

INDO-CANADIAN

By JOAN MAYO

AN INTERESTING EVENT ABOUT THIS TIME ^{EACH} ~~OF~~ YEAR IN INDIA IS CALLED LORRI. THE CLOSEST THING TO LORRI IN CANADA WOULD PROBABLY BE HALLOWEEN.

LORRI HAPPENS AROUND THE 13th OF JANUARY AND IS ENJOYED BY ALL PEOPLE ALL OVER INDIA. YOUNGSTERS PLAN FOR LORRI BY MAKING LISTS OF WHICH HOUSES THEY WILL VISIT. IT IS ALWAYS A HOME IN WHICH A BABY BOY HAS BEEN BORN OR THE HOME OF SOMEONE WHOSE RELATIVE HAS HAD A BABY BOY SINCE LAST LORRI TIME. GROUPS OF YOUNG BOYS OR GIRLS WILL CALL AT THE HOME SINGING SONGS OFFERING GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS TO THE BABY THEN ASK FOR SWEETS IN RETURN FOR THEIR SINGING. CHUNKS OF SWEET GHUR A CRUDE TYPE OF RAW SUGAR MADE FROM THE JUICE OF THE SUGAR CANE ARE THE USUAL GIFT IN THE VILLAGES ALTHOUGH HOME MADE CANDY-LIKE SWEETS CALLED JALEBI ARE BECOMING MORE FREQUENT. SOME OF THE YOUNGSTERS WILL EVEN REFUSE THE FANCY MADE JALEBI AND REQUEST THE GHUR INSTEAD.

EACH SECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY OR MOHLLA AS IT IS CALLED IN INDIA WILL HAVE A BON FIRE WITH THE YOUNG BOYS GOING HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTING WOOD FOR THE FIRE IF THERE IS A FAMILY IN THEIR COMMUNITY WHO HAS HAD A BABY BOY DURING THE PAST YEAR THE BON FIRE WILL BE IN FRONT OF THAT HOME, IF NOT A COMMON AREA IS CHOSEN. MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN GATHER ROUND THE BON FIRE WHILE THE WOMEN SING HAPPY SONGS AND SONGS OF GOOD WISHES FOR THE NEW BOYS. AS COOKED BARLEY IS NATURALLY SWEET IT IS GIVEN OUT TO ALL WHO ATTEND THE BON FIRE.

IT IS TRADITIONAL IN INDIA TO GIVE SOMETHING SWEET TO EVERYONE WHO CALLS AT YOUR HOUSE WITH GOOD WISHES IF SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO A BOY. AS IT IS USUALLY IMPROMTU EVEN A LUMP OF SUGAR WILL DO BUT THE FAMILY HAS UNTIL LORRI TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE ONSLAUGHT OF YOUNGSTERS WHO WILL SURELY COME CALLING, SINGING SONGS OF LONG LIFE AND ASKING FOR LORRI.

ANOTHER INTERESTING CUSTOM AND ONE WHICH CAME ABOUT BECAUSE OF COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES ^{IN} YEARS PAST IS THE ONE OF ANNOUNCING THE BIRTH OF A NEW BABY. EACH VILLAGE HAS LAGGI PEOPLE OR PEOPLE WHO DELIVER THE

GOOD NEWS. THESE PEOPLE TOO ARE GIVEN SWEETS ALTHOUGH MONEY IS NOW BECOMING MORE COMMON TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS TO THE HOMES OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN NEARBY VILLAGES. EACH HOUSEHOLDER WILL THEN GIVE THE DELIVERER OF GOOD NEWS SWEETS OR MONEY IN RETURN.

ANOTHER OF THE PLEASANT OLD COUNTRY TRADITIONS THAT IS SLOWLY DISAPPEARING BECAUSE OF THE ADVENT OF THE TELEPHONE.