

## PREFACE

This is an attempt to study the social stratification of rural South Malabar in the early decades of this century and the changes which are occurring in it today. The rural community in the beginning of this century is studied in the first four chapters. The fifth chapter deals with the mobility of castes and other groups, a process which characterised the society since an early time in the past and changed the social status of some of the component groups. Changes occurring in the general structure today, and changes in the most important of the component group with a pivotal or dominant position, the family of the Nairs, are examined in the sixth chapter. How far changes are likely to occur under the impact of more powerful factors of change is briefly examined by a short study of a village in an area generally known as one of a high degree of social change. The major part of this study covers the field data from three villages which form one of the areas of comparatively little social change in Malabar. In addition to these villages enquiries were also made at two more villages to get enlightened on certain specific aspects related to the study. The field work was conducted during the years 1954-57 mainly in April and May of each year.

Baroda,  
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