

2000 years ago, the Greek ambassador to India "Megasthenes" travelled throughout India recording his observations. The following are extracts taken from his book "Indica".



"India has many huge mountains, abounding in fruit trees of every kind, and many vast plains of great fertility, beautiful, very much alike, and intersected by a multitude of rivers. The greater part of the soil is under irrigation, and consequently bears two crops in the course of a year. It teems with animals of all sorts, beasts of the fields and fowls of the air, all of differing degrees of

size and strength.

It is prolific besides in elephants which are of monstrous bulk, as its soil supplies food in unsparing profusion, making these animals far exceed in strength those which are bred in Libya. The inhabitants in like manner, having abundant means of subsistence, exceed the ordinary stature, distinguished by their proud bearing. They are also found to be well skilled in the arts, as might be expected of men who inhale pure air and drink the very finest water. And while the soil bears on its surface all kinds of fruits, underground, it also has all kinds of metals, for it contains much gold, silver, copper and iron in large quantities.



In addition to cereal, there grows throughout India, much millet, which is kept well watered by the profusion of river streams, and much pulse of different kinds, as well as rice, and many other plants, useful for feed which grows almost spontaneously. It is accordingly affirmed that famine has never visited India, and there has never been a scarcity in the supply of nourishing food. For since there is a double rainfall in the course of each year, one in the winter season, when the sowing of wheat takes place, and the second at the time of the summer solstice, which is the proper time for sowing rice, sesame and millet, the inhabitants of India almost always gather in two harvests annually, and even if one crop fails, they are always sure of the second crop.

The fruits are of spontaneous growth, and the esculent roots which grow in marshy places and are of varied sweetness, afford abundant sustenance for man. The fact is almost all the plains of the country have a moisture which is alike congenial, whether derived from the rivers, or from the rains of the summer season, which are wont to fall every year at a stated period, with surprising regularity, while the great heat which prevails, ripens the roots which grow in the marshes, especially those of the tall reeds.









