CHAPTER VI

LIFE AND SOCIETY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY DECCAN
The Nizam's territories comprising the present day Telengana, Northern Karnataka and the Marathwada regions, have a rich cultural and artistic heritage spanning over a period of 2000 years of recorded history. This region witnessed the rise and fall of many dynasties and absorbed shocks and transformations into its characteristic personality. During the pre-Islamic period specially under the hegemony of the Satavahanas, the Vakatakas, the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Yadavas and the Kakatiyas, the religious systems and practices took a concrete shape and became generally accepted religious usages. The unquestioned popularity of the Puranas and the Smriti laws which paved the way for the Smartha form of worship was experienced in this region. The unorthodox religions such as Buddhism and Jainism gained their footing in this region. At one time Buddhism challenged the very survival of the Brahmanical practices of Hinduism. But it was gradually absorbed into the main fabric of Hinduism, Jainism, though less popular, survived through the vagaries of religious activities. It appeared although Hinduism was unable to withstand the organised efforts launched by Buddhism and Jainism, it was quick in counter-acting through its revived and reinvigorated monumental self-advertisement. Saivism gained precedence as against Vaishnavism.
The social structure, while adhering to the Vedic Chaturvarna practice, became more dynamic and flexible due to the diversification of professions and trade and the growth of industrial arts and crafts. This period also witnessed the absorption of many foreign bodes into the Indian society. The singular contribution of this region is in the realm of art and architecture. The far famed cave monuments of Ajanta and Ellora have wielded a considerable influence on the art forms of not only India but also over a major part of Asia. All the major artistic and architectural innovations in the Deccan have a lasting impact in the rest of the country. The monumental works of the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Kakatiyas and the Yadavas reflect the grandiose of their pomp and glory and eloquently advocate the regional personality.

The life and society in the Deccan in its general tenor and composition underwent a major change due to the advent of the Islamic rule by about the beginning of the 14th century. The situation then was very clear. Religious activities backed by politics spearheaded by the conqueror on the conquered, there seem to have been coercion and a considerable amount of resistance from the native Hindus. Whatever the physical and psychological situation may be the reality was the emergence of yet another powerful
religion backed by the conqueror's sword, equally broad based and the one which had a large following in Asia and Europe. But in terms of its religious practices, Islam was diametrically opposed to Hinduism, though the ethical and human values advocated by both the religions did not differ much. Therefore, the religious history of the subsequent period is characterised by the interaction and assimilation and polarisation of these two major religions of India. Hinduism also became broad based thanks to the teachings and writings of the saint-philosophers like Gnaneshwara, Sant Eknath, Namdev and Basavesvara. Similarly a large number of saints and philosophers of Islam from Central Asia, Turkistan and other Arab countries came to the Deccan and moulded the minds of many Muslims. Another school of Muslim religious thought, the Sufism, provided almost an identical philosophy between Hinduism and Islam. Thus the Muslim religious institutions, with royal patronage and popular beliefs also became deep rooted on the Deccan soil. All the important religious sects within the broad frame work of Islam flourished in the Deccan though the Sunnis were in large majority.

The advent of Islam brought forth major changes in the society and the way of life in the Deccan. Hinduism, true to its Catholic nature, accepted Islam as a faith.
accomplice and as a way of life. But at the same time the Bhakti Movement brought within the Hindufold all sections of the Hindu populace which adopted the Bhagavata Dharma. Whereas the Muslim rulers encouraged the Muslims and the Hindu converts by appointing them in government offices. It is during this period a large number of Muslim statesmen and military generals were employed by the rulers of the Deccan principalities such as the Bahamanis, the Nizam Shahis, the Barid Sahis, the Kutub Shahis etc. In course of time, the Hindus and the Muslims started living together and no town or village was without the intermingling of these two communities. The customs and manners further underwent changes. The method of warfare, the weapons of offence and defence, the military architecture have been updated depending upon the military requirements and the development of artillery defences.

With the advent of the British rule in India, a new political and social phenomenon presented itself during the eighteenth century. The Nizam's territories came in contact with the British because of their friendly relations. It was during the first half of the nineteenth century Meadows Taylor was exposed to the ethos of the Deccan people. Before any attempt is made to reconstruct the life and society in the Deccan as envisioned by
Meadows Taylor imperson and also as reflected in his writings, it is also necessary to find out the other sources of information on this subject. It may be pointed out here that the earlier writings of the European travellers in the form of travelogues romanticised India as a land of Gold and Jewels, Maharajas and Palaces, and Temples and Mosques. But it is during the 18th and 19th centuries, specially in the northern parts of the Deccan, that the Britishers began to see something of real India.

There are a large number of letters and reports which are widely scattered and found in some Archival Collections like the Andhra Pradesh (State Archives), the National Archives, New Delhi, and the Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay. "The Hyderabad Affairs" also provide valuable information on various aspects of the Deccan. However, a study of Taylor's works for a correct understanding and appreciation of the life and society is absolutely necessary. The nineteenth century ethos of the Deccan are graphically delineated in Taylor's works. As stated earlier, Deccan has a long and exciting cultural heritage as seen in the art works of Ajanta and Ellora, the mosques and mausoleus and also the soul stirring poetry and discourses of the saint philosophers of the medieval Deccan.
Though Taylor was born in England, he spent major part of his active life, from the very beginning of his career till his retirement in India specially in the Deccan. True to his extraordinary sense of perception of everything that he saw and experienced due to his close contact with the native life and manners at the impressionable age of fifteen, he fully utilised the opportunities thrown open to him. Sir William Hunter observes that he was a "a man of rare literary excellence who gave his whole life and leisure to Indian subjects."

His pride in speaking a chaste variety of Hindustani mystified many of the contemporary Englishmen. Most of them had picked up a rather vulgar variety of the native tongue from their domestic and whatever little of the language they spoke was merely functional and sufficient for that purpose. They could not imagine a blue blooded Englishman learning the refinement and the graces of a native to the. In fact it was a bit of a surprise for many that "Taylor" had learnt the proper use of the language in provincial areas where he lived which was far from the metropolitan centres where Hindustani was employed not only for cultured interaction among the native aristocrats but also for the creative writing. It was only in
in exotic places like Delhi, Lucknow or Hyderabad that
the language had acquired a certain elegance all its
own. Fortunately Taylor was able to secure a commission
in the army of the Nizam of Hyderabad through the good
officers like Sir Charles Metcalfe, which provided him
with ample opportunities of getting thoroughly acquainted
with the Deccan style of living with all its aristocratic
veneer and the touch of the "Nawabi" or the refined way
of life.

Though his romances are written in England, he
often reproduces in them the flavour of cultured Indian
conversation by using proper forms of address and oriental
modes of expression. He enjoyed his life in Hyderabad and
was fond of mixing with local gentry. "I was often asked,
"he says in his autobiography, to sit down with them with
their carpets were spread and their attendants brought
hookahs." The result of Taylor's free association with the
Indian gentry was that he got a deep insight into Indian
life.

Taylor's efforts to project the life and society
in the Deccan through his varied literary works should be
viewed more rationally. It is possible that he succeeded
in providing a cultural break through in interpreting
India and her people through his own countrymen. He seemed to be well equipped to do this job due to the situation in which he was placed as well as the personal gifts of a rare creative genius. "I felt", he says in his autobiography, referring to his life in Sorapur, "I was gaining more and more real knowledge of native life and character, under circumstances that fall to the lot of very few Englishmen."²

The character of Cyril Brandon appears to be an idealised self-portrait of Taylor himself when he says "I wish him to be distinguished from those who having no sympathy with the people they rule over are haughty or supercilious uncourteous in address and demeanour forbidding and scorning confidence entrenched behind native clerks and ministerial officers and rarely seeing with their own eyes or hearing with their own ears."³

The above statement holds good as far as Taylor was concerned. They contain historical names and also give full and vivid details of peoples and places. Any number of examples can be cited. While describing the weekly market scene at Shahagunj he writes, "At the weekly markets held there every Friday in the year all produce of the country found - cattle and sheep, grain condiments of all kinds, cotton and sofflower in their seasons, beeswax,
honey and gums from the forest bought in by the wild tribes, who lived in them. Clothes of all kinds native and English some English hardware, and copper and brass vessels made by workman in the town and villages about. These with extensive stalls of sweetmeat and toy sellers, vendors of shoes and sandals of parched rice and pulse, a few small goldsmiths and money exchangers, shoemakers, bangle sellers and women with hawks of cotton yarn made up a motley but interesting assemblance of articles for sale, chilie, the rich perfume of flowers, fruits and vegetables mingled pleasantly with all.

Thus passages after passages can be chosen from his works, which suggest his intimate knowledge of Indian people. But at the same time Taylor cannot be accredited as genuine on everything he wrote. He had his own limitations in as far as the Hindu mythology and the ancient literary works such as Mahabharatta and Ramayana. We notice that he refers to Rama and Laxmana as the popular heroes of Mahabharut. Taylor seem to have been more concerned in idealising the places, people and some mythological incidents and with an effort to provide an effective rapport and strong bondage between his own people and the people of India. When it comes to harsh realities as for instance the British encounter in India during 1857 he did not hesitate to say that it was a fight between the
forces of civilization and those of savagery of the Indian rebellion. He forgets for a moment all his regard and esteem for the people of great antiquity.

Taylor’s writings do not suggest any denigration towards Hinduism and Islam. In his other novels Tara and Seeta, he highlighted the influence of Hinduism and Islam on the minds of the people. While dealing with mixed marriages (inter-marriages and conversions and the resultant spiritual conflicts). Taylor was doubtful about the real change of faith along with the change of heart. The case in question is about Tara who after marrying Pazal, embraces Islam. Here Taylor tries to impress upon the reader that the religious ethos that a Hindu or a Muslim had imbibed hardly vanish and thus the deep rooted religious culture comes to the surface.

Taylor’s views seem to be identical with the contemporary thinking. Rev. Mr. Kies, a German missionary, whom Taylor refers in his autobiography says, “His experience led him to believe that there were great numbers in many parts who were really dissatisfied with their own Hindustan. Yet lacked courage to break through the trammels of caste and separate themselves from Brahmanical influence. That eventually the Christian faith would prevail he did not doubt.”
There is no doubt that just as his fellowmen Taylor also perceived things in India through western eyes and their value judgements. But Taylor stands apart for he never passed any hasty judgement. On the other hand he took pains to gauge the real essence of Indian, howsoever it was strange and unfamiliar to him. At times he did not hesitate to highlight the darker side of India as for instance thuggee and various other forms of crime. He was more concerned about portraying the higher values of life which he penpictures from the entire gamut of Indian society, Hindu as well as Muslims.

One may feel that Taylor was idealistic in projecting the nineteenth century peccan society and its life because it looked totally anachronistic at that time. But it is not totally irrelevant even at that time. He was convinced about the validity and usefulness of mixed marriages as it was based on his personal knowledge of happiness as seen in his own father-in-law Palmer's family. For instance Taylor visualised a phenomenon of mixed marriages where the Hindu and the Muslim cultures and the Muslim-Hindu and Christian cultures could meet. Secondly, he seemed to have been more anxious to remove artificial barriers among these communities. On the other hand his effort was to project more of human values.
A synoptic picture of the life and society in the Deccan during the 19th century has been reconstructed on the basis of the works of Taylor. It will be seen that Taylor grasped the essence of the life and ethos of the people of the Deccan. Though Taylor looked somewhat idealistic when he emphasised on mixed marriages, the fact remains that not many English women were ready to marry their menfolk who were serving in far off colonial territories, completely cut off from the civilised world. An average Britisher, for that matter knew very little about India. Whatever they knew, was not complimentary to India. Therefore, several British officers and military personnel married Indian women. Hindus as well as Muslims from the aristocratic families and gained social acceptability because of their superior position as rulers of India. It may, however, be noted that the western civilization did not have much impact in the Nizam's territories, because of its backwardness and also for its not being directly administered by the British. An attempt has been made in the following pages to supplement Taylor's picturisation of the life and society in the Deccan.

Food:

Muslims and Christians were by and large non-vegetarians. As Muslims were the rulers the upper classes
took pleasure in eating non-vegetarian food. Fish, hen, dear, eggs, fowl was eaten by them. The Hindus avoid specially beef as cow has been sacr ' to them. The lower classes of Hindus and some high Rajputs eat animal food except the beef, but not as common diet. On the other hand we find the Jains, Brahmans were strictly vegetarians. Onion, carrot, turnip was also excluded. Drink was not so common among Hindus or the lower classes. The use of Bhung and Ganja was exceptional.

**Dress:**

As far as dress is concerned there was no uniformity. The village cultivator wears simple clothes - a dhoti, a jacket (angarkha) which serves the purpose of both a shirt and a coat and a turban in the cold season. Very often carries a blanket (kambal) around his shoulder. Whereas we find that Muslim we gaudy and colourful clothes. During the post mutiny period fez cap and sherwani took the place of the turban and angarkha. The dress of the village woman was impressive and very simple. The saree, so highly admired by Europeans and the choli (a breast cover) were worn by all types of Hindu females. Whereas the Muslim ladies had a petticoat and scarf in place of the saree. But the choli was common to both. Gradually we find that this type of dress was giving
way in favour close trousers and dupatta. The dhoti was worn by adult males in rural and urban areas. The peasant as well as the lower class people wore a shorter dhoti especially for making the dhoti a fit wear for manual work, its front pleats were drawn up between the legs and tucked behind. The Muslim wear sherwani, trouser and fez cap. Whereas the Christians had their short coat and trousers and Parsis with long coat and cap or turban.

There were varieties of turbans depending upon the caste or tribe to which the wearer belonged. The 'Nustalik' was a very small turban of the finest muslin which fitted closely to the head and was used as the court dress at Hyderabad. The material of its clothing consisted usually of cotton, but silk was used to some extent by the higher classes. Hindus adopted a narrow pyajama and a short jacket and the long coat reached below the knee with the buttons to the right. While a similar coat for the Mahomedans had the buttons to the left. The Mahomedans wore an inner coat of medium length and their pyajamas were wide.

The general clothing of the Hindu females consisted of a 'sari' of 8 or 9 yards and a short choli or sleeved bodice, reaching the waist covering both the back and the
breasts, the ends tied in front. The 'sari' wore by them was of course according to their taste, with jari borders. It had two breadthwise borders (padars) at the two ends, each decorated more than the other. Women of the Maratha allowed the 'sari' to dangle from the waist straight like a skirt with pleats clustered in front and drew its and which covered the bosom and the back over the head. On the other hand the Brahmin women with the hind pleats tucked into the waist at the back centre, whereas the Mohomedan females wore 'pyajama', a short sleeved bodice covered with a light Muslim jacket or a saree covering both head and body.

In Hyderabad state dress was sherwani and trousers. Even government servant and the non-Muslims, on the dresses at their free will, and hot by compulsion. Everyday possibly tried to imitate the dress which formed a part of the social life of the times. This was the impact of Muslim culture on the pattern of clothing. Several Hindus considered it a privilege and tried to copy Muslim dress and was difficult to identify or distinguish between Hindus and Muslims.
Customs and manners:

Meadows Taylor is right when he tells that both Hindus and Muslims differ in many respects. Hindu is cheerful, social and in most part they are amiable whereas the Muslims are proud, reserved, forward, yet polite. He also describes their manners. He writes that Muslim eat their meals on table using forks and knives, whereas Hindus use their fingers. The position of women was most deplorable on the following grounds: a) As a daughter a woman lived under her father, b) As a wife under her husband, c) And as a widow under the care of oldest son.

Both the Hindus as well as Muslims treated her as an inferior person.

The pardah system:

During the Nizam's regime "pardah" system was prevalent in higher classes. The growing sense of insecurity encouraged "pardah" system. To quote John Law, "Mohomedan women were strictly seduced and are seldom, if ever, allowed to become "beasts of burden". Travel the state from end to end and you will not find a Mahomedan woman showing her face, much less working in fields and carrying on her back a load that would make a mule stagger and cause a pack horse to show impatience." Again William
Barton writes that "pardah is strict in Hyderabad, but the Nizams unmarried daughters are exempt from its rules.\textsuperscript{10}

The position of women in the Deccan calls for a detailed discussion. Women of lower classes mixed freely with outsiders, observed no purdah and worked as labourers in the open. The only thing was that they were looked down upon by caste Hindus. In fact they were regarded as valuable domestic animals.\textsuperscript{11} Whereas Hindu ladies belonging to upper classes enjoyed more freedom than Muslim females who observed purdah.

The Muslim women of the Deccan enjoyed little freedom. Life in the zanana and illiteracy made her lot wretched, though she ruled the household and kept herself busy in her domestic work. Yet her condition is far from satisfactory. Taylor had actually lived and been nursed while ailing in the house of a Muslim Talukdar of Pargi\textsuperscript{12} and that is why he had been able to portray in red colours the woof and the warp of Muslim life.

\textbf{Suttee:}

The social customs of the Deccan Hindus have been noticed by Taylor and other writers. "Suttee was common in South India at the time of Peshwas."\textsuperscript{13} It was also common among the Hindus of Hyderabad state. Therefore, the most important social legislation in nineteenth century was
the abolition of cruel rites of the suttee that is burning of the widow of the funeral pyre of her husband. According to Perishta, Sikandar, a bigoted king of Kashmir prohibited the performance of sati, but his son Abidin restored the religious rite to Hindus. In 1510 Albuquerque prohibited sati in Goa. Even Mughal emperors like Akbar, Jehangir, forbade this practice, but they were unable to enforce beyond the neighbourhood of Delhi. Even Teshwa Bajirao discouraged this practice.

Lord William Bentick tried to abolish this suttee practice. He lost no time to take up their issue in right earnest, and realised that king length and education were the only two things which would diminish the case of sati. Therefore on December 4, 1829 sati was declared by Regulation XVII to be the illegal in Bengal Presidency and punishable by the criminal courts. As a result of the knowledge this practice gradually disappeared. The cases were so severe that some times the widows were buried alive with the dead bodies of their husbands. Therefore according to the above Regulation XVII of 1829, prohibited the cremation as well as the burial of the widows, with their dead husbands.

While suttee practice was universally viewed as a human scourge, a black mark on the society, Taylor looks at its differently. He writes, "strange
enthusiasm, strange fortitude which having no terror of a horrible death has carried on its votaries even to the flames with a constancy and devotion worthy of a noble fate." To him it was an individual action, a man-woman relation and human feelings and sentiments, more than a social system.

Widow marriage:

The Brahmins did not permit a widow to be remarried. The widow was required to pass an ascetic life for the remaining days of her life. She was to avoid all sexual pleasures. Kayasthas and their Jains also followed Brahmins. A few depressed classes also copied the custom of higher castes in order to enhance their dignity and prestige.

The situation was extremely paradoxical. On one hand as per the injunctions as laid down in Hindu Dharma sastras, the marriageable age was considerably reduced, preferrably before puberty and on the other the mortality rate was very high. These social norms added to the human misery and also led to other untoward bad result. Sometimes such widows became Murlis or Temple girls, where they were expected to serve the God. But in reality the temple priests exploited the situation.
Sale of slaves and children:

This system was really common in the Deccan. They were carried by the Arabs who imported slaves from Africa and Arabia and often purchased distinutes at the time of famine. Forbes bought two slaves at Bombay for less money than what a couple of pigs cost in England.\(^{17}\) He also found that a woman in Malbar sold two years old babe just for a rupee; children cost more than slaves. Another instance can be quoted that in the south children were sold for 8 to 12 shillings according to their age and physique.\(^{18}\) In the words of O. Malley slaves were considered to be a movable property and were sold in execution of decrees at the instance of creditors.\(^{19}\)

The slave was engaged as a cultivator, bodyguard or an attendant. The male slaves were allowed to marry, whereas the female slave called as "Ayah" could not. Though slavery was deprived of its legal status in 1843 in British India it flourished in the state till January 1866 as Nizam issued a notification to abolish slavery as being opposed to the commandant of Koran.\(^{20}\)

The position of woman did not improve much due to old beliefs, traditions and customs. Ignorance added to their miseries. The British impact did not percolate deep
deep into the social fabric of the Deccan. Thus there was no way of social regeneration in the 19th century Deccan.

**Education**:

At the beginning of the 19th century a regular system of education was unknown in most parts of India. The daughters coming from high aristocratic family got elementary education at home and in general the female education was discouraged. The first effort towards female education was made by Christian Missionaries. They openly taught Christianity in their schools and hoped that the girls "now engaged in the degrading and polluting worship of idols shall be brought to the knowledge of the true gods."[21]

Christian Missionaries were the first to start school and the girls of respectable families were not allowed to join. According to Adam's Report, there were many other Missionary schools for girls in Bengal in 1834 the total number exceeded 50.[22] Girls were taught reading spelling, writing arthematic, needle work and in some cases religion. But unfortunately the Missionary schools did not succeed much as they devoted more time in preaching Christianity. Secondly there seem to have been a dearth of good teachers. Thirdly the schools were established in backward areas.
Some efforts were made for the improvement of education among women. In 1822 a pamphlet entitled "Strisiksha Vidhayaka" was circulated. It laid down that the sastric texts also advocated woman education among the upper classes even in ancient times. They emphatically asserted that to keep women uneducated is to treat them like animals.  

Education played a vital part during the time of Taylor, because he realised that education occupies a significant position in the life of an individual in particular and society in general. Taylor thought that ultimately the social and cultural development depends upon the kind of education imparted to the younger generation. Therefore he established various schools at Sorapur.

English was not a popular language. Government had encouraged education in classical languages like Sanskrit and Persian. Urdu was the medium of instruction throughout the Nizam's territories. Persian and Arabic were the only other languages encouraged, as English was taught as a second language. All primary and secondary schools were run by the Government. Private enterprise in education, was almost forbidden. Every public activity was looked upon with suspicion. Even literary activities
were considered as political. Permission was very essential to hold any social, cultural programme.  

Spread of the Islamic culture was the main aspect of the educational system during the Nizam's rule. Here government never bothered about the education of common man. The period of Taylor was a period of development when western learning strongly influenced Indian. As such this impact of western learning brought great changes. As early as 1841 Taylor realised the need of vernacular education. It was in 1853 Taylor's school at Sorapur was a step forward to teach students in English. Schools at Sorapur were well attended. Both Marathi and Telugu with Persian to Musalman boys were well taught. Apart from this there were schools of Kanarese and Marathi and to this Taylor gave grants in aid and even his books were used in the schools of British provinces.

During the first half of the 19th century, schools with English medium and sometimes English as one of the languages were established in the country. It is Mecaulay who advocated for English teaching. However the Nizam's territories were never incorporated in the sense that the Maratha kingdom or for that matter Madras and Calcutta were directly administered by the British. Thus the spread of English was indirect and with a view to equipping themselves for social acceptability in the higher circles of British army. As such the spread of English
was mainly due to the missionary schools and colleges in this region.

The vernacular Marathi school at Sorapur was expected to attract students from Brahmin families. Taylor utilised the surplus money from town fund to set up schools. He would have established more vernacular schools had the funds permitted.²⁵

The cultural life in the former territories of Peshwas was different from the Nizam's kingdom. After 1818, the British took over the entire administration of the Maratha region. The Maratha Brahmins, the sardars and the jagirdars, who wielded considerable influence earlier felt completely alienated from their hereditary privileges and the impending ruinous economic crisis among them. But interestingly, these classes were quick enough to attune to the new culture within a short period. In fact they took full advantage of the western liberal ideas through English education and came to the forefront in the Nationalist Movement.

During the period of our study, the composition of the society was, by and large, similar to the rest of the Deccan. However, due to the Maratha Peshwa rule, the
Brahmanical traditions were strong unlike the Nizam territories. Inspite of the pre-eminent position of the priestly class, one would notice a steady degeneration in the efficacy of its functioning. Ignorance had set in at all levels of the society. The so-called intellectual class, the dwijas, was as ignorant as the rest of the society on the fast changing societal activities after the British took over. They felt that the Peshwas were unfortunate as to loose their empire. In short, they were averse to acquiring scientific knowledge and employing knowledge for material gains. Initially they viewed with dismay all the efforts of westernisation made by the British administrators. They were oblivious of the new scientific discoveries and still believed in the efficacy of the obsolete age old scriptures like the Puranas and the Smritis. As a result they put forward traditions and beliefs even on matters such as widow remarriages sutee practices and sea voyages to foreign countries.

Mahatma Jyotirao Phule has highlighted the exploitative tactics the priestly classes adopted towards the ignorant and the gullible peasant community specially. The role of a village priest with all aspects of village life be it a festival or the birth, marriage and death. Phule writes,
"Under the guise of religion the Brahmin has his finger in everything, big or small, which the Sudra undertakes go to his house, to his field or to the court to which business may invite him, the Brahmin is there under some specious pretext or other, trying to squeeze out of him as much as his cunning and wily brain can manage. The Brahmin despites the Sudra not only in his capacity of a priest but does so in a variety of other ways. Having by his superior education and cunning monopolised all the higher places of emolument, the ingenuity of his ways is past finding out, as the reader will find on an attentive perusal of this book. In the most insignificant village as in the largest town, the Brahmin is the all in all, the be all and the end all of the ryot. He is the master the ruler. The Patel of a village, the headmen is in fact a nonentity. The Kulkarni the hereditary Brahmin village accountant, the notorious quartermaster moulds the patel according to his wishes. He is the temporal and spiritual adviser of the ryots, the soor er in his necessities and the general referee in all matters. In most instances he plans active mischief by advising opposite parties differently, so that he may feather his own nest well. If we go up higher to the court of Mamlutdar, we find the same thing."
Phyle further comments that in spite of western ideas and civilization which had a telling effect on the priestly class, yet they did not give up their air of superiority and dishonest ways. 29

The condition of the downtrodden or the untouchables, as in the past, was deplorable. They were treated with contempt and the most ordinary human treatment seem to have been denied to them. They were just like chattles and were equated even to animals. In terms of crime and punishment the intensity varied in inverse order. When the Britishers introduced common laws, the caste Hindus ridiculed them. 30

During this period the position of women was equally deplorable though they cannot be equated with the untouchables, yet the treatment towards them was extremely obnoxious. While women are the sisters, wives, mothers, daughters, daughters-in-law, and mothers-in-law in a particular given family, they were deprived of all sorts of rights and privileges. For example, the birth of a daughter in a family was not an occasion for merriment, but of grief and sorrow. The other inhuman practices such as child marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage, denial of education and tonsuring of widow's hair are too well known. Thus their existence was warranted to the extent
it served and satiated the whims and physical urges of the men folk.

Thanks to the British rule who, inspite of all their political and commercial exploitative policies, introduced western values and legal systems which gradually reduced the appalling and unequal norms among the equals. In this respect the states which were directly administered by the British have an edge over the people who continued to be ruled by the princely states. But it was a matter of time and the western values started breaking open the strongholds of ignorance, poverty, illiteracy and blind faith in religious beliefs and customs. Unlike the Maratha territories the population of the Nizam's kingdom had more Muslims. But their lot was in no way better than their Hindu brother. The Muslim society was also dominated by the religious heads and other spiritual prophets who spread nothing but implicit adherence of age old and totally irrelevant religious practices.

Religious festivals were celebrated with great pomp and enthusiasm. There were a large number of fairs and festivals of both Hindus and Muslims. They were much the same as in our days. Important festivals commonly observed by the Hindus were Gudi Padva, Chaitra Gauri,
Nagapanchami, Pola, Ganesh Chaturthi, Dassara, Deepavali, and Holi. Whereas the Muslims observed Muharram, Ramzan, Bakrid as the most important festivals.

Hinduism is the chief faith followed by all castes and classes among Hindus and Islam is followed by all classes among Muslims. In the religious practices and beliefs of the Hindus, acts of worship have been always playing a prominent part. For instance, Taylor depicts in his novel 'Confession of a Thug' that how the Thugs worshipped the Goddess Kali, as they had a firm belief that she would protect them and also would give courage in their murderous activities. He also depicts as to how the Thugs were the firm believers on omens. For example, if a snake crossed their path or if the lizard chirped they would never undertake the journey.

Number of trees, plants were considered sacred and of religious importance even to this day. Animal worship was also followed. Cow, cobra, nandi were considered to be sacred to them. Similarly several gods and goddesses like Ganpati, Hanuman, Ram, Krishna as male deities and Parvati, Lakshmi, Bhavani as female deities are worshipped.

Taylor seems to have been greatly stuck by the widespread Indian belief in astrology. In his autobiography, he tells us how he met an astrologer at Tooljapur who forecast his future with remarkable accuracy. He was also aware of the tremendous role
that the prophecy about the company's rule ending after a hundred years played during the mutiny. Perhaps he believed like his own Sersthtadar Babasahab that 'when one who understands the art, casts a horoscope and calculates it scientifically the result is seldom wrong.'

The question of mixed marriage always interested Taylor. Taylor approves all these inter-marriages because for him it is a symbol of a meeting of the Hindu and the Muslim worlds. Again in his novel Ralph Darnell, he brings a similar encounter between Christian and the Muslim. Ralph Smithson's marriage with the Begum Noorul-nissa, an entirely successful story with this firm belief. Taylor gives numerous examples in his own novels, Noor-ul-Nissa's love for Ralph Smithson. For example, 'O what love she bore. She would never tell it but he felt and acknowledged it as a gentle, ever pervading presence never, importunate, never exacting humble even to him and yet how confident defiant of all else - how triumphant in its knowledge and belief of his faith and truth.'

The present form of Brahmanism is not observed by the whole of Hindu population and in intermixed with different kinds of worship. In this regard Taylor knows better as for instance, in the story Seeta he shows how Seeta turns to the vendantic invocation of the
Sun ghatu. Again Taylor had shown us the need for integrating different religious faiths besides political integration. There should be no difference in the caste. He has shown us a true picture of social life, as he was sympathetic towards Indians.

Taylor also knew how great was the hold of Hinduism on the minds of the people. In two of his important novels Tara and Seeta, he deals with the conversion and spiritual crisis. Tara accepts the Muslim faith and marries Pazal but Taylor is doubtful ( ) about the reality of her change of faith, with her outward conversion to a strange faith did Tara forget the old? No it was highly impossible. Though her studious disposition enabled her to master enough Arabic to understand the daily prayers and simple ceremonials. Yet the grand old Hindu Hymns of the Vedas and other devotional portions of the shastras especially the Bhugwat Geeta were never forgotten. But in the case of Seeta as death approaches her, she dies with a Christian prayer on her lips. Taylor views in this matter seem to co-incide with those of the German missionary, Rev. Mr. Kies whom he mention in his autobiography.

It was actually after this background he made a tour to India and judged it through western eyes. Taylor also gives us an authentic account of what happens at an Indian marriage.
"I assure you dear readers that a proper orthodox and Hindoo marriage is a very tiresome affair and like many other marriages perhaps everybody is glad when it is over very noisy tediously minute in ceremonial liable to interruptions from disputes it is often an arena for rival faction of families to fight out ill-feeling discontent and jealousy which have accumulated for years. Sometimes the feast provided are not eaten and have to be thrown away or given to beggars. Musicians won't play, processions can't be formed or interrupted in progress, offence is taken at trifles and the whole proceeding rocks to and fro as though it would tumble to pieces altogether, till it suddenly comes right and affairs go on - to a happy conclusion." 35

Islam is a monotheistic religion. Besides monotheism it lays stress on equality and brotherhood in faith. The Mehomedans are divided into two great sects viz. Sunni and Shias. The Sunnis are found in large number than Shias. The only difference between these two faiths is that Sunnis consider Abubakar, Umar and Usman as the lawful successors of the prophet, while Shias advocate the cause of Ali, the fourth Khalifa and his sons Hasan and Hussain. In consequence the Shias omit from the Koran certain passages alleged to have been written by Usman and add a chapter in praise of Ali.
A Sunni offers five times a prayer, where as Shias three times and hold their hands open by their sides instead of folding them below the breast. Except these and few other particulars, the beliefs and customs of the two sects are the same.

The Islam religion hold five important and fundamental points. They are as follows: 1. There is only one God and Muhamad is the prophet of God, 2. Charity, 3. Pilgrimage to Mecca, 4. The fast of Ramzan and 5. Prayer.

The Muhammedan religion is divided into two heads i.e. faith and practice. Faith comprises belief in god, in his prophet, in Koran, where as the practice includes prayer, charity, fast during Ramzan and pilgrimage to Mecca. Muslim worship consists of a number vows and worship prayers by reciting verses from the Koran. But the five daily prayers has a separate form and on Friday and on the days of Ramzan and Bakrid festivals, the reading is accompanied by a sermon. Muslims on the whole observe the chief rules of their faith. As for instance, the first Nizam-ul-Mulk Asafjah tried to follow the teachings of Koran. He was far from being a fanatic. He respected other faiths and never hesitated in appointing non-Muslims to high posts of responsibility.
Lala Mansaram, who was a Secretary in the office of Sadarapat (Religious establishment) during the time of Nizam-ul-Mulk writes that "It is necessary for the ruler of the Deccan to seek peace, achieve accord with the Marathas as they are the zamindars of this country. He should consider the maintenance, the prestige, dignity of Islam as an outstanding importance."

Islam was the religion of the ruler. The first five Nizams followed a tolerant policy but the Nizam VI and VII were outwardly tolerant. However, in practice they regarded Islam as the religion of the state. In fact a separate department known as "Ecclesiastical Department" was there to look after the religions of the state, which generally favoured Islam. This Ecclesiastical Department had appointed special persons known as "Wahuj" for the guidance of Muslim in practicing Islam. "Waj" means lecture. 'Wahuj' means person doing that work. They used to tour villages in order to guide Muslims regarding observance of fast, reading Koran to enlighten rural Muslims regarding their religious principles and practices. Unfortunately there was no impact on the Islam as it was considered to be a perfect religion which led by the idea of superiority among its followers. As Government was in favour of Islam, several new mosques were constructed, old one's were repaired. Muslims followed religion very scrupulously.
Due to Ittehad, and also due to Ecclesiastical Department some conversion took place which resulted in adding to their population and the atrocities committed by Muslims created hatred among Hindus and Muslims thus lost their sympathy.

The religious policy of the Nizam had far-reaching effects on the society in general, especially towards Islam by the government created a feeling of superior complex among Muslim subjects, which resulted in creating a gulf between Hindus and Muslims of the state. As a result social harmony was disturbed. Muslims regarded themselves as the followers of a perfect and only true religion. Therefore, they regarded the Muslim culture founded on the principles of the true religion as perfect. They considered that in their religion there is no room for social reforms. Under such circumstances Islam lacked dynamism and therefore particularly its society did not progress.36