with descriptions of forked moon crescent, half moon, full silvery salver like moon showering silver light and enveloping the environment in glazed beauty. In, A Bird of Passage (1893), we come across the beautiful description of the moonlight. Gilbert Lisle and Miss Helen Denis climbed the hilltop, to witness some nocturnal surprise among the stars known as Mose’s Horn. Soon after witnessing it they find themselves in the moonlight. They fell in conversation about the
moon and moonlight. Their conversation about the inconstancy of the moon is full of under tones, of feministic stance. Here is the one.

As they stood gazing, ... the moon, which now rose out of the sea like a huge fire balloon! (Emphasis added)

"The moon is irresponsible out here," remarked Mr. Lisle, "she seems always to the fore."

"So much the better," replied Helen, "these Eastern nights are splendid. I wonder, by the way, why the moon has always been spoken of by the feminine gender."

"As the lady Moon? Oh! That question is easily answered:-- because she is never the same two days running"

"...

...Oh! the moon; "and gazing over at that orb, he added," I too can repeat poetry, Miss. Dennis, and this seems just a fitting place to quote.

"'Larger constellations burning--mellow moons and happy skies;

Breadths of tropic shade, and palms in clusters--knots of paradise'"

In, Her Own People (1905), also we have the description of silvery moonlight. We witness Miss. Vernoa singing melodiously and winning the applause of the Cavalhoes and others who had gathered there. After everybody's retiring Verona went towards the river Jurra. It was a cool moonlight night. The plains in the neighbourhood and the river were all laved in the silvery light of the moon. Here is the description.

It was a perfect moonlight night, and oh, what a delightful change from the noise and chatter of the days! The scene was beautiful all the landscape being outlined in silver; (emphasis added) the everyday yellow plain across the water had now a far away fairy-like effect. The silence was almost death-like; hideous cry of the hunting jackal, the scream of a night hawk,... All at once she was aware of something-a faint, distant sound... in two or three minutes a white boat rowed by one man shot into sight. As it approached, she perceived that the oarsman, whose curly hair was bare, was a sahib, for the moon shone a full dazzling light on his good looking determined face... (Emphasis added)
In the story “The Moonshine Picnic” we come across the whole community of Cheetapore assembled at Perda in order to partake and enjoy the moonlight picnic and dinner organized by Mr. Tenant. At Sundown they all left their bungalows and waited for the host in vain. As they waited in the moonlight here is the description of the one.

*It was a truly exquisite Eastern night. The moon hung above the delicate white pavilions like an enormous electric light, (emphasis added) which illuminated the beautiful, well-kept gardens, the pale faded faces of the Cheetapore ladies- yes, and even of the Cheetapore men...*³⁰⁶

We also witness her documenting the beauty of Indian night with its peculiar sounds as also with moonlight nights. *The Company’s Servant* (1907), offers the readers the beauty of Indian tropical nights. We see Vernon hearing the people talk about Rosita’s seductive beauty and rapacious nature. They all commented about him too. At the time of his being cheated by her he spent most his time in rest and sleep. Here is the description of the might at one such moment.

The hot interminable days lagged on; also stifling tropical nights, with the “zizz, zizz, zizz” of hungry poisonous insects- yet people talked of the glamour the East!- then suddenly Vernon was summoned to Tani-Kul by telegram...³⁰⁷

4.11 SYMPATHY, APATHY AND ANTIPATHY TOWARDS INDIA

The increase of interest towards the Orient among the public in Europe, in the nineteenth century, owed much to the publication of enormous body of literature dealing with the content pertaining to the Orient in general and India in particular. Such literature dealing with details and various vignettes of India and Indian life became source of information for the people who desired to travel across this country. They entered the Indian sub-continent with this kind of knowledge based on books. Finding themselves into this alien yet alluring land with its battling vastness, multiplicity of languages, practices, cultures and religion they exhibit their response, which is often tinged with ambiguity.

³⁰⁶

³⁰⁷
Some times they also felt attracted and influenced by various factors like scenic beauty, sense of superiority enjoyed, and the endless opportunities the land offered from hunting to hilarious romances among the Himalayas, some times they also felt afraid and abhorrent towards India because of innumerable inconveniences, like heat, dust, disease dangers and unexpected death that waylaid the white man at the street corner. Such elements of desires, delusions, discoveries, and disillusionment leading to detachment and allurement inseparable involvement leading to ultimate settlement are pictured in various novel of Mrs. B.M. Croker. As a novelist who “has to grasp and present the reality of so vast, varied and ancient a land as India, ambiguity is likely to become an inevitable characteristic of the whole picture” this kind of all pervasive and ever present vastness and diversity leaves her characters in the lurch as to their opinions, desires and decisions which emerge from inferences and peripheral understanding of this country. This is evident in her works. We witness this kind of attitude of sympathy and apathy and sometimes antipathy towards India, Indians and Indian elements. In almost all of her works we come across this idea. Instances from representative works are presented here.

We come across the element of desire to know India and Indian life, love towards this country and sympathetic stance towards the natives in the works like Mr. Jervis (1897), Angel (1901), The Cat's-Paw (1902), Babes in the Wood (1910), In Old Madras (1913), and Quicksands (1915) etc. Mr. Jervis (1897), shows the love of the white man for India. Senior Jervis, took immense fascination for India, married an Indian woman after the death of his first wife leaving his son Mark with his brother-in-law, the uncle of the boy, and had settled in India. His son Mark Jervis came to India with an intention of meeting him. He saw his father settled well at “Pela Kothi” in the beautiful landscape of the Himalayas. When he met him the old man was very weak and cadaverous due to illness. He spoke of many things about his past and pals in a loquacious manner. Then he asked his son to stay with him at that place only. But the young man did not concede to his father’s proposal and emphatically said that the old
man must accompany him to England where he would be better soon. But
the old man objected to this arrangement. He said that he had spent the
formative years of his life and youthful days of many memories and
adventures in this land he was emotionally bound to this country and it
was not possible for him to get severed from the bond and to get settled in
England. Here are his words of love for India expressed at several place in
the novel again and again.

"I don't want to see England," he answered peevishly. "India is my
country, it has got into my blood. I have spent my bright days out
here, and here I'll spend my dark ones. (Emphasis added) My days
are dark indeed, but they will soon be over, and so much the
better... 309

While throwing light on glamour that is thrown of east on the
westerners, the ineffable attraction that bound Dr. Fleming to Madras
Presidency that has already been discussed in the previous pages, from
The Cat's-Paw (1902), foregrounds the attachment of the white man for
Indian forests as an official. We are introduced to the character of Mr..
Evans who worked in the Department of Forests in the Company Sirkar.
He loved Indian forests, having worked for and among them, as if the very
trees in his nursery were his children. His knowledge of several parts of
the forests and the individual trees in them really baffled Miss. Ferrars
when she joined the family of the Evanses. Here is the description of his
knowledge and love of forests.

Mr. Evans was deeply versed in the lore of his district, ... the names
of the different plants and trees and birds ... (Emphasis added) a
tamarind... a sheshum, a peepul ... a teak; and with anecdotes and
little stories of the villages and "topes," rivers and temples, ... he
had been a forest officer for nearly twenty years, ... (Emphasis
added) fond of his profession of his children, the trees, and his
nurseries of tender saplings.

... I know that we could not get on comfortably without them. What
about the rain fall?" he asked; "and what about fuel? I have my
hands full, as you will soon see. I prevent and stamp out fires.
(Emphasis added) I look after my nurseries of young trees; plant,
fence, lop and cut down. Many of my ancient oaks, I am as much

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India was land of love for some whites like Vernon who found bread, shelter and situation here after being fired out of the family and home for an accused crime of selling the miniatures of ancestors wherein he had practically no role, as we witness in *The Company's Servant* (1907). Vernon who came to India empty handed secured a situation in the railways as a guard. Ever since his arrival he suffered loneliness and inferiority complex. As days went by the former melted and he developed attachment with the land perhaps a sense of gratitude too, to it, but the latter remained a part of his personality we see him indulging in moments of rumination at various points in the novel about his past and present predicament. In the one instanced below we see him expressing his attachment with the land.

At times his twenty-one years of home life seemed remote and dim, a vision, a mirage that was gradually fading; *... between England and himself not one link remained.* (Emphasis added) The weekly mail brought him no letters, *... "I am, as a dead man, out of mind-and who cares? India is my home; here I will live and die. What do I owe to name or family? I am my own ancestor. I must strive to hold up my head, be independent, and make the best of things."* (Emphasis added)

In the same novel we witness the whites men's inseparable attachment with India. Gojar, a white man (Algernon Craven) having fallen a prey to *Ganja*, lived low in the bazaar, masquerading as a native. Vernon was very friendly with him by reason of his saving from being drowned in a mysterious tank. After remaining in the Blue Hills Vernon met Gojar at his residence on hearing that he was seriously ill. After meeting him in the filthy place in the company of a native woman struggling hard with nervousness Vernon requested Gojar to do away with Ganja and go back to home. Gojar's reaction to this proposal of Vernon is brimming with his love and attachment with this land. Here is what he said to Vernon.

"Give it up, give it up!" repeated Gojar, "my good, well-meaning youth, no; *I have no desire to return to the waking life, the life of..."
home. Here I live where the gods reign— in a world of beauty, and I am content. (Emphasis added) A seat in the parish church, and on the bench, a position in the county— no — a tweed suit and leather leggings, would not accord with my twelve chillums a day! I am not anxious to hear about politics, poaching, and the price of turnips per ton. (Emphasis added) I will never cross the Krishna and the Kali-pani, but you will— ...

The theme of attraction and love of India gets alluded to repeatedly in, *In Old Madras* (1913). In the novel Colonel Tallboy, his wife Fanny Tallboy, Lena Villars, Mrs. Bourne, Mrs. Brander, Miss Ada Sim, Miss Barbie Miller, General Beamish, Senior Mallender and other characters express their love for India on various occasions. Miss. Ada desired to visit India, after accumulating enough knowledge through extensive reading. Her pressing desire to see India makes her even to sell her ornaments and embark. But after coming here she was very much disillusioned and faced many difficulties. Here is her recounting before Captain Mallender how she came to India in spite of incurring the wrath of her aunt.

... I had always longed to see India, and devoured every book relating to the East that I could lay my hands on, (emphasis added) and a girl I knew, had a married sister in Poona, and read me delightful letters. Then when I went for a holiday to an old school fellow, I met a lady who lived out here, and who took a fancy to me... 

"..."

"...and Mrs. Powell, who was returning to India, said, that if ever I could scrape up the passage money... she would give me a ripping time." (Emphasis added)

"...

*I got this idea firmly fixed in my mind and worked for it like a slave. I sold some old jewellery and bought things, ... (emphasis added) and obtained a passage to Bombay, ...

In, *Quicksands* (1915), also we come across a white lady’s immense interest in India. We see Miss. Eva Lingard traveling to India under the care of Mrs. Hayes Billington in order to join her brother Mr. Ronald Lingard who worked in Secunderbad. Soon after her arrival into India the
girl stayed with the Billingtons at Silliram. Then knowing that his sister had been in India and stayed with a divorce he rushed to the place and asked his sister to get packed immediately in order to follow him to Secunderbad. The evening before the day of departure Mrs. Billington invited Eva to her room and narrated her story of first arrival to India after getting married to Mr. Robert de Lacy who was much older than her. Her description shows that she was immensely interested to see India, which she thought to be a land of her dreams. She also said before the girl that she enjoyed her say and status here. Here are her words.

... He was fifteen years older than I was, and had a fine appointment in Northern India. As his furlough was nearly ended we were married after a month's acquaintance. *I was not in love with him but in love with the idea of going to India- always the land of my dreams-* (emphasis added) also thankful to be released from a detestable stepmother and a hateful country groove. *India enchanted me; in her I was neither disappointed nor disillusioned-* (emphasis added) but then as the wife of a wealthy civilian I saw the country from its best aspect. I had number of servants, horses and crowds of appreciative friends. We entertained...

In many other novels also we come across such characters that display their desire to see India for one or the other reasons.

It is rather curious a fact that for some Europeans Orient was not simply the “other” as they conceived it in the infancy of their entry into it. In due course of time they were drawn towards it and became a part of the so-called “other” or the “orient”. It no longer remained, to quote Edward Said, “a place of pilgrimage... spectacle or *tableau vivant...*”. On the contrary they, at least some, identified themselves, with it, having got attached to it by various ways such as birth, position or pedigree. Of this ramification of white man’s response to India and Indian life viz: India as home of permanent settlement not because of his mere marriage with an Indian woman and consequent meanness that stuck to his shoulders but a sheer sense of attachment and allurement. “And a close reading of Anglo-Indian History and fiction reveals, some more reasons still why India could, in some cases prove to be home or at least another home for an Englishman.” In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across many instances of such characters who made India their home even
after their retirement from the service. And for this decision of theirs they also come forward with their own articulated opinions.

In, *Proper Pride* (1885), we see the white man’s desire to stay back in India even after the retirement. We see Sir. Reginald came to India and got attach to the fifth Hussars. At that time Miss. Mason, the daughter of a retired commissariat officer who had chosen to stay in India, (at Cheetapur), complaining the atmosphere of England unsuitable to him who had stayed out here for thirty and odd years, had taken fascination for him and made many advances in vain. She remained a hurt cat and therefore took revenge on him by sending a false marriage certificate to his wife. Here is the description about her father.

...an old Commissariat Officer, who survived to enjoy his off-reckonings and settled down at Cheetapore. After thirty-eight years of India, he could not stand England he said; one winter there would finish him. (Emphasis added) 317

In the story “The Little Brass God” we see the Tilleys on the verge of taking pension and returning home after twenty-five years’ service. Mrs. Ann Jane Tilley had married Mr. Gay throne Tilley when she was a girl of twenty-two. Being a shrewd and clever young woman she proved an excellent wife and had been the leading spirit of the community at whatever station she found herself. At the time of returning she felt it rather difficult to quit India and cleave herself from her acquaintances and go away to England. It was an unwanted thing to her. Here are her words to Julia.

“Julia between you and me- of course, I would not breathe this to other people- I hate going. It seems to be the end of all things. I would give ten years of my life for another two years of India. I detest England! Think of the climate, the frogs, the house keeping, and the servants! Hush!” (Emphasis added) 318

In, *In Old Madras* (1913), also we come across to this motif of India as home or earned home at many places. Captain Mallender, who came to India searching for his uncle, during his stay with the Tallboys, met Mrs. Brander, a niece of Mrs. Fanny Tallboys. Mrs. Brander came to know of
Mallender's errand in India. Soon they fell in conversation and she made several suggestions to Mallender when she also remarked about many men who chose India for their home in the evening of their life. Here is what she said to him.

"...I shall write to Tom tonight, and tell him to dredge his memory, and try if he can recall any eccentric English men, who live out here, and lie low; not loafers, but others who have a little money, and their own very particular reasons for not returning home; or who simply worship the East, for being the East, and cannot tear themselves away from the Sun. (Emphasis added)"

In the same novel, when Captain Mallender visited Wellunga, he met an old retired general. General Beamish had retired from the service of the Company Sirkar. Taking ineffable attraction for this country he had settled here. His settlement has been commented by the butler also at the dak bungalow of Wellunga. But during the conversation later with the old man Mallender heard him speaking of his settlement. The old man said that his was not the singular case. Many officers and government servants including women settled here living quietly unheard by the white community. Therefore it would be difficult for Mallender to search his uncle. Here are his words spoken before Captain Mallender.

"...I funked going home myself! (Emphasis added) But that was different. I had spent the best of my life out here, and the country would not release me. (Emphasis added) You may think me a queer sort of lunatic, but my case is not uncommon; quite a number of old retired officers, and officials, remain in India after their work is done; they are out of touch with England and life is easier here. (Emphasis added) You find them in the Doon, and in parts of the Himalayas, in the Neilgherries, the Shevaroys, and not men alone,—but women too."  

In the same novel we see Mrs. Bourne who had settled here, maintaining a coffee estate and dairy at Kartairi after the death of her husband.

The novel Quicksands (1915), also recounts the theme of India has a home for a matronly lady. Miss. Eva joined her brother Mr. Ronald Lingard who worked at Secunderbad. In the early days of her arrival she
stayed with the Soames. Mrs. Soames took her to the club. There she met other ladies of the station. When she met Mrs. Lakin, an elderly lady who had spent nearly more than a quarter a century in India. During the dialogue with the experienced woman Miss. Eva came to know many things about the Anglo-Indian life in the past and present as also her unswerveable attachment with India, and the life here. The matronly lady said that she was not of the first generation in her family to come to this country and having spent major and memorable portion of life in India having suited in all respects to the life here it was difficult for her to imagine her life in England where she felt like a fish out of water. Here is what the woman said to Eva during the dialogue.

You see I was born out here, as were my father and mother before me. We come of families who have made their home in India for many generations- educated of course in England, they all return like homing pigeons- to the Army, to the Civil Service, and to many other posts. India draws them- (emphasis added) they all hear the East a- calling.

...If we cannot stand it, we will return and settle down in the hills. I can see us in England. Probably established in some Landon suburb, in a little house, with smoky chimneys, the boiler always out of order, two servants- saying they've too much to do, no interests, and none of our accustomed comforts. My! I don't like to think of it! I have heard such tales from friends who have gone back to England, and find the change awful, especially the climate."

(Emphasis added)

As also with the above citation in many other places in the book we see Miss. Eva and other characters expressing their attachment with India and their desire to settle here.

As has already been remarked that the extra ordinary vastness of India baffled and remained far from the Europeans' imagination and understanding. Even a person like Lord George Nathaniel Curzon (1899-1905), who worked as a Viceroy of India, who was immensely interested and who knew more of India than most of his contemporaries once said, "The East is a university in which the scholar never takes a degree." 322
spite of their longer stay here and repeated attempts to participate sympathetically and comprehend the Indianness and India they could not penetrate deep into it. Many of them, because of their Euro-centric thinking, self-centeredness and book-based ideas, hated this land, the people here and their practices. In the novels of Mrs. B.M. Croker we come across a host of characters that hated India and articulate the idea verbatim. Their hatred stems from various points of view of India such as it is a land of regrets, disillusionment, disappointment, inconveniences and above all lacking in even the basic civic amenities.

In, Mr. Jervis (1897), the theme of white man’s hatred for India gets treated. We see Mark Jervis coming to India in the company of Captain Waring. Soon after their arrival in India they went to Poona to meet Major Byng. He was surprised to find Captain Waring in India once again and hence asked him what was it that brought him back to India. In the query his hatred of India may be witnessed. Here is the conversation that ensued between them

“Thought I had gone home- sold out and was stone broke. But here I am, you see, on my legs- again”

“Delighted to hear it,” with a swift glance at Waring’s well-to-do air and expensive-looking clothes. “Sit down, my dear boy,” he cried cordially, “sit down and have a cheroot, and tell me all about yourself and what has brought you back again to the land of regrets? Is it tea, coffee, or gold?” (Emphasis added)\(^\text{323}\)

If, for Major Byng India was a land of regrets, for Miss. Pamela Ferrars, in The Cat’s-Paw (1902) her stay at the palace of Royapetta as a tuitor to the royal children seemed a bad dream. During her stay there she felt the palace in spite of its massive masonry work and majesty she felt it dark and the people therein dirty and lazy. All the while she felt the movements of the members of the palace mysterious. It was during her stay there the festival of divali was celebrated and also a grand nautch was arranged. The supreme dancers from Tripura were invited to the palace to exhibit their talent. In spite of the excellence of the dance she feels it disappointing. This kind of response towards Indian art stems from
her ignorance towards the meaning of the mudras employed by the dancers and the hatred she had harboured towards the people of palace for more than one reason. Here is her opinion about the dance.

... I found the nautch excessively disappointing a few shuffling steps to and fro, a simpering and posturing, a waving aloft of shapely bangled arms, all to the nasal twanging of a hideous accompaniment; ...³²⁴

After facing a chain of difficulties at the palace she came to the home of the Dalrymples. There she felt quite cozy and safety. Here are her words.

As I sat in Mrs. Dalrymple's charming room opening into the verandah, and felt the cool air blowing up the ghaut, and saw her familiar knick-knacks and photos, and the dear dogs, and her still dearer self, I felt inclined to imagine that the whole of those last days at Royapetta, the whole of my stay at Royapetta, was a bad dream, or I had died down there, and this was heaven! My brain was in a strange, over-wrought condition; the pupils of my eyes had distended; my nerves were a thing of the past. (Emphasis added)³²⁵

In, The Company's Servant (1907), we come across the element of apathy towards India and Indian life because of lack of civic amenities in this country. Vernon (Jack Talbot) worked on the railway as a guard at Tani-Kul junction in South India. After his father's sudden death he fell into the hands of his unsympathetic uncle. He was not an intelligent chap in the school. This was really loathsome a fact to his uncle. He failed repeatedly and to make matters worse Jack wounded his uncle's favourite horse and got into a scrape with the family miniatures. All these joined to his expulsion from the home to India. In India he passed under a false name of Vernon as a guard. After some time a friend of his Mr. Breakspeare recognized him and talked to him- on the station. After reaching his room he fell in conversation with another friend and colleague Mr. Pascoe and narrated the story of Vernon before the latter. Pascoe's words go to show the fact that he was one of those who hated India for the kind of inconveniences that were hurled upon the whites. Here are the bits of conversation.
"I should not fancy it at all- I'd shoot myself. Though I was born out here, I loathe the... East, where a fellow can't have his shirts properly glazed, or get on the telephone- no club- no theatres. (Emphasis added) I say, are you going to take this job up?" and Mr. Pascoe slowly turned...

...If he is steady, he will be promoted, and bloom it into a burly station-master! If not- he will be under. I have heard my father on the subject... like lots of our country-folk out here, where it is so easy to be lost- you know what I mean-lost in the bazaars, where food is cheap; guise is easy- then one day a little extra opium, mind it's all over!" 

In the same novel we see the character of Mr. Carol Moccato, a retired person who leaked the official secrets to another nation. He bagged many papers containing official secret documents and was about to go away to England. When he was on the journey the trains got delayed and he grew restless and criticized Indian life and the system of working of various departments including the railways. Here is what he said to Vernon at the station Bowen Villay.

"I wonder you don't want to get away from all this," remarked the traveler, suddenly walking to the door and spreading his hands towards the yellow plain, which was beginning to lose its shadow of brownish purple.

"Please God, I shall never see another sunrise in this country!"

"Oh, there are worse places," said Vernon following him to the platform.

"No doubt, that is what the souls in Purgatory say to one another. But worse places than the inferno known as India- by Jove, I don't think so. Everything half Eastern, half make-shift. Look at your disgraceful break downs!" (Emphasis added)

"Those sudden rises would puzzle the finest engineers in the world. We do our best."

"... It's not alone your crawling trains, with their lying timetables." ... what about your post-office? Why, in some districts its positively farcical! And your preposterous opera-buffe police force, all bribes and bluster. I can tell you, I've been out here twenty years off and on, and I know India. Now I have ploughed my furrow,
and I'm going home- home- by this confoundedly late train- to enjoy a well-earned rest". (Emphasis added)

If the instances charged with severe hatred towards India cited above are the expressions of those characters who came and lived here and got disillusioned by whatever they felt against their tastes, there are instances of characters who never visited India yet hated her sheerly on the basis of the information they gathered from others or books, such as the one we meet in, Quicksands (1915). In the novel when Miss. Eva proposed her plan of going to India to join her brother Ronnie her aunt Wilhelmina Lingard detested the idea. At this point Eva speaks of the hatred towards India that her aunt had cherished in her heart. Here is the description.

...I had frequently heard her express a horror of India- a country that, in her opinion, was full of second-rate people, fast, disreputable women and impecunious gambling men; no, there would be no gorgeous East for me, (emphasis added) and I could not reasonably expect to see Ronnie for three long years.

CONCLUSION:

Thus from the discussion carried down hitherto it goes to show the fact that the responses of the white persons about India and the native life are full of ambivalent attitude. If in the case of some characters the pendulum of response swings to the side of sympathy, love and attachment so much so that they show an unshakable love with India to settle here down even after their retirement, in the case of some other characters we witness inveterate hatred for India and the native life. For some others such as Malcolm Haig (Her Own People) and Dr. Collins, and others (Babes in the Wood) the real India remains beyond the understanding of the whites of in spite of their sympathetic and sincere attempt. Malcolm's words spoken before Miss. Verona Chandos, in Her Own People (1905), when she tried to ply him with numerous queries about India before her journey to India in order to meet and see her own people who stayed out here. When she tried to rake his knowledge of India, during the dinner,
here is the conversation wherein what he said, of India is full of resonance of what Lord Curzon said of India.

"I am truly sorry my information appears so meager, but the truth is that India- real India- is to the European a closed book!" (Emphasis added)

“Oh, no surly not!”, she protested warmly. “Only stupid people say so!”

“Well I have been out in the East seven years, and I know precious little of the natives, although I speak their language. I was born there, too, and sent home as a kid. My father was a judge in the Punjab for thirty years. Shall I tell you what he said?

“Oh, pray do!”

“That we Europeans are like drops of oil on a great ocean of water, and will never penetrate or mix!” (Emphasis added) 329

Quite apart from the instance we come across many cross references to the element of hatred towards India, Indians and Indianness and the white man's inability to get immersed into the main stream of Indian life in many other works like In Old Madras (1913) To LET ETC (1893), Babes in the Wood (1910), The Old Contonment and Other Stories (1905), A Bird of Passage (1893), Odds and Ends (1919) etc.

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