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OUTLINE OF
ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY
AND
CIVILISATION.

By

DR. RAMESH CHANDRA MAJUMDAR M.A., Ph.D

Professor, Dacca University. Author of "Corporate Life in Ancient India", "Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East", "The Gurjara-Pratihāras" and "Early History of Bengal". Premchand Roychand Scholar, Griffith Prizeman, Mouat Gold Medallist etc. etc.

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PREFACE.

This book is primarily intended for that gradually increasing class of readers who desire to possess a general but accurate knowledge of the history and civilisation of ancient India without going through a large number of texts and journals dealing with special branches of the subject. The necessity for such a book has long been keenly felt and its absence has hampered the growth of a real interest in ancient Indian history among the educated public.

This book may claim to be the first of its kind. For V. A. Smith's Early History of India, the only other book of this kind, confines itself merely to political history, while R. C. Dutt's "Ancient India," beside being voluminous, is absolutely unreliable as regards political history, and is also considerably out of date in regard to other portions. It should not be supposed, however, that this book treads altogether a new ground, for the topics dealt with herein have been already critically discussed in special monographs or articles by learned

scholars. My main work has been to make a critical study of these special treatises, to select and sift the materials collected therein, and then, with their help, to draw up a comprehensive, intelligible and interesting picture of ancient Indian history and civilisation. The greatest difficulty has been in making a choice as to what to retain and what to leave out. I have, above all, endeavoured to make the book a 'readable' one, and have accordingly avoided all controversial topics, and abstruse discussions of a technical nature which can only interest a few specialists. At the same time it has been my object not to ignore anything that is essential for forming a correct appreciation of ancient Indian history and civilisation. How far I have succeeded in steering clear of these extremes and finding the much desired golden mean, it is for my indulgent readers to judge.

A few words may be said regarding some new features which I have tried to introduce in this book. In the first place, I have divided the ancient period into three broad divisions, and have arranged the subject-matter in strict accordance with these chronological limits. These are (1) From the earliest times to c. 600

B. C. (2). From c. 600 B. C. to c. 300 A. D. (3). From c. 300 A. D. to c. 1200 A. D.

This division not only follows the natural course of cultural development in ancient India (Vedic culture-Buddhism and Jainism-Neo-Brāhmaṇism) but also facilitates chronological treatment of broad cultural topics which do not admit of being dated within narrow limits. Take, for example, the Epics and Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra. While opinions vary as to their dates, probably few would demur to their claim to be considered as representative works of the second period named above. Similarly, literary works, while most of them cannot be dated even within approximate limits, can be placed, without much difficulty, in one or other of these divisions.

Secondly, I have tried to write the history of India from a strictly historical and not from a European point of view, which has so long been the usual attitude. This does not, of course, mean that I have tried to exaggerate the glories or minimise the short-comings of Indian culture. For the matter of that, I have not made a single statement in this book which is not supported by some kind of evidence. But what I really mean by "European point of view"

may be illustrated by two examples from V. Smith's book. His discussion of Alexander's campaign occupies nearly one seventh of the whole book. Now, while the modern Europeans, who take pride in the reflected glory of Greece, may justly regard this topic as of absorbing interest, it can hardly claim greater importance in Indian history than the invasion of Sultan Mahmud, Tamerlane or Nadir Shah. While V. Smith seems to take great pleasure in thus describing at length the Greek conquest of India which demonstrates, to his satisfaction, "the inherent weakness of the greatest Asiatic armies when confronted with European skill and discipline," he has not a word to say about the political or military greatness of India as exemplified by her colonial empires in Asia. Again, in describing the political condition of India after the reign of Harsha, he seeks to "give the reader a notion of what India always has been when released from the control of a supreme authority, and what she would be again, if the hands of the benevolent despotism which now holds her in its iron grasp should be withdrawn." These sentiments, which are echoed in other books, are not only

uncalled for and misleading, but are calculated to distort the vision and judgment of modern readers. Those who cannot forget, even while writing the history of ancient India, that they belong to the imperial race which holds India in political subjection, can hardly be expected to possess that sympathy and broad-mindedness which are necessary for forming a correct perspective of ancient Indian history and civilisation. European scholars have rendered most valuable service by way of collecting materials for ancient Indian history and civilisation, and India must ever remain grateful to them for their splendid pioneer work. But they would hardly be in a position to write the history of India, so long as they do not cast aside the assumptions of racial superiority and cease to regard Indians as an inferior race.

Time has come when an attempt should be made to write the history of India purely from the historical standpoint, untramelled by any Imperialistic or European point of view. I have constantly kept this in mind in writing this little book.

Thirdly, I have not given an undue predominance to political history, but have devoted

considerable space to religion, literature, and other cultural aspects of ancient India. Dry details of political events, while essential to specialists, are not nearly so useful in forming a correct estimate of ancient Indian history and civilisation.

While I have planned this small volume mainly as a handbook of historical information, I have also attempted to aid and stimulate further studies by touching upon many topics which are likely to awaken the interest of readers, and supplying, at the end, a bibliographical note for each chapter. I have not attempted to draw up an imposing 'list of authorities' which might have raised this book and its author in the estimation of a section of the public, but have merely contented myself with a list of such books as are necessary or would prove useful for advanced studies in different branches of the subject.

On account of various pre-occupations, I have not been able to devote as much time to this book as I wished, and I can only crave the indulgence of my readers for errors of omission and commission. Any short-comings pointed out will be thankfully acknowledged

and corrected if this book ever runs into a second edition.

In conclusion I must express my heartfelt thanks to my pupil Mr. Praphulla Chandra Mukherji M.A. for having kindly prepared the Index.

Ramna, Dacca.
19th April, 1927.

R. C. Majumdar.

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Abbreviations.

Ashutosh Jubilee Volume—Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume (Published by the Calcutta University.)

Camb. Hist.—Cambridge History.

Fa Hien—Legge.—Travels of Fa Hien, Translated by Legge.

J. A. S. B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J. B. O. R. S.—Journal of the Behar and Orissa Research Society.

J. R. A. S.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

S. B. E.—Sacred Books of the East.

Smith. Hist.—Early History of India by V. A. Smith.

Vaishṇavism—Vaishṇavism, Saivism and minor religious systems by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar.

Winternitz—Geschichte der Indischen Litteratur by Winternitz.

Z. D. M. G.—Zeitschrift der Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft.

The System of Transliteration.

Arranged in order of English alphabet.

a	=	অ	(অ)	l	=	ল	(ল)
ā	=	আ	(আ)	m	=	ম	(ম)
ai	=	ঐ	(ঐ)	ṁ	=	ং	(ং)
au	=	ঔ	(ঔ)	n	=	ন	(ন)
b	=	ব	(ব)	ṇ	=	ণ	(ণ)
bh	=	ভ	(ভ)	ṅ	=	ঙ	(ঙ)
ch	=	চ	(চ)	ñ	=	ঞ	(ঞ)
chh	=	ছ	(ছ)	o	=	ও	(ও)
d	=	দ	(দ)	p	=	প	(প)
ḍ	=	ড	(ড)	ph	=	ফ	(ফ)
dh	=	ধ	(ধ)	r	=	র	(র)
ḍh	=	ঢ	(ঢ)	ṛi	=	ঋ	(ঋ)
e	=	এ	(এ)	s	=	স	(স)
g	=	গ	(গ)	ś	=	শ	(শ)
gh	=	ঘ	(ঘ)	ṣ	=	ষ	(ষ)
h	=	হ	(হ)	t	=	ত	(ত)
ḥ	=	ঃ	(ঃ)	ṭ	=	ট	(ট)
i	=	ই	(ই)	th	=	থ	(থ)
ī	=	ঈ	(ঈ)	ṭh	=	ঠ	(ঠ)
j	=	জ	(জ)	u	=	উ	(উ)
jh	=	ঝ	(ঝ)	ū	=	ঊ	(ঊ)
k	=	ক	(ক)	v	=	ব	(ব)
kh	=	খ	(খ)	y	=	য	(য)

The System of Transliteration.

Arranged in order of Indian alphabet.

অ	(অ)	=	a	ড	(ড)	=	ḍ
আ	(আ)	=	ā	ঢ	(ঢ)	=	ḍh
ই	(ই)	=	i	ণ	(ণ)	=	ṇ
ঈ	(ঈ)	=	ī	ত	(ত)	=	t
উ	(উ)	=	u	থ	(থ)	=	th
ঊ	(ঊ)	=	ū	দ	(দ)	=	d
ঋ	(ঋ)	=	ṛi	ধ	(ধ)	=	dh
এ	(এ)	=	e	ন	(ন)	=	n
ঐ	(ঐ)	=	ai	প	(প)	=	p
ও	(ও)	=	o	ফ	(ফ)	=	ph
ঔ	(ঔ)	=	au	ব	(ব)	=	b
ক	(ক)	=	k	ভ	(ভ)	=	bh
খ	(খ)	=	kh	ম	(ম)	=	m
গ	(গ)	=	g	য	(য)	=	y
ঘ	(ঘ)	=	gh	র	(র)	=	r
ঙ	(ঙ)	=	ṅ	ল	(ল)	=	l
চ	(চ)	=	ch	ব	(ব)	=	v
ছ	(ছ)	=	chh	শ	(শ)	=	ś
জ	(জ)	=	j	ষ	(ষ)	=	ṣ
ঝ	(ঝ)	=	jh	স	(স)	=	s
ঞ	(ঞ)	=	ñ	হ	(হ)	=	h
ট	(ট)	=	ṭ	ং	(ং)	=	ṁ
ঠ	(ঠ)	=	ṭh	ঃ	(ঃ)	=	ḥ

To

My Father

BABU HALADHAR MAJUMDAR.

INTRODUCTION.

1. Physical Characteristics.

India is bounded on the north by the Himalayas, and on the south, east and west by the open sea. On the north-east and on the north-west, ranges of hills connect the main chain of the Himalayas with the sea.

India is thus naturally protected on all sides. It must not be supposed, however, that she was cut off from the rest of the world by these formidable barriers. Himalaya is the most inaccessible frontier that nature has designed for any country, but even here, there are roads from Tibet to Nepal that have carried for ages not merely, peaceful missionaries of culture and religion, but formidable hosts of soldiers as well. Besides, there are mountain passes in the north-west which have served for ages as the high road of communication between

Natural boundaries of India.

India and the outer world. Apart from invasions and immigrations unrecorded in history, innumerable bands of colonists, merchants and conquering hosts entered and left India through these passes in historical times ever since the Aryans crossed the Hindu Kush about four thousand years ago. The north-eastern chains contain a remarkable gap through which the Brahmaputra enters India and it must have been frequented by people in all ages, though recorded instances are few and far between. The sea too has never operated as a barrier to the enterprising Aryans. From early times they boldly plied the ocean and came into contact with islands and countries both far and near. But as the navy in ancient days could hardly ever be a formidable instrument for aggressive purpose, India was practically secure against invasions from the sea. The natural frontiers of India thus gave security, but not immunity, from invasions, and while they ensured definite individuality to her people by separating them from the rest of Asia by well-marked boundary lines, they never isolated them from the rest of the world.

Their effect.

Within these frontiers India comprises an area of one hundred and fifty thousand English square miles and is thus equal in extent to the whole of Europe with the exclusion of Russia. Its coast line extends for more than three thousand miles and its mountain barrier is half that length. Its population numbers nearly three hundred millions.

Area.

The physical features of the country are varied in character—there being inaccessible mountain heights, the highest on the face of the earth, low alluvial plains, high table-lands, wild forests, secluded valleys as well as arid deserts. It has the hottest plains as well as the coolest hill resorts. The variety in physical characteristics is only equalled by the variety of races, religions and languages, and it may be said, without much exaggeration, that India alone contains greater varieties of each of these than the whole of Europe. India cannot thus be looked upon as a country in the same sense in which we apply the term to modern European countries like France and Germany. It would be more rational to look upon it as a continent and its

India, a sub-continent not a country.

different provinces as so many countries. The term sub-continent, recently applied to India, is a happy designation, and it will be well to bear in mind the full significance of such a name while reading its history. To take an example, it will be unreasonable to look for that unity in Indian history which the annals of a country like France or Italy afford. Such unity may be expected only in kingdoms like Magadha, Gauḍa, Kośala, Śūrasena (Mathurā), Avantī and Karṇāṭa, each of which is equal in area and population to many of the European states. The occasional unity of India or a large part of it under the Mauryas or their successors should not be likened to processes in the formation of kingdoms such as we are familiar with in the case of modern European states or of the kingdoms of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and Italy. It should rather be compared to the brilliant but ephemeral empires, established by those ancient states or brought into existence by the imperial ambitions of Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV and Napoleon.

Modern historians are never tired of emphasising the contrast between the peaceful

empire established by the British Raj and unsuccessful efforts of the ancient Indians in that direction. They conveniently ignore the fact that in speaking of ancient India they are speaking of a period when time and space had not been practically eliminated by the modern discoveries of science. How physical characteristics influence history in this respect may be illustrated by one example. The news of Moplah riots reached the Government at Simla in less than three minutes and an adequate military force could be despatched in an equal number of days. But if a rebellion had occurred in that region in the days of Asoka the news would not have reached Pāṭaliputra in less than three months and at least double that period would have been necessary to send a requisite force.

True import of the above.

A clear recognition of these factors is of primary importance for a proper understanding of Indian history. Failure to do this has often vitiated the judgment of historians. They have, for example, inferred that the Indians were unenterprising and lacked military skill, because there are no records of their expeditions outside their frontiers. But the fact

is ignored that the sub-continent of India together with Further India, Indo-China and Pacific islands offered too large a field for their military enterprise to tempt them outside its boundaries. The largest empires ruled over by the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians were far less in extent than India, whose political boundaries in ancient times extended up to the Hindu Kush and the Helmund, together with its colonial empire in the east. The Persian and Roman empires as well as the area over which Alexander gained his meteoric success are equal to or only a little larger than this greater India, while the empire of Louis XIV or of Napoleon is insignificant, compared to its whole extent.

As regards the physical characteristics of the interior, the most noteworthy feature is the central range of hills known as the Vindhya, which divides India into two unequal portions. Its dense and impenetrable hills and forests made communication extremely difficult, and hence a sharp distinction has always been evident between the people of the north and the people of the south. The history of the two

The Vindhyas.

portions has also, generally speaking, followed independent courses, though at times they have been brought into contact with each other.

Northern India.

The portion north of the Vindhya range contains fertile plains both in the east as well as in the west, with the desert of Rajputana intervening between the two. The plain on the west of the desert is watered by the Indus and that on the east by the Ganges system. These two rivers and their tributaries served as easy means of communication and hence their banks were studded from very ancient times with flourishing seats of civilisation. The short space between the desert of Rajputana and the chains of Himalaya is the only connecting link between these two plains and serves as an admirable defending ground against any army from the west which seeks to penetrate into the interior of Hindustan. It was no mere accident that several battles which decided the fate of India were fought on this famous ground.

Southern India.

The part of India lying south of the Vindhya is a great table-land that rises abruptly in the west and slowly descends towards the east, leaving only two

long narrow strips of plain lands along the coast in both these directions. The Kṛishṇā and its tributary the Tungabhadrā divide the tableland into two parts, the Deccan and the South India proper, which have often played separate but important róles in history. The two other important river-systems in the south of the Vindhya are those of the Godāvarī in the north and the Kāverī in the south.

The fertile plains of India, with easy means of irrigation, have made it one of the richest agricultural countries in the world. Metallic ores deposited in the soil, and huge timber forests have stimulated industry and manufacture. Large navigable rivers and extensive sea-coasts, studded with good harbours, have developed inland and foreign trade and carried Indian products all over the civilised world. To crown all, gold, silver, jewels, pearls, and various precious stones are found in abundance in the soil. All these factors made India the richest country in the world. The wealth of India became proverbial and tempted greedy invaders from beyond the mountain passes. The fertility of the

The wealth of India, and its effect.

soil and the wealth of the country were thus also indirect causes of her downfall and degradation. It has often been alleged that they were also direct causes, inasmuch as they enervated the people and made them an easy prey to foreign invaders. This is, however not so self-evident as has generally been assumed. Indian soldiers never lacked in bravery and hardihood and their defeat is to be traced to causes of a different character.

Influence of physical features upon the civilisation of the country.

The wild and sublime beauty of nature in which India is peculiarly rich gave a philosophic and poetic turn to the Indian mind and remarkable progress was made in religion, philosophy, art and literature. But while easy means of livelihood favoured the growth of these elements, the absence of a keen struggle with nature was detrimental to the development of positive science. In short, almost all the main peculiarities of intellectual development in India may be explained with reference to its physical environments.

II. Sources of Indian History.

One of the gravest defects of Indian culture which defy rational explanation, is the aversion of Indians to writing history. They applied themselves to all conceivable branches of literature and excelled in many of them, but they never seriously took to the writing of history. It is difficult to accept the view, too often maintained, that the Indians lacked the historical sense altogether. This is discredited by the few historical texts and a number of dated inscriptions that have come down to us. Still the fact remains that the Indians displayed a strange indifference towards properly recording the public events of their country.

Absence of history

Rudiments of history are indeed preserved in the Purāṇas and the Epics. We find lists of kings and sometimes, though very rarely, their achievements, but it is impossible to arrange them in chronological order without extraneous help. Indirect references to historical events are also scattered in literature and valuable historical information is thus obtained from

Sources of history
1. Literature.

the different branches of literature, both secular and religious, even from such books as the grammatical works of Pāṇini and Patañjali. Biographical works of great historical persons are of course of great value and we are fortunate in possessing a few of them, such as Śrī-Harsha-Charita by Bānabhatta, Vikramāṅka-Charita by Bilhana, Navasāhasāṅka-Charita of Padmagupta, Rāmacharita of Sandhyākara Nandi, Bhojaprabandha by Ballāla, Gauḍavaha by Vākpatirāja, Pṛithvīrāja-Charita by Chand Bardai, Pṛithvīrāja--Vijaya by an anonymous writer and a number of Jaina chronicles. There is only one historical work, properly so called, written by Kalhana in the 12th century A. D. This is Rājataraṅgiṇi which deals with the history of Kashmir from the earliest times up to the date of the composition of that work. It assumes however a regular historical form only from the seventh century A. D., the earlier chapters being a medley of confused traditions and fanciful imaginations.

But although the literary works are of great help in forming an estimate of ancient culture and civilisation of India, they do not go far enough in the reconstruction of

the history of the country. Our knowledge in this respect was therefore very imperfect till the 19th century, when the genius and patient industry of a number of scholars, mostly European, considerably improved it with the help of evidences of quite a different character. Our present knowledge of Indian history is mainly based on these evidences, and it is therefore necessary to form a correct idea about them.

2. Archæology.

The first in point of importance is the archæological evidence. It consists of coins, inscriptions, and other monuments of antiquity. The inscriptions, being contemporary records of a reliable character, have helped us most. They have furnished us with the names of kings together with their dates and other necessary particulars, and have recorded many important events of history. The coins have preserved the names of additional kings and given us further particulars about the locality over which they ruled. The monuments are undying witnesses of the artistic skill of ancient Indians and testify to their wealth and grandeur at different epochs of history.

For a great deal of our knowledge of ancient Indian history we are indebted to the foreigners.

3. Foreigners' accounts.

India figures in foreign inscriptions, e.g., in those of Darius, and in foreign literature, such as the history of Herodotus. But the most valuable contributions were made by foreigners who came to this country. The Greeks who accompanied Alexander in his invasion of India, or who were subsequently sent as ambassadors to the court of India, wrote detailed accounts of the country, and although these works are mostly lost, their substance has been preserved in the accounts of later Greek writers. Special reference may be made to the famous account of Megasthenes, the Geography of India written by Ptolemy and a valuable account of trade and maritime activities in India from the pen of an unknown Greek author who visited India in the first century A. D.

The Greeks.

At a later period, Chinese travellers came to India in large numbers to collect religious books and visit the holy places of Buddhism. Some of them like Fa-Hian (5th c. A. D.), Hiuen Tsang (7th c. A. D.)

The Chinese.

and I-tsing (7th c. A. D.) have recorded very valuable accounts of contemporary India. Last, but not of the least importance, is the Muhammadan traveller Al-Berūnī who accompanied Sultan Mahmud to India and made a careful study of the literature, religion, and social institutions of India. His memoir on India is a remarkable product of the age and throws a flood of light on the decadent period of Indian History.

The Muhammadans.

By utilising all these evidences it has been possible to construct an outline of Indian history from about the seventh century B. C. to the present day. No doubt, details remain to be filled in to a great extent, but the success, so far achieved, encourages hope for the future. The chronology of all the royal dynasties, with the sole exception of the Kushānas, has been fixed with tolerable certainty; the epochs of Indian eras have been determined; and thus a great deal of spade work has already been accomplished. The following pages are intended to give a brief resumé of the results so far attained and they will also indicate the directions in which our knowledge is deficient in the extreme.

BOOK I.

From the Earliest Times to c. 600 B. C.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PEOPLE.

History is a record of the achievements of man. History of India should, therefore, properly begin with the account of the earliest settlers in the country. Unfortunately, we know very little of the people that inhabited the land before the advent of the Aryans, the forefathers of the high-class Hindus of the present day. They settled in this country more than four thousand years ago, and are the earliest race in India of whom we possess any written record. Generally speaking, therefore, the history of India begins with the immigration of the Aryans.

Pre-Aryan settlers in India.

Recent researches have, however, thrown some light on the period of Indian history preceding this notable event. The few isolated facts that have so far been established do not, of course, enable us to reconstruct anything like a connected history of this age, but we can glean some interesting information regarding the earlier settlers of India. In the first place, it is now certain that, long before the Aryans had

appeared on the scene, India was successively occupied, at remote intervals, by various bands of people, differing in language, manners, and customs, and belonging to various grades of civilisation. The earliest of these settlers are known as Palaeolithic (from Greek words meaning 'old stone') men from the fact, that rude tools of chipped stone, used by them, constitute the only remnants, hitherto known, of this class of men. They might, of course, have been preceded by other races, but no trace of any such people exists to-day, and the Palaeolithic men are regarded as the earliest settlers in India. These men belonged to a very primitive stage of civilisation. They did not know the use of metals, and had no idea of cultivation. They probably did not even know how to make a fire, and lived on fruits of trees, and the animals and fishes which they killed by means of their stone implements. They lived in natural caverns and never constructed tombs of any kind.

1. The Palaeolithic.

The next group of people who settled in India are called Neolithic (from a Greek word meaning 'new stone'). "They did not altogether give up the use of

2. The Neolithic.

tools merely chipped, but most of their implements, after the chipping had been completed, were ground, grooved, and polished, and thus converted into highly finished objects of various forms, adapted to diverse purposes." These people belonged to a far advanced state of civilisation. They made houses, domesticated animals, and cultivated lands. They made potteries, and constructed tombs, some of which have come to light in our days. They seem to have also been acquainted with the elements of the art of painting.

It is difficult to decide whether the Neolithic men are descendants of the Palaeolithic. But it appears to be certain that these Neolithic people included the forefathers of the many savage peoples of India like the Sāontals, the Kols, the Munḍās etc, who live in wild mountain tracts to-day. It is also equally certain that the language of these people, at least of a large section of them, belonged to the Tibeto-Chinese and Austric family. The Munḍā languages, belonging to the latter class, are now spoken by a large number of people scattered in Sāontal Parganas, Chotanagpur, Central Provinces, Madras and the slopes of the Himalaya mountains.

The Neolithic men were probably superseded by another group, who introduced the use of copper, and are hence known as the 'men of the copper age'. But we know hardly anything about them.

3. The Copper age.

Last of all came the people who are known by the generic term 'Dravidians', from the Indian word 'Drāviḍa.' Their language is now represented by Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, Malayalam, Tuluva and Oraon languages spoken by peoples living in the Vindhya region and the Southern peninsula. A tribe in Baluchistan, called the Brāhui, speaks a tongue allied to the above languages, and this fact is of very great importance in determining the original home of the Dravidians. For a long time the Dravidians were supposed to be the aborigines of India, but the existence of a Dravidian tongue in Baluchistan, and the 'undoubted similarity' of Sumerian and Dravidian ethnic types', have led some scholars to suppose that the Dravidians originally belonged to Western Asia, and invaded India through Baluchistan. Some scholars are, however, still of opinion that the Dravidians originally belonged

4. The Dravidians

to India, and spread through Baluchistan to Western Asia.

But whatever we may think of their origin, it seems to be certain that the Dravidians predominated both in Northern and Southern India before the Aryan conquest of this country. For, 'Dravidian characteristics have been traced alike in Vedic and classical Sanskrit, in the Prākrits or early popular dialects, and in the modern vernaculars derived from them.' It is equally certain that the Dravidians possessed a civilisation of a very high order. They were conversant with the use of metals, and erected buildings and forts. They constructed boats, and navigated the rivers and seas in pursuit of trade and commerce. Their language and literature were in a fairly developed condition, and influenced the Aryan tongue when the two came into contact. The Dravidian religion also was advanced far beyond the primitive state, and some of their gods were adopted by the Aryans.

5. The Aryans.

The Dravidians were firmly settled in different parts of Northern and Southern India more than four thousand years ago, when the fair-complexioned Aryans

gradually advanced from the north-west, across the Hindu Kush mountains, and entered India through Afghanistan. The Dravidians naturally resisted the new-comers with all their might, and a fierce and protracted struggle ensued. It was not merely a struggle between two nationalities, but a conflict between two types of civilisation. The Dravidians had to fight for their very existence, and there are several passages in the Rigveda which indicate the severity of the struggle. But all in vain. History has repeatedly shown that sons of India, born and brought up in her genial soil, are no match for the fresh hardy mountaineers of the north-western regions who poured into the country at irregular intervals. The Dravidians proved no exception to the rule. They laid down their lives in hundreds and thousands on various battlefields, and ultimately succumbed to the attack of the invaders. They put up indeed a brave fight, but the Aryans destroyed their castles, burnt their houses, and reduced a large number of them to slaves.

Their struggle with the Dravidians.

The hard-won victory enabled the Aryans gradually to occupy the whole of the Panjab,

and ultimately to conquer the whole of Northern India. The vanquished natives, the Dravidians as well as the remnants of their predecessors, mostly submitted to them, and became the Dāsas; but large bodies of Dravidians found shelter in the south, and some of the other tribes retreated towards the north, south, and east, and maintained a precarious existence in inaccessible mountains. Their descendants, the Kōls, Bhils, Gonds, and many Himalayan tribes, are still to be found in the fastnesses to which their ancestors were driven by the Aryans about four thousand years ago.

The origin of the Aryans.

The Aryans who thus obtained a footing on Indian soil had a previous history. They belonged to a very ancient stock of the human race, and lived for a long period with the forefathers of the Greek, the Roman, the German, the English, the Dutch, the Scandinavian, the Spanish, the French, the Russian, and the Bulgarian nations. This is best shown by the fact, that some words, denoting essential ideas of a civilised man, are still used in common by their descendants, although removed from one another by hundreds of miles and thousands

of years. Thus the Sanskrit words *Pitar* and *Mātar* are essentially the same as *pater* and *mater* in Latin, *patér* and *métér* in Greek, *father* and *mother* in English, and *vater* and *mutter* in German, all denoting the most notable of the earliest notions of mankind *viz.*, that of the parents. The community of language has led many scholars to suppose that the Aryans, who conquered India, belonged to what may be called the parent stock of the many nations named above, famed in the ancient and the modern world. This is not, however, a very logical conclusion, for the community of language does not necessarily prove the community of blood. The Bengali language, for example, is now spoken by people of diverse nationalities. The only certain conclusion, therefore, is that the forefathers of all these nations lived for long in close intimacy at a certain region. The locality of this region and the time when the different groups of people separated, are alike uncertain and subject of a keen and protracted controversy. The generality of opinion is, that they lived somewhere in central Asia. But some would place them still further north, in the Arctic regions, while others locate them in the regions

now occupied by Austria, Hungary and Bohemia.

Anyhow one or more of these groups separated from the rest, and proceeded towards India. In course of time, some of them settled into the province now known as Persia, and developed a civilisation of which distinct traces are still to be seen among their descendants, the Parsis of the present day. The remaining clans crossed the Hindu Kush and occupied the Panjab after driving away the Dravidians as has already been narrated.

CHAPTER II.

THE VEDAS.

Before proceeding with the history of the Aryans in India, it will be well to give a short account of the Veda, their sacred literature, as practically every thing we know about them is derived from this source alone. But even apart from this, there are other reasons why we should give a prominent place to the Vedic literature. It is the oldest literary work not only of the Indo-Aryans, but of the entire Aryan group known as the Indo-Germans, and, as such, occupies a very distinguished place in the history of the world-literature. Besides, for about four thousand years, the Vedas have been looked upon as revealed words of God by millions of human beings, and they have formed the basis of their culture and religion amid continual changes and successive developments.

The Vedic Literature.

The word "VEDA" means "knowledge," "knowledge par excellence *i.e.*, the sacred, spiritual knowledge." It does not signify either any individual literary work as the "Koran,"

or even a collection of a definite number of books arranged at a particular time, such as the Bible or the Tripiṭaka. It is a mass of literature which had grown up in course of many centuries, and was orally handed down from generation to generation. It consists of three successive classes of literary productions. To each of these belong a number of single works, some of which still exist, but many have completely disappeared.

These three classes are :—

I. The Saṁhitās or Mantras. As the name signifies, these are collections of hymns, prayers, charms, litanies and sacrificial formulas.

II. The Brāhmaṇas. These are massive prose texts which contain "speculations on the meaning of the hymns, give precepts for their application, relate stories of their origin in connection with that of sacrificial rites, and explain the secret meaning of the latter. In short, they form a kind of primitive theology and philosophy of the Brāhmans."

III. The Āraṇyakas and Upanishads. These are partly included in the Brāhmaṇas or attached thereto, and partly exist as separate

works. They embody philosophical meditations of the hermits and ascetics on soul, God, world and man.

A large number of Saṁhitās must have existed among the different schools of priests and singers. But many of them are only different recensions of one and the same Saṁhitā. There are, however, four Saṁhitās, which are notably different from one another, and which have reached us in several recensions. These are :—

1. The Ṛigveda Saṁhitā—A collection of hymns.

2. The Atharvaveda Saṁhitā—A collection of spells and charms.

3. The Sāmaveda Saṁhitā—A collection of songs mostly taken from the Ṛigveda.

4. The Yajurveda Saṁhitā—A collection of sacrificial formulas. (There are two distinct classes of this Saṁhitā *viz.*, the Saṁhitās of the Black-Yajurveda and the Saṁhitās of the White-Yajurveda.)

These four Saṁhitās have formed the basis of four different Vedas, and every work belonging to the second and third classes of Vedic literature *viz.*, the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas and

the Upanishads, is attached to one or other of these Saṁhitās, and is said to belong to one of the four Vedas. There are thus not only Saṁhitās but Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣhads of the Ṛigveda, and the same thing holds good with regard to the other three Vedas. Every single work of this vast literature belongs to the category of Veda, and the authors of these works are always referred to as *Ṛishis* or sages. Sometimes the names of these *Ṛishis* or sages denoted not so much an individual as a group, and thus the hymns attributed to Viśvāmitra, for example, were probably composed not by a single individual of that name, but by various members of his family or school. It may be noted that women and people of the lowest classes of society are mentioned as composers of some of these hymns.

The authorship of the Vedic Literature.

Although the hymns are attributed to these *Ṛishis*, pious Hindus have always laid stress upon their divine origin. They maintain that these hymns were merely revealed to the sages and not composed by them. Thus the Vedas are called *apaurusheya* (not made by man), and *nitya* (existing in all eternity), while the *Ṛishis*, or sacred poets to whom they are

ascribed, are known as *mantradrashṭā*, *i.e.*, inspired seers who saw or received the *mantra* by sight directly from the supreme Creator. These ideas about the sanctity of the Vedas have ever formed the cardinal doctrines of Hinduism, and no religious sect that refuses to subscribe to them can have any legitimate place within its fold.

Besides the revealed literature, described above, to which alone the name Veda may be properly applied, there is another class of works which, strictly speaking, belong to the Vedic literature, but which cannot claim to be ranked in that category, as its authorship is ascribed to human beings. These are called Sūtras or Vedāṅgas.

The Vedāṅgas or the Sūtras.

There are altogether six Vedāṅgas. This does not mean six distinct books or treatises, but merely six subjects, 'the study of which was necessary either for the reading, the understanding, or the proper sacrificial employment of the Veda.' These six subjects are śikshā (pronunciation), Chhandas (metre), Vyākaraṇa (grammar), Nirukta (explanation of words), Jyotisha (astronomy) and Kalpa (ceremonial). The first two are considered necessary for reading the Veda,

the two next, for understanding it, and the last two for employing it at sacrifices'.

These doctrines were originally embodied in the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas, but, later on, separate text books were written on each of them. These texts were written in a very peculiar style. They consisted of a series of extremely concise formulas, called Sūtras, which in point of brevity may almost be compared to Algebraic formulas. From this fact the texts are also called Sūtras. These were, however, mostly composed in later periods and will be dealt with in a later chapter.

What has been said of the Vedāngas applies equally well to another class of literature, called the Upavedas or subsidiary Vedas, dealing with secular subjects such as medical science (*Āyurveda*), military science (*Dhanurveda*), music (*Gandharvaveda*), art, architecture and analogous subjects.

The Upavedas.

Having given a general description of the Vedic literature, we may now proceed to give a short account of the more important individual works, the composition of which may be roughly placed during the period under review.

Detailed account of the Vedic Literature.

The Rigveda.

A. The Saṁhitā. Of the various Saṁhitās of the Ṛigveda, only one has reached us, *viz.*, that belonging to the Śākalaka school. It contains 1028 (according to some 1017) *sūktas* (hymns), divided into ten *maṇḍalas* and again in eight *ashṭakas*. This Saṁhitā is the earliest work in the Vedic literature, but its different portions must have been composed at different ages, and put together at a subsequent date. The oldest hymns occur in *maṇḍalas* 2-7, each of which is ascribed to a family of priests *viz.* Gṛitsamada, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvāja and Vasishṭha. The ninth *maṇḍala* is wholly devoted to Soma drink and the God Soma. The first and tenth *maṇḍalas* are the latest additions, although they contain many old passages. The Saṁhitā contains hymns addressed to various deities. An idea of their poetical beauty and general nature may be gathered from the specimens given at the end of Chapter III. Besides, the Saṁhitā throws a flood of light on the early life of the Aryans, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter III.

B. The Brāhmaṇas. There are two Brāhmaṇas belonging to the Ṛigveda ; The first, the

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa is traditionally regarded as the work of Mahidāsa Aitareya. It deals principally with the great Soma sacrifices and the different royal inauguration ceremonies. The second, the Kaushītaki or Śānkhāyana Brāhmaṇa, deals not only with the Soma but also with various other sacrifices.

C. To the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa belongs the Aitareya Āraṇyaka, which includes the Aitareya Upanishad. The Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa contains Kaushītaki Āraṇyaka, a portion of which is known as the Kaushītaki Upanishad.

II. The Atharvaveda.

A. Saṁhitā. The Saṁhitā is known to us in two recensions, the Śaunaka and Paippalāda, but the latter is very imperfectly known. The Śaunaka recension contains 731 (according to some 760) hymns, divided into 20 books. The last two books seem to be later additions. The Saṁhitā contains many verses which occur in the Rigveda. It deals mostly with charms, magic, and spells, by which one could overcome demons and enemies, win over friends, and gain worldly successes. For this reason the Saṁhitā was not included in the Vedic literature for a long time. It preserves many old popular cults and superstitions.

B. Brāhmaṇa. No ancient work of the Brāhmaṇa class, belonging to Atharvaveda, is known. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, although classed as a Brāhmaṇa, really belongs to the Vedāṅga literature, and is a very late work.

C. Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣhads. There are three Upaniṣhads, *viz.*

(1) The Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣhad.
(2) The Praśna-Upaniṣhad.
(3) The Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣhad.

All these are comparatively late works.

III. The Samaveda.

A. Saṁhitā. The Purāṇas refer to thousand Saṁhitās of the Sāmaveda. But only one has reached us in three recensions, *viz*: 'the Kauthuma current in Gujarāt, the Jaiminīya in the Carnatic, and the Rāṇāyanīya in the Mahratta country.' It consists of a collection of hymns, which were sung by a particular class of priests, called Udgātar, at the Soma sacrifices. These hymns are 1810, or omitting the repetitions, 1549 in number, but all of them, with the exception of 75, are taken from the Rik Saṁhitā. The 75 verses, which are not found in that Saṁhitā, occur partly in the other Saṁhitās, and partly in different Brāhmaṇas or other works on Ritual. These

texts were, however, merely used for the melody, which was all-important for the followers of the Sāmaveda. Thus while the Sāmaveda is very important for the history of Indian music, and throws interesting light on the growth of sacrificial ceremonies, its value as a literary work is practically nil.

B. Brāhmaṇas.

(1) The Tāṇḍya-mahā-Brāhmaṇa, also called Pañchaviṁśa (*i. e.* consisting of twenty-five chapters), is one of the oldest and most important of Brāhmaṇas. It contains many old legends, and includes the *Vrātyastoma*, a ceremony by which people of non-Aryan stock could be admitted into the Aryan family.

(2) The Shaḍviṁśa Brāhmaṇa (the twenty-sixth Brāhmaṇa) is merely a supplement to Pañchaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa. The last portion of this forms what is known as 'Adbhuta Brāhmaṇa', a Vedāṅga-text dealing with omens and supernatural things.

(3) The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa—very little is at present known of this book.

C. Āraṇyakas and Upanishads.

(1) The Chhāndogya Upanishad, the first part of which is merely an Āraṇyaka, belongs

to a Brāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda, probably the Tāṇḍya-mahā-Brāhmaṇa.

(2) The Jaiminīya-Upanishad-Brāhmaṇa is an Āraṇyaka of the Jaiminīya or Talavakāra school of Sāmaveda, and a part of it forms the Kena-Upanishad, also called the Talavakāra Upanishad.

IV. The Yajurveda.

A. Saṁhitās.

The grammarian Patañjali speaks of the 101 schools of Yajurveda. At present, however, only the following five are known. Of these the first four belong to the Black-Yajurveda and the last to the White-Yajurveda.

1. The Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā of the Kaṭha school.
2. The Kapishṭhala-Kaṭha-Saṁhitā—known only in fragments.
3. The Maitrāyaṇī-Saṁhitā, *i. e.* the Saṁhitā of the Maitrāyaṇīya school.
4. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā, *i. e.* the Saṁhitā of the Taittirīya school.
5. The Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā, known in two recensions of the Kāṇva and Mādhyandina schools.

The principal distinction between the White- and the Black-Yajurveda consists in the fact,

that while the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā, belonging to the former, contains only the hymns *i. e.* the prayers and sacrificial formulas, the *Saṁhitās* of the Black-Yajurveda contain, in addition, the prose commentaries which should properly be relegated to the Brāhmaṇa portion. It seems that the Black-Yajurveda belongs to an earlier period, when the Saṁhitā and the Brāhmaṇa portions were mixed up together, and that it is only at a later time, that necessity was felt to separate the two, as had probably already been done in the case of the other Vedas.

The Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā consists of forty chapters, and about two thousand verses, including repetitions. It consists of hymns, many of which are borrowed from the Ṛigveda and the Atharvaveda, as well as sacrificial formulas in prose. As the Sāmaveda Saṁhitā contains only those hymns which were sung by the Udgātar priests, so the Yajurveda Saṁhitā consists only of texts which were to be recited by the Adhvaryu priests in connection with the more important sacrifices.

B. The Brāhmaṇas.

(1) The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa belongs to the Black-Yajurveda. As has been already pointed

out, the Black-Yajurveda Saṁhitās contain both Saṁhitā and Brāhmaṇa. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa therefore contains only later additions to the Taittirīyā Saṁhitā.

(2) The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, belonging to the White-Yajurveda, is the most voluminous, and, at the same time, the most important of all the Brāhmaṇas. Like the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā, of which it is a commentary, it occurs in two recensions, the Kāṇva and the Mādhyandina. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is a very important source of information, not only about the sacrificial ceremonies of ancient India, but also about her theology and philosophy, as well as her thoughts, ideas, manners and customs.

C. Āraṇyakas and Upanishads.

(1) The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka is practically a continuation of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. Its concluding portion constitutes the Taittirīya Upanishad, and the Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upanishad, the last one being a comparatively late work.

(2) The first portion of the fourteenth book of Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa really constitutes an Āraṇyaka, while the last portion of the same book constitutes the famous Brihadāraṇyaka-Upanishad.

(3) The Kāṭhaka-Upanishad, belonging to Black-Yajurveda.

(4) The Īsā-Upanishad forms the concluding chapter of the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā.

(5) The Svetāsvatara-Upanishad, belonging to the Black-Yajurveda.

(6) The Maitrāyaṇīya-Upanishad, belonging to the Black-Yajurveda, is a late work.

Of all the books noticed above, the Saṁhitā of the Rigveda is the earliest. It must have been finally arranged in its present form long before the Saṁhitās of the other Vedas, so far as they are independent of the Rigveda, began to be composed as such. Again, the composition of the Saṁhitās of the Sāma, Yajur, and Atharva-veda must have preceded the prose Brāhmanical texts. It is probable, however, that the final arrangement of the Yajurveda and the Atharvaveda Saṁhitās took place at a time, when the Brāhmaṇa literature had already commenced to take shape, so that the latest portion of the former is sometimes contemporary with the oldest portion of the latter.

Antiquity of the Rigveda.

So far the conclusions are easy to draw, and, on the whole, reliable, but when we try

to fix the time of these different compositions, our difficulty at once commences.

The date of the Vedic literature has formed the subject of a keen and protracted discussion.

The age of the Vedas.

Max Müller, who first dealt with the question in a critical manner, held that the hymns of the Rigveda must have been composed before 1200-1000 B. C. He was, however, loath to lay down any positive date for its composition, and expressly remarked, that the question, whether this date should be fixed as 1000, 1500, 2000 or 3000 years before Christ, can never be solved. As Winternitz observes, later scholars have, without offering any new argument, regarded 1200-1000 B. C., which was merely looked upon by Max Müller as *terminus ad quem*, as the date of the composition of the Rik Saṁhitā. On the other hand, scholars like Jacobi and Tilak have, on astronomical grounds, referred the date of the Rik Saṁhitā to a much higher antiquity than was contemplated by Max Müller. Thus Tilak refers some Vedic texts to a period as far back as 6000 B. C. According to Jacobi, the Vedic civilisation flourished between 4500 and 2500 B.C.,

and the Saṁhitās were composed during the latter half of the period.

The present position about this question may be summed up in the following lines of Winternitz, the latest authority on this subject. "The available evidence merely proves, that the Vedic period extends from an unknown past, say X, to 500 B. C., none of the dates 1200-500 B. C., 1500-500 B. C., and 2000-500 B. C., which are usually assumed, being justified by facts. Only it may be added, as a result of recent researches, that 800 B. C. should probably be substituted for 500 B. C., and that the unknown date X more probably falls in the third, rather than in the second, millenium before Christ."[1]

Origin and antiquity of the art of writing.

The discussion of Vedic literature naturally leads to the cognate subject, the antiquity of the art of writing. Scholars have almost unanimously held the view, that the art of writing was unknown in the period when the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas were composed. The great Vedic scholar Max Müller even went so far as to assert, that the art of writing was unknown to the Indians

(1) Winternitz, vol. I. p. 258.

before the fourth century B. C. Fortunately, these views have since been abandoned, and most scholars now agree in referring the introduction of writing in India to seventh century B. C. They also hold that the ancient Indian alphabet, called '*Brāhmī lipi*', was derived from Semitic alphabets, although there is difference of opinion as to the particular Semitic race from which the Indians borrowed this knowledge of writing. The generally-accepted view is that of Bühler, who maintained that the Indian alphabet was derived from the earliest Phœnician alphabet which was in use in the 9th century B. C.

The European views on this subject have recently been challenged by some Indian scholars, notably by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar. He maintains that the art of writing was known to the Indians as early as the time of Rigveda, and derives the Brāhmī alphabet from pre-historic alphabetic signs, such as have been recently found on pre-historic potteries dug out of the Hyderabad Cairns. It is thus impossible to form any definite opinion on the subject before further discoveries are made.

The scholars, who hold that the art of writing was unknown in the Vedic period, are

naturally forced to the conclusion, that the whole Vedic literature was preserved by oral tradition only. To those who look upon this as incredible, the following lines of Max Müller would serve as a reply :

"It is of little avail, in researches of this kind to say that such a thing is impossible. We can form no opinion of the powers of memory in a state of society so different from ours as the Indian Parishads are from our Universities.....Even at the present day, when manuscripts are neither scarce nor expensive, the young Brāhmans who learn the songs of the Veda and the Brāhmanas and the Sūtras, invariably learn them from oral tradition, and know them by heart. They spend year after year under the guidance of their teacher, learning a little, day after day, repeating what they have learnt as part of their daily devotion, until at last they have mastered their subject and are able to become teachers in turn."

"How then was the Veda learnt ? It was learnt by every Brāhmana during twelve years of his studentship (forty-eight years in the case of those who did not wish to marry). The Prātiśākhya gives us a glimpse into the

lecture rooms of the Brāhmanic colleges..... The pupils embrace their master, and say "Sir, read." The master gravely says 'om' *i. e.* 'Yes.' He then begins to say a *praśṇa* (a question) which consists of three verses. In order that no word may escape the attention of his pupils, he pronounces all with the high accent, and repeats certain words twice.

"After the *Guru* (teacher) has pronounced a group of words, consisting of three or sometimes (in long compounds) of more words, the first pupil repeats the first word, and when anything is to be explained, the teacher stops him and says, "Sir." After it has been explained by the pupil who is at the head of the class, the permission to continue is given with the words "Well, Sir." After the words of the teacher have thus been repeated by one, the next pupil has to apply to him with the word, "Sir".....After a section of three verses has thus been gone through, all the pupils have to rehearse it again and again."

CHAPTER III.

ARYAN SOCIETY.

The sacred literature, of which a short account has been given in the last chapter, covers a period, roughly speaking, of about 1500 years. For, although, as noted above, it is impossible to assign precise dates, the period 2000 to 600 B.C. may be looked upon as a fair approximation. For the history of the Aryans during this period, we are almost solely dependent upon these books, and, when carefully studied, they furnish a valuable account of the life led by the Aryans during these 1500 years.

The Samhitā of the Rigveda, being the earliest literary production of the Aryans, reveals to us the earliest phase of Aryan life, and we proceed to give a short sketch of its essential features.

First, as to the home of the Aryans. The valleys of the river Sindhu and its tributaries, and of the Sarasvati[1] and the Drishadvati, formed the earliest settlements in India proper. Al-

[1] The river Sarasvati, which was looked upon as very sacred by the Aryans, flowed through the territory now belonging to Patiala Raj, but it has been completely lost in the sands.

though they were thus mainly confined to the province now called the Panjab, their outer settlements reached further eastward, to the banks of the Ganges and the Jumna. On the other hand, some Aryan tribes still lingered on the western side of the Indus, on the banks of the Kabul, the Swat, the Kurram and the Gomal rivers.

The Aryans had given up their nomadic habit, and lived in fixed dwelling houses. These were made of wood and bamboo, and did not differ much from those in Indian villages at the present day. Only we sometimes hear of 'removable houses built of wood, which could be taken in parts and re-fixed at different sites.'

Family life.

Within these homes, the Aryans developed a healthy family life, the prototype of what we see around us to-day. It rested upon the sacred tie marriage, and 'the old Aryans knew of more tender relation than that between hu and wife.' The wife, though subject t husband, was the mistress of the household had authorities over farm-labourers and s Her importance is sufficiently indicated b fact, that she participated with her husb-

all religious ceremonies, and we read how, in early dawn, the loving pair, with harmonious mind, and in fitting words, sends up their prayers to the gods above. There was no *purdah* system. The women spoke to the people gathered at her husband's house, and went to feasts and general sacrifices, gaily decorated, and decked with ornaments. They were fully attentive to their household duties, and we have a refreshing picture in the Rigveda as to how they rose at early hours, set the household servants at work, and made themselves active, 'singing songs while working.' Their education was not neglected, and some ladies like Viśvavārā, Apālā, and Ghoshā, even composed *mantras* and rose to the rank of *Rishis*.

Besides the wife or wives (for polygamy was not unknown), the parents, brothers, and sisters formed the other important members of an Aryan family. It was characterised by sweet and affectionate relations between its members, which form such a distinctive feature of the Hindu society, and have been so fascinatingly described in later times in immortal works like the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata.

The family served as the foundation of the State. A number of families, bound together by real or supposed ties of kindred, formed a clan, several clans formed a district, and a number of these districts composed a tribe, the highest political unit. Various tribes are mentioned in the Ṛigveda, such as the Bharatas, Matsyas, Krivis, Tṛitsus and the well-known group of five tribes *viz.* the Turvaśas, Yadus, Pūrus, Druhyus and Anus. The organisation of the tribal state was varied in character. In some cases the system of hereditary monarchy prevailed, while in others there was a sort of oligarchy, several members of the royal family exercising the power in common. Some tribes again had a democratic organisation, and their chiefs were elected by the assembled people. 'But whatever the form of government, the head of the state was nowhere absolute, but everywhere limited by the will of the people, which made its power felt in assemblies of the clan, the district, and the tribe.'

Political organisation.

The assemblies were known as *Sabhā* and *Samiti*, terms which have subsisted up to the present day. Political affairs were freely discussed in these bodies, and debates ran high,

everyone wishing to convert others to his faith. But all the same, their ideal was a harmonious activity of the different members of the assembly, and this is beautifully set forth in the concluding hymn of the Rigveda.

"Assemble, speak together, let your minds be all of one accord. The place is common, common the assembly, common the mind, so be their thought united. A common purpose do I lay before you. One and the same be your resolve, and be your minds of one accord. United be the thoughts of all that all may happily agree."

When the serious business of the assembly was over, the Sabhā or assembly-hall was converted into a club-house, where the people ate and drank, talking merrily all the while. Both animal and vegetable foods were taken by the Aryans. Not only fishes and birds, goats and rams, but horses, buffaloes, and even bulls were slaughtered for their food. Rice, barley, beans and sesamums formed the chief vegetable food-stuffs, and they ate not only boiled rice as the Bengalis do, but also bread and cakes made of flour, like the other peoples of India. Milk and

Food and Drink.

its various preparations, such as *ghee*, butter, and curds, together with fruits, vegetables, sugar-cane, and various parts of the lotus plant formed favourite commodities of food and drink.

It would be a mistake to suppose, however, that our forefathers quenched their thirst by milk and water alone. They used stronger drinks, the chief among which were *surā*, a brandy made from corn and barley, and the juice of Soma plant. To such an extent were they addicted to the last, that they even raised it to the position of a God.

Occupations.

Agriculture naturally formed the chief occupation of the people. They ploughed the field, as cultivators do to-day, by means of a pair of oxen bound to the yoke, and irrigation and other subsidiary processes have practically continued unaltered for the last three or four thousand years. Much attention was naturally devoted to cattle-rearing, and many a singer represent the cows as the sum of all good, which Indra has created for our enjoyment.

Among other important occupations, the first place must be given to weaving, both in cotton and wool, which supplied cloths and garments

to the people. It is noteworthy, that as in later days, both men and women were engaged in this work, as well as in the subsidiary processes of dyeing and embroidery. Next came the carpenter who constructed houses, and supplied house-hold utensils and furniture. They also built chariots, carts, boats and ships. Many of them were skilled in wood-carving, and produced delicate artistic cups. Then there were blacksmiths who supplied various necessaries of life, from the fine needles and razors, to the sickles and ploughshares, and spears and swords. Goldsmiths worked in gold and jewels, and ministered to the fashions of the gay and the rich. The leather-workers tanned leather, and made various articles out of it, such as bow-strings, and casks for holding liquor.

Last, but not the least in importance, come the physician and the priest. The former not only cured diseases by means of the 'healing virtues of plants,' but also chased away evil spirits which sometimes possessed a man. The latter composed hymns, taught the boys how to learn them by rote, and served as the priests of kings, nobles and common people.

Trade.

There was trade and maritime activity; navigation was not confined to the streams of the Panjab, for the Aryans seem to have boldly ventured out into the open sea. There was probably a commercial intercourse with Babylon and other countries in Western Asia.

Exchange.

Coined money was not unknown, but it had a restricted use. The ordinary transactions were carried on by means of barter, *i.e.*, exchange of one thing for another. Cows formed an important standard of valuation; in other words, things were usually valued at the worth of so many cows.

War.

The usual equanimity of the society was no doubt disturbed by occasional wars. Reference has already been made to the fight between the Aryans and the original settlers of the country. This must have been constantly going on as the Aryans advanced further and further into the interior. But the Aryan tribes also not infrequently fought with one another. We hear, for instance, that King Sudāsa of the Tṛitsu tribe, in alliance with the Bharatas, fought with a confederacy of ten kings, and gained a complete victory.

Army.

The main elements of the army were charioteers and infantry, and their weapons chiefly consisted of bows, arrows, spears, lance and slings. The soldiers were arranged according to the clans and districts to which they belonged, and were protected by helmet and coat of mail.

Amusements.

On the whole, people led a merry, easy-going life. Men and women enjoyed themselves in festive assemblies with music and dance. Gambling houses were very common, and men whiled away their time in dice and drinking. Of manly games, chariot-racing and hunting seem to have been the most prominent.

Sense of morality.

It must not be supposed, however, that the people were light-hearted, and lacked the sense of duty or morality. The Vedic hymns "give evidence of an exalted and comprehensive morality." They condemn those who, with food in store, harden their hearts against the needy, and praise the bounty of others, who give unto the beggar what he wants, or minister to the physical comforts of the feeble. Hospitality to guests is repeatedly enjoined, while prayers are

offered to the gods to hurl destruction upon thieves, robbers and those guilty of telling lies. Sorcery, witchcraft, seductions, and adultery are denounced as criminal, and they acknowledge no wicked divinities, nor any mean and harmful practices. On the other hand, minstrels fervently prayed Agni to urge them on to 'holy thought,' and to Varuṇa, to loosen the bonds of sin committed by them,—the bonds above, between and under,—so that they could stand without reproach before Aditi.

Religion.

The Vedic minstrels thus gave due weight to duties other than those of multiplying offerings to the gods, and the punctilious observance of religious rituals, although it must be admitted that their religion was pre-eminently ritualistic, and the worship of gods was looked upon as the first duty of man.

Prayer.

The Vedic worship meant primarily only oblation and prayer. The recitation of sacred, but stereotyped, texts was yet unknown; on the contrary, a great value was attached to the novelty of the hymns. The ascetic practices had not yet probably had any importance in the ceremony, which merely consisted of sacrifice, along with

devout prayers. These prayers have been handed down to us in the shape of hymns, and a few specimens will be quoted at the end of this chapter.

Sacrifice.

As to the sacrifice itself, we do not know much in detail, but it appears that the offerings, consisting of ordinary food and drink, were thrown into the fire, in order that they might reach the gods. Animals like horses, rams, buffaloes, bulls, and even cows were also sometimes sacrificed. But although the process of sacrifice was simple enough, the theory about it was quite a complex one, as the object and necessity of sacrifice were often regarded from radically different points of view. Thus it was sometimes looked upon as a bargain between God and man: the man has necessities which can only be, and actually are, provided by the bounty of God, and, in return, man offers food and drink to quench His thirst, and satisfy His hunger. Sometimes this idea of give-and-take is entirely dropped, and sacrifice becomes an act of thanksgiving, mingled with affection and gratitude, to the gods, for the benefits already received from them, and expected in future.

But, above all, there was a mystic air about the sacrifice. It was somehow associated with the supreme energy which keeps the universe in order. Without it there would be no day and night, no harvest and rain, because the gods would lose the power of sending them. Nay, even the gods themselves, as well as the universe, are said to have owed their origin to an act of sacrifice, without which everything would again be in a state of chaos. Proceeding on this line of symbolism, the whole system of nature came to be looked upon as a vast and perennial sacrifice. The lightning and the sun were looked upon as its sacred flame, the thunder as the hymn, the rains and rivers as the libations, and the gods and the celestial apparitions, as the priests.[2] Whatever we might think of these mysterious fancies, no one can fail to be struck with the grandeur and sublime beauty of the conception.

The Vedic Deities.

The gods, to whom the sacrifice was offered, formed a motley group of varied and complex character. It is true that almost everything in nature, which impressed the imagination, or was

(2) Barth—The Religions of India. p. 37.

supposed to be possessed of the power of doing good or evil, received the homage and worship of the old Aryans. But these were of minor importance, compared to the personal divinities to whom the Vedic hymns were mostly addressed. These personal divinities were mostly deified representatives of the phenomena or agencies of nature, and were endowed with human passions and instincts. The true origin of these gods is often betrayed by their names and attributes, such as 'Dyaus' (the Heaven), 'Prithivī' (the earth), 'Sūrya' (the Sun), 'Ushas' (the dawn), 'Agni' (the fire), and Soma (the sacrificial draught of that name).

Usually, the natural phenomena, out of which these gods arose, pass into the shade, amid a variety of attributes, superimposed upon them; so much so, that in some cases the origin of these gods is altogether obscured. Thus Agni and Soma, while clearly retaining their physical characters, are credited with mystic powers, by virtue of which they kindle the sun and the stars, render water fertile, and make the plants and all the seeds of the earth spring up and grow. In Indra, on the other hand, the physical characteristics are practically hidden under the

superimposed attributes. He is primarily the thunder-god, but a host of fanciful myths have gathered round him. On the whole, he appears as the ideal Aryan chief, leading his followers to victory against the unbelievers, *viz.*, non-Aryan inhabitants of India.

It would be impossible to refer to even the prominent Vedic gods in detail. Various attempts have been made to classify them. The earliest, and perhaps the best, classification is that of Yāska, "founded on the natural bases which they represent." It places the gods mainly in three categories, according as they represent some phenomena in earth, atmosphere, or Heaven. We have thus (1) the *Terrestrial gods*, such as Pṛithivī, Agni, Bṛihaspati (Prayer), and Soma ; (2) the *Atmospheric gods*, such as Indra, Rudra (probably lightning), Maruts, Vāyu (wind), and Parjanya ; and (3) the *Celestial gods*, such as Dyaus, Varuṇa (vault of Heaven), Ushas (dawn), Aśvins (probably the twilight and morning stars), and Sūrya, Mitra, Savitṛi and Vishṇu, all associated with the most glorious phenomenon of nature viz, the Sun.

There was no hierarchy among the host of Vedic gods. It is true that some gods figure

more prominently in the Vedic hymns than others. Indra, for example, is invoked in about one-fourth of the total hymns of the Rigveda. But still there was no recognised chief among them, like the Greek Zeus, the position of supremacy being ascribed to different gods, at different times, by their worshippers. The true sentiment of the Vedic Aryans in this respect is indicated as follows in one of the hymns: 'Not one of you, ye gods, is small, none of you is a feeble child: All of you, verily, are great.' Reference is, however, sometimes made, even in the Vedic hymns, to "the mighty and the lesser, the younger and the elder gods." Gods, who are sometimes said to rule over others, are elsewhere described to be dependent upon them, and such contradictory statements are by no means infrequent. Sometimes one god was identified with others, and the process went on, till they arrived at the grand monotheistic doctrine, *viz.* 'that the gods are one and the same, only the sages describe them differently.'

In concluding this short sketch of the Aryans, we cannot but refer to the pious, lofty, and poetic sentiments which are still preserved in their hymns. The following instances are

calculated to give some idea, not only of the characteristics of some of their principal gods, but also of their philosophic insight, and ethical conceptions. The first three poems give a metrical sketch of the three principal Vedic deities, Indra, Agni and Ushas. They are not literal translations of any particular Vedic hymn, but 'combine in one picture the most salient and characteristic points in the representations of the deities which are contained in the hymns.' The last three verses are metrical renderings of select Vedic hymns. The first is a fine poetic description of the most glorious phenomenon of nature, the Sun. The hymn addressed to Varuṇa is a "beautiful description of the divine omniscience", and the relations between God and man. The last one is a fine example of the lofty philosophic speculations of the Vedic Ṛishis, foreshadowing the doctrines of the Upanishads.

INDRA.

(A METRICAL SKETCH.)

(1) *Indra's Greatness.*

What poet now, what sage of old,
The greatness of that god hath told,
Who from his body vast gave birth
To father Sky and mother Earth ;

Who hung the heavens in empty space,
And gave the earth a stable base ;
Who framed and lighted up the sun,
And made a path for him to run ;
Whose power transcendent, since their birth
Asunder holds the heaven and earth,
As chariot-wheels are kept apart
By axles framed by workmen's art ?
In greatness who with Him can vie,
Who fills the earth, the air, the sky,
Whose presence unperceived extends
Beyond the world's remotest ends ?
A hundred earths, if such there be,
A hundred skies fall short of thee ;
A thousand suns would not outshine
The effulgence of thy light divine.
The worlds, which mortals boundless deem,
To thee but as a handful seem.
Thou, Indra, art without a peer
On earth, or yonder heavenly sphere.
Thee, god, such matchless powers adorn,
That thou without a foe wast born.
Thou art the universal lord,
By gods revered, by men adored.
Should all the other gods conspire,
They could not frustrate thy desire.

The circling years, which wear away
All else, to thee bring no decay ;
Thou bloomest on in youthful force,
While countless ages run their course.
Unvexed by cares, or fears, or strife,
In bliss serene flows on thy life.

(Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. V., p. 135).

(2) *Indra's conflict with Vṛittra.*

Who is it that, without alarm,
Defies the might of Indra's arm ;
That stands and sees without dismay
The approaching Maruts' dread array ;
That does not shun, in wild affright,
The terrors of the deadly fight ?
'Tis Vṛittra,* he whose magic powers
From earth withhold the genial showers,
Of mortal men the foe malign,
And rival of the race divine,
Whose demon hosts from age to age
With Indra war unceasing wage,
Who, times unnumbered, crushed and slain,
Is ever newly born again,
And evermore renews the strife
In which again he forfeits life.

* The demon who personifies drought, and is also called Śushṇa and Ahi.

Perched on a steep aerial height,
Shone Vṛittra's stately fortress bright.
Upon the wall, in martial mood,
The bold gigantic demon stood,
Confiding in his magic arts,
And armed with store of fiery darts.
And then was seen a dreadful sight,
When god and demon met in fight.
His sharpest missiles Vṛittra shot,
His thunderbolts and lightnings hot
He hurled as thick as rain.
The god his fiercest rage defied,
His blunted weapons glanced aside,
  At Indra launched in vain.
When thus he long had vainly toiled,
When all his weapons had recoiled,
His final efforts had been foiled,
  And all his force consumed,—
In gloomy and despairing mood
The baffled demon helpless stood,
  And knew his end was doomed.
The lightnings then began to flash,
The direful thunderbolts to crash,
  By Indra proudly hurled.
The gods themselves with awe were stilled
And stood aghast, and terror filled
The universal world.

Even Tvashṭṛi sage, whose master-hand
Had forged the bolts his art had planned,
  Who well their temper knew,—
Quailed when he heard the dreadful clang
That through the quivering welkin rang,
  As o'er the sky they flew.
And who the arrowy shower could stand,
Discharged by Indra's red right hand,—
The thunderbolts with hundred joints,
The iron shafts with thousand points,
Which blaze and hiss athwart the sky,
Swift to their mark unerring fly,
And lay the proudest foemen low,
With sudden and resistless blow,
Whose very sound can put to flight
The fools who dare the Thunderer's might?
And soon the knell of Vṛittra's doom
Was sounded by the clang and boom
  Of Indra's iron shower;
Pierced, cloven, crushed, with horrid yell,
The dying demon headlong fell
  Down from his cloud-built tower.
Now bound by Śushṇa's spell no more,
The clouds discharge their liquid store;
And, long by torrid sunbeams baked,
The plains by copious showers are slaked;

The rivers swell, and sea-ward sweep
Their turbid torrents broad and deep.
The peasant views, with deep delight
And thankful heart, the auspicious sight.
His leafless fields, so sere and sad,
Will soon with waving crops be clad,
And mother Earth, now brown and bare
A robe of brilliant green will wear.
And now the clouds disperse, the blue
Of heaven once more comes forth to view
The sun shines out, all nature smiles,
Redeemed from Vrittra's power and wiles
The gods, with gratulations meet,
And loud acclaim, the victor greet;
While Indra's mortal votaries sing
The praises of their friend and king.
The frogs, too, dormant long, awake,
And floating on the brimming lake,
In loud responsive croak unite,
And swell the chorus of delight.

(Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. V., p. 1

AGNI.

(A METRICAL SKETCH.)

Great Agni, though thine essence be but one,
Thy forms are three; as fire thou blazest here
As lightning flashest in the atmosphere,
In heaven thou flamest as the golden sun.

It was in heaven thou hadst thy primal birth ;
By art of sages skilled in sacred lore
Thou wast drawn down to human hearths of yore,
And thou abid'st a denizen of earth.

Sprung from the mystic pair,* by priestly hands
In wedlock joined, forth flashes Agni bright ;
But,—O ye Heavens and Earth, I tell you right,—
The unnatural child devours the parent brands.

But Agni is a god : we must not deem
That he can err, or dare to reprehend
His acts, which far our reason's grasp transcend :
He best can judge what deeds a god beseem.

And yet this orphaned god himself survives :
Although his hapless mother soon expires,
And cannot nurse the babe, as babe requires,—
Great Agni, wondrous infant, grows and thrives.

Smoke-bannered Agni, god with crackling voice
And flaming hair, when thou dost pierce the gloom
At early morn, and all the world illume,
Both Heaven and Earth and gods and men rejoice.

* The two pieces of fuel by the attrition of which fire is produced, and which are represented as husband and wife.

In every home thou art a welcome guest ;
The household's tutelary lord ; a son,
A father, mother, brother, all in one ;
A friend by whom thy faithful friends are blest.

A swift-winged messenger, thou callest down
From heaven, to crowd our hearths, the race divine,
To taste our food, our hymns to hear, benign,
And all our fondest aspirations crown.

Thou, Agni, art our priest, divinely wise,
In holy science versed ; thy skill detects
The faults that mar our rites, mistakes corrects,
And all our acts completes and sanctifies.

Thou art the cord that stretches to the skies,
The bridge that spans the chasm, profound and vast,
Dividing Earth from Heaven, o'er which at last
The good shall safely pass to Paradise.

But when, great god, thine awful anger glows,
And thou revealest thy destroying force,
All creatures flee before thy furious course,
As hosts are chased by overpowering foes.

Thou levellest all thou touchest; forests vast
Thou shear'st like beards which barber's razor shaves,
Thy wind-driven flames roar loud as ocean-waves,
And all thy track is black when thou hast past.

But thou, great Agni, dost not always wear
That direful form; thou rather lov'st to shine
Upon our hearths with milder flame benign,
And cheer the homes where thou art nursed with care.

Yes, thou delightest all those men to bless,
Who toil, unwearied, to supply the food
Which thou so lovest, logs of well-dried wood,
And heaps of butter bring,—thy favourite mess.

Though I no cow possess, and have no store
Of butter,—nor an axe fresh wood to cleave,
Thou, gracious god, wilt my poor gift receive,—
These few dry sticks I bring; I have no more.

Preserve us, lord, thy faithful servants save
From all the ills by which our bliss is marred;
Tower like an iron wall our homes to guard,
And all the boons bestow our hearts can crave.

And when away our brief existence wanes,
When we at length our earthly homes must quit,
And our freed souls to worlds unknown shall flit,
Do thou deal gently with our cold remains;

And then thy gracious form assuming, guide
Our unborn part across the dark abyss
Aloft to realms serene of light and bliss,
Where righteous men among the gods abide.

(Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts Vol. V., p. 221.)

USHAS.

(A METRICAL SKETCH.)

Hail, Ushas, daughter of the sky,
Who, borne upon thy shining car
By ruddy steeds from realms afar,
And ever lightening, drawest nigh:—

Thou sweetly smilest, goddess fair,
Disclosing all thy youthful grace,
Thy bosom bright, thy radiant face,
And lustre of thy golden hair;—

(So shines a fond and winning bride,
Who robes her form in brilliant guise,
And to her lord's admiring eyes
Displays her charms with conscious pride;—

Or virgin by her mother decked,
Who, glorying in her beauty, shews
In every glance, her power she knows
All eyes to fix, all hearts subject ;—

Or actress, who by skill in song
And dance, and graceful gestures light,
And many-coloured vestures bright,
Enchants the eager, gazing throng ;—

Or maid who, wont her limbs to lave
In some cool stream among the woods,
Where never vulgar eye intrudes,
Emerges fairer from the wave) ;—

But closely by the amorous sun
Pursued, and vanquished in the race,
Thou soon art locked in his embrace,
And with him blendest into one.

Fair Ushas, though through years untold
Thou hast lived on, yet thou art born
Anew on each succeeding morn,
And so thou art both young and old.

As in thy fated ceaseless course
Thou risest on us day by day,
Thou wearest all our lives away
With silent, ever-wasting, force.

heir round our generations run :
The old depart, and in their place
Springs ever up a younger race;
Vhilst thou, immortal, lookest on.

ll those who watched for thee of old
Are gone, and now 't is we who gaze
On thy approach ; in future days
hall other men thy beams behold.

ut 't is not thoughts so grave and sad
Alone that thou dost with thee bring,
A shadow o'er our hearts to fling ;—
hy beams returning make us glad.

hy sister, sad and sombre Night
With stars that in the blue expanse
Like sleepless eyes mysterious glance,
t thy approach is quenched in light ;—

nd earthly forms, till now concealed
Behind her veil of dusky hue,
Once more come sharply out to view,
y thine illuming glow revealed.

hou art the life of all that lives,
The breath of all that breathes ; the sig
Of thee makes every countenance brigl
ew strength to every spirit gives.

When thou dost pierce the murky gloom,
Birds flutter forth from every brake,
All sleepers as from death awake,
And men their myriad tasks resume.

Some, prosperous, wake in listless mood,
And others every nerve to strain,
The goal of power or wealth to gain,
Or what they deem the highest good.

But some to holier thoughts aspire,
In hymns the race celestial praise,
And light, on human hearths to blaze,
The heaven-born sacrificial Fire.

And not alone do bard and priest
Awake ;—the gods thy power confess
By starting into consciousness
When thy first rays suffuse the east ;

And hasting downward from the sky,
They visit men devout and good,
Consume their consecrated food,
And all their longings satisfy.

Bright goddess, let thy genial rays
To us bring stores of envied wealth
In kine and steeds, and sons, with health,
And joy of heart, and length of days.

(Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts. Vol. V., p. 196.)

SUN.

(A VEDIC HYMN.)

1. By lustrous heralds led on high,
The omniscient Sun ascends the sl
His glory drawing every eye.

2. All-seeing Sun, the stars so bright,
Which gleamed throughout the sombre night;
Now scared, like thieves, slink fast away,
Quenched by the splendour of thy ray.

3. Thy beams to men thy presence shew;
Like blazing fires they seem to glow.

4. Conspicuous, rapid, source of light,
Thou makest all the welkin bright.

5. In sight of gods, and mortal eyes,
In sight of heaven thou scal'st the sk

6. Bright god, thou scann'st with searching
The doings all of busy men.

7. Thou stridest o'er the sky; thy rays
Create, and measure out, our days;
Thine eye all living things surveys.

8. 9. Seven lucid mares thy chariot bear,
Self-yoked, athwart the fields of air,
Bright Sūrya, god with flaming hair.

10. That glow above the darkness we
Beholding, upward soar to thee,
For there among the gods thy light
Supreme is seen, divinely bright.

(Translation of Rigveda 1, 50.
Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts. Vol, V., p. 160, f. n.)

VARUNA.

(A VEDIC HYMN.)

The mighty Lord on high, our deeds, as if at hand, espies :
The gods know all men do, though men would fain their deeds disguise.

Whoever stands, whoever moves, or steals from place to place,
Or hides him in his secret cell,—the gods his movements trace.

Wherever two together plot, and deem they are alone,
King Varuna is there, a third, and all their schemes are known.

This earth is his, to him belong those vast and boundless skies ;
Both seas within him rest, and yet in that small pool he lies.

Whoever far beyond the sky should think his way to wing,
He could not there elude the grasp of Varuna the king.

His spies descending from the skies glide all this world around,
Their thousand eyes all-scanning sweep to earth's remotest bound.

Whate'er exists in heaven and earth, whate'er beyond the skies,
Before the eyes of Varuna the king, unfolded lies.

The ceaseless winkings all he counts of every mortal's eyes:
He wields this universal frame, as gamester throws his dice.

Those knotted nooses which thou fling'st, O god, the bad to snare,—
All liars let them overtake, but all the truthful spare.

(Translation of Atharvaveda, Book IV., 16. Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. V., p. 64 f. n.)

CREATION HYMN.

Nor Aught nor Nought existed; yon bright sky,
Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above.

What covered all? what sheltered? what concealed?
Was it the water's fathomless abyss?
There was not death—yet was there nought immortal,

There was no confine betwixt day and night;
The only One breathed breathless by itself,
Other than It there nothing since has been.

Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled
In gloom profound—an ocean without light—
The germ that still lay covered in the husk
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.
Then first came love upon it, the new spring
Of mind—yea, poets in their hearts discerned,
Pondering, this bond between created things
And uncreated. Comes this spark from earth
Piercing and all-pervading, or from heaven?
Then seeds were sown, and mighty powers arose—
Nature below, and power and will above—
Who knows the secret? who proclaimed it here,
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?
The Gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
He from whom all this great creation came,
Whether His will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.

(Rigveda X. 129. Translated by Max Müller in 'Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. I, p. 78.)

CHAPTER IV.

LATER VEDIC PERIOD—POLITICAL HISTORY.

During the period represented by the later Vedic literature which, roughly speaking, comes down to about 600 B. C., some remarkable changes came over the Aryans in India. The first and foremost of these was their gradual expansion towards the east and south. We have seen, that the main Aryan settlements, in the earlier period, were on the banks of the rivers of the Panjab, although their outlying colonies reached as far as the Ganges. During the period under review, however, they continued their progress, and well-nigh covered the whole of Northern India, from the Himalaya to the Vindhyas, and probably even beyond the latter range. The spread of Aryan colonies over the whole of Hindusthan was probably due to a variety of causes, the most important of which was, no doubt, the missionary propaganda, not infrequently backed by military force. The earlier inhabitants either resigned themselves to the fate of the slaves, or were pushed back still

Extension of Aryan Settlements.

further, and Northern India was almost completely Aryanised. Of the new Aryan kingdoms in the east, the most important were those of the Kurus, Pañchālas, Kāśis, Kośalas and Videhas.

With the progress of the Aryans, their centre of civilisation, too, was shifted towards the east. The bank of the Sarasvatī was now regarded as the most sacred spot, and witnessed the performance of many a sacrifice of great sanctity and importance. The territory between this holy river and the Ganges came to be the seat of the orthodox Aryan civilisation, and nothing is more indicative of the change that had taken place, than that the people of this region should look down upon the Aryans of the Panjab as of impure descent, and imperfect in manners and customs.

The progress of the Aryans was followed by other important consequences. The old tribal organisation was gradually strengthened and consolidated, and led in many instances to the growth of powerful territorial states. Many of the famous tribes of the earlier period had passed into oblivion, and new ones had taken their place. Thus the far-famed Bharatas, Pūrus, Tṛitsus and

Growth of Powerful States.

Turvasas of old were now merging into new peoples like the Kurus and the Pañchālas, whose names do not occur in the Rigvedic hymns, but who now began to play the most conspicuous part in political and religious life. The political life became more keen, and the conflict for supremacy among different states was of frequent occurrence. Already the ideal of universal empire loomed large in the political horizon, and it is difficult to maintain that it was never actually realised in practice to any considerable extent. The references to Aśvamedha and Rājasūya sacrifices are too frequent in literature to be dismissed as mere fiction, and both of them had, as their immediate and only object, the establishment of imperial sway over a number of other states. We may readily believe, that political India was already exhibiting those characteristic features, which have ever distinguished it in historical times, *viz.* a congeries of states, fighting for supremacy, and yielding at times to the irresistible force of a mighty empire-builder.

Imperialism in ancient India.

A few concrete instances may be noted. The Śatapatha Brāhmana refers to two Bharata

kings, Bharata Dauhshanti and Satānika Sātrājita, as having performed the Aśvamedha sacrifice. They advanced as far as the Ganges and the Jamuna, and conquered the Kāśis in the east, and the Sātvats in the west. The same Brāhmaṇa refers to an old *gāthā* which says: "The greatness of the Bharatas neither the men before nor those after them attained." The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa further refers to Aśvamedha sacrifices performed by Para, the Kośala king; Purukutsa, the Aikshvāka king; Marutta Āvikshita, the Āyogava king; Kraivya and Soṇa Sātrāsāha, the Pañchāla kings; Dhvasan Dvaitavaṇa, the king of the Matsyas; and Ṛishabha Yājñātura, the king of the Sviknas.

Again, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa refers specifically to no less than twelve kings who, being inaugurated with the Mahābhisheka ceremony, "went everywhere, conquering the earth, up to its ends, and sacrificed the sacrificial horse." Three of these kings are identical with those in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa list.

The story of Mahābhārata.

A typical instance of the struggle for supremacy, leading to the establishment of a mighty empire, is furnished by the Mahābhārata. The main events

of this grand epic are too well-known to require any detailed treatment. Although its composition is to be referred to a later period, the central event of the poem, *viz.* the struggle between the Kauravas of Hastināpura and the Pāndavas of Indraprastha, is certainly historical. These two branches of the Kuru family fell out with each other owing to the perfidy of the Kaurava prince Duryodhana, and when negotiations and mediations failed to bring about a settlement, each side prepared for war. Most of the important states of India joined with the one or the other. The patron of the Pāndavas, the statesman Vāsudeva Krishna, conceived the bold idea of building up one universal empire out of the innumerable states which divided India into so many hostile camps, as it were. At last the great battle was fought on the famous field of Kurukshetra, and the Pāndavas gained a complete victory. This great war, the echo of which persists down to our own time, may be approximately dated at about 1000 B. C. It must have caused a tremendous sensation, comparable to the late great war in Europe, for the ancient writers are unanimous in their view that it

The story of Mahābharata.

ushered in a new epoch (the Kali Yuga or Dark Age) in the history of India.

Later history of the Pāṇḍavas.

The battle of Kurukshetra left the Pāṇḍavas the supreme political power in India. The Purāṇas name thirty kings of this dynasty descended from Arjuna. They are called *Pauravas*, no doubt because of a real or fancied connection with the celebrated Pūrus. It is almost certain that the early Aryan tribes, mentioned in the Ṛik-Saṁhitā, were merged in later ones, and, in all likelihood, the Pūrus and the Bharatas of the Ṛigveda were merged in the Kurus of the Brāhmaṇas and Mahābhārata. The Paurava kings, Parīkshit and Janamejaya, are famous figures in Mahābhārata, and the latter is one of the twelve universal sovereigns mentioned in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. During the reign of Nichakshu, fourth in descent from Janamejaya, the city of Hastināpura was carried away by the Ganges, and other calamities befell the Kuru kingdom. The capital was then transferred to Kausāmbī, but the Kuru kingdom steadily declined from that time. No detail is known of any of the succeeding Pauravas, till we come to the twenty-sixth king Udayana,

whose history will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Other contemporary kingdoms.

The contemporary, and probably allied, dynasty of the Aikshvākus ruled in Kośala with Ayodhyā as their capital. Twenty-four kings ruled in this line, but our detailed knowledge begins from the time of Prasenajit, a contemporary of Udayana, of whom more will be heard hereafter. At the time of the Great War, the Bārhadrathas were ruling in Magadha. They were descendants of the famous Jarāsandha. Sixteen kings of this dynasty ruled at Giribraja (Rājagriha) after the Great War, when the dynasty was overthrown by the Śaiśunāgas.

In addition to the above, other ruling dynasties flourished in different parts of India, during the period that followed the Great War. Of these, the kingdoms of Kāśi and Videha rose to great eminence, and among others may be mentioned the Pañchālas, the Haihayas, the Kaliṅgas, and the Śūrasenas.

Thus the supremacy which the Pāṇḍavas gained by the Great War must have been short-lived. During the six hundred years that

followed, India must have presented the same political condition, out of which she was rescued by the genius of Kṛishṇa, and the prowess of Arjuna. The next great empire that we know of was built up by Mahāpadma Nanda, and if any flourished during the interval, its memory has been completely lost.

So far about a general outline of political events. If we now turn from this brief sketch to a consideration of the detailed political history of the period, our difficulties at once become apparent. There were no doubt genuine traditions about kings and royal dynasties from the earliest period, but in course of transmission through thousands of years, the texts containing them have suffered to such an extent by way of additions and alterations, that it is at present almost impossible to reconcile them with one another. Mr. Pargiter, who has gone more deeply into this branch of study than any other scholar, has prepared an outline of political history of this period on the basis of these early traditions. This outline has not yet been critically examined by scholars, and is in conflict with

Lack of detailed political history.

Mr. Pargiter's view.

some of the current views. But as a first bold attempt to reconstruct the framework of the early political history of India, its importance cannot be over-estimated. We give below a summary of his main conclusions.

The mythical king Manu.

Tradition naturally begins with myth, and so all the early dynasties that ruled in India are derived from a primaeval king Manu Vaivasvata. Manu is said to have nine sons and a daughter, among whom the whole of India was divided. Ikshvāku, the eldest son, obtained Madhyadeśa, and was the progenitor of the solar race or dynasty, with its capital at Ayodhyā. From Ikshvāku's son Nimi (or Nemi) sprang the dynasty that reigned in Videha, with its capital at Mithilā, which is said to have been named after his son Mithi.

The dynasty of Purūravas.

Ilā, the daughter of Manu, had a son, called Purūravas Aila, who got the kingdom of Pratishthāna (Allahabad). This kingdom rapidly developed, and members of this family carved out independent principalities at Kānyakubja (or Kanauj) and Benares. Yayāti, the son of Nahusha, and the great-grandson of Purūravas,

was a renowned conqueror. He extended his kingdom widely, and was reckoned a *Samrāj* (emperor). He divided his empire among his five sons, Yadu, Turvasu, Druhyu, Anu and Puru, each of whom became the founder of a long line of kings. Puru, the youngest son, got the ancestral property, and Yadu's realm lay in the country watered by the rivers Chambal, Betwa, and Ken. At a later period, Yadu's descendants increased and divided into two great branches, 'the Haihayas', and 'the Yādavas.' The Yādava branch developed a great kingdom by extending its sway over neighbouring countries. They defeated the Pauravas (descendants of Puru), and drove the Druhyus into the Panjab.

The kingdom of Ayodhyā then rose to very great eminence under Yuvanāśva II, and especially his son Mandhātṛi. The latter was a famous king, a *Samrāj* (emperor), and extended his sway very widely. He overran the Paurava and Kānyakubja kingdoms, and defeated the Druhyus. The Druhyu king Gāndhāra retired to the north-west, and gave his name to the Gāndhāra country. It is also probable that Mandhātṛi or

Mandhātṛi.

his sons carried their arms south to the river Narmadā.

The supremacy of Ayodhyā soon waned, and the Haihayas became the dominant power. One of their kings traversed the prostrate Paurava kingdom, and conquered Kāśi. The most famous king of this dynasty was Arjuna, son of Kritavīrya. He extended his conquests from the mouth of the Narmadā as far as the Himālayas, and raised the Haihaya power to pre-eminence during his long reign.

The Haihayas.

The principal Brāhmaṇs, who dwelt in the lower region of the Narmadā, were the Bhārgavas. They were ill treated by the Haihaya kings, and fled into Madhyadeśa. The famous Rishi Richika Aurva, who was chief among them, married a daughter of Gādhi, king of Kānyakubja. The issue of the marriage was Jamadagni, who married a princess of Ayodhyā. Gādhi's son Viśvaratha became the Brāhmaṇa Viśvāmitra.

At the end of his long reign Arjuna came into collision with Jamadagni, and killed him. The latter's son Rāma took up the fight, and was supported by the princes of Ayodhyā and Kānyakubja, who

Jamadagni and Arjuna.

were allied to him by marriage, and who would naturally have opposed the dangerous raids of the Haihayas. With their help Rāma killed Arjuna, and punished the Haihayas.

But although the Haihayas received a set-back, they grew in power, and their dominions stretched from the gulf of Cambay to the Ganges-Jumna Doab, and thence to Benares. They overthrew the kingdoms of Ayodhyā and Kānya-kubja, and many other kingdoms in the north-west, with the co-operation of various foreign tribes. The king of Ayodhyā, driven from his throne, took refuge in the forest, and died there, leaving a child Sagara. Sagara, on reaching manhood, defeated the Haihayas, and regained Ayodhyā. He extended his campaign, crushed the Haihayas in their own territories, and subdued all the other enemies in North India. India was thus saved from age-long struggles and depredations, bringing ruin and carnage in their train.

Sagara.

When Sagara established his empire over Northern India, the only noticeable kingdoms that survived were the Videha, Vaiśālī* and Ānava

*This name is given in anticipation to the foundation of the city by a later king named Viśāla.

(descendants of Anu) kingdoms in the east, Kāśi in Madhyadeśa, and the Yādava kingdoms in Vidarbha and on the Chambal. After the death of Sagara, the overthrown dynasties appear to have generally recovered themselves, and the Yādavas of Vidarbha seem to have extended their authority north-ward over the Haihaya territory. Vidarbha, after whom the province was named, had a grandson, Chidi, who founded the dynasty of Chaidya kings in Chedi, the country lying along the south bank of the Jumna. The Ānava kingdom in the east, the nucleus of which was Aṅga, became divided up into five kingdoms, said to have been named after king Bali's sons, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Suhma and Puṇḍra. The capital of Aṅga was Mālinī, and its name was changed afterwards to Champā or Champāvatī (Bhāgalpur) after king Champa.

Minor States.

The Paurava realm had been overthrown in Mandhātṛi's time, but, after Sagara's death, it was re-established by Dushyanta. Dushyanta's son by Śakuntalā was the famous and pious Bharata. Their territory, however, appears to have been shifted to the northern portion of the Ganges-Jumna Doab,

The Pauravas.

for Pratishṭhāna is no longer mentioned, and the district was included in the Vatsa realm. Bharata was a great monarch with a wide sway, and his successors were the famous Bharatas. Bharata's fifth successor Hastin made Hastināpura his capital. Under Hastin and his successors, the Paurava dynasty extended its sway over Pañchāla and other neighbouring realms.

In the meantime Ayodhyā again rose to prominence under Sagara's great-grandson Bhagīratha, and the latter's successors. But after the reign of Kalmāshapāda, who killed the sons of his priest Vaśishṭha, troublesome period ensued, and the kingdom was divided among two rival lines. The internal dissensions continued for six or seven generations, until Dilīpa II re-established the single monarchy. The kingdom of Ayodhyā, which now acquired the name of Kośala, rose to prominence under Dilīpa II and his successors Raghu, Aja, Daśaratha and Rāma. After them Ayodhyā ceased to play any prominent part in history.

Kingdom of Ayodhyā.

About this time the Yādavas rose to power. For a long time their territory was divided into

a number of small kingdoms, but the famous king Madhu consolidated them, and his territory is alleged to have extended from Gujarat to the Jumna. His descendants were the Madhus or Mādhavas. But the large Yādava kingdom was again divided among Sātvata's four sons, of whom Andhaka and Vṛishṇi became the founders of important ruling dynasties. Andhaka reigned at Mathura, the chief Yādava capital, and Vrishni reigned probably at Dvārakā in Gujarat.

The Yādavas.

About this time the kingdom of north Pañchāla rose to great power, and the famous king Sudāsa established its pre-eminence by driving out the Paurava king of Hastināpura, and defeating a confederacy of hostile kings. But not long afterwards the table was turned. The Pauravas not only recovered Hastināpura, but conquered north Pañchāla, and under the famous king Kuru, their sway extended beyond Prayāga. Kuru gave his name to Kurukshetra, and to Kurujāngala, which adjoined it on the east, and in which Hastināpura lay. His successors were called the Kurus or the Kauravas, a name that was extended also to the people.

The Kurus.

Vasu, a descendant of Kuru conquered the kingdom of Chedi, and extended his conquests as far as Magadha in the east, and Matsya in the north-west. He divided the kingdom among his five sons. Bṛihadratha, the eldest, took Magadha, with Girivraja as his capital, and founded the famous Bārhadratha dynasty there. Jarāsandha was one of the most famous kings of this dynasty, and extended his kingdom as far as Mathura, where Kaṁsa, the Yādava king, acknowledged him as overlord. Kaṁsa, relying on his favour, tyrannised over his own subjects, and was killed by Kṛishṇa. This roused Jarāsandha's wrath against Kṛishṇa and the Bhojas of Mathura. For a long time they resisted him, but feeling their position there insecure, they migrated in a body to Gujarat, and established themselves in Dvārakā, where Kṛishṇa ultimately obtained the lordship.

Jarāsandha.

In the meantime the Kauravas had again become prominent under Pratīpa and his successor Śāntanu Śāntanu's grandsons were Dhṛitarāshṭra and Pāṇḍu. Dhṛitarāshṭra had many sons, Duryodhana and others, who, as the

The Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas.

eldest branch, were called the Kauravas. Pāṇḍu had five sons, Yudhishṭhira and others, who were known as the Pāṇḍavas. Pāṇḍu died early, and there was intense jealousy between the cousins. The young Pāṇḍavas received the small principality of Indraprastha (Delhi) as their share of the Kaurava territory, but being ambitious they, with Krishna's help, killed Jarāsandha, their common enemy. They were banished for fourteen years as the penalty of losing at dice, and, at the end of that time, re-claimed their principality ; but Duryodhana refused all terms, and they appealed to arms. They were aided by the Matsyas, Chedis, Kārushas, Kāśis, south Pañchālas, western Magadhas, and the western Yādavas from Gujarat and Surāshṭra ; and on Duryodhana's side were all the Panjab nations, and all the other kingdoms of Northern India, and the north of the Deccan. The contest ended in the victory of the Pāṇḍavas, with the slaughter of nearly all the kings and princes who took part in it. It was the famous Bhārata battle. Yudhishṭhira became the king of the Kurus, and reigned at Hastināpura. A few years later, the Yādavas of Gujarat were ruined by fratricidal strife, and Krishna died. Yudhishṭhira

then abdicated, and retired with his brothers, having placed Arjuna's grandson Parīkshit II on the throne.

The later history of the Kurus.

The great slaughter of the Kshatriyas in the battle must have seriously weakened the stability of the kingdoms, specially in the north-west, which were faced by hostile frontier tribes. The Nāgas established themselves at Takshaśilā, and probably overran the whole of the Panjab. Within a century of the great battle, the Kuru king was obliged to abandon all the northern parts of the Ganges-Jumna Doab, and the Kaurava-Pāṇḍavas then reigned at Kausāmbī.

CHAPTER V.

LATER VEDIC PERIOD—SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

The gradual political evolution was by no ieans the most important factor in the history f the Aryans during the later Vedic period. hanges of far greater significance were gradu-lly taking place in their society and religion.

'he obscurity the Vedic ıguage.

One fact, which contributed more than anything else to this development, and which indeed supplies ke[y] to all the subsequent changes, is the g obscurity of the language of the

For languages, like human beings, have ise, growth, and decay, and here, as in lomains of nature, 'the old order changeth to new.' The language of the ıns was no longer understood by ɔple, and a special training was ter them. The consequences of ıenomenon were great and far-aching. In the first place, need as felt of a class of men, who ruction in the old Vedic texts,

and thus arose the professional Brāhmaṇa class, destined to develop into a rigid caste at no distant date. Secondly, the Vedic hymns came to be regarded as a Canonical book, to which it was impossible to add, and the religion thus assumed a more or less stereotyped form.

As a matter of fact, the theology of the hymns did not essentially differ from the theology of the later Vedic literature. Although some new deities had arisen, and some of the old ones had passed into oblivion, the change in the pantheon as a whole could not be said to be very striking in view of the number of years that h But although the theology remained less the same, the religious spirit un great change. The charming app that is good and sublime in nat outburst of individual enthusiasi stanzas addressed to various divin were now things of the past. Th was succeeded by one of criticism tion had yielded to rigid formali no more of those simple ceremon breathing a sense of healthy and ir

Change of religious spirit.

between God and man. Instead, we find the energy of the priestly class directed to a number of ceremonies, which they developed in endless details, and to which they attached the most fanciful and mystic significance. Indeed, the priestly class now devoted their whole attention to find out the hidden and mystic meaning of the rites and ceremonies. These ceremonies comprehend both domestic rites as well as great sacrifices, and form a body of rituals, probably the most stupendous and complex which has ever been elaborated by man.

Elaborate Rituals.

The domestic rites embrace the whole course of man's life, from his conception in the mother's up to his death, or rather beyond it, as ceremonies refer to the departed souls.

nventional list of forty *saṁskāras* nally drawn up at a later period, t reflecting conditions of an lier age, will not only explain e general nature of these rites but also throw a flood of light nd customs of the period.

a—Ceremony to cause conception.

-Ceremony to secure the birth of a male child. It consisted

in pounding a Soma stalk, or some other plant, and then sprinkling it into the right nostril of the would-be mother, with four Vedic verses.

3. Sīmantonnayana—The parting of the pregnant wife's hair by the husband with a porcupine's quill after due oblations and sacrifices, and offering prayers to Vishṇu to take care of the womb.
4. Jātakarman—Ceremony for the new-born child.
5. Nāmakaraṇa—Ceremony of naming the child
6. Anna-Prāśana—The first feeding of the child with solid food in the six month. The father gave the child flesh, if he was desirous of nouri flesh of partridge, if desirous of holy fish, if desirous of swift with *ghee*, if desirous of food mixed with curds, hc father gave to the child tc oblations to the gods with
7. Chūḍākarman—The tonsu head.
8. Upanayana—Initiation. B the child

Brahmacharya or the austere life of a student.

9-12. The four vows, differently named in different *Sūtras*, which were undertaken for studying the different portions of the Vedic literature.

13. Samāvartana—The ceremony on the completion of studentship. The student pays a fee to his teacher, cuts his hair, beard and the nails, takes his bath, and returns home.

14. Sahadharmachārini-samyoga—The taking of a helpmate for the fulfilment the religious duties—in other words,

arriage :—

lent-career is over, that of the
s. The first duty of the house-
a girl of equal rank, who has
another man, is younger than
side certain degrees of relation-
s father's and mother's side.
ıds of marriage were in vogue.
ɛr gives his daughter, dressed
ıents and decked with orna-
ı person, possessing sacred
virtuous conduct, who has

relatives and a good disposition, that is a *Brāhma* wedding.

(*b*) The *Prājāpatya* wedding is similar to the above, but the marriage formula used is "Fulfil your duties conjointly." Although the wives, married according to other rites, shared the duties of the husband, the *Prājāpatya* marriage laid particular stress on this aspect of marriage, and the husband could not take to any other *Āśrama*, or marry another wife, owing to the formula used.

(*c*) At the *Ārsha* wedding, the bridegroom presents a cow and a bull of the girl.

(*d*) If the bride is given, d ments, to a priest, who a sacrifice, during the c formance, it is called a *Da*

(*e*) The spontaneous union maiden is called a *Gāndha*

(*f*) If those, who have authori are propitiated by money, wedding.

(*g*) If the bride is taken b *Rākshasa* wedding.

(*h*) If a man embraces a female, deprived of consciousness, that is a *Paiśācha* wedding.

The first four of the above were unanimously held to be lawful. The fifth and the sixth were valid, only in the opinion of some. The last two were always regarded as blameworthy.

15-19. Pañcha-Mahāyajñas. The five great daily sacrifices to the gods, manes, men, goblins and Brahman. 'Teaching (and studying) is the sacrifice (offered) to Brahman, the (offerings of water and food called) Tarpaṇa the sacrifice offered to the manes, the burnt oblation the sacrifice offered to the , the Bali offering the sacrifice offered e Bhūtas (goblins), and the hospitable guests that offered to men.' be regularly performed every useholder.

n kinds of Pākayajñas (or small sacrifices) *viz.* the Aṣhṭakā, the Āgrahāyaṇī, the Chaitrī, the Pārvaṇa and the Śrāddha.

s are sacrifices offered on the of the dark halves of the four 'Kārtika to Māgha.' The ered on the full moon day of

Śrāvaṇa, the Āgrahāyaṇī, on the fourteenth, or on the full moon day of Agrahāyaṇa, the Chaitrī, on the full moon day of Chaitra, and the Āśvayujī on the full moon day of the month of Āśvina. Pārvaṇa is offered on the new and full moon days. The Śrāddha is one of the most important domestic rites. It is the monthly funeral offering to the manes on the new moon days.

27-33. The seven kinds of Haviryajñas.

34-40. The seven kinds of Somayajñas.

The Haviryajñas, along with the Somayajñas, form more highly developed rituals than described above, and are treated in detail Śrauta-sūtras. The essential po kindling of at least three sacre offerings of cakes, grain, milk made. In the case of Somayajñ offering of Soma, of course, part, and most of them were cha killing of animals. There was a distinction between these and (Nos. 1-26), as described in th In these Śrauta rituals, the prie prominent part, whereas, in th

the essential duties are performed by the householder himself.

The seven kinds of Haviryajñas are :—

1. The Agnyādheya—The establishment of the sacred fires, three or more in number. It was the bounden duty of every householder to set up these sacrificial fires in his house. These fire-places served the purposes of temples where God was worshipped.
2. The Agnihotra—Daily oblation in the three sacred fires.
3. The Darśa-paurṇamāsas—Yajñas of the full and new moon.
4. The Āgrayaṇa—The oblation of the first fruits of the harvest.
5. The Chāturmāsyas—Yajñas at the beginning of each of the three seasons.
6. The Nirūḍhapaśubandha—The animal-sacrifice, effected separately, not as an integral part of another ceremony.
7. The Sautrāmaṇī—The essence of this is the offering of *surā* (wine) to the Aśvins and Sarasvatī. It was usually an epilogue to the Somayajñas, its object being to cure persons who had drunk too much Soma therein.

The seven kinds of Somayajñas are—

The Agnishṭoma or Jyotir-agni-shṭoma, the Atyagnishṭoma, the Ukthya, the Shoḍaśin, the Vājapeya, the Atirātra, and the Aptoryāma. All these were more or less different forms of the Agnishṭoma, and varied only in the number of victims and some details.

The actual ceremony of the Agnishṭoma lasted for only one day in which the Soma was pressed thrice, in the morning, midday and in the evening, and cattle were offered to Agni. But the ceremony was preceded by a long period of *dīkshā* or consecration, sometimes extending for a year, during which the sacrificer and his wife lived an austere life in two adjacent huts built for the purpose. One of the most interesting features of this ceremony was the purchase of the Soma plant, which was brought on a cart, and solemnly received as a guest.

There were many other sacrifices besides those mentioned in the above list. It is not necessary to enumerate these, but four of them deserve special notice. The first is the Vrātya-Stoma. It consisted of four rites, by means of which persons outside the pale of Brahmanic fold were admitted into

Vrātya-Stoma.

the orthodox society. The existence of this sacrifice conclusively proves that the Hindu society in old days was not so rigid as at present, and opened its doors to all persons.

The next two ceremonies to be described, viz. the Rājasūya and Aśvamedha, have obtained a wide celebrity.

The Rājasūya was a ceremony for the consecration of a king. Like Agnishṭoma it consisted of a day in which Soma was pressed and other ceremonies performed, preceded by a long period extending to a year, in which the various preliminary rites were celebrated. The principal officers of the state took part in the ceremony, and the king, in his state-dress, received from the priest a bow and arrow, and declared himself king. He performed various acts symbolising his conquests in all directions, and was then anointed by a priest, a kinsman, a Kshatriya and a Vaiśya.

Rājasūya.

In the Aśvamedha ceremony, a horse, duly consecrated and protected by warriors, was let loose, along with 100 other horses, to move about at its own free will as a challenge to other kings. Then, for about a

Aśvamedha.

year, the king, accompanied by his queen, with their maids-in-waiting and high officials, performed daily sacrifices, in course of which the legends of the king's ancestors were recited. After the year was over, the horse was brought back, and the king was consecrated. The horse was anointed by the queens, and various ceremonies were gone through. It was then killed and its flesh roasted.

There can be no doubt that both the Rājasūya and Aśvamedha ceremonies could only be performed by powerful sovereigns, and were usually regarded as a visible symbol of their supremacy over other kings. In order to emphasise this aspect, the subordinate kings were sometimes made to perform menial services in these sacrifices, particularly in the Rājasūya.

Purushamedha.

More efficacious than the Aśvamedha, but far more dreadful, was the Purushamedha, in which a human being was sacrificed instead of a horse. The ceremonies performed were very similar in the two cases. As the horse was let loose for about a year, the human victim was allowed to enjoy himself for the same period, during which all his wishes were satisfied. The queen behaved with the

human victim exactly as she did with the horse in the Aśvamedha Sacrifice.

These rites and ceremonies were not, however, the only means of attaining success in this world, or bliss in heaven. Shortly, there developed the idea of *tapas* or self-mortification as leading to the same or even more important results. *Tapas* means meditation, accompanied by physical tortures. These took various forms, such as remaining in the same posture for months and years, living on the least quantity of food, standing in the sun in summer, and in the cold in winter, lying on iron spikes, and various other similar performances, testifying to the perfect control over physical body. Men retired into solitude, and exercised all these ascetic practices under the belief, that they would thereby not only gain heaven, but also develop "mystic, extra-ordinary and superhuman faculties." Thus *tapas* was substituted for sacrifice to a considerable extent in the religious out-look of the age.

Tapas.

While elaborate rites, ceremonies, and ascetic practices had been taking the place of the simple religious worship of the good old time, an intellectual

Philosophic speculations.

section of the people was more and more urged on by the conviction, that bliss and salvation were attainable only by true knowledge. They did not altogether discard rites, ceremonies, and austerities, but relegated them to a minor position, and laid down the doctrine, that 'he who knows God, attains to God, nay, he is God.' Such philosophic speculation was of course no new thing, for its germs are traceable even in the Ṛigveda, and a distinction between *Karma-kāṇḍa* and *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*, between rituals and knowledge, was always recognised in the Vedas. But it is only towards the close of the Vedic period, that these philosophic speculations were systematised and incorporated in the revealed literature, and thereby assumed an important position. Six definite schools of philosophy were distinguished at an early date, viz. the Sāṁkhya system of Kapila, the Yoga system of Patañjali, the Nyāya system of Gautama, the Vaiśeshika system of Kaṇāda, the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā of Jaimini, and the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā or the Vedānta of Vyāsa.

Upanishads.

The general body of early philosophical treatises is known by the name of Upanishads. The number of Upanishads known to us is exceedingly large,

about 200 in number, but many of them belong to very late times. The oldest Upanishads like the Brihadāranyaka and the Chhāndogya, however, go back to a period anterior to 600 B. C., and contain bold speculations about the eternal problems of human thought, concerning God, man, and the Universe. There was no doubt some sort of antagonism between the devotees of the ritual, and the philosophers, and it is not without significance that the Kshatriyas distinguished themselves in the domain of pure thought. The Brāhmanas were the sole authorities in questions affecting rites and ceremonies, but in philosophical speculations, they had rivals in the Kshatriyas, and sometimes even took lessons from them.

It is impossible to deal in detail with the philosophic speculations of the Upanishads, which are justly regarded as the most important contribution of India towards the world's stock of thought. They give evidence of a rare intellectual attainment which has won the rapturous praise of the learned world. The great philosopher Schopenhauer was so much carried away by the perusal of a Latin translation of the Persian translation of the Upanishads, that

he broke out in the following rapturous applause :—

"From every sentence deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us, and original thoughts of kindred spirits. And oh, how thoroughly is the mind here washed clean of all early engrafted Jewish superstitions, and of all philosophy that cringes before those superstitions ! In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnekhat (Upanishad). It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death !" (S. B. E., Vol. I, p. lxi).

This may be considered as somewhat extravagant, but even the sober Max Müller held that "the earliest of these philosophical treatises will always maintain a place in the literature of the world, among the most astounding productions of the human mind in any age and in any country." (S. B. E., Vol. I, p. lxvii).

The Egyptians and the Indians were both faced with the common problem of death. "Had all ended for the man with the moment in which he had ceased to breathe ?" was their common

enquiry, and to prevent such a horrible thing, their common endeavour. Yet the one found the true solution in the mighty Pyramids, containing the embalmed bodies, while the other was led to evolve the immortal Upanishads. This contrast is interesting and instructive, and not only indicates the true character of Indian civilisation, but its superiority to all that preceded it.

At the close of the period we are dealing with, there were thus developing, side by side, a stupendous system of rites and observances, a curious method of self-torture, and highly elaborate philosophical speculations into the mysteries of the Universe. The life of an ancient Indian, swayed by these cross-currents, may be best realised from a study of what is technically called the four Orders or Āśramas. These four Orders are, that of the student, that of the householder, that of the ascetic, and that of the hermit in the woods. After the ordinary course of training at the teacher's house was over, every man had to make a choice of his future career out of these four.

The four Āśramas.

He might choose the first, and devote his whole life to study. He had then to live at his

teacher's house until his death, and follow the course of strict discipline prescribed for a student. He had to lead a chaste life of strict virtue, maintaining proper control over all his organs, and avoiding all luxuries and pleasures of life.

If he chose the second, he had to return from his teacher's house, after his study was over, in order to marry, and maintain a household. His chief duty was to study the Vedas, maintain a fire, and perform the different rites and ceremonies noted above.

Or he might adopt the third, and go forth as an ascetic from his teacher's house. He was to live without a fire, without a house, without pleasures, without protection. Remaining silent, and uttering speech only on the occasion of the daily recitation of the Vedas, begging so much food only in the village as will sustain his life, he had to wander about, neither caring for this world nor for heaven. He had to wear clothes thrown away by others as useless, or he might even go naked, though this last practice was not much countenanced. Indifferent towards all creatures whether they do him an injury or a kindness, without undertaking

anything for this world and the next, he was to seek the Ātman or Self ; in other words, he had to consecrate his whole life to philosophic meditation. No doubt, it was to this type of men, that we owe the development of philosophy.

Fourthly, one might, after finishing his studies, adopt the life of a hermit in the woods. A hermit was to live in the forest, in order to practise austerities. He maintained a fire, and performed the five great daily sacrifices referred to above. He could not enter a village, and dressed himself in garments made of bark and skins. At first he had to live on roots, fruits, leaves and grass, then on whatever became detached spontaneously, next on water, lastly on nothing.

Although any one of these four Orders was open to a student who had had a course of training at his teacher's house, he could follow even two or more of them if he chose. Thus he might live as a householder for some time, and then take to the life of an ascetic or a hermit at a fairly advanced age. There are reasons to believe that this was the course more often followed. We even hear of kings retiring to forest at the close of their lives.

The organisation of the four Orders is a unique feature of Indian society. Though the historian is mostly concerned with one of them alone, *viz.* that of the householder, he cannot ignore the influence that the other three must have exercised upon it. The presence of a band of pious selfless seekers after knowledge and salvation must have improved the moral tone of the society as a whole. Many of them, again, although generally aloof from worldly affairs, lived too close to society not to help it with constant advice, and, if necessary, by occasional intervention. The laws and regulations, for example, were codified by them, and tyrannical kings had not infrequently to tremble before their terrible wrath. Many instances are on record, in which the sages intervened to put an end to a tyrant's career.

This brief sketch of the Vedic society cannot be concluded without a reference to the evolution of that unique social institution, called caste. At first the Aryans formed a homogeneous mass of people, but gradually two classes of men gained a position of honour and distinction. A primitive people naturally yields awe and

The Caste system.

reverence to those who possess a knowledge of sacred literature and religious ceremonies, as well as to those who wield political authorities. Thus arose the Brāhmaṇas and the Kshatriyas out of the general mass of population, now known as the Vaiśyas.

Whether these distinctions took definite shape when the Ṛigveda was written, it is difficult to tell. The probability is, that in the early Vedic period the only real distinction was between the white-skinned Aryans and the black-skinned Dāsas or Śūdras, as the aborigines, conquered by the Aryans, and incorporated in their society, came to be called. It is only in the later Vedic period, when the obscurity of the Vedic texts required a professional class of interpreters, that the class of Brāhmaṇas arose. At the same time, the extension of the Aryans increased the importance of the military leaders, who established political powers in various directions, and a distinct Kshatriya class was evolved.

But although the society was divided into four classes, there was no rigid caste system as yet. There is nothing to show that none but the son of a Brāhmaṇa could belong to that class.

Many passages indicate that the knowledge of Vedic texts and religious ceremonies was looked upon as the primary qualification, and heredity counted for little, in the recognition of a person as Brāhmaṇa. Rules were indeed laid down in the *Sūtra* period, that nobody should serve as a priest who could not prove his descent from three generations of Ṛishis. But these very rules prove distinctly, that the unbroken descent in a Brāhmaṇa line was yet an ideal, and not an actuality. They further show a deliberate attempt towards making the system more and more rigid. As to the other essentials of caste, the prohibition of interdining among the different classes was not even thought of, and inter-marriage between different classes was in vogue. The marriage of the three upper classes with the Śūdras was indeed looked upon with disfavour, but it was not positively forbidden. Lastly, the Brāhmaṇas had not yet attained an unquestioned position of supremacy, the Kshatriyas having successfully contested it for long.

The contrast between the 'Ārya' and the 'Śūdra,' however, came to be more and more accentuated during the later part of the Vedic period. It was claimed that the Śūdras had

no right to approach the sacred fire, i. e. perform sacrifice, or to read the sacred texts, although many passages in early texts clearly admitted these rights. The Śūdras were further denied the rite of burning the dead body, although old texts even go so far as to lay down the measurements for the tumulus of a Śūdra. Further, as has just been mentioned, marriage with the Śūdra gradually came to be looked upon with disfavour. These were portents of evil days for the Śūdras, but as yet there was no question of relegating them to a position of abject humiliation, such as has since been their fate.

The Kshatriyas pushed the Aryan colonies into remote and unknown lands, the Brāhmaṇas elaborated and spread the Aryan culture into the newly conquered regions and even far beyond, while the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras ministered to the growing needs of a wealthy people, fast developing a life of ease and luxury, by means of trade, commerce, manufacture, cultivation, and various other arts and crafts.

Position of woman.

It is gratifying to note that the women maintained a high position, not only in society, but also in the learned world. Two very interesting

incidents, described in the Brihadāraṇyakopanishad, may be referred to in this connection.

The great king Janaka of Videha once performed a sacrifice, at which the most learned Brāhmaṇas, including those from Kuru and Pañchāla countries, were present. Janaka wished to know, which of those Brāhmaṇas was the best read. So he enclosed a thousand cows, and ten *pādas* of gold were fastened to each pair of horns. And then Janaka spoke to the assembled Brāhmaṇas: "Let the wisest among you drive away these cows." Yājñavalkya, the great philosopher, asked his pupil to drive them away. Then the other Brāhmaṇas became very angry, and, one after another, they plied Yājñavalkya with questions. Yājñavalkya silenced them all. One of his interlocutors was the venerable lady Gārgī Vāchaknavī. She stood up in the midst of the assembly, and held a philosophic discussion with the great Yājñavalkya, till the latter remarked: "O Gārgī, do not ask too much, lest thy head should fall off. Thou askest too much about a deity, about which we are not to ask too much." Gārgī stopped for the moment, but some time after she rose again, and began with the proud

remark : "Venerable Brāhmaṇas, I shall ask him two questions. If he will answer them, none of you, I think, will defeat him in any argument concerning Brahman." The questions were asked and Yājñavalkya answered them.[1]

The second incident is also connected with Yājñavalkya. "Maitreyī," said he, addressing his wife, "verily I am going away from this my house into the forest. Let me make a settlement between thee and that Kātyāyanī, my other wife."

Maitreyī said : "My Lord, if this whole earth, full of wealth, belonged to me, tell me, should I be immortal by it?" 'No' replied Yājñavalkya. And Maitreyī said : 'What should I do with that by which I do not become immortal ? What my Lord knoweth of immortality, tell that to me.'

Yājñavalkya replied : 'Thou who art truly dear to me, thou speakest dear words. Come, sit down, I will explain it to thee, and mark well what I say.' Then followed one of the most abstruse philosophical discussions about

1. S. B. E., Vol. XV., pp. 121 ff.

the Universal Self, and its relation to the Individual.[1]

These two incidents eloquently testify to the high position, learning, and mental equipment of women in ancient India, to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in the history of the world.

1. S. B. E., Vol. XV., pp. 108 ff.

Book II.

From c. 600 B. C. to c. 300. A. D.

CHAPTER I.

POLITICAL HISTORY FROM THE SIXTH TO THE FOURTH CENTURY B. C.

Indian history assumes a more or less definite shape towards the close of the seventh century B. C. Śiśunāga, a local chief at Benares, became king of Magadha about this time, and established himself at Rājagriha, the far-famed capital of Jarāsandha. There was no paramount power in Northern India at this period, but the whole country was divided into a number of independent states. The literary works of the succeeding period give the number of important states as sixteen, but in all probability, the actual figure exceeded this conventional one. Some of the states were monarchical, but others had republican or oligarchic constitution. The four important royal dynasties that stand out prominently at this period, are the Śaiśunāgas in Magadha, the Aikshvākus in Kośala, the Pauravas at Kausāmbi, and the Pradyotas in Avanti. It is interesting to note that the

The Sixteen States.

kingdoms of Kuru-Pañchāla, Kāśī and Matsya, celebrated in the Mahābhārata, continued at this period, although they ranked as minor powers. Of the non-monarchical states we hear mostly of the Vrijis of Mithilā, the Sākyas of Kapilāvastu, and the Mallas of Pāvā and Kuśinagara. The Vrijis formed a confederacy of eight different clans, the most prominent of which were the Lichchhavis, who had their capital at Vaiśālī.

There were matrimonial alliances between many of these states, but that did not prevent the outbreak of hostility among them. Each of the four important royal dynasties, mentioned above, tried to establish its supremacy, and aggrandise itself at the cost of minor states. We hear, for example, that Pradyota, king of Avanti, fought with Udayana, king of Kauśāmbī, although the latter was his son-in-law, and at another time he threatened Rājagriha, the capital of Magadha. Prasenajit, king of Kośala, was already master of Kāśī, and his son afterwards conquered the Śākya state of Kapilāvastu. Again, Bimbisāra, king of Magadha, annexed Aṅga, and his son Ajātaśatru conquered the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī. All these kings—Pradyota, Udayana,

Bimbisāra and Prasenajit—flourished in the second half of the sixth century B. C.

At the beginning of the fifth century the Pauravas and the Pradyotas seem to have retired from the contest for supremacy, which was thus left to be fought out between the Śaiśunāgas of Magadha, and the Aikshvākus of Kośala. A fierce and protracted struggle ensued between Prasenajit and Ajātaśatru, and although the results were indecisive for a long time, victory ultimately inclined to the Magadha kingdom. Henceforth Magadha stands out as the supreme power in Northern India, a position which was ultimately destined to convert her into the greatest empire that India has ever seen. Ajātaśatru, the founder of the supremacy of Magadha, died about 475 B. C., and was succeeded by his son Darśaka, who plays such a prominent part in the recently discovered play, Svapna-Vāsavadattā of Bhāsa. Darśaka was succeeded by Udayi, to whom tradition ascribes the foundation of Pāṭaliputra, the new capital of the Magadha kingdom. From the remote times, described in epic literature, Rājagriha, now represented by the ruins at Rājgir in the Behar Sub-division,

Rise of Magadha.

served as the capital of the Magadha kingdom. While Ajātaśatru was fighting against the Lichchhavis, he built, as a defensive measure, a fortress at Pāṭaligrāma, a village at the junction of the Ganges and the Sone. In course of time, strategic importance of the place must have attracted the attention of the statesmen of Magadha, and Udayī evidently thought it a more suitable capital for his kingdom, which had lately extended its boundaries in all directions.

Udayī was succeeded by Nandivardhana, who in his turn was succeeded by Mahānandin. With him ends the Śaiśunāga dynasty, the ten kings of which ruled for about 200 years, from 600 to 400 B. C. Mahānandin had a son by his Śūdra wife, called Mahāpadma Nanda, who succeeded to the throne, and founded a new dynasty known as the Nandas. Mahāpadma seems to have been a great military genius. He defeated and destroyed the far-famed Kshatriya families, such as the Pauravas, the Aikshvākus, and the Pradyotas, who were ruling in Kauśāmbī, Kośala and Avanti, and established an empire which included the greater part of Northern India,

The Nandas.

excluding Kashmir, Panjab and Sindh. Thus did the work begun by Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru make triumphant progress.

The Panjab.

The Panjab seems to have been lacking in political power and prestige during this period. Of the sixteen traditional states mentioned in Indian literature, none is in the Panjab proper, and only two, Kāmboja and Gāndhāra, may be placed in the outlying tracts of the province. It appears to have been divided into two dozen or more independent principalities, not infrequently at war with one another. Some of these tiny states were ruled by kings, while others had democratic or oligarchic constitutions. It offered therefore an easy prey to foreign invaders, and already towards the close of the sixth century B. C., Darius, the famous king of Persia, conquered its western portion. This was the first of a series of foreign conquests, of which the Panjab was destined to be the unfortunate victim. Shortly after the time when Mahāpadma Nanda had established his great empire in Northern India, it was again invaded by the Greeks under Alexander the Great. Alexander found no

Invasion of Alexander.

difficulty in conquering the small principalities one after another. The only serious opposition he met with was from king Porus on the bank of the Jhelum river. He defeated Porus, but restored his kingdom, and advanced as far as the Beas river. Then he retraced his steps back to the Jhelum, whence he proceeded by boats to the mouth of the Indus, conquering the Malloi, the Oxydrakai and other tribes that he met on his way. From the mouth of the Indus his army was divided into two parts, one proceeding by land, and the other by sea. Alexander, at the head of the former, reached Susa in Persia in 324 B. C., and died there the next year. The whole expedition lasted from May, 327 B. C., when Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush, to October 325 B. C., when he began his retreat from the mouth of the Indus.

Reflections on Alexander's invasion.

The invasion of Alexander the Great has been recorded in minute details by the Greek historians, who naturally felt elated at the triumphant progress of their hero over unknown lands and seas. From the Indian point of view, its importance lies in the fact, that it opened up a free intercourse between India and the

western countries, which was big with future consequences. For the rest, there was nothing to distinguish his raid in Indian history. It can hardly be called a great military success, as the only military achievements to his credit were the conquests of petty tribes and states by instalments. He never approached even within a measurable distance of what may be called the citadel of Indian military strength, and the exertions he had to make against Porus, the owner of a small district between the Jhelum and the Chenab, do not certainly favour the hypothesis that he would have found it an easy task to subdue the mighty Nanda empire. Taking every thing into consideration, a modern historian, unprejudiced by the halo of Greek name, may perhaps be excused for the belief, that the majority of Greek writers did not tell the whole truth, when they represented the retreat of Alexander as solely due to the unwillingness of his soldiers to proceed any further; nor can he dismiss, as altogether fictitious, the belief, recorded by at least one ancient Greek historian, that the retreat of Alexander was caused by the terror of the mighty power of the Nandas.

But if the invasion of Alexander was not crowned by military success like that of Nadir Shah or Tamerlane, it was nevertheless characterised by cruelties, which may differ in degree, but certainly not in kind, from those standing to the credit of these later heroes. The perfidious massacre of the garrison of Massaga, and the recorded instances of the blood-thirsty Greek troops slaughtering the inhabitants of captured cities, sparing neither man, woman, nor child, tell their own tale. The Greek historians have recorded, that during the campaign of the lower Indus alone, 80,000 of the natives were killed, and multitudes sold as slaves, ; and howsoever the modern European historians try to palliate or justify these crimes, an Indian historian can hardly be blamed for regarding Alexander only as a precursor of Nadir Shah and Tamerlane.

The death of Alexander was a signal for the disruption of his vast empire. The Indian territories, which cost him a toilsome and blood-thirsty warfare for about three years, declared their independence, and in less than five years, they did away with the last vestige of Greek domination in the Panjab.

The credit of freeing the country from a foreigner's yoke is unanimously assigned to Chandragupta. The early career of this hero is all but unknown, although the brilliant achievements of his later life have surrounded his memory with a host of legends. He is said to have been the son of a Nanda king of Magadha by a low-born woman named Mura, from whom the dynastic name Maurya is supposed to have been derived. It is more probable, however, that Chandragupta belonged to the Kshatriya clan of that name, which is referred to as Moriyas of Pipphalivana in the Mahāparinivvāna Sutta. According to this Buddhist Sutta, the Moriyas were a well-known clan as far back as the time of Gautama Buddha.

Chandragupta, the Maurya.

There are good reasons to believe, that the splendid success of Chandragupta was due, as much to his own military genius, as to the statesmanship of his prime-minister Kautilya. He ascended the throne of Magadha by uprooting the Nanda dynasty about 322 B. C., and by means of a series of brilliant military conquests, established a vast empire stretching from the bank of the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges.

It is extremely fortunate that he did so, for erelong he had to meet with a terrible foe.

Invasion of Seleucus.

Seleucus, one of the ablest generals of Alexander, obtained possession of the Asiatic dominions of his master, and after organising his empire from Syria to Afghanistan, he proceeded to take possession of the Panjab. The desire was neither unnatural, nor illegitimate, in view of the recent conquests of Alexander, but, unfortunately for Seleucus, he had to reckon with a foe of a quite different character. The Panjab was no longer parcelled out among numerous petty chieftains, unable or unwilling to make a common cause against a foreign invader. It was part of a well organised empire, at the head of which stood a great military genius, and a far-sighted politician. The details of the conflict between these mighty enemies are not yet known, but that it ended in a decisive and disastrous defeat on the part of Seleucus, is no longer doubted by any sane historian. Seleucus had not only to finally abandon the idea of reconquering the Panjab, but had to buy peace by ceding Paropanisadai, Arachosia, and Aria, three rich provinces with the cities now

known as Kabul, Kandahar and Herat respectively as their capitals, and also Gedrosia (Baluchistan), or at least a part of it. The proud victor probably married the daughter of his Greek rival, and made a present of five hundred elephants to his royal father-in-law.

The conflict between Seleucus and Chandragupta Maurya is the nearest approximation to a fair trial of strength between the Greek and the Indian military discipline which history has recorded. The princelings in the Panjab can hardly be regarded as a fair match to Alexander, the greatest military genius the world has ever seen, backed by the resources of a mighty empire, extending over three continents, and stretching from the Adriatic to the Indus. But the empires of Seleucus and Chandragupta do not compare unfavourably in point of resources. Both of them had fought their way to the throne within recent years, and the generalship of both was as fair a specimen as their countries could normally show. If, then, according to Dr. V. Smith "the triumphant progress of Alexander from the Himalaya to the sea demonstrated the inherent weakness of the greatest Asiatic armies when confronted

with European skill and discipline,"[1] it may be said, with far greater logic, that the triumph of Chandragupta over Seleucus demonstrated the inherent weakness of the greatest Hellenic armies when confronted with Indian skill and discipline.

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1. Early History of India, 3rd Edition p. 112.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAURYA EMPIRE.

The crushing defeat inflicted upon the Greek hosts of Seleucus enabled Chandragupta to build up a mighty empire. It is unfortunately not yet possible to write a detailed account of his brilliant career. Nor can we trace the gradual steps by which an all-India empire, the unrealised dream of ages to come, was gradually brought into being. The available evidence, however, leaves no doubt, that during the reign of Chandragupta and his son and successor Bindusara, the arms of the Mauryas were carried almost to the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula, and the Maurya banner wafted across the vast stretch of land, from Herat in the north-west, to Madura in the south.

The Maurya Empire at its height.

India was now a leading power in the world, and maintained diplomatic relations with outside powers. The House of Seleucus sent regular embassies to the Court of Pāṭaliputra. We know, in particular, two of these ambassadors,

Foreign relations.

viz. Megasthenes, who lived in the Court of Chandragupta, and Deimachos who replaced him at the time of Bindusāra. We also hear of the exchange of friendly letters between Bindusāra and Antiochus, the son and successor of Seleucus. There are also reasons to believe, that diplomatic relations existed about this time between India on the one side, and China and the Central Asiatic powers on the other. Ptolemy Philadelphos, the Greek ruler of Egypt, also sent an embassy to the Court of the Mauryas. The Maurya rulers, too, despatched messengers to far-off countries, as will be described in a subsequent chapter.

Military strength.

A good idea of the power and magnificence of the Magadhan empire about this period may be formed from the account of Megasthenes and other Greek writers. The vast empire maintained a highly organised and well equipped army, consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry. The regular military establishment consisted of '600,000 infantry, 30,000 horsemen, 36,000 men with 9,000, elephants, and 24,000 men with nearly 8,000 chariots, or 690,000 men in all, excluding followers and attendants.'

There was a highly organised system of military administration. Six Boards, consisting of five members each, looked after the six Departments, viz. (1) Admiralty; (2) Transport, Commissariat etc.; (3) Cavalry; (4) Infantry; (5) Chariots and (6) Elephants. The thirty members were no doubt collectively responsible for the whole military organisation.

The Capital City.

The capital, Pātaliputra (modern Patna), at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sone rivers, was the greatest city in India. It was about 9 miles in length and a mile and a half in breadth. The wooden wall of the city, probably built of massive Sāl tree, had sixty-four gates, and was crowned with 570 towers. Surrounding the wall was a ditch, six hundred feet in breadth, and thirty cubits in depth. The royal palace within the city was one of the finest in the whole world, and its gilded pillars, adorned with golden vines and silver birds' extorted the admiration of the Greeks. The Municipal arrangements, too, were highly satisfactory. A Commission of thirty members administered the city. They were divided into six Boards of five members each. The members

The Municipal Administration.

of the first Board looked after everything relating to the Industrial arts. Those of the second attended to the entertainment of foreigners, resident in the city. The third recorded the births and deaths, while the fourth superintended trade and commerce. The fifth Board supervised manufactured articles, and the sixth collected the tenths of the prices of the articles sold. But apart from the functions which these bodies separately discharged, the whole Commission, in their collective capacity, looked after matters of general interest, such as the keeping of public buildings in proper repair, the regulation of prices, and the supervision of markets, harbours and temples. There can be scarcely any doubt that this system of municipal administration prevailed in a large number of cities in the empire.

The Maurya emperor himself probably administered the government of Magadha and surrounding territories only. The distant provinces were under Viceroys, who were very often selected from the royal family. The Central Government kept watch over their administration by means of a class of persons called news-writers.

System of administration.

Both in the Central Government, as well as in the provinces, the administration was carried on by a number of departments, each under a Superintendent, aided by a host of ministerial officers. There was a highly organised bureaucracy which efficiently managed the affairs of the vast empire. The different parts of the empire were connected by high roads, one of them traversing the whole breadth of India from the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges. Irrigation works were undertaken even in such distant parts of the empire, as the Kathiawar Peninsula, and, on the whole, the efficiency of the government was combined with peace, prosperity and contentment of the people.

Chandragupta and Bindusāra ruled for nearly half a century, and in or about 273 B.C., the throne of Magadha passed on to Aśoka, one of the greatest names in the history of the world. No figure in ancient Indian history is more familiar to us, and none leaves a more abiding impression of a towering personality, than this immortal son of Bindusāra. His life was consecrated to religion, and his activities were mainly directed towards the propagation of Buddhism.

Aśoka, the greatest king in ancient India.

It will thus be more convenient to give a detailed sketch of his career in connection with that topic. The high ideals of kingship, by which he was actuated throughout his reign, will also be described in another chapter. He inherited a vast empire, and successfully maintained it during his long reign of 41 years. Traditions affirm that he was cruel and bloodthirsty, and waded to the throne through the blood of his ninety-eight brothers. These cannot, however, be regarded as sober facts of history, and must be dismissed as pure fiction. Aśoka was formally consecrated four years after his accession to the throne, and this is the only fact, at present known, which lends some colour to the theory of a disputed succession at the death of Bindusāra. In the ninth year after his consecration, Aśoka conquered the outlying province of Kaliṅga after a bloody war. But, as if to compensate for this accession of territory, the Maurya empire suffered the loss of the Tamil territories in the extreme south, although it is difficult to say whether the loss of these territories took place after the accession of Aśoka, or shortly before it. It is certain, however, that in the 13th year

of the reign of Aśoka, the Tamil kingdoms of Chera, Chola, Pāṇḍya, and Satyaputra were independent states, and the southern extremity of the Maurya empire was formed approximately by a line drown from Nellore to the mouth of the Kalyāṇapurī river on the western coast. It comprised, no doubt, as in the days of Chandragupta and Bindusāra, the rest of India proper (excluding probably Assam), in addition to modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Certain territories within this vast area enjoyed autonomy in internal administration, like the present Native States of India, while the rest of the empire was governed by a number of Viceroys, who had their seats of government at provincial capitals such as Suvarnagiri, Tosali, Takshaśilā and Ujjayini. The vast organisation seems to have worked fairly well, and the magnificent works of art that Aśoka has left behind, and to which a detailed reference will be made in a later chapter, prove beyond all doubt, that the empire reached the high water-mark of greatness and glory under him.

Aśoka died about 232 B. C., and seven other kings followed him in regular succession, during a period of about fifty years. No detailed

account of these kings is known to us, but the disruption of the empire began within almost a decade after the death of Aśoka. The Andhras, a powerful tribe in the Deccan, enjoying internal autonomy during Aśoka's rule, raised the banner of revolt, and freed the country south of the Vindhyas from the yoke of the Mauryas. The Mauryas ruled over the empire in Northern India till about 185 B. C., when they succumbed to internal dissensions and invasions from abroad.

Downfall of the Empire.

It is necessary to go back a little, in order to understand aright the foreign invasions which brought about the downfall of the Mauryas. As has already been related, Seleucus and his descendants ruled over the whole of Western Asia up to the Hindu Kush mountains. About 250 B. C., Bactria and Parthia, two provinces of this vast empire, revolted against the Seleucid dynasty, and declared their independence. The Greek governor of Bactria and his successors formed a line of independent Greek rulers on the other side of the Hindu Kush, while a national Government was established in Parthia. The Seleucid rulers tried in vain to assert their supremacy over the revolted states, and at last

virtually acknowledged their independence about 208 B. C. Shortly after this, the Graeco-Bactrian kings turned their eyes towards India. Demetrios, the son of the ruling king, and son-in-law of Antiochus, the Syrian monarch, invaded India about 190 B. C., and wrested from the Maurya Emperor Brihadratha, seventh in descent from Aśoka, a considerable portion of his empire in the north-west.

The successful revolt of the Andhras, the victorious raid of the Greek king, probably far into the interior of the Magadha empire, and the loss of the north-western dominions gave a terrible blow to the power and prestige of the Maurya empire. Apparently taking advantage of this state of confusion, Pushyamitra, the commander-in-chief of Brihadratha, made a plot against his royal master, and killed him, while engaged in reviewing the army. Thus ended the dynasty of Chandragupta and Aśoka after a rule of about 137 years (322-185 B. C.).

Pushyamitra.

The traitor Pushyamitra then ascended the throne, and made some amends for his foul crime by the energy he displayed in restoring order in the empire. There are reasons to believe that he successfully carried

the arms of the Magadha empire up to the bank of the Indus, and consummated his victories by the celebration of an Aśvamedha Sacrifice. We are told in the Sanskrit Drama Mālavikāgnimitra, that his valiant grandson Vasumitra, son of Agnimitra, the ruler of Vidiśā (Bhilsa), guarded the horse, and rescued it from the Yavanas or Greek. after a terrible fight on the bank of the Indus. Intermittent fights with the Greeks, however, continued throughout the reign of Pushyamitra and that of his descendants. Ultimately the Panjab and Sind were lost to the Magadhan empire, and became the scene of contest for supremacy among the hosts of foreign invaders that began to pour into India. The emperor of Pāṭaliputra probably still claimed allegiance, however nominal, from the rest of Northern India. But it was quite evident that his actual power was dwindling day by day, and hosts of independent states, monarchical and republican, were springing up in different directions. We know, for example, that the Kaliṅgas, subdued with so much toil by Aśoka, successfully declared their independence, and one of their kings, Khāravela by name, even made a triumphant raid upon the shattered fabric of the Magadhan empire.

The power of the Śuṅga dynasty—such is the name by which that founded by Pushyamitra is known in history—originated in foul treachery, and it met its end in the same way. Devabhūmi, the tenth king of the dynasty, was of dissolute character, and was killed at the instance of his minister Vasudeva. The ten kings of the Śuṅga dynasty ruled for a period of 112 years (185-73 B. C.).

The Śuṅgas.

The Kāṇva dynasty, founded by Vasudeva, comprised only four kings, and ruled over the Māgadhan empire for a period of 45 years. The fourth king Suśarman was overthrown by the Andhras in or about 27 B. C. The Andhras had established an independent dynasty in the Deccan, as early as 220 B. C., and now finally destroyed the Magadhan empire, which survived under different dynasties, and amid varying fortunes, for about four hundred years.

The Kāṇvas.

CHAPTER III.

From the end of the First to the beginning of the Second Magadhan Empire—(2nd century B. C. to 4th century A. D.).

It has been already recorded that the north-western Provinces of the Magadhan empire had been wrested by Demetrios, the Greek king of Bactria, about the beginning of the second century B.C. Demetrios was so successful in his Indian expedition, that the Greek writers gave him the appellation of "King of the Indians." But while he was busy in India, the Bactrian throne was usurped by one Eucratides, and Demetrios tried in vain to dislodge him. Eucratides, though successful against Demetrios, was not destined to enjoy his ill-gotten power for long. He was cruelly murdered by his own son, who drove his chariot over the bloody remains of his father.

The Greeks.

These internal dissensions among the Greeks probably gave Pushyamitra the necessary respite for restoring order in the Magadhan empire. But they were attended by other terrible consequences for the Greeks. While they were

quarrelling among themselves, Bactria was invaded by the Scythian hordes, and the Greek sovereignty in the fair valley of the Oxus was extinguished for ever (c. 120 B. C.). The Greeks, driven from Bactria, were forced to take shelter in their Indian dominions in Afghanistan and the Western Panjab, and there they ruled for two hundred years more. There were rival dynasties in different localities, and it is at present impossible to deal with them in a consecutive narrative. But the interesting fact remains, that within this narrow enclave, cut off from the mainland of Greece, and all but unknown to the Greek historians, there flourished about thirty Greek kings, who were instrumental in bringing about a fusion of the cultures of the East and the West.

The names of these Greek rulers are known to us from their coins, but we hardly know anything about most of them. Of the few kings, who are known to us from other sources also, Menander, King Milinda of the Buddhist literature, is the most prominent. His capital was Śākala, the present Sialkote, and he seems to have led several victorious expeditions into the interior of Northern India. Another king,

Apollodotos, is also said to have conquered Kathiawar Peninsula. In general, however, the sovereignty of the Greek kings was confined to Afghanistan and the Panjab, and it is only at rare intervals that they temporarily carried their arms into the interior.

The Parthians.

But the Greeks were not the only nation that harassed the Indian frontier. Several others followed in their wake, the most notable of them being the Parthians, the Śakas and the Kushāṇas. It has been already related how an independent national kingdom was established in Parthia, about the middle of the third century B. C., by a successful revolt against the Seleucid monarch of Syria. As early as the middle of the second century B. C., the Parthian king Mithradates I had carried his arms up to the Indus. At a later period, a powerful chief named Maues established a principality in the Western Panjab. About the same time a line of Parthian princes ruled in the Kandahar region, the most notable of them being Vonones and Azes. Towards the close of the first century A. D., Parthian chiefs were squabbling for power in lower Sindh, the region watered by the mouths of the Indus, and

it is probable that the Parthians spread even further beyond. Great interest centres round one of these Indo-Parthian-chiefs, named Gondophares, as a very early Christian tradition affirms that the Apostle St. Thomas visited his court, and converted him and his family to Christianity.

The Sakas.

The Sakas were at first a nomadic tribe, and lived on the northern bank of the Jaxartes or Syr Daria River. Being dispossessed of their homelands by another nomadic tribe, the Yüeh-chi, they fell upon Bactria, and destroyed the Hellenistic monarchy in that province, as has already been related. Later on, they proceeded south and east, and entered India in various bands, through different ways. They must have formed a strong settlement on the bank of the Helmund river, as the region was called Sakasthāna (now corrupted into Seistān) after them. In India, we can clearly trace three important Saka principalities. Two of them were in Northern India, and had Mathurā and Takshasilā as their respective capitals. The third comprised Malwa and Kathiawar Peninsula in Western India. The rulers of all these countries called themselves

Satraps or Viceroys. Though it is impossible to say anything about the overlord whose Viceroys they were, and although there is scarcely any doubt that they were practically independent monarchs, the nomenclature has been accepted by modern historians, who style the Śaka rulers of Mathurā and Takshaśilā as Northern Satraps, and those of Kathiawar Peninsula as the Western Satraps. Altogether four Northern Satraps are known to us, though we hardly possess any detailed information about them. The Western Satraps were more than twenty in number, and ruled for three centuries. But it will be more convenient to sketch their history in connection with the Andhras.

The Kushāṇas.

The Kushāṇas, the last but by no means of the least importance among these foreign invaders, belonged to a nomadic Turkish tribe, called the Yueh-chi, which originally settled in the Kan-su province in north-western China. Being driven by another nomadic tribe, called the Huns, about 165 B. C., they were forced to march westwards, and fell upon the Śakas who occupied the territory to the north of the Jaxartes river. The migration of the Śakas in consequence of this event, and their ultimate

settlement in India have already been related. The victors had to follow in the footsteps of the vanquished in this respect, for hardly had they occupied the land of the Śakas, than they were once more defeated by their old enemy, the Huns, and forced to move towards the south. In course of time they again drove away the Śakas, and occupied and settled in Bactria to the south of the Oxus. Here two important changes came over them. In the first place, they gave up their nomadic habit, and adopted a settled life. Secondly, the solidarity of the great Yueh-chi tribe was destroyed, and five of its clans established five independent principalities in the conquered region.

More than a century passed away, and then the chief of the Kushāṇas, one of the five clans of the Yueh-chi, found means to bring the other four clans under his sway. Kozola Ḳadphises or Ḳadphises I, who accomplished this great task, and laid the foundation of the greatness of his clan, did not rest content by merely establishing a united Yueh-chi principality. He cast longing eyes towards India, and made preparations for conquering that land. As a preliminary measure, he had to fight with the Greeks and the

Parthians, who were now in possession of the territories immediately south of the Hindu Kush. Throughout his long career he was engaged in this task, and ultimately succeeded in finally extinguishing the Parthian and the Greek domination in the North-western frontier of India. A series of coins beautifully illustrate how the authority gradually passed from Hermaeus, the last Greek ruler of Kabul, to Kadphises I.

But although Kadphises I disposed of his enemies, *viz.*, the Greeks and the Parthians, and occupied Kabul, he was not destined to enjoy the fruits of his labour. With the Indian empire almost within his grasp, he died, full of years and full of honours, at the age of eighty. But the task which he left unfinished was more than accomplished by his son and successor, Wema Kadphises or Kadphises II, who conquered India, probably as far as Benares, if not further towards the east. He did not, however, rule his Indian dominions in person, but appointed military chiefs to govern them on his behalf. Thus was established a vast Kushāṇa empire which included large tracts on both sides of the Hindu Kush Mountains.

Kadphises II.

The next Kushāna emperor, the famous Kanishka, is probably the most familiar figure in ancient India after Aśoka. His memory has been fondly cherished by the Buddhists who looked upon him as one of their greatest patrons, and a number of traditions have gathered round his name. According to these he conquered the whole of Northern India including Kashmir and Magadha, and his power extended up to the borders of the desert of Gobi in Central Asia. He is further credited with success in wars against the Parthians and the Chinese, and also with the conquest of three rich provinces belonging to the latter, viz. Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan. It is even alleged that hostages from a Chinese principality lived in his court. How far these traditions may be accepted as historical it is difficult to say, but there is scarcely any doubt that Kanishka's Indian dominions included Kashmir and Upper Sindh, and extended to Benares in the east and the Vindhyas to the south.

Kanishka.

Unlike Wema Kadphises, whose relationship with Kanishka is not yet known, Kanishka ruled his Indian territories in person, and

selected Purushapura as his capital. The great relic-tower which he erected there excited the wonder and admiration of all for hundreds of years, and its ruins have been discovered a few years ago near Peshawar which represents that ancient capital city. This, along with the statue of Kanishka recently discovered in Mathurā, have rendered this famous emperor of old quite familiar to us. Traditions affirm that two learned men lived in the court of Kanishka, Aśvaghosha, the famous Buddhist scholar and poet, and Charaka, who is supposed to be the same as the great medical authority whose treatises still occupy the highest place of honour in the indigenous system of medical treatment.

Kanishka's successors.

Kanishka was followed by three kings Vāsishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva. Very little is known about them beyond the fact that they were probably successful in keeping the empire intact. Kanishka founded an era which is believed by many to be the Śaka era current to-day. This would place the accession of Kanishka in 78 A. D. But opinions widely differ on this point. Certain it is that the four kings ruled for about one

hundred years, after which the great empire of Kanishka passed away, though Kushāṇa kings, known in history as the later Kushāṇas, but bearing names of Kanishka and Vāsudeva, still ruled in Kabul and the Panjab valley for a long time.

While the Greeks, the Parthians, the Śakas and the Kushāṇas were harrying the North-western frontier of India, a powerful kingdom was established in the Deccan by the Andhras. The Andhras are a very old tribe, and are referred to in a legend in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa which shows that they lived on the border of Aryan settlements, and had a mixture of Aryan and non-Aryan blood in them. This notice may be dated about 800 B. C. Five hundred years later, we hear of them as a very powerful people. They possessed numerous villages and thirty towns, defended by walls and towers, and an army of 100,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 1,000 elephants.[1] Not long after this they had to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mauryas,

The Andhras.

1. The statement is made by Pliny who probably got his information from Megasthenes.

although they seem to have preserved a great measure of autonomy in their internal administration. Shortly after the death of Aśoka they threw off the yoke of the Maurya dynasty, and thereby brought about its downfall, as has been related above. King Simuka, who achieved this task, belonged to the Sātavāhana family. The word Sātavāhana, in its corrupt form Sālivāhana, is almost a household word all over India, although the popular fancy has made the strange mistake of taking it for the name of an individual king. In point of fact, Sālivāhana or Sātavāhana was the name of the royal family founded by Simuka. Simuka and his two successors extended their dominions from the mouth of the Krishna to the whole of Deccan plateau. Pratishthāna, modern Paithān or Pytoon on the Godavery, was their western capital, while Dhānyakataka, near Bezwada on the Krishna, was the eastern capital. For nearly two hundred years the powers of the family were confined to the territories south of the Vindhyas, but according to the Purāṇas, the Sātavāhanas killed the last Kāṇva ruler, and became master of Magadha in the last century B. C.

Thus a great Andhra empire was established which extended its sphere of influence not only over the whole of the Deccan and South Indian peninsula, but also over Magadha and Central India (including Malwa). More than hundred years passed in peace and prosperity, when the empire had to feel the terrible shock of the foreign invasions that convulsed North-western India. The Andhra emperors had to engage themselves in fight with the Greeks, the Śakas, and the Parthians, but the details of the struggle are unknown. Towards the end of the first century A. D., the Śaka chiefs, called the Western Satraps, of Malwa and Kathiawar Peninsula, whose early history has been recorded above, dispossessed the Andhras of their dominions in Malwa, conquered the North-western portion of the Deccan, and occupied the important city of Nasik. It was a critical moment, not only for the Andhra kingdom, but also for the whole of Southern India, for the chances were that the whole country would be submerged under the barbarian invasions. Fortunately, a great hero arose in the Sātavāhana family in the person of Gautamiputra Sātakarni. He ascended the throne about 106 A. D., and inflicted a

crushing defeat upon the Śaka chiefs of Malwa and Kathiawar Peninsula. Thereby he not only recovered his paternal dominions in the Deccan, but also conquered large territories in Gujarat and Rajputana. He died after a glorious reign of about 25 years, and was succeeded by his son Pulumāyi. About that time the two Śaka principalities of Malwa and Kathiawar Peninsula were united under a valiant chief called Rudradāman, and there ensued a long and protracted struggle between the two rulers. Rudradāman seems to have been successful in pushing back the Andhras to the Deccan proper, and enjoyed undisturbed his vast kingdom extending over Malwa, Gujarat and Rajputana. A matrimonial alliance was established between the rival dynasties, by the marriage of Pulumāyi with the daughter of Rudradāman, but intermittent struggles continued, till the Sātavāhana dynasty was blotted out of existence altogether about 225 A. D. The dynasty comprised about thirty kings, who ruled for over 450 years, an unusually long period in Indian History.

The Western Satraps now took possession of a part of the Deccan, and continued as a ruling power, with varying fortunes, for more than a

century and a half. The rest of the Andhra empire was divided among a number of new dynasties, who rose into prominence for the first time about this period. These were the Ābhīras and the Kadambas, who conquered respectively the western and the southern portion of the Deccan, and the Ikshvākus, a family apparently of northern descent, who established themselves in the eastern districts.

The three kingdoms in the extreme south of the Indian peninsula, *viz.* the Chera, the Chola, and the Pāṇḍya, which first come into notice during the reign of Aśoka, continued their independent existence after the downfall of the Sātavāhana dynasty, to which they were probably subordinate for a long period.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.

The political developments, which culminated in the evolution of the mighty empire of the Mauryas, must have been accompanied by a change in the system of public administration. The simple machinery of government, which sufficed for a small provincial state, was hardly suitable for a big empire. Fortunately, we are in possession of a good many details regarding this highly developed system of government in ancient India. These are to be found mainly in ancient works on polity, the most notable of them being the Arthaśāstra, which is traditionally attributed to Chāṇakya or Kauṭilya, the prime-minister of Chandragupta, but may be of somewhat later date.

We learn from these books that the Hindus cultivated the science of politics with an ardour and enthusiasm which has probably no parallel in the ancient world. The science of politics was looked upon as the most important of all sciences,

Importance of political science in ancient India.

and some old writers even have gone so far as to declare, that there is only one science and that is the science of government, for it is in that science that all other sciences have their origin and end. The Arthaśāstra of Kautilya mentions no less than five schools and thirteen individual authors, who had contributed to the development of this science before him. All these strikingly indicate the progress and development of this science in ancient India.

Its influence upon the practical system of administration must have been considerable. It is impossible, however, to dwell upon the subject at great length in the present book, and we must therefore be content with a brief sketch of the salient features of public administration in ancient India.

The machinery of government was highly organised. At the head stood the king, assisted by a number of ministers, and a council. The detailed work of administration was divided among a number of departments, and managed by an efficient and highly organised bureaucracy. In order to have a rough idea of the system of government we must have some knowledge of each of these four elements, *viz.*

the king, the ministers, the council, and the bureaucracy.

The king was the supreme head of the executive, judicial, and military branches of administration. Sometimes the kings were elected by the people, though hereditary kingship became gradually the established practice. Females were not absolutely excluded from succession, though we hear very rarely of reigning queens. The prestige attached to the position of the sovereign varied in different times, and in different localities. According to one class of ideas, the king was merely the highest public servant; there was an implied contract between him and the people, by virtue of which he administered justice to his subjects and secured their life and property, and in return they paid him a part of their income in the shape of revenues. According to another class of ideas, the king was of divine origin,—a god in human form,—and must be accorded implicit obedience. In actual practice, however, we find the working of both the ideas in greater or less degree. The king enjoyed special honours and privileges, and his person became sacrosanct; but if he proved unrighteous or

The King.

oppressive, he was deposed and sometimes even done to death by the people.

Special care was taken to impart sound education and moral ideas to the future king, but if the prince proved unruly, or showed signs of wickedness or perverse character, he forfeited his right to the throne, and another was installed in his place.

The ancient writers on polity prescribe a daily round of duties, to which a king was expected to conform as closely as possible. The day and the night were each divided into eight parts, measured by water-clock or the shadow of the sun, and the following scheme lays down the duties to be performed during each of these parts.

Day: (1) Receiving reports about the accounts and the defensive measures of the kingdom.

(2) Considering the prayers and petitions of the subjects.

(3) Bath, meal, and study.

(4) Attending to revenue and departmental heads.

(5) Attending to the business of the

council and confidential reports from spies.

(6) Recreation or deliberation on state affairs.

(7) Inspection of royal forces.

(8) Consultation with the commander-in-chief about military affairs.

Night : (1) Receiving the spies.

(2) Bath, meal, and study.

(3-5) Sleep.

(6) Reflection on sacred literature and his own duties.

(7) Consultation with the ministers and sending out spies.

(8) Attending to domestic duties, religious rites, ceremonies etc.

Slightly varying details are given in different books, and it is not to be supposed that any of these time-tables was strictly followed by any king. But they certainly indicate methodical and businesslike habits of ancient kings, and give us a general picture of their lives and duties.

The king was easily accessible to the people at large. Kauṭilya says that "when a king makes himself inaccessible to his people, and

entrusts his work to his immediate officers, he may be sure to engender confusion in business, and to cause thereby public disaffection, and himself a prey to his enemies." (p. 43.)

The paramount duty of the king was to protect the people and seek their welfare. Kautilya sums up the position very beautifully in the following verse: "In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good." (p. 44.)

The ancient writers on polity also emphasised the heavy responsibility of the king's position. By accepting taxes from the people, the king incurs definite obligations to them, and these he must fulfill by the due discharge of his duties. These ideal virtues of an ancient Indian king are embodied, to a considerable extent, in the character of the great emperor Aśoka. "All men are my children," said he, "and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness, in both this world and the next, so also I desire the same for all men." Again he wrote in the same strain: "Just as a man, having made over

his child to a skilful nurse, feels confident and says to himself, "The skilful nurse is zealous to take care of my child's happiness," even so my officials have been created for the welfare and happiness of the country."

Aśoka's zeal for public business, and his sense of responsibility for the sacred trust imposed on him as king, are well exemplified by another record. "For a long time past," runs the royal edict, "it has not happened that business has been dispatched and that reports have been received at all hours. Now by me this arrangement has been made that at all hours and in all places—whether I am dining, or in the ladies' apartments, in my bedroom, or in my closet, in my carriage, or in the palace gardens—the official Reporters should report to me on the people's business, and I am ready to do the people's business in all places....I have commanded that immediate report must be made to me at any hour and in any place, because I never feel full satisfaction in my efforts and dispatch of business. For the welfare of all folk is what I must work for—and the root of that, again, is in effort and the dispatch of business. And whatsoever exertions I make are for

the end that I may discharge my debt to animate beings, and that while I make some happy here, they may in the next world gain heaven."

Aśoka's conception of kingly duties was thus very noble. He did not take any credit for his great exertions to secure the welfare of the people, for in his views he merely discharged his debt thereby. And the welfare of the people he understood in the broadest sense,—not only the security of life and property together with material prosperity here below, but also moral elevation leading to perpetual happiness hereafter. This conception of his duty was the logical outcome of his famous doctrine, that all men are the children of the king. Just as a father ought not to rest satisfied by merely advancing the material prosperity of his children, but should also see to their moral development, in very much the same way, the king should concern himself with both the material and the moral well-being of his subjects. This led Aśoka to adopt those extensive measures for the propagation of moral doctrines among his people, which will be fully discussed in the next chapter. The same idea, again, is at least partly responsible for

his assumption of the headship of the Buddhist Church.

We must, however, bear in mind that kings in ancient India did not always approximate to this high standard, and that there were good and bad kings, as well as kings of average merit. But this is true not only of India but also of every other country under the sun. India's greatness lies in the fact that she produced at least one Aśoka, who still remains without a parallel in the history of the world.

Ministers.

Next in importance to the king were the ministers. Kauṭilya says: "Sovereignty is possible only with assistance. A single wheel can never move. Hence the king shall employ ministers and hear their opinion." Similarly other writers on polity, too, looked upon the ministers as an organic part of the government.

In view of the great importance of the position of the ministers, the ancient writers discussed in great detail the proper modes of selecting them. Kauṭilya held the view that the "ministerial appointments shall depend solely on qualifications, and not on the considerations of family, or backstair influence." Before employ-

ing the ministers on responsible duties, their characters were tested by secret agents, and the king employed those alone as ministers, who proved themselves superior to the allurements that usually lead a man astray from his duties. Those who failed in one or more tests, were appointed, in accordance with the ascertained degree of purity, to the various appointments in the civil service inferior in rank to that of the minister.

All kinds of administrative measures were preceded by deliberations in a council of ministers. The number of ministers varied, according to circumstances, from three or four to twelve. Sometimes one of them was appointed Prime-minister. Individual ministers were in charge of separate departments. There were for instance finance minister, and the minister for war and peace. But they advised the king on all important affairs of state. The following remarks of Kautilya indicate the nature of ministerial power and responsibility. "A single minister proceeds wilfully and without restraint. In deliberating with two ministers, the king may be overpowered by their combined action, or imperilled by their mutual dissension. But

with three or four ministers he will not come to any serious grief, but will arrive at satisfactory results. In accordance with the requirements of place, time, and nature of the work in view, he may, as he deems it proper, deliberate with one or two ministers or by himself. The king may ask his ministers for their opinion, either individually or collectively, and ascertain their ability by judging over the reasons they assign for their opinions."

We read also in Śukranīti (probably a much later work, but embodying old traditions), that the king should receive in written form the opinions of each minister separately with all his arguments, compare them with his own opinion, and then do what is accepted by the many.

The Council.

In addition to the body of ministers, there was a council to assist the king in the administrative work. King Bimbisāra, who had the sovereignty of 80,000 villages, is said to have once called an assembly of their 80,000 chiefs. Such big councils could, however, be summoned only on rare occasions. There was a smaller council, too, which formed a regular part of the machinery of government.

Kauṭilya calls it *Mantri-Parishad*, but clearly distinguishes it from the council of ministers. We may designate them respectively as Legislative Council and Executive Council.

The Legislative Council seems to have occupied the place of the Samiti or the Assembly of the Vedic period. It sometimes consisted of large numbers. Kauṭilya maintains, against the schools of politicians who would limit the number to 12, 16 or 20, that it shall consist of as many members as the needs of the dominion require. As regards the powers of this council, Kauṭilya expressly lays down that they had to consider all that concerns the parties of both the king and his enemy, and that in important cases the king shall hold a joint session of both the Executive and the Legislative Councils, and do whatever the majority of members suggest. The constitutional importance of this body also appears quite clearly from the injunction of Kauṭilya, that the king should consult the absent members, if any, by means of letters.

A further constitutional development is indicated by a passage in the Mahābhārata, according to which 4 Brāhmaṇas, 8 Kshatriyas, 21 Vaiśyas, 3 Śūdras, and 1 Sūta formed the Legislative

Council, and out of this body of 37, the king selected eight as ministers. This seems to be the last stage of constitutional development in India, and it is interesting to note how, to a certain extent, it ran on parallel lines with that of England. As the great National Council of the English gave rise to the Parliament, from which the king selected his confidential ministers and formed the Cabinet, so the *Samiti* of the Vedic period gave place to the *Mantri Parishad* out of which the king selected a few to form a close Cabinet.

While the policy was formulated by the council and the ministers, the detailed work of administration was carried on by a bureaucracy.

The Bureaucracy.

At the head of the bureaucracy were a few high officials whose number and status must have varied in different ages and different countries. The following list includes the more important ones :—

1. The High Priest.
2. The Commander-in-Chief.
3. The Chief Judge.
4. The Door-keeper (Pratihārī).
5. The High Treasurer (Sannidhātā)
6. The Collector-General. (Samāharttā).

The general nature of their duties is indicated by their names. There were also ceremonial officers, such as "The Bearer of the Sunshade of State," and "the State Sword-bearer." There were other officers like Viceroys, and Ambassadors, whose sphere of work lay in distant parts of the country. All these formed the members of the higher branch of administration. Next came the lower branch, consisting mainly of the Superintendents of the various departments into which the administration was divided, and their staff. The number of these Superintendents must have varied in different kingdoms. In Kautilya's Arthaśāstra we read of the superintendents of the following :—

1. Ocean-mines. 2. Treasury. 3. Mines. 4. Metals. 5. Mint. 6. Accounts. 7. Gold 8. Store-house. 9. Commerce. 10. Forest produce. 11. Passports. 12. Weights and Measures. 13. Lineal measure. 14. Tolls. 15. Weaving. 16. Agriculture. 17. Liquor. 18. Slaughter-house. 19. Prostitutes. 20. Ships. 21. Cows. 22. Horses. 23. Elephants. 24. Chariots. 25. Infantry. 26. Armour. 27. Pasture 28. Harem.

Each Superintendent was the head of a

department, and carried on his work with the help of a number of assistants and subordinates. His work was regularly checked by Commissioners appointed by the Collector-general, and punishments were inflicted upon him for dereliction of duty. The Superintendents were sometimes transferred from one department to another. As will be seen from the above list of departments, the Government directly carried on manufacture and commerce on their own account, and also worked the various mines of the kingdom.

Besides the officers named above, belonging to the central Government, there were local officers of various descriptions. The kingdom was divided into several districts, and each district into a number of villages. There was a district officer, called Sthānika, and a village accountant, named Gopa. There was, besides, a headman in every village, either nominated by the king, or elected by the people of the village. The headman, assisted by an assembly of villagers, transacted the affairs of the village, and maintained peace and order. Each village formed a close corporation, invested with large powers and

Local administration.

responsibilities. It had absolute control over persons and property belonging to the village, and was held responsible for the regular payment of royal dues. These were not necessarily paid in cash. Some villages supplied soldiers, some paid their taxes in the form of grains, cattle, gold or raw materials, and some supplied free labour and dairy produce in lieu of taxes. Some villages were altogether free from taxation. The general appearance of a village was very much like what it is to-day, but ancient villages were almost always surrounded by boundary walls.

The Gopa looked to the accounts and kept the statistics of a group of villages. He recorded and numbered plots of grounds, both cultivated and uncultivated, plains, marshy lands, gardens, vegetable gardens, forests, altars, temples of gods, irrigation works, cremation grounds, feeding houses, places where water was freely supplied to travellers, places of pilgrimage, pasture grounds, and roads within his jurisdiction. He fixed the boundaries of villages, of fields, of forests, and of roads, and registered gifts, sales, charities and remission of taxes regarding fields. He recorded the total number

of cultivators, cowherds, merchants, artisans, labourers, slaves and animals. He also kept an account of the number of young and old men that resided in each house, and recorded their history, occupation, income and expenditure.

The Sthānika or the district-officer supervised the work of the Gopas within his jurisdiction. The Collector-general, who was the highest officer in charge of these works, deputed special commissioners to inspect the work done and the means employed by the village and district-officers. He also employed secret agents to ascertain the validity of the accounts of these officers.

The administration of the city corresponded, on a small scale, with that of the country. It was divided into several wards, and each ward into several groups of households, like the corresponding divisions of the country into districts and villages. Similarly, a Gopa and a Sthānika were placed respectively in charge of a group of households and a ward. The superior officer in charge of the city, corresponding to the Collector-general, was called Nāgaraka or City-Superintendent. Corresponding to the village assembly there was municipal corporation

in the city. A typical instance is furnished by the municipal body of the capital city Pāṭaliputra at the time of Chandragupta, to which reference has already been made.

Elaborate regulations were laid down for the proper sanitary arrangements of the city and to prevent such calamities as the outbreak of fire. Most of the important cities had forts, walls, and other defensive works. Reference is also made to hidden passages for going out of the city.

Town-planning was regularly studied on scientific principles, and many ancient books give elaborate description of the proper arrangements for a city.

Cities were adorned with temples, roads, foot-paths, reservoirs, wells for drinking water, travellers' sheds, hospitals, brilliant shops, pleasure gardens, big tanks and various places of amusement. The Gopas kept a statistical record of cities like the corresponding officers of the village.

Spies.

In addition to the various officials described above, there was another class which played a prominent part in ancient Indian administration. These were spies, or secret agents, maintained not only by the king,

but by almost all the important officials as a check against their subordinates. The spies were divided into several classes, and employed for various purposes, in various spheres of life. It is worthy of note that the orphans, who were necessarily fed by the state, were trained up for this purpose from their boyhood. Even women, including widows of the Brāhmaṇa caste, adopted the profession of spy for earning their livelihood. The spies were distinguished by cleverness and an intimate knowledge of men and manners. They were also trained in various languages as well as in the art of putting on disguises appropriate to different countries and trades. Disguised as householders, cultivators, merchants, hermits, ascetics practising austerities, mendicant women, and disciples or students, they mixed with all ranks of society, and collected information. The king employed them to watch the movements not only of his high officials including the priests, ministers, and the commander-in-chief, but even of his own son and heir-aparent to the throne. The officials of the kingdom also followed the example set by their master. There were counter-spies for the detection of spies, and very often different

bands of spies, unknown to one another, were employed on the same errand, so that the truth might be ascertained by comparing the different accounts given by them. These spies evolved systems of signs, symbols, and cipher-writing for communicating with one another.

Tribunals were organised throughout the kingdom for administering justice. There were local as well as central courts. The local courts were three in number. The first consisted of the kindred of the accused; the second, the guild to which he belonged; and the village assembly formed the third. A great deal of importance was attached to these local courts, and this was based on the rational idea laid down in the Śukranīti, that "they are the best judges of the merits of a case who live in the place where the accused person resides, and where the subject-matter of the dispute has arisen." Proceeding on the same idea, Bṛihaspati recommends, that 'for persons roaming the forest, a court should be held in the forest; for warriors, in the camp; and for merchants, in the caravan.'

Judicial administration.

The central court was held in the capital.

It was presided over by the king or the Chief Justice (Prāḍvivāka), and included four or five judges who were chosen for their character and erudition in law. This was the highest court of justice, and exercised a sort of general supervision over the administration of justice throughout the country.

Between the king's court and the local courts, there were other courts in important cities, where royal officers, assisted by judges, administered justice. Thus there was a regular gradation of courts,—court of kindreds, guild, village assembly, city court, and king's court. Each of these was more important than the preceding one, and heard appeals from its decision. But although they were courts of appeal, each of them was also an original court in respect of cases occurring within its jurisdiction. The first three could not decide cases involving serious crimes which were referred to the city courts. Both civil and criminal cases were tried by the same court.

It is difficult to conceive a more striking difference between ancient and modern societies than their standpoint with regard to law and

its enactment. Accustomed as we are to a set of positive laws sanctioned by a definite authority, it requires a great effort on our part to adjust ourselves to a situation in which the difference between positive and moral laws was not clearly recognised, and the right of authorities to enact new laws positively denied.

Legislation.

Thus in ancient India there was no sharp distinction between religious ordinances, moral practices, and positive injunctions of secular law. All were jumbled together in law books, and an individual was expected to adjust himself to them as best as he could.

Regarding the source of law, there was a great deal of difference between different authorities. They all, however, refer, as two primary sources, to the sacred literature, and the local usages. The sacred literature consisted of the Vedas, the Smritis, and the Purānas, and it was not always an easy affair to extract legal rules from them. The defect was removed by drawing up manuals of law based on sacred literature, and, in course of time, there grew up a body of practices

and authoritative decisions which had the force of law.

The local usages were accorded a far greater importance than we can possibly imagine. Not only the usages and customs generally prevalent in the country, but also those of a village, of a profession, of a religious order, and even of a single family had the force of law. The king was bound to respect them and to keep a permanent record of "the history of customs, professions, and transactions of countries, villages, families, and corporations."

The source of law being limited to these two, there was theoretically no scope for new legislation. In practice, however, that was far from being the case. There were at least two distinct ways in which laws were either modified or enlarged. In the first place, commentaries were written to explain the sacred law, and these not infrequently altered the interpretation of original texts by straining the meaning of words, in order to suit them to the needs or tastes of the changed society. As a result, the same passage in sacred literature has given rise to diametrically opposite laws in different parts of the country.

Secondly, there was gradually evolved the custom of referring doubtful points in sacred law to a duly authorised body of Brāhmaṇas, called the Parishad. Although the Parishads were formed only to declare the true law as embodied in the sacred literature, in practice they altered the laws to a considerable degree by additions and alterations. The Parishad is thus the nearest approximation to a definite legislative body. Its constitution was not a stereotyped one, but differed in different localities. According to a very ancient authority, it consisted of "four men who each know one of the four Vedas, one versed in Mīmāṁsā, one who knows the Aṅgas, one who recites (the works on) the sacred law, and three Brāhmaṇas belonging to three different orders."

Originally, the king had no power to enact laws, but with the development of political ideas, the royal edicts came to possess the force of law. The earliest notable instance in this direction is furnished by the case of the great Maurya Emperor Aśoka. He promulgated a number of ordinances, such as those prohibiting the slaughter of certain animals on certain days, and giving a brief respite of three days to con-

demned men lying in prison under sentence of death. He went even much further. His empire included a great many countries having different legal systems and practices, and he tried to introduce uniformity in judicial procedure and in awarding penalties all over his vast empire.

Before concluding the discussion on the monarchical form of government, it is necessary to say a few words about its general character.

Character of ancient monarchy.

It has often been discussed whether ancient monarchy was an absolute despotism, or there were some limitations upon its authority. Saturated as we are with the ideas of modern constitutional development, we naturally look for constitutional checks upon the authority of kings, such as are to be found in most countries of modern Europe where monarchy prevails. The only check of this nature in ancient India seems to have been the *Mantrīs* and *Mantri-Parishad*, roughly corresponding to the modern Executive and Legislative Councils. It will appear from what has been said above that the Ministers controlled the authority of the king to a great extent. We have also seen 'that the decisions arrived at at the joint session of the two bodies

were binding upon the king.' But our knowledge in this respect is very limited, for although the Legislative Council seems to have been of a representative character, we do not know for certain whether its members were nominated or elected.

There were, besides, many indirect restraints upon the authority of the king. In the first place, the law of the land had a sacred character and was binding equally upon him and his subjects. Secondly, the learned Brāhmanas of the land were guardians and expositors of this law, and in view of the position they held in society, he would be a bold king indeed who would dare to disobey them. Thirdly, the duty of the king was clearly defined in the Sāstras. In those days a man's status in society was looked at not so much from the point of view of right, as from that of duty, which had moral and religious sanction behind it; and it would have created as much sensation in those days, if the king had failed in his duties, as would follow the violation of people's right in modern days.

It is true that inspite of all these, a king might, and probably not unoften did, establish

an arbitrary rule. But it must be remembered that even the most efficient constitutional checks that were devised in later ages similarly failed to curb the despotic authority of kings, until and unless the people demonstrated their will and power to force them to a reasonable frame of mind. The history of England amply illustrates this point, and further shows, that it is not the letter of the constitution, but the extent to which the people are willing and capable of exercising their undoubted rights, that really determines the character of the monarchy. The same is also true in ancient history. Octavius, for example, maintained the old constitution, but it would be a mockery to describe the Imperial Rome of his days as the old republic or even a limited monarchy.

In judging of any constitution, therefore, the thing of primary importance is to determine the status and the political consciousness of the people. A close study of Arthaśāstra reveals the fact that the people were recognised as one of the most important factors of the state in ancient India. The theoretical recognition of this principle may be traced in various passages

throughout the book. Some of these have been quoted above, on p. II, and two more may be added. Addressing the army the king says "I am a paid servant like yourselves." Again, we read : "It is unrighteous to do an act which excites popular fury." In practical politics, too, Kautilya attaches due importance to the power of the people. He refers again and again to the political organisation of the people, and to the causes and consequences of their disaffection. He recommends that the king should bring round the disaffected by conciliation, and should show due deference to popular sentiment. To the king who has conquered a new territory, Kautilya suggests the following line of action : "He should follow the friends and leaders of the people. Whoever acts against the will of the people will also become unreliable. He should adopt the same mode of life, the same dress, language, and customs as those of the people. He should follow the people in their faith with which they celebrate their national, religious, and congregational festivals or amusements. Whoever has caused excitement to the people or incurred their displeasure should be removed

and placed in a dangerous locality" (pp. 491-493). But the surest testimony to Kauṭilya's regard for popular sentiment is furnished by the injunction that 'a prince, though put to troubles and employed in an unequal task, shall yet faithfully follow his father, unless that task costs his life, *enrages the people*, or leads him to commit any heinous sin (pāṭaka).' The author of Śukranīti says in the same strain that "the king should dismiss the officer who is accused by one hundred men." All ancient writers agree that the people have the undoubted right of ḍethroning a king, or even killing him, if he proves a tyrant.

All these things indicate a high political status enjoyed by the people at large. When every thing is taken into consideration, it may be safely laid down that the ideal form of government in ancient India was one in which the three elements, the king, the bureaucracy, and the people, were equally balanced, and served as checks against one another. If we are to look for a modern prototype, the German government before the late war would approximate, in spirit, if not in form, to the ideal constitution of India in her best days.

Non-monarchical Constitution.

It has already been mentioned above that monarchy was not the only form of government known in ancient India. From very early times both oligarchic and republican governments flourished in this country. They are not only referred to in ancient literature, coins, and inscriptions, but have also been noticed by the Greeks, who had far greater knowledge of the working of these constitutions than any other ancient race known to history.

We can trace the existence of these forms of government, as early as the sixth century B. C., among the Lichchhavis, the Śākyas, the Mallas and many other tribes. Some of these like the Lichchhavis were very powerful and won great name and fame in ancient India.

Unfortunately, very few details with regard to the constitution of these states are known with certainty, and we are forced to make a tentative suggestion. It appears that the whole state was divided into a number of small administrative units, each of which was a state in miniature by itself, and possessed a complete machinery for carrying on the local administration. The business of the state as a whole

was entrusted to an assembly consisting of the heads of those administrative units, under the guidance of a Chief or President elected for a definite period. In case the assembly was a large one, an executive council was chosen from amongst its members. The resemblance of this form of Government with the Cleisthenian constitution of Athens is obvious and need not be dilated upon.

The assembly consisted of both old and young men, and met in a hall called Santhāgāra. The Lord Buddha professed great admiration for the Lichchhavi assembly, and is said to have once remarked to his disciples: "Oh brethren, let those of the brethren who have never seen the Tāvatiṁsa gods, gaze upon this assembly of the Lichchhavis, behold this assembly of the Lichchhavis, compare this assembly of the Lichchhavis, even as an assembly of the Tāvatiṁsa gods." Buddha was also impressed with the inherent strength of the Lichchhavi constitution. For when Ajātaśatru, resolved on conquering the Lichchhavis, sent his ministers to Buddha for advice, the latter replied that the Lichchhavis were invincible so long as their constitution remained unim-

paired. There are grounds for believing that the Buddha modelled the democratic organisation of his Church on the constitution of the Lichchhavis.

We possess some imformation regarding the method in which justice was administered among the Lichchhavis. The system is chiefly remarkable for the ultra-democratic spirit which characterises it, and is calculated to give us some insight into the principles of administration followed in these non-monarchical states. We learn from an old text that a criminal was at first sent for trial to a class of officers called *Vinichchaya Mahāmatta*. If they found the accused innocent they acquitted him, but if he was guilty in their opinion, they could not punish him, but had to send him on to the next higher tribunal. The man had thus to pass through six tribunals, each of which could acquit him, if they found him innocent, but had to send him on to the next higher tribunal if he appeared guilty in their eyes. The last tribunal, that of the President, alone had the right to convict the accused, and in awarding punishment he was guided by the *Paveni Pustaka i. e.* the book containing law and

previous legal decisions. The position of the individual was thus safeguarded in a manner that has had probably few parallels in the world. He could be punished only if seven successive tribunals had unanimously found him guilty, and he was quite safe if but one of them regarded him as innocent. And it is but fitting that the right of the people should thus be safeguarded in a state where the people governed themselves.

Republican and Oligarchical states.

Quite a large number of democratic states flourished in the fourth century B. C. Megasthenes says that most of the cities in his time adopted the democratic form of government, and other writers corroborate him. One of the most important democratic states in the 4th century B. C. was that of the Sabarcae, who, like many others, fought with the army of Alexander the Great. Their territory extended along the bank of the Indus, and they had 60,000 foot, 6000 cavalry, and 500 chariots. The Greek writers also refer to a number of oligarchical states. The city-state of Nysa, for example, had an oligarchical form of government, and its governing body consisted of a president

and 300 members of the aristocracy. In some cases the governing body consisted of as many as five thousand councillors. Reference is also made to another state in which the command in war was vested in two hereditary kings of two different houses, while a council of Elders ruled the whole state with paramount authority. The Greek writer could not help emphasising its obvious similarity with the Spartan constitution.

The establishment of the Maurya empire was ruinous to these non-monarchical states. The existence of independent democratic states seemed incompatible with the conception of a centralised empire, and Kautilya, in his Arthaśāstra, steadily advocates the policy of putting them down by all means, fair and foul. By his diabolical intrigues he seems to have been fairly successful in his task, and the oligarchies and democracies in the neighbourhood of Magadha vanished for ever. But after the downfall of the Maurya empire others arose in their place. The Yaudheyas, the Mālavas, and the Arjunāyanas, among others, established democratic constitution and played important parts in Indian history. Like their predecessors

they fought stubbornly against the foreign invaders, but like them, too, they had to succumb to an imperial power. For, as we shall see, Samudragupta conquered most of them in the 4th century A. D. Thus, a prey to imperialism within, and foreign invasion from without, these non-monarchical states finally vanished from India about the fifth century A. D.

CHAPTER V.

NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS.

§ 1. BUDDHISM.

During the period, of which the political history has been sketched in the last four chapters, momentous changes occurred in the Aryan society. By far the most important among them was the growth of heterodox religions like Buddhism and Jainism. A short history of the rise and growth of these two religious movements is essential for the proper understanding of Indian History.

Gautama Buddha.

Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, belonged to the Śākya clan, whose territory is now represented by the Nepal Terai, immediately to the north of the Basti District in the United Provinces. Popular legends of a later date have represented him as the son of a mighty king, born and brought up amidst the luxuries of a palace. The fact, however, is, that the Śākyas had no king, and the father of Gautama was probably elected to the chief position in the State for the time being. The date of his birth is a

matter of dispute, but we shall not probably be far wrong, if we place it about 567 B. C. As he grew into manhood, he was caught by the prevailing spirit of the time, which was a sort of pessimism, leading to spiritual aspirations. The growth of the Vedic religion failed to keep pace with the intellectual development of the Aryan race, and men, refusing to be satisfied with the Vedic cults and ceremonies, sought for a higher synthesis of life, and a more rational mode of salvation. A number of leading teachers and scholars voiced the spirit of the time, and founded either religious sects, or schools of philosophy. Of these, Gautama Buddha and Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, founders, respectively, of Buddhism and Jainism, stand out prominently, inasmuch as these religions played a very prominent part in India for centuries to come.

Popular tradition has dramatically represented, how Gautama was horrified at the sight of an old man, a diseased person, and a dead body, and left his home, wife, and child in a sudden fit of renunciation. The fact seems to be, that the problem of getting rid of the evils of the world, among which old age,

disease, and death, are the most prominent, had been agitating the better minds of the Aryans, who could see beyond the material luxury that surrounded them. Gautama shared the growing pessimism of the day, and left the world in quest of higher truth. He studied for some time in the philosophical schools of two renowned teachers of Rājagriha, and then proceeded to Uruvilva near Gayā. Six years of concentration and profound meditation led to the discovery of truths, which, he claimed, would cure the ills of the world, and thus Gautama became the Buddha or the enlightened.

Fundamental Principles of Buddhism.

The fundamental truths of Buddha's teachings are represented by the four Noble Truths (Ārya-Satyāni), viz. (a) that there is suffering; (b) that this suffering necessarily has a cause; and (c) that in order to suppress this evil (d) one must know the right way. The chain of causes that lead to suffering is then described in detail, and lastly the means of deliverance from these sufferings are fully explained. This is the celebrated Eightfold path (Ashtāngika-mārga) viz: right views, right aims, right exertion, right mindfulness and right meditation and tranquility.

Moral doctrines of Buddhism.

The moral doctrines preached by the Buddha were quite simple. Man is the arbiter of his own destiny, not any god or gods. If he does good deeds in this life, he will be reborn in a higher life, and so on, till he attains salvation, or the final emancipation from the evils of birth. On the other hand, evil deeds are sure to be punished, and not only will salvation be retarded thereby, but man will be reborn into lower and lower life. Man should avoid both the extremes, *viz.* a life of ease and luxury, and a life of ruthless asceticism,—the middle path was the best. In addition to the ordinary moral code such as truthfulness, charity, purity and control over passions, Buddhism laid great stress on non-injury to living creatures in thoughts, words or deeds.

In its negative aspect, Buddhism denied the efficacy of Vedic rites and practices for the purpose of salvation, and challenged the superiority assumed by the Brāhmaṇas.

Gautama Buddha adopted the life of a religious teacher at the age of thirty-five, and wandered in different places in Magadha, Kośala, and the adjoining territories, preaching

his new gospel. The disciples, whom he thus recruited, fell into two categories, the *Upāsaka* or lay disciple, who lived with his family, and the *Bhikshu* or monk, who renounced the world, and led the life of an ascetic. The Buddha was endowed with a great organising capacity, and the community of Buddhist monks called *Saṁgha*, of which he laid the foundation stone, became one of the greatest religious corporations the world has ever seen.

A few striking characteristics of Buddhism may be noticed here. One was the admission of the female members into his church, as *Bhikshuṇī* or nun. The Buddha was at first opposed to this, but was at last persuaded by his favourite disciple Ānanda to give his consent, though not without much misgivings about the future of his church. Secondly, the members enjoyed equal rights in his church, irrespective of the classes or castes to which they belonged. Thirdly, Buddha introduced the practice of holding religious discourse in the language of the common people, in preference to the highly elaborate Sanskrit tongue, unintelligible to the people at large.

All these factors contributed to make the

religion of Buddha a highly popular one, and when he died at Kuśinagara at the advanced age of eighty (c. 487 B.C.), his loss was mourned by a wide circle of monks and lay disciples.

Shortly after the death of Gautama Buddha, his disciples met together in a general council at Rājagṛiha, and made as complete and authentic a collection of the teachings of the master, as was possible. This was all the more important, inasmuch as Buddha did not nominate anybody to succeed him in the headship of the church, but expressly said to his disciples,—"The truths and the rules of the Order which I have set forth and laid down for you, let them, after I am gone, be the Teacher to you."

First General Council.

The sacred literature of the Buddhists, which probably did not take final shape till one or two centuries later, is known as the *Tripiṭaka*, or the three baskets. The first is the Vinaya-piṭaka, which laid down a body of rules and regulations for the guidance of the Buddhist monks, and the general management of the church. The second, the Sutta (Sūtra)-

pitaka, was a collection of the religious discourses of the Buddha; and the third, the Abhidhamma-pitaka, contained an exposition of the philosophical principles underlying the religion.*

The Buddhist Church.

Besides the Buddha and his doctrines as embodied in the Tripitaka, there was yet a third factor which was of equal importance. This was the Saṁgha or the Buddhist church. Even to-day, millions of Buddhists daily express their faith in the holy Trinity by uttering the sacred formula,—"I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Saṁgha." The idea of a church, or a corporate body of men, following a particular religious faith, was not certainly a new one, and there were many organisations of this type at and before the time of Gautama Buddha. His credit, however, lies in the thorough and systematic character which he gave to these organisations.

The membership of the Buddhist church was open to all persons, male or female,

* For detailed account of the Buddhist Literature, see infra Chap. VI.

above fifteen years of age, irrespective of any class or caste distinctions, except certain specified categories, such as those affected with leprosy and other specified diseases, criminals, slaves etc. The new convert had to choose a preceptor who led him before an assembly of monks, and made a formal proposal for admitting him to the church. The consent having been obtained, the convert was formally ordained, and the life of destitution and stern morality, which he was expected to lead, was fully explained to him. A special training was necessary to accustom him to the new ideas and habits, and he had therefore to live for the first ten years in absolute dependence upon his preceptor. After this disciplinary period was over, he became a part and parcel of the great religious corporation. Henceforth his conduct, down to the minutest details, was regulated by specific ordinances, even the slightest violation of which was sure to bring down upon him the appropriate punishment. It was the cardinal principle of the Buddhist church that none but the founder of the sect could make laws for the fraternity.

Its Membership.

Others might explain and expound them, but could not formulate any new laws.

The Buddhist church consisted of the various local Saṃghas or communities of monks. There was no central organisation, co-ordinating the various local communities, and this defect was sought to be remedied by the convocation of general Councils, whenever any occasion arose. In theory, of course, all these local bodies were merely parts of one Universal Church, and thus any member of any local body was *ipso facto* a member of any other local community which he might choose to visit. These local bodies were governed on strictly democratic principles. The general assembly of all the monks resident in the locality constituted the supreme authority, and matters were decided by votes. No meeting of the assembly was legal, unless all the members were either present, or, being absent, formally declared their consent. The assembly whose constitution and procedure would have probably satisfied the ultra-democrats of the present day, had complete authority over the individual monks and could visit their offences with various degrees

Its democratic character.

of punishment. They carried on the necessary secular business of the monastery through the agency of a number of officers, appointed by them in due form. The nuns formed a distinct community which was practically subordinate to the community of monks. The general tendency of the Buddhist canon law was to assign a distinctly inferior position to the nuns (Bhikkhunīs), as the great Buddha was of opinion, that their admission into the Buddhist church was calculated to destroy its purity. Many safeguards were devised to avert this evil, but the essential principles guiding the corporation of monks were equally applicable in the case of the nuns.

This sketch of the Buddhist church may be concluded with a reference to two important institutions. The first was the regular assembly of all the local Bhikkhus on the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of each fortnight, to recite the Dharma. On one of the last two days, a learned monk recited Pātimokkha, a short treatise containing a list of the crimes and offences which were to be avoided by the Buddhist monks. As the recitation proceeded, and at the end

The Confession.

of the description of each class of offences, the question was put to the assembled monks and nuns, whether they were pure with regard to it. Any one, guilty of any of these offences, had to confess his guilt, and his case was treated according to rules and regulations.

The Vassa.

The *Vassa* or the *Retreat* during the rainy season was another characteristic institution. It was ordained, that for three months during the rainy season every year, the monks should live in a settled residence, and must not leave it except in case of emergency. The rest of the year the monks used to wander all over the country.

The organisation of the church, sketched above, must have taken centuries to develop; but its ground-work was laid by the Buddha himself. Its chief defect was the absence of any co-ordinating central authority, which resulted in repeated schisms within the bosom of the church. About 100 years after the death of the Buddha, the monks of Vaiśāli observed certain practices, which were held by some monks to be unlawful. A general Council of the Buddhists was held, which was attended by

Second General Council.

Vaiśāli

monks from different parts of Northern India. The account of this Council is confusing and complicated, but it is certain that a great schism followed, and a new sect was established.

Aśoka.

We know very little of importance about the history of Buddhism, till we come to the reign of the Maurya emperor Aśoka, who transformed the comparatively insignificant sect into a world religion. As has been mentioned above, Aśoka ascended the throne about 273 B. C., and twelve or thirteen years later, he conquered the province of Kaliṅga. It was a terrible warfare, in course of which 150,000 persons were captured, 100,000 were slain, and many times that number perished. Aśoka, who probably led the campaign in person, was struck by the horrors of the war and the amount of misery and bloodshed it involved. The feelings which they evoked in him are thus described in his inscriptions, probably in his own words.

"Thus arose His Sacred Majesty's remorse for having conquered the Kaliṅgas, because the conquest of a country previously unconquered, involves the slaughter, death, and carrying away captive of the people. That is a matter of

profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty.

There is, however, another reason for His Sacred Majesty feeling still more regret, inasmuch as in such a country dwell Brahmans or ascetics, or men of various denominations, or householders,.....To such people in such a country befalls violence, or slaughter, or separation from their loved ones. Or misfortune befalls the friends, acquaintances, comrades, and relatives of those who are themselves well protected, while their affection is undiminished. Thus for them also that is a mode of violence."* The feeling of remorse and misery led Aśoka to embrace the Buddhist religion, one of whose cardinal doctrines was non-injury to living beings. For about two years and a half, Aśoka remained a lay disciple; then he formally joined the Buddhist Order and became a Bhikkhu. From that time he exerted himself strenuously to propagate the religion in which he found the solace and comfort of his life. The means by which he sought to achieve this

Propagation of Buddhism.

* Rock Edict XIII. V. A., Smith—Asoka, pp. 172-173.

end were varied in character, and have been graphically described in his own records. As early as the 11th year, the emperor commenced a series of pious tours over the country, spreading the gospels of his religion by his personal effort. He visited the holy places of Buddhism, and wherever he went, he arranged discussions on religious subjects. He instructed his high officials to proceed on circuit every five years, and, in addition to their proper business, to spread the *dharma* (religious doctrines) among the people at large. Besides, he instituted a special class of officers called Dharma-mahāmātras, whose sole business was to propagate *dharma* among the people. He also convoked a general Council of the Buddhists to settle internal differences. This was the Third General Council.

The Emperor organised a network of missions to preach the gospels in countries far off and near. His missionaries visited not only the different parts of India and Ceylon, but also Western Asia, Egypt and Eastern Europe. Of the foreign kings, whose dominions thus received the message of the Lord of Kapilāvastu, five are mentioned in the Inscrip-

tions of Aśoka by name, viz. Antiochos Theos, king of Syria and Western Asia; Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt, Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene, and Alexander of Epirus. The names of the missionaries, whose sphere of work lay in India proper, are preserved in the Ceylonese literature. The relic caskets, unearthed about fifty years ago at Bhilsa, bear the names of some of them, and vividly bring home to us the wonderful missionary activity of Aśoka. The great emperor even sent his own children, his son Mahendra and daughter Saṅghamitrā, to preach the religion in Ceylon.

But by far the most novel means adopted by the emperor to make the people realise the blessed doctrines of the Buddha, was to engrave them on rocks, pillars, and caves, throughout his vast dominions. Many of them have been lost, but we still possess about thirty-three separate records, which, in some respects, are the most wonderful that antiquity has bequeathed to us. They contain a glowing personal narrative of the emperor, and give a detailed account of what he believed to be the *dharma*, and of what he did to

bring it home to the millions of his subjects. The emperor was urged on by an anxious desire to uplift the morality of the people, by bringing home to them the essential features of his *dharma*. So he engraved these on imperishable stones, which even to-day, after the lapse of more than two thousand years, stand as an undying monument to his purity of life, and sublimity of thoughts.

Aśoka's Dharma.

The aspect of *dharma* which he emphasised, was a code of morality, rather than a system of religion. He never discussed metaphysical doctrines, nor referred to God or soul, but simply asked the people to have control over their passions, to cultivate purity of life and character in inmost thoughts, to be tolerant to other's religion, to abstain from killing or injuring animals and to have regard for them, to be charitable to all, to behave with decorum to parents, teachers, relatives, friends, and ascetics, to treat slaves and servants kindly, and, above all, to tell the truth.

The emperor not only preached these truths but also practised them. He foreswore hunting and gave up meat diet. He established hospi-

tals for men and beasts, not only throughout his vast empire, but also in the dominions of his neighbouring kings. He made liberal donations to the Brāhmanas and followers of other religions. We read in his records, how, on the roads, he had rest houses erected, and also caused wells to be dug, and trees to be planted, for the use of man and beasts. He also issued various regulations to prevent the slaughter of animals.

Achievements of Aśoka.

The grand personality of Aśoka, and the steadfastness of his purpose, backed by the resources of a mighty empire, that stretched from the borders of Persia to Assam, and from the source of the Ganges to that of the Kavery, gave an unheard-of impetus to the religion he patronised. Men were thirsting for the knowledge that would relieve them from the woes and miseries of the world. That knowledge was vouchsafed to the noble son of the Śākyas, and the torch that would pierce the gloom of misery and ignorance was lighted at Gayā under the Holy Tree. Then appeared the torch-bearer, more than two hundred years later, who led the holy light from village to

village, from city to city, from province to province, from country to country, and from continent to continent. Three continents now drank the nectar of bliss, thanks to the superhuman energy and undying zeal of the Maurya Emperor, and the time was not far distant, when the name of Buddha would be daily uttered in nearly one third of the households of the entire world. It is not every age, it is not every nation, that can produce a king of this type, and emperor Aśoka still remains without a parallel in the history of the world.

Buddhism which was thus raised to the status of a world religion became, of course, the leading religion in India. The swarm of foreign invaders that appeared on Indian soil were attracted by its catholicity, and must have been converted in large numbers. One of these, the Greek king Menander, still lives in the Buddhist tradition, as Rājā Milinda, and an interesting work on Buddhist doctrines is associated with his name. But, by far the greatest name among the foreign patrons of Buddhism is that of Kanishka. His fame in the Buddhist world is only second to that of Aśoka. Like the

Kanishka.

Maurya Emperor Aśoka, he convoked a Buddhist Council—the fourth of its kind—to settle the text of the holy scriptures, and his political relation with the Central Asiatic states probably helped the propagation of Buddhism in Central and Northern Asia. Buddhism had already reached China on the one hand, and Burma, Siam, the Malay Peninsula and islands in the Indian Archipelago on the other. Thus towards the end of the Kushāna dynasty, it was the leading religion in the whole of Asia.

Growth of Mahāyānism.

But the period which saw the greatest extension of Buddhism also witnessed the most serious dissensions within the bosom of the Church. In describing the constitution of the Buddhist Church, we have already emphasised the absence of a central co-ordinating authority, favouring the growth of split and dissensions. We have also seen how, about 100 years after the death of Buddha, a great schism followed the council of Vaiśālī. These schisms became more frequent in subsequent periods, and no less than eighteen different sects had grown up by the time of Kanishka. But the greatest split was yet to come. This was the growth

of Mahāyānism which permanently divided the Buddhist Church into two hostile camps, as it were.

A detailed treatment of this new development cannot be attempted here, but some of its essential features may be briefly referred to. In the first place, the Mahāyānists introduced a belief in the *Bodhisattvas*, beings "who were in the process of obtaining, but had not yet obtained, Buddha-hood." A number of such Bodhisattvas soon claimed the faith and allegiance of the devotees, and image-worship with its usual accompaniments, such as elaborate rituals, formulae and charms, took the place of the simple faith in Buddha of the primitive times.

Secondly, whereas the Hīnayānists,—as the old sect was now called by way of contrast to the Mahāyānists,—relied on self-culture and good deeds as the only way to salvation, the latter began to place more and more reliance on faith in, and devotion to the various Buddhas as leading to the goal. Thirdly, Sanskrit was substituted for Pāli as the language of the canon, and a new canon was developed, differing from the old in many essential respects. Besides the points noticed above, there were fundamental

differences between the two sects as regards metaphysical conceptions, the final goal of religious life, the true nature of Buddha, and sundry other matters.

The development of this sect is ascribed to Nāgārjuna, a contemporary of Kanishka, although it seems to be quite clear, that it was already in an incipient state before the Kushāna period. In any case, from this time onward, the growing rivalry between the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna sects was the leading feature in the history of the Buddhist Church. The Buddha is said to have prophesied that his religion would remain pure for only five hundred years. Within that time limit, Buddhism had attained to the greatest glory, and reached the highest pinnacle of power. But now the tide was turned, and it was visibly going down. The story of its decline and fall is, however, reserved for another chapter.

§ 2. JAINISM.

The Jaina religion is usually regarded as being founded by Vardhamāna Mahāvīra. According to the orthodox Jaina faith, however, Mahāvīra is only the last of a long series of

illustrious teachers, to whom the religious sect owes its origin and development. These teachers, called *Tīrthaṅkaras*, are twenty-four in number. The first twenty-two of them, are, however, unknown to history, and reasonable doubts may be entertained regarding the existence of most of them. But the twenty-third *Tīrthaṅkara*, Pārśva, seems to have had a real existence. The outline of his life and activity, so far as it is known to us, has striking coincidences with that of Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra. He was brought up amid luxury, left home at the age of thirty, attained the perfect knowledge after nearly three months of intense meditation, and spent the remaining life as a religious teacher, till death carried him away at the age of seventy. This event may be placed in the eighth century B. C.

About 250 years after the death of Pārśva flourished Vardhamāna. He was born in Kuṇḍagrāma, a suburb o Vaiśālī, about the year 540 B. C. His father, Siddhārtha, was a rich Kshatriya, belonging to the Jñātṛika clan, and his mother, the princess Triśalā, was a sister of Chetaka, the ruler of Vaiśālī. On the death of his parents, Vardhamāna left his home, and

became an ascetic at the age of thirty. During the next twelve years he wandered about, practising the most rigorous asceticism. At the age of 42, he reached supreme knowledge and final deliverance from the bonds of pleasure and pain. Henceforth he was styled Mahāvīra or the great hero, and Jina or the conqueror. From this latter term, his sect came to be known as the *Jainas*,—it being originally designated as the *'Nirgranthas,' i. e.* free from fetters. Mahāvīra spent the remaining thirty years of his life as a religious preacher, and died at the age of 72 (c. 468 B. C.).

It appears that Vardhamāna Mahāvīra accepted, in the main, the religious doctrines of Pārśva, but reformed them by some additions and alterations. Pārśva laid stress on the four great commandments, *viz.* (1) Thou shalt tell the truth, (2) Thou shalt possess no property, (3) Thou shalt not injure any living being, and (4) Thou shalt not steal. To this Vardhamāna Mahāvīra added another, *viz.* (5) Thou shalt observe chastity. Mahāvīra introduced a further innovation by asking his followers to discard the use of clothes, and move about completely naked.

Mahāvīra was a junior contemporary of Gautama Buddha, and there are striking resemblances in the doctrines of these two teachers. Both derived their basic principles from the Vedic Literature, although they denied the authenticity of the Vedas as an infallible authority, and the efficacy of the rites prescribed in them for the purpose of salvation; both preached their religion in the common language of the people; both laid great stress upon a pure and moral life, specially non-injury to animate beings; both emphasised the effects of good and bad deeds upon a man's future births and ultimate salvation; both ignored the idea of God; both decried caste; and lastly, both encouraged the idea of giving up the world, and organised a church of monks and nuns. Indeed the resemblance was so great, that many scholars believed that Jainism was merely a branch of Buddhism. This notion has proved to be erroneous, for apart from the fact, that we can trace distinct historic origins of the two, they differ in fundamental conceptions about salvation, and certain other matters, which cannot be explained

Comparison and contrast between Buddhism and Jainism

away as later additions. Jainism, for example, laid great stress upon asceticism and practised it in a very rigorous manner, whereas Buddha decried it, and asked his disciples to follow the middle path between a life of ease and luxury on the one hand, and rigorous asceticism on the other. Besides, the Jaina attitude of non-injury to animals was carried to far greater excesses than was ever contemplated by Buddhism. There can thus be no doubt that Gautama and Mahāvira were founders of independent religious sects. Both of them were products of the prevailing spirit of the time, and no wonder that both travelled the same way, up to a certain distance, in their search after truth. There was, however, a great deal of rivalry between the two sects, even during the life-time of their founders, and Buddha condemned, in no uncertain terms certain aspects of the rival religion. The two religious teachers lived and preached their religion in the same region, and recruited their disciples from the same class of people. So far as can be judged at present, both the religious sects had equal footing in the country at the time

when their founders died, within a few years of each other. But it is in their later developments that the two sects differ widely; for while, within five hundred years, Buddhism became a world religion, and was destined erelong to count nearly a third of the entire human race as its votaries, Jainism had scarcely even spread beyond the boundaries of India. On the other hand, while Buddhism practically vanished from the land of its birth, more than five hundred years ago, Jainism is still a living force in India, and has got a strong hold upon a large and influential section of the people.

History of Jainism.

At first Jainism seems to have made greater progress than Buddhism, and before the end of the fourth century B. C. it had spread to Southern India. The growing importance of the sect is probably due to a large extent to the patronage of Chandragupta Maurya. According to Jaina tradition, Chandragupta was not only a convert to Jaina religion, but had actually abdicated the throne, and died as a Jaina Bhikshu in Southern India.

The genuineness of this story has been

doubted, but the attendant circumstances are full of interest for the Jaina history. It is said that about two hundred years after the death of Mahāvīra, a terrible famine broke out in Magadha. At that time Chandragupta Maurya was the king, and the Thera Bhadrabāhu was the chief of the Jaina community. These two, with a crowd of followers, went to Karṇāṭa, leaving Sthūlabhadra in charge of the Jainas that remained at Magadha. Now Sthūlabhadra was the last man who knew all the 14 *Pūrvas* (*i. e.* old texts) into which the teachings of Mahāvīra were divided. In view of the danger that threatened the loss of sacred scriptures, he convoked a council at Pāṭaliputra, in which the 14 *Pūrvas* were re-arranged in 12 *Aṅgas*. The present scripture of the Jainas is merely a re-arrangement of the first 11 Aṅgas made in Valabhī in the 5th century A. D., the *12th Aṅga* having already been lost.

The Great Schism.

When the followers of Bhadrabāhu returned to Magadha, there arose a great dissension. The Jainas as a rule went naked, but the Jainas of Magadha used to put on white robes. This was objected to by the Jainas who returned from

South India, as they held complete nudity to be an essential part of the teachings of Mahāvīra. Reconciliation was found to be impossible, and thus arose the two sects, the Śvetāmbaras (*i. e.* those who put on white robes), and the Digambaras (*i. e.* those who had only the directions for their clothings, in other words, stark naked), into which the Jaina Community is still divided. The unfortunate split was followed by other consequences. The Digambaras refused to accept the 12 Aṅgas as authentic. According to the tradition of the Digambara sect, the last man who knew all the *Aṅgas* died about 436 years after the death of Mahāvīra, and the knowledge of the *Aṅgas* was completely lost about 250 years later.

Inspite of this internal dissension, the Jaina religion rapidly spread all over the country. It made headway also in South India, and ere-long it became one of the important all-India religions.

Besides Buddhism and Jainism, there were other heterodox religious sects, the Ājīvikas for example, which exercised considerable influence for the time being, but ultimately disappeared, without leaving behind any trace whatsoever.

§ 3. BHĀGAVATISM.[1]

Between the heterodox religions like Buddhism and Jainism in the one extreme, and the orthodox Vedic religion in the other, there grew up certain religious systems which were destined to attain to considerable power at no distant date. These religious sects had no faith in the mechanical system of worship prescribed in the Vedas. But while they agreed with Buddhism and Jainism to a great extent in this respect, the differences between them were very great. Buddhism and Jainism "discarded, or passed over in silence, the doctrine of the existence even of God, and laid down self-abnegation and a course of strict moral conduct as the way to salvation." The new theistic religions were, however, based on the "ideas of a supreme God, and devotion to Him as the mode of salvation."

The chief representatives of this new system were Bhāgavatism (known in later times as Vaishnavism) and Saivism. Bhāgavatism

1. This and the following section are mainly based on Dr. Bhandarkar's 'Vaishnavism,' and the quotations in the text, unless otherwise stated, are from that book.

'owed its origin to the stream of thought which began with the Upanishads, and culminated, in the east, in Buddhism and Jainism.' It arose, about the same time, in the west, among the Sātvatas, a branch of the Yādavas, who settled in the Mathura region. "Originally, it merely laid stress upon the idea of a supreme God, God of gods, called Hari, and emphasised the necessity of worshipping Him with devotion, in preference to older methods of sacrifices and austerities. It did not, of course, altogether do away with either sacrifice or the Vedic literature which prescribed the same, but regarded them as of minor importance, and omitted the slaughter of animals, which formed the principal feature of the Brāhmanical religion. The Sātvatas thus made "an attempt to introduce a religious reform on more conservative principles than Buddhism and Jainism did. The repudiation of the slaughter of animals, and the inefficacy of sacrificial worship and austerities are common to this religious reform with Buddhism. But that the supreme Lord Hari is to be worshipped with devotion, and that the words of the Āraṇyakas are not to be rejected are doctrines which are peculiar to it."

Krishna.

The religious reform received a strong impetus from Vāsudeva Krishna of the Vrishni race, which was probably another name of the Sātvatas. He gave a definite shape to the reformed doctrine by promulgating its philosophical teachings in the Bhāgavadgītā. This led to the regular growth of an independent sect, and erelong Vāsudeva was looked upon as the supreme deity, 'the supreme soul, the internal soul of all souls.'

Gītā.

In its ultimate form, as developed in the Bhāgavadgītā, Bhāgavatism stood out prominently for two things. It counteracted tendencies 'to look upon ascetic life as a *sine qua non* of religious elevation,' by emphasising the supreme importance of doing one's worldly duties according to one's status in society. Secondly, it sought to turn men's minds away from 'dry, moral discourses, and thoughts of moral exaltation, unassociated with a theistic faith. Theistic ideas were, no doubt, scattered in the Upanishads, but it was the Bhāgavadgītā which worked it up into a system of redemption, capable of being easily grasped.'

The new religious ideas seem at first to have been confined to the Mathura district.

Original home.

The Greek ambassador Megasthenes notices that 'Herakles is held in special honour by the Sourasenoi, an Indian tribe, who possess two large cities, Methora and Cleisobora.' Thus even in the fourth, or the beginning of the third century B. C., Herakles, who is undoubtedly the same as Vāsudeva-Krishna, was specially worshipped by the Sūrasenas of Mathura, through whose territory flowed the river Jumna.

But by the second century B. C., the new religion had spread far beyond the confines of Mathura. Inscriptions, recording the worship of Vāsudeva, are found in Mahārāshṭra, Rajputana, and Central India. We learn from one of these, that a Greek ambassador of king Antialcidas, called Heliodora (Heliodorus), an inhabitant of Takshaśilā, styled himself a Bhāgavata, and erected a Garuḍadhvaja (a pillar with an image of Garuḍa at the top), in honour of Vāsudeva, the God of gods, at Besnagar, the site of ancient Vidiśā, in the Gwalior State. It is thus apparent that

Extension of influence.

Vaishnavism, like Buddhism, made converts of the foreigners, and was distinguished enough in the second century B. C. to attract the most civilised nation among them. A Syrian legend further informs us that the cult of Kṛishṇa worship was prevalent in Armenia as early as the second century B. C. The popularity of the new cult about the same time is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact, that already the chief legendary exploits of Vāsudeva-Kṛishṇa formed the subject of dramatic representations. From the second century B. C. the progress of the religion continued unabated, so that by the end of the period under review, it had penetrated into the extreme south of India, beyond the Kṛishṇā river.

Reconciliation with Brāhmanical religion.

The development of the local sect of Mathura into what promised to be an all-India religion, in the second century B. C., seems to be due, at least partially, to an event of far-reaching importance. This was the adoption of the new sect into the fold of orthodox Brāhmaṇism. The reconciliation between the two is clearly demonstrated by the fact, that Vāsudeva-Kṛishṇa was successively identified with two

prominent Vedic gods, Nārāyaṇa and Vishṇu. That this identification was completed before the second century B. C. is evidenced by the dedication of Garuḍadhvaja by Heliodorus, in honour of Vāsudeva, the God of gods, for Garuḍa was the recognised vehicle of Nārāyaṇa-Vishṇu, these two deities being ultimately regarded as one.

Why or how this amalgamation was brought about, it is difficult to say. The advance might have been made by the Brāhmaṇas themselves, as a protection against Buddhism, which grew predominant under the patronage of Aśoka, and threatened utter ruin to them. The Bhāgavâtas, on the other hand, probably thought it politic to attach to themselves the honour and prestige due to an old and time-honoured name. Whatever might be the reason, it must have cost the Brāhmaṇas a bitter pang. The memorable scene in the Mahābhārata, in which Śiśupāla poured forth the venom of his heart against Bhīshma for honouring Krishṇa as the most 'worship-ful,' seems to be a reminiscence of the spirit of the die-hards, who refused to acknowledge the divine character of one who was not a Brāhmaṇa by birth.

The reconciliation of Bhāgavatism with orthodox Brāhmanism not only assured a permanent position to the former, but altogether gave a new turn to the latter. Henceforth Bhāgavatism, or as it may now be called by its more popular name, Vaishnavism, formed, with Saivism, the main plank of the orthodox religion in its contest with Buddhism. The sacrificial ceremonies prescribed in the Vedas no doubt survived, but gradually receded into the background.

§ 4. SAIVISM.

The origin of Saivism may be traced to the conception of Rudra in the Rigveda. Rudra represented the malignant and destructive phenomena in nature, which destroyed the cattle and caused diseases to the people. His wrath was sought to be appeased by offerings, and prayers, a specimen of which is given below.

Rudra in Vedic literature.

"O Rudra, harm not either great or small of us, harm not the growing boy, harm not the full-grown man.

Slay not a sire among us, slay no mother here, and to our own dear bodies, Rudra, do no harm.

Harm us not, Rudra, in our seed and progeny, harm us not in the living, nor in cows or steeds.

Slay not our heroes in the fury of thy wrath. Bringing oblations evermore we call to thee." (Ṛigveda I, 114.)

'Rudra, however, occupies a minor position in the Ṛigveda,' though, like many other gods, he is occasionally described as possessing supreme power. It has been suggested that he represents the storm, 'not the storm pure and simple, but rather its baleful side, in the destructive agency of lightning.'

The conception of Rudra is further developed in the Yajurveda, in the famous Satarudriya, where his benevolent characteristics are emphasised in addition to the malevolent ones. 'When his wrathful nature is thoroughly appeased he becomes Śambhu or benignant, Śaṅkara or beneficent, and Śiva or auspicious.' These three names which occur at the end of the Satarudriya were destined to become famous at no distant date.

In the Atharvaveda, Rudra is looked upon as a supreme God, and the furthest point is reached, when Svetāśvatara Upanishad substi-

tuted this active personal God in the place of the impersonal Brahman of the Upanishads. It asserted that "there is only one Rudra—and they do not recognise another—who rules these worlds by his ruling powers, who is the inmost soul of all men, and, creating all beings, protects them." "When there was simple darkness and no day or light, no entity or nonentity, Śiva alone existed. He was the one unchangeable thing, and he was the bright light of the sun, and from him sprang all intelligence. His form is invisible. Nobody sees him with the eye. Those who see him, dwelling in the heart, by the heart and the internal consciousness, become immortal." Lastly "Śiva, the God, the creator and destroyer, is said to be knowable by *Bhāva* (faith, love or the pure heart)". The supreme God Rudra-Śiva was at first the object of worship, not of a particular sect, but of the Aryans in general, and this character it has retained down to the present day, inspite of the rise of innumerable Śaiva sects.

The Saiva sects.

The existence of the Śaiva sects may be traced as early as the second century B. C. It is probable that a definite Śaiva system or school was established,

in imitation of the Bhāgavata sect, by a person, called variously Lakulin, Lakuṭin, Lakulīśa and Nakulīśa. The Śaiva sects were at first generally known as Lākula, Pāśupata or Māheśvara after the name of their God or historical founder. Before the end of the period under review, however, four important schools arose Viz. Pāśupata, Śaiva, Kāpālika and Kālāmukha. The main activity of these sects falls into the next period, and will be dealt with in another chapter.

The Śaivas, like the Buddhists and the Bhāgavatas, attracted foreigners to their creed. Wema Kadphises, the Kushāṇa conqueror of India, adopted the new religion, and the 'Reverse' of his coins depicts the figure of Śiva, with a long trident, leaning on Nandī or bull behind him.

It must be noted here, that the image of Śiva, as an object of worship, was soon replaced by Liṅga or Phallus. Many eminent scholars think that this element of phallic worship was borrowed from barbarian tribes. But it obtained a wide currency, and almost completely ousted the likeness of Śiva as an object of veneration.

Minor religious systems.

In addition to Vaishnavism and Śaivism, other minor religious sects, of more or less the same general character, flourished during the period under review. These were the followers of Śakti, Ganapati, Skanda or Kārttikeya, Brahmā, and Sūrya. Śakti was the wife of Śiva, while Ganapati and Kārttikeya, at first leaders of Ganas or hosts of Rudra-Śiva, came to be regarded as his sons. Sūrya or the Sun was one of the principal deities in the Vedic age. As to the Vedic gods other than those mentioned above, some were still remembered, though occupying a distinctly inferior position, while others almost completely disappeared.

In order to complete the picture of religious condition, it is necessary to add that primitive belief in the spirits of the earth and mountains, in Yakshas, Gandharvas, and Nāgas, and worship of all these, as well as of animals like elephant, horse, cow, dog and crow, still retained a hold on the popular mind.

CHAPTER VI.

LITERATURE.

§ 1. THE BUDDHIST LITERATURE.

The Buddhist sacred literature may be broadly divided into two classes, according to the language in which it is written. For part of it is written in Pāli, a literary language, based upon a provincial dialect of India, and the rest is composed in Sanskrit or 'mixed Sanskrit.'

The Pāli canon.

The Pāli literature is undoubtedly the earlier of the two. As already mentioned, the Pāli canon of the Buddhists is divided into three classes, *viz.* (1) the Vinaya-piṭaka, (2) the Sutta-piṭaka, and (3) the Abhidhamma-piṭaka, dealing respectively with the disciplinary rules and regulations, religious doctrines, and philosophical principles.

I. The Vinaya-piṭaka comprises the following texts.

1. The Suttavibhaṅga.
2. The Khandhakās.
3. The Parivāra, or Parivārapāṭha.

The Suttavibhaṅga, as the name implies, is the explanation (*vibhaṅga*) of the Suttas. The Suttas which it explains consist of what is known as Pātimokkha rules, *i. e.* a list of 227 different kinds of offences. This list was recited every new and full moon day before a gathering of monks and nuns, every individual member of which had to confess if he or she was guilty of one or more of them, and expiate the sin by appropriate punishment.

The Khandhakās are divided into two sections, the Mahāvagga and the Chullavagga, and lay down minute rules and regulations regarding such matters, as admission into the Order, the mode of spending monsoon in a fixed retreat, the various ceremonies to be performed at fixed periods, probations and penances, as well as rules for foot-clothing, seats, vehicles, dress, medicaments, etc. to be used by monks and nuns. These rules, which may be said, without much exaggeration, to have covered even the most insignificant details in the daily life of a monk or a nun, are generally prefaced by a short account of the occasion on which they were laid down by the Buddha. Incidentally, therefore, they

contain many stories and legends about the life of Buddha, and throw a flood of light on the life and manners of the day.

The Parivāra, the last book of the Vinaya, is a sort of resumé and index of the preceding books.

II. The Sutta-piṭaka forms the most important part of the Buddhist literature, and is divided into five Nikāyas or compilations, *viz.* (1) Dīgha-nikāya, (2) Majjhima-nikāya, (3) Saṁyutta-nikāya, (4) Aṅguttara-nikāya, and (5) Khuddaka-nikāya.

(1). The Dīgha-nikāya, or the compilation of the long (*dīgha* = Skt. *dīrgha*) *Suttas*, consists of 34 long *Suttas*, each dealing with one or more aspects of the Buddhist creed. The different *Suttas* have no connection with one another, and each of them is complete in itself. Each *Sutta* contains a short preface, describing the occasion on which Gautama Buddha delivered it, and some of the *Suttas* are put in the form of a Socratic dialogue between Gautama Buddha and an unbeliever. Thus in the Tevijja Sutta, the Brāhmaṇa Vāsishṭha (Vāseṭṭha) is forced to admit, after a severe cross-examination, that not the knowledge of

the Vedas, but the Buddhist moral principles alone can lead to a realisation of the absolute Brahman.

Among other important topics, dealt with in this *Nikāya*, may be mentioned the origin of the Universe, the artificiality of the caste system, the way to union with God, rebirths, *nirvāṇa*, self-mastery, self-concentration, asceticism, miracles, soul-theory, heretical doctrines, the previous Buddhas, the causes of things, and the true nature of a Brāhmaṇa. One of the most important *Suttas* in this series, the Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta, contains a very detailed and interesting account of the last days of the Buddha, and his death and funeral ceremonies.

(2). The Majjhima-nikāya, or the compilation of the medium (*majjhima* = Skt. *madhyama*) *Suttas*, consists of 152 *Suttas*. These are shorter than the *Suttas* in the Dīgha-nikāya, but deal mostly with the same kind of topics. They contain discourses and dialogues, but a good many of them are *ākhyāṇas* or stories, narrated in prose and verse, and ending with a moral lesson.

(3-4). The Saṃyutta-nikāya or the com-

pilation of the joined or connected (*Saṁyutta* = Skt. *saṁyukta*) *Suttas*, consists of fifty-six groups of *Suttas*, divided in five great sections. The Aṅguttara-nikāya, or the compilation of *Suttas* arranged in an ascending numerical series (*aṅguttara* = Skt. *Aṅgottara*), consists of more than 2300 *Suttas* arranged in eleven sections in such a way, that "all the classes containing only one thing are treated of in the first book, all the dyads in the second, all the triads in the third, and so on." For example, the third section deals with the 'threefold way to the suppression of selfishness,' the 'three causes for the rise of *Kamma* and their extinction,' the 'threefold restraint' etc.; the fourth section deals with 'the four happy states, the four elements of popularity, four modes of producing a superabundance of merit, etc.'

The third and the fourth *Nikāyas* primarily deal with the same topics as the first two. But whereas owing to the conversational form in the latter, the doctrinal matters are necessarily treated in a discursive way, the same or allied topics being dealt with in many different passages, these are arranged in the third and the fourth *Nikāyas* with reference to their mutual relations. Thus in

order to ascertain what Buddhism teaches on a particular subject, one has to ransack the whole of the first two *Nikāyas*, but the different points of view are actually brought together in the third and the fourth.

(5). The name of the last part of the Sutta-piṭaka, Khuddaka-nikāya or compilation of the small (*Khuddaka=Skt. Kshudraka*) *Suttas*, is misleading. It really consists of a large number of miscellaneous works, and some of them are very long indeed. Besides, it is quite apparent, that the different books comprised in this Nikāya were composed at different times, and did not originally form part of a single collection. These books are :—

1. The Khuddaka-pāṭha—A collection of nine short texts (*mantras*) to be first learnt during the novitiate.

2. The Dhammapada—One of the best and most well-known works in the Buddhist literature. It contains a fine exposition of the ethical teachings of Buddhism in 423 verses.

3. The Udāna,—*lit.* an enthusiastic and joyous utterance. It is divided into eight sections of ten *suttas* each. Each *sutta* briefly narrates an event in Buddha's life, and ends

with a maxim which Buddha delivered on the occasion.

4. The Itivuttaka ('Thus said the Buddha'). It consists of 112 short *suttas* in prose and verse, and expounds the teachings of Buddha without any narrative.

5. The Suttanipāta. It is a collection of poetical *suttas* in five sections. Many of these are as old as the time of Buddha, and occur in other canonical texts. It is therefore of great importance for a knowledge of primitive Buddhism.

6–7. The Vimāna-vatthu and the Peta-vatthu. These describe the joys or sorrows which a man, doing good or bad deeds here below, respectively enjoy or suffer after death in heaven or hell. These two books belong to the latest strata of the Pāli canon.

8–9. The Thera-gāthā and the Therī-gāthā. These are collections of poems (*gāthā*) ascribed to various monks (*thera*) and nuns (*therī*). They are fine lyrics, and, in the opinion of some critics, worthy of being ranked with those of Kālidāsa and Amaru.

10. The Jātakas. According to the Buddhist doctrine, one can attain the status of a Buddha

only by means of the accumulated merits of good deeds performed in countless births. Even the great Gautama Buddha had to pass through 84,000 previous existences before he could become a Buddha. The Jatakas contain more than 500 stories of such previous births of Gautama Buddha. Many of these stories are fairly old, some even possibly existing before the time of Gautama Buddha, and the Buddhists adopted them with slight alterations for the purpose of inculcating moral lessons in the shape of a previous-birth-story of Gautama Buddha. As these stories deal with different aspects of common life, they furnish invaluable materials for the study of economic conditions and social manners and customs in ancient India.

These stories are narrated in prose and verse. But it is only the verse which forms part of the canon, the prose portion merely supplying, by way of commentary, the details of the story briefly alluded to in the verses. As a matter of fact, however, some of the verses are quite unintelligible without the accompanying story in prose. The prose commentary was translated into the Simhalese language, and again re-translated in Pali in the 5th century

A. D. This Pāli text, with the original verses (*gāthās*), forms the present Jātaka-texts.

11. The Niddesa or Mahāniddesa. It is the title of a commentary to two sections of the Sutta-nipāta (no. 5). The fact that this commentary was included in the canon shows the relative antiquity of its composition.

12. The Paṭisambhidāmagga. It is really a philosophical work, and, properly speaking, belongs to Abhidhamma-piṭaka.

13. The Apadāna. It is a collection of stories of good and virtuous deeds performed by the Buddhas and the eminent Arhats (Buddhist sages), both male and female, in their previous births. It is thus a counterpart of the Jātakas.

14. The Buddhavaṁsa. It consists of poetic legends of the 24 Buddhas who preceded Gautama Buddha during the last 12 *Kalpas*.

15. Chariyā-piṭaka, a collection of 35 Jātakas in verse, showing how Gautama Buddha possessed the ten *pāramitās* (perfections) in his previous births.

III. The Abhidhamma-piṭaka.

The term Abhidhamma is usually rendered as 'higher religion' or 'metaphysics,' but, as Rhys Davids pointed out long ago, there was

very little of metaphysics in the Abhidhamma-pitaka. As regards its philosophy, it is of the same character as that dealt with in the Sutta-pitaka, so much so, that even the learned Mrs. Rhys Davids once remarked, that our knowledge of Buddhist philosophy would remain undiminished, even if the entire Abhidhamma-pitaka were non-existent. Indeed the subjects dealt with in the Sutta-pitaka and Abhidhamma are the same, only the latter deals with them in a more scholastic fashion, adding definition, classification, categories etc. The Abhidhamma is written mostly in the form of questions and answers, and its subject-matter is mainly derived from the Sutta and the Vinaya-pitaka. The Abhidhamma-pitaka consists of seven books, of which the Kathāvattu, attributed to Tissa Moggaliputta, is the most important. It deals with such questions as follow: "Is there a soul? Can an Arhat lose his Arhatship? Are there two kinds of Nirvāna? Can the father of a family become an Arhat?" All these questions are answered in the negative.

A few words must be said about the origin and antiquity of the Pitakas. No one believes that these texts, attributed to Buddha, really

contain words uttered by him. Some, probably many, of Buddha's words and doctrines were, no doubt, current among his disciples, and incorporated into the Piṭakas, but the different texts, as we have them now, and their existing arrangement and classification, must have been the work of a long period of time, and separated, in some cases at least, by a long interval of centuries from the time when Gautama Buddha lived and preached.

Origin of the Pāli canon.

The great bulk of the Vinaya-piṭaka must have been composed before 350 B. C., and the same thing may probably be said of the first four Nikāyas of the Sutta-piṭaka. The miscellaneous works included in the Khuddaka-nikāya must have been composed at different periods. The loose character of this Nikāya and its late origin are further demonstrated by the fact, that the Burmese version includes four texts which are not regarded as canonical in Ceylon, while seven texts are wanting in the Siamese edition of the Piṭaka. The bulk of the Khuddaka-nikāya, however, certainly existed in the third century B. C. As regards the Abhidhamma-piṭaka, its latest book, the

Kathāvatthu, was composed during the reign of Aśoka, in the third century B. C.

Non-canonical Buddhist Literature.

In addition to the canonical works, there are other Buddhist books written in Pāli. One of the most famous is the 'Milinda-Pañha', which explains the Buddhist doctrines in the form of a dialogue between King Milinda and a Buddhist priest Nāgasena. King Milinda is no other than the Graeco-Bactrian king Menander, referred to above, and the book was probably composed in North-Western India, about the first or second century A. D.

Commentaries.

The necessity of explaining the canonical texts gave rise to a vast literature by way of commentaries. These commentaries not merely explained the text by adding critical notes, but also systematically arranged the subject-matter, and added legends and other extraneous matters. The commentators also attempted to reconstruct the life of Buddha from the scattered notices in the Pitakas, and the result was the Nidānakathā. It relates the story of Buddha, from the day when he was born as Sumedha, in the time of Dipaṅkara Buddha, up to the grant of Jetavana

to the Buddhist Order by the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika.

The greatest commentator of the Pāli canon was Buddhaghosa, who probably flourished in Ceylon during the reign of Mahānāma (acc. 413 A. D.). He lived in the Mahāvihāra of Anurādhapura, and studied the Siṁhalese 'Aṭṭhakathā' or commentary. He is the author of Visuddhimagga, the first systematic and philosophic treatise on Buddhist doctrines, and wrote learned commentaries on almost all the books of the Pāli Tripiṭaka. It is, however, doubtful whether Buddhaghosa was the author of the famous commentaries on the Dhammapada and the Jātakas.

Dīpavaṁsa and Mahāvaṁsa.

To complete the sketch of the non-canonical Buddhist literature, reference must be made to the two famous historical works of Ceylon, *viz.*, Dīpavaṁsa and Mahāvaṁsa. The Dīpavaṁsa (the history of the island of Ceylon) was composed in the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A. D., and was mainly based on the Siṁhalese Aṭṭhakathā or commentary. A far more successful effort to write an historical epic of Ceylon is, however, to be found in

the Mahāvaṁsa, probably the work of a poet Mahānāma, who flourished in the last quarter of the fifth century A. D. Many other Pāli works were composed in Ceylon, but they need not be referred to in detail.

The Sanskrit canon.

The Pāli literature, of which a short account has been given above, forms, however, the canon of only one class of Buddhists, called the Theravādins. Other sects had a different canon, written partly in Sanskrit, and partly in a Middle Indian dialect, which is allied to Sanskrit, and may be called 'Mixed-Sanskrit.' This Sanskrit canon belongs mainly, though not exclusively, to the Mahāyāna school. The Sarvāstivādins of the Hīnayāna school, also, had a Sanskrit canon. This canon contained many voluminous works, but some of them have been recovered only in parts,—a good many fragments being obtained in course of recent excavations in E. Turkestan,—while others exist only in Tibetan and Chinese translations. It is thus impossible to give a detailed description of this canon, but it seems that both the Pāli and the Sanskrit canon originated from a common source, probably the lost Māgadhī canon. The cano-

nical texts of the Mūlasarvāstivādins are better known, as they were translated into Chinese by I-tsing. They show considerable agreement with, as well as difference from the Pāli canon. The Vinaya of this canon corresponds in arrangement and substance to the Pāli Vinaya, and the Āgamas correspond to the Nikāyas; the Dīrghāgama, the Madhyamāgama, the Ekottarāgama, and the Saṁyuktāgama corresponding respectively to the Dīgha—, Majjhima—, Aṅguttara—, and Saṁyutta-nikāyas. There is also a Kshudrakāgama, but we do not know whether it contains all the works belonging to the Khuddaka-nikāya. The Sanskrit canon, however, contains Sūtranipāta, Udāna, Dharmapada, Sthaviragāthā, Vimānavastu, and Buddhavaṁśa, corresponding, respectively, to Suttanipāta, Udāna, Dhammapada, Theragāthā, Vimānavatthu, and Buddhavaṁsa. There are also seven Abhidharma books translated into the Chinese, but it is doubtful whether they originated from the old canon.

All the Buddhist sects, however, did not possess a more or less complete canon like the Pāli Piṭaka of the Theravādins, or the Sanskrit canon of the Sarvāstivādins. But

every sect had one or more special treatises, which it looked upon as specially sacred, and, for the rest, it appropriated select texts from an existing canon. One of the most famous of these special treatises is Mahāvastu, a book belonging to the Vinaya-piṭaka of the Lokottaravādins, a subdivision of the Mahāsāṃghikas, the sect which first broke off from the Orthodox church after the council of Vaiśāli. But although classed as Vinaya, Mahāvastu contains hardly anything about the disciplinary rules of the monks. It merely contains legends about Bodhisattva and Buddha, which substantially agree with those found in the Pāli Piṭaka. It is thus a source of many Jātaka stories and other narratives found in the Buddhist literature. But although Mahāvastu belongs to the Hīnayāna school, some of its doctrines make a very near approach to the Mahāyāna system, and some of its hymns to Buddha are akin to the Purāṇic *stotras* addressed to Śiva or Vishṇu.

Mahāvastu.

We now come to the rich Sanskrit literature of the Mahāyāna school. One of the earliest texts of this school, which has obtained wide celebrity in the Buddhist world, is

Lalitavistara, an embellished story of the life of Buddha. The work originally belonged to the Hīnayāna school, but was later on definitely classed as Vaipulyasūtra or the Mahāyānasūtra.

These Vaipulyasūtras may be looked upon as the canonical books of the Mahāyānists. The latter, however, can hardly be said to possess a canon in the strict sense of the word, for these books originated at different times, and among different sects, though at present they are all looked upon with great reverence in Nepal. The Vaipulyasūtras consist of the following :—

The Vaipulya-sūtras.

1. Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, 2. Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, 3. Lalitavistara, 4. Laṅkāvatāra or Saddharmalaṅkāvatāra, 5. Suvarṇaprabhāsa, 6. Gaṇḍavyūha, 7. Tathāgataguhyaka or Tathāgataguṇajñāna, 8. Samādhirāja, and 9. Daśabhūmīśvara.

The most important of these works is Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, 'Lotus of good religion', a typical Mahāyāna work containing all the characteristic features of that school. The conception of a human Śākyamuni is here replaced by that of Buddha, God of gods, the self-created, and the creator of the whole

world. This work was translated in Chinese between 265 and 316 A. D., and must therefore have been composed at least as early as the second century A. D.

The most important of the Philosophical works of the Mahāyāna school is the 'Prajñā-pāramitā' or 'perfection of knowledge or wisdom'. It deals with the six perfections of the Bodhisattva, particularly the Prajñā (knowledge or wisdom). The Prajñā, however, consists mainly in the realisation of 'Śūnyavāda' or 'nothingness of the world.' The book exists in four redactions of 100,000, 25,000, 10,000 and 8,000 ślokas, these being called respectively Śata-, Pañchaviṁśati-, Daśa-, and Ashṭa-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā.

The Mahāyāna literature also possessed a rich store of legends. The best known collections of these legends, called *avadānas*, are Avadānaśataka and Divyāvadāna, which were translated in Chinese in the third century A. D., and the Avadānakalpalatā of Kshemendra, a poet of Kashmir, who flourished in the eleventh century A.D.

Reference may now be made to some of the greatest writers associated with the Buddhist

Sanskrit Literature. The most famous of these is Aśvaghosha. He was a contemporary of Kanishka, and probably an inhabitant of Ayodhyā. A French savant has recently referred to him in the following enthusiastic strain. "He stands at the starting point of all the great currents that renewed and transformed India, towards the beginning of the Christian era. Poet, musician, preacher, moralist, philosopher, playwright, tale-teller, he is an inventor in all these arts, and excels in all ; in his richness and variety he recalls Milton, Goethe, Kant and Voltaire."[1]

Aśvaghosha

The most important of Aśvaghosha's works is 'Buddha-Charita,' a complete life of Buddha written in the form of Mahā-Kāvya. This great 'Buddha-epic' has been ranked along with the works of Vālmīki and Kālidāsa. Another work, Saundarānanda-Kāvya, is an excellent specimen of the Kāvya style. It, too, deals with Buddha's life, but dwells more particularly on those episodes which are either briefly related, or altogether omitted in the Buddha-Charita. The third great work of Aśvaghosha is the Sūtrālaṁkāra, a collection of legends written

1. S. Levi, in Calcutta Review, September, 1923, p. 377.

in prose and verse. Another work attributed to Aśvaghosha is 'Vajrasūchī' in which the Brāhmanical caste-system is decried, mainly by reference to, or quotations from, Brāhmanical works. Aśvaghosha's fame as a teacher of Mahāyānism is based upon a philosophical work called 'Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda,' which is used even to-day as the principal treatise in the schools and monasteries of Japan. A dramatic poem of Aśvaghosha, called 'Sāriputra-prakarana,' has also been recently discovered. Other works are also attributed to Aśvaghosha but there are doubts about their true authorship.

Nāgārjuna.

Next to Aśvaghosha stands Nāgārjuna. He is said to be the author of the 'Satasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā,' one of the earliest Mahāyāna-sūtras. He is also the author of Mādhyamikasūtras, and founder of the Mādhyamika school which teaches that the whole of the phenomenal world is a mere illusion. Other books are also attributed to him, but it is difficult to decide whether he was really the author of all of them. According to the biography of Nāgārjuna, which was translated into Chinese at the beginning of the fifth century A. D., he was born in a Brāhmana

family in South India. He studied the Vedas and other Brāhmaṇical scriptures, but was converted to Buddhism, and became one of the most important teachers of Mahāyāna-Buddhism. He probably flourished towards the close of the second century A. D.

Āryadeva.

Āryadeva was probably a younger contemporary of Nāgārjuna. One of his books Chatuḥśatikā has recently been discovered. Another, of which only fragments are known, seeks to demonstrate the hollowness of Brāhmaṇical ceremonies.

Asaṅga and Vasubandhu.

Asaṅga or Āryāsaṅga was the founder of the Yogāchāra school of Mahāyāna-Buddhism, and the author of Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṁkāra. The Yogāchāras deny the real existence of all except *vijñāna* or consciousness, and are therefore also called Vijñānavādins. Vasubandhu, younger brother of Asaṅga, was the author of Abhidharmakośa, a learned treatise on Ethics, Psychology and Metaphysics, held in great reverence by the Mahāyānists of China and Japan. He also wrote many other learned philosophical works and commentaries to Mahāyānasūtras. The two brothers Asaṅga and Vasubandhu probably

lourished towards the end of the fourth, or the eginning of the fifth century A. D.

Other writers.

A large number of Buddhist authors flourished after Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, and a brief reference to the most amous of them may be made to complete his sketch, although it would carry us beyond he period under review.

Dignāga, the author of Pramāṇa-Samuchchaya, famous treatise on logic, was a pupil of Asaṅga or Vasubandhu.

Chandragomin, a famous student of the chool of Asaṅga, enjoys great celebrity all over he Buddhist world as a grammārian, philoopher, and a poet. Of his poetical works only he Śishyalekhadharmakāvya, an elegant religious oem written in the form of a letter to a tudent, is known to us. He flourished in the eventh century A. D.

About the same time flourished Śāntideva, he reputed author of three learned works, Śikshāsamuchchaya, Sūtrasamuchchaya, and Bodhicharyāvatāra. The last, 'a poem breathng a truly pious spirit, ranks foremost among he religious poetry of the Buddhists.'

In conclusion it may be pointed out that

with the development of Buddhism as a world religion, Buddhist literature also rose to the rank of a world-literature. It was studied all over Asia, and many of its legends, fables, and anecdotes found their way into Europe. Nay, it is even surmised by many, that the Christian Gospels, and particularly the story of Christ's life, were profoundly influenced by the Buddhist canon. Rudolf Seydel, who has gone more deeply into this branch of study than any other scholar, has pointed out a close agreement between a large number of Buddhist and Christian legends, parables and maxims. From this he has derived the very natural conclusion that the Bible is indebted to a large extent to the Buddhist literature. Later scholars have disputed this theory, but have not been able to demolish it altogether. There is, however, no doubt that the Apocrypha, which originated in the second and third century A. D., and is admitted by the Roman Catholics into the Old Testament, borrowed largely from the Buddhist literature.

Buddhist Literature, a world-literature.

The influence of Buddhism and Buddhist literature in Europe at a later date is most conspicuously illustrated by the 'Barlaam and

Barlaam and Josaphat.

'Josaphat', 'one of the most widely spread religious romances of the Middle Ages, relating the conversion of the Indian prince Josaphat by the hermit Barlaam, his subsequent resistance to all forms of temptation, and his becoming a hermit.' The whole story is 'nothing more or less than a Christianised version of the legendary history of Buddha[1], agreeing with it in all essentials and many details.' The Romance was originally composed in the Pehlevi language about the sixth or the seventh century A. D., and translated in Arabic and Syriac at a later date. The Syrian version was translated into Greek, and the Greek version was translated into many European languages. The book exists in Latin, French, Hebrew, Ethiopean, Italian, Spanish, German, English, Swedish, Dutch, Armenian, Russian and Rumanian versions, and was even translated as early as 1204 A. D. into Icelandic. It is also interesting to note that by the fourteenth century A. D., Barlaam and Josaphat

1. 'Josaphat' is written in Arabic as Yudasatf which is simply a corruption of Bodhisat, the Arabic letters *y* and *b* being often confused with each other.' Barlaam is probably to be traced to 'Bhagavān.'

were recognised as saints by the Holy Pope. Prof. Max Müller has pointed out how Gautama, the Buddha, under the name of St. Josaphat, is at the present day officially recognised and honoured throughout Catholic Christendom as a Saint of the Church of Christ. He justly remarks that few saints have a better claim to the title than the Buddha.

§2. The Brahmanical Literature

In addition to the Buddhist literature, the period witnessed the growth and development of the Jaina and the Brāhmaṇical literature as well. Unfortunately, the authentic Jaina literature of this period is completely lost, except in so far as it has been preserved in later works, of which a detailed account will be given in a later chapter. Of the Brāhmaṇical literature, the most important are the works belonging to the Vedāṅga class. A general account of it has already been given in chapter II (P. 30). We shall now refer briefly to the more important works under each of the six divisions of the Vedāṅgas.

1. Śikshā—Śikshā may be defined as the science dealing with pronunciation of letters,

accents, organs of pronunciation, delivery and euphonic laws. The oldest text-books belonging to this class are the Prātiśākhyas. These are collections of phonetic rules peculiar to the different branches of the four Vedas. Besides giving general rules for the proper pronunciation of the Vedic language in general, they were intended to record what was peculiar in the pronunciation of certain teachers and their schools. The following may be mentioned among the more important texts belonging to the different Vedas.

1. The Ṛigveda-Prātiśākhya, attributed to Śaunaka.

2. The Taittirīya-Prātiśākhya-Sūtra.

3. The Vājasaneyi-Prātiśākhya-Sūtra, attributed to Kātyāyana.

4. The Atharvaveda-Prātiśākhya-Sūtra, belonging to the Śaunaka school.

There are many later books belonging to this class which are attributed to such famous sages of old as Bhāradvāja, Vyāsa, Vāsishṭha, Yājñavalkya, etc.

2. Chhandas or Metre.

Metre is dealt with in the Ṛigveda-Prātiśākhya, the Śāṅkhāyana-Śrauta-sūtra, and

the Nidāna-Sūtra, belonging to the Sāmaveda. One of the most important treatises is the Chhanda-Sūtra of Piṅgala. Although two recensions of it are attached respectively to the Ṛigveda and the Yayurveda, it is a comparatively later work.

3. Vyākaraṇa or Grammar.

The older works on this subject were superseded by the Grammar of Pāṇini, who flourished almost at the end of the Vedic period. It has been rightly said about this work, that it presents 'the scientific treatment of a single tongue in a perfection which arouses the wonder and admiration of all those who are more thoroughly acquainted with it ; it even now stands, not only unsurpassed, but not even attained, and in many respects it may be looked upon as the model for similar work.'

4. Nirukta or Etymology.

As Grammar took its final shape in Pāṇini's work, so 'the etymological lexicography of Vedic terms' was embodied in the Nirukta of Yāska. All the older works on the subject, like those on Grammar, were superseded, and consequently forgotten.

5. Jyotisha.

The only separate treatise on this subject is the Jyotisha-Vedāṅga, a small treatise of about 40 verses. It deals with the sun, the moon, and the 27 Nakshatras. The fact that it is written in verse, and not in the *sūtra* style, shows that it is a later work.

6. Kalpa.

The treatises on ritual fall into three classes. The first, the Śrauta-sūtra contains prescriptions for the solemn ceremonies, described in the Brāhmaṇas, and performed with the assistance of the priests with exact observance of the ritual. They include the Śulva-sūtras which give directions for the building of sacrificial places and fire-altars, and thus constitute the oldest works on Indian Geometry. The second, the Gṛihya-sūtra deals with the various domestic ceremonies to be performed by a householder in all special circumstances of life, from the cradle to the grave, such as those connected with birth, initiations, marriage, death etc. (cf pp. 97 ff). The third, the Dharma-sūtra, prescribes the moral rules to be observed in daily life with a view to fix the proper attitude of an individual, both towards other individuals, as

well as towards the civic community at large. It has therefore to deal with the state and society, and the relations of individuals thereto.

We have a collection of these four kinds of Sūtra-texts (including Sulva), belonging to the Baudhāyana and Āpastamba schools of the Black-Yajurveda. Closely connected with the Kalpasūtra of the Āpastamba school is that of the Hiraṇyakeśins. All these are attached to the Taittirīya-Saṁhitā, while to the Maitrāyaṇī-Saṁhitā belong the Śrauta-, Gṛihya- and Śulva-sūtras of the Mānava school, and to the Kāṭhaka-saṁhitā the Kāṭhaka-Gṛihyasūtra. The following list represents the other important works of this class, arranged under the different Vedas to which they are attached.

White-Yajurveda.	(1)	Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra.
	(2)	Pāraskara-Gṛihyasūtra.
	(3)	Kātyāyana-Śulvasūtra.
Ṛigveda	(1)	Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra.
	(2)	Āśvalāyana-Gṛihyasūtra.
	(3)	Śāṅkhāyana-Śrautasūtra.
	(4)	Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛihyasūtra.
Sāmaveda.	(1)	Lāṭyāyana-Śrautasūtra.
	(2)	Gobhila-Gṛihyasūtra.
	(3)	Khādira-Gṛihyasūtra.

Atharvaveda	(1) Kauśikasūtra.
	(2) Vaitāna-Śrautasūtra.

All these works are of very great importance from historical point of view. They not only hold out before us a detailed picture of the social and religious condition of the Aryans, but also acquaint us with the form of their government and their politica ideas. In short, they are the most important source of information about the Hindu civilisation of this period.

There are other works which, properly speaking, belong to the Vedāṅga class, as they deal with the Saṁhitās, but are not really regarded as such. These are the Anukramaṇīs i. e. 'Lists' or 'Indices' of the contents of the Saṁhitās.

Anukramaṇīs.

Thus Śaunaka made an Anukrāmaṇī or list of (1) the Ṛishis, (2) the metres, and (3) the gods of the Ṛigvedic hymns, and another, of the hymns themselves. The most perfect Anukramaṇī is that of Kātyāyana, called Sarvānukramaṇī i. e. the index of all things belonging to the Ṛigveda. It gives in the form of *sūtras*, the first words of every hymn, the number of verses, the name and family of the Ṛishi to whom it is ascribed, the

deities to whom each individual verse is consecrated, and the metres of every verse. Another important work of the same class is the Bṛihaddevatā attributed to Śaunaka. It gives a list of deities referred to in the Ṛigvedic hymns, and contains many myths and legends about them.

In addition to the religious literature described above, we have not only secular literature, but also the Smṛitis, the Purāṇas, and other classes of religious literature, of which the beginnings may be traced during the period under review. These will be more conveniently dealt with in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

The Epics And The Hindu Society.

The period under review also witnessed the growth of the Epics. While the Sūtra literature is unmistakably Brāhmanical, the Epics may be said to represent the view-point of the Kshatriyas. Indeed they may be regarded as the last remnant of a Kshatriya literature, which was distinct in its origin and development from the Brāhmanical literature. Even the latter refers to 'Gāthās' or Nārāśamsis, literary compositions of the nature of 'hero-lauds', describing in rapturous terms the heroism and other virtues of Kshatriya princes. It is quite clear that many of these compositions were regularly sung on the occasion of important ceremonies. They are mostly lost, but there can be no doubt that the origin of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata is ultimately to be traced to these sources.

Origin of the Epics.

Although edited and re-touched by the Brāhmaṇas at a later age, the Epics still retain

their original characteristics to a grreat extent. They clearly testify to the fact that the political power of the Kshatriyas had not yet been subordinated to the Brāhmaṇas, as in a later age. This is a valuable historical truth, the importance of which cannot be overestimated.

Age of the Epics.

The two Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, are too well known to require any detailed description. But the question as to the time of their composition is involved in difficulties. It is certain that both these Epics have reached their present form by additions and alterations in successive ages, and it is probable that while they did not assume their final shape till the third or the fourth century A. D., their beginning must be dated six to eight centuries earlier. Both the Epics are the products of new Hinduism, and Rāma and Kṛishṇa, the two chief incarnations of Vishṇu, play the most prominent part therein.

The historical importance of these two books is indeed very great. If any one would seek to realise what Hindu life and society was like during the period under review, he can do no better than turn to the two grand

Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. They hold out before us a mirror, reflecting the Indian society as it was two thousand years ago, and paint in glowing colours the virtues and vices that characterised the people, and the high ideals which inspired them.

The story of the Rāmāyaṇa may be briefly told. King Daśaratha of Ayodhyā had three queens, and four sons were born of them. He wanted to install the eldest, Rāmachandra, as crown-prince, but his favourite queen Kaikeyī wanted the throne for her own son Bharata. On the eve of the installation ceremony, she reminded the king of the two boons he had promised her long ago, and extracted a promise that he would grant them now. Her demands were terrible,—Rāma must go to the forest for 14 years, and Bharata should be placed on the throne. The old king would not swerve an inch from the path of rectitude, and though his heart was rent in twain, he could not say 'no' to the proposal of his favourite queen. Rāma, like a true hero, calmly accepted the position into which his father's pledge had placed him, and banished himself from Ayodhyā. His loving

The story of the Rāmāyaṇa.

brother Lakshmana and young and faithful wife Sītā could by no means be dissuaded from accompanying him to the forest. On his way, he met a Nishāda chief, and made him a life-long friend, and settled in the Chitrakūta mountains, not far from modern Allahabad. In the meantime Daśaratha died of a broken heart, and Bharata, who was at his maternal uncle's house, was hurriedly sent for. But Kaikeyī's cruel wish was not fulfilled. Bharata was overwhelmed with shame and sorrow at the part that she had played in the late transactions, and expiated the sins of his mother by trying to persuade Rāma to take back his legitimate throne. But Rāma was the worthy son of a father who suffered himself to be literally killed by inches with a poignant sorrow, rather than deviate a hair's breadth from the path of rectitude. He refused the offer and Bharata went back to Ayodhyā in a dejected mood. He resolved henceforth to lead an ascetic life like Rāma, and having placed the latter's sandal on the throne, ruled the kingdom as his deputy.

Rāma retired further south into the Dandaka forest, and lived near modern Nasik on the banks of the Godavery, served and cared for

by his faithful brother and loving wife. There he had to fight against the marauding tribes of the forest, in order to protect the Aryan sages, but erelong this brought troubles upon him, and Rāvaṇa, the notable non-Aryan chief of the south, carried away Sītā to his residence at Laṅkā, in the island of Ceylon. Rāma sought and obtained the aid of Sugrīva, a non-Aryan chief of Kishkindhyā, by killing his elder brother Vāli. Tārā, the widowed queen of Vāli became the willing spouse of Sugrīva, and with his help, Rāma defeated Rāvaṇa and recovered Sītā. Sītā's purity was tested by the ordeal of fire, and as it was now full 14 years since they left their home, the loving couple returned to Ayodhyā. Bibhīshaṇa, the faithless brother of Rāvaṇa, who had gone over to Rāma's side, was crowned at Laṅkā.

Historical truths to be deduced from the Rāmāyaṇa.

In its historical setting, the Rāmāyaṇa represents the most notable fact during the period under review, *viz.* the expansion of Aryan culture all over South India. It plainly hints at the methods employed by the conquerors, *viz.* the missionary enterprises

backed by military power, and the setting up of one non-Aryan tribe against another. It also pays an indirect tribute to the high state of material and moral civilisation of the non-Aryans. The unfair means, by which Vāli was killed by Rāma, and Indrajit, by his brother Lakshmaṇa, only prove once more that a conquering race cannot always be scrupulous in its methods of warfare. The strength and resources of Rāvaṇa were by no means negligible, and the material civilisation of his country was hardly inferior to that of his opponents. In morality, there is at least one point in which Rāvaṇa towered head and shoulders above his opponents. We need only compare the barbarous treatment that Lakshmaṇa meted out to Rāvaṇa's sister Śūrpaṇakhā, on the slightest provocation, with the conduct of the outraged non-Aryan chief to his captive lady.

But the strength and excellence of the Aryan culture lay in their domestic virtues. The affectionate faithfulness of the brothers of Rāma, and the undying love of his consort Sītā contrast strangely with the faithless conduct of Bibhīshaṇa, Sugrīva and Tārā. The

sternness of Aryan character, and its spirit of sacrifice, as reflected in the characters of Daśaratha and his three sons, has no parallel in the effiminate luxury of Rāvana's household.

Among the other virtues of the Aryans must be counted a supreme regard for truth, a spirit of manly enterprise which nothing could daunt, and a perseverance and dogged obstinacy which carried everything before it. Everyone of these features is emphasised in the successful expedition of Rāma against enormous odds. There can hardly be a nobler and more stimulating example than that of the helpless Rāma, rising above the most terrible calamity that can befall an honourable man, and fighting his way to a successful issue by his own unaided energy and prowess. The high ideals of Aryan life were embodied in Rāma, the faithful and dutiful son, the affectionate brother, the loving husband, and the stern relentless hero,—a strange combination, as an ancient text puts it, of the grace of flowers and the fury of thunders.

But the weak spots of Aryan life are also hinted at in the Rāmāyana. The system of polygamy, and the weakness of king Daśaratha

for feminine grace, not to put it more bluntly, brought all the disasters upon himself and his kingdom. Out of these germs developed the palace intrigues, and the license of the court, which undermined the virility of political life in ancient India. The fire-ordeal of Sītā also points to the growth of superstitious practices, with ominous consequences for the future. The friendship of Rāma with the Nishāda and other non-Aryan chiefs clearly indicates the absence of the degrading influences of caste. The last book of Rāmāyaṇa, however, which was added at a later time, depicts Rāma as having killed a Śūdra for daring to perform the Brāhmaṇical sacrifices, and thus betrays the lamentable progress of that institution in the interval.

The story of Mahābhārata is complex in character, and a great deal of its importance lies in the subsidiary legends and long discourses on political, social, moral and religious topics, loosely attached to the main story.

The historical basis of this grand Epic has already been discussed. Like Rāmāyaṇa, it faithfully reflects an important feature of the history of India during the period under review,

viz. the evolution of empire out of a host of petty states fighting for supremacy with one another. It shows considerable advance over the Rāmāyana-period in war and diplomacy, and in various phases of society. The different characters of the book represent different aspects of Indian life. In Bhishma we meet with the stern regard for truth, combined with a sense of duty, heroism, and filial love. Duryodhana is an embodiment of unscrupulous and insatiate greed for political power. The Pāṇḍava brothers typify the sweet brotherly relations of old. Yudhishthira is a model of unflinching rigid moral virtues, and Subhadrā, of a selfless, devoted wife and matron. But the typical figures of the Mahābhārata are Arjuna, Krishna and Draupadī, representing some of the best and noblest traits of Aryan character. The first soldier of his age, Arjuna was equally devoted to high philosophy, and fine arts, such as music and dancing. Krishna was the first great statesman that grasped the vital political problems of India, and applied his truly remarkable genius for their solution. He rose above the narrow

Historical truths to be deduced from the Mahābhārata.

parochial patriotism which distinguished most men of his age, and steered the ship of state cleverly through troubled waters. In Draupadī we find a unique type of woman,—not merely a fond and devoted wife, but the true helpmate and partner in life. She was the best illustration of Kālidāsa's famous epigram—a good housewife, wise counsellor, merry companion, and a beloved pupil in the pursuit of fine arts. The prowess, liberalism, and all-round culture of Arjuna, the masterly personality, profound philosophic insight, and political sagacity of Krishṇa, and the lofty, high-souled, and spirited Draupadī, proud in her virtue and noble in her indignation, formed the ideals that shed lustre on the society of ancient India.

Society as depicted in the Epic.

Several objectionable practices and customs referred to in the Mahābhārata throw an interesting light on the growth of Hindu society. Thus the marriage of Draupadī with five husbands points to the existence of polyandry. For, it must be remembered that the epic was based upon an ancient story, and the marriage of Draupadī was too essential a part of it to be modified in later versions. The attempt of

the author to explain it away by a mythological story proves that although the system was in vogue in early times, it had fallen into disuse during the period under review. The same may be said of another objectionable custom, *viz*, procreating sons on a childless widow by a relation, which we find in the birth-story of Dhritarāshtra and Pāṇḍu.

It is difficult, however, to explain away the barbarity of Kaurava princes, who dragged Draupadi by her hair to an open assembly, and there forcibly took away her clothes. This cannot be conceived to be an essential part of the old story which the epic writer could not have avoided. It is part and parcel of the epic, though probably a later embellishment of the story, and we are bound to conclude that the Aryan society had already developed that characteristic disregard for woman's honour, which ultimately accorded her an abject and humiliating position in society. Some incidents seem to show that the primitive savage instincts were not yet wholly subdued. Fancy, for instance, how the Pāṇḍava prince Bhīma literally quenched his thirst for vengeance by drinking the blood of his opponent Kuru prince.

The long discourses scattered throughout the epic are both edifying and instructive, and throw interesting side-light on the social ideas, manners and customs. We may take for example the growth of the caste-system.

The Caste-System.

The divisions of society into different classes, to which we have referred in a previous chapter, were growing more and more rigid, and the Brāhmaṇas had already developed those social theories which we find to-day as accomplished facts. But the rational mind of India was not slow to challenge their extravagant pretensions and superstitious theories. Thus there are various passages scattered in the epic in which Brāhmaṇical pretensions are recorded, and others in which a rational view is taken of the growth of society. The following, for instance, is hard to match for its insolent bravado.

"Brāhmaṇas are like flaming fire. Whether ill or well-versed in the Veda, whether untrained or accomplished, Brāhmaṇas must never be despised. Whether learned or unlearned, a Brāhmaṇa is a great deity."

Again, "through the prowess of the Brāhmaṇas, the Asuras were prostrated on the

waters; by the favour of the Brāhmaṇas the gods inhabit heaven. The ether cannot be created, the mountain Himavat cannot be shaken, the Gaṅgā cannot be stemmed by a dam; the Brāhmaṇas cannot be conquered by anyone on earth."

Against this we may quote the following:—

"Mahādeva says, 'A man, whether he be a Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra, is such by nature. By evil deeds a twice-born man falls from his position. The Kshatriya or Vaiśya, who lives in the condition of a Brāhmaṇa, by practising the duties of one, attains to Brāhmaṇhood. And the foolish Brāhmaṇa, who having attained the Brāhmaṇhood, which is so hard to get, follows the profession of a Vaiśya, under the influence of cupidity and delusion, falls into the condition of a Vaiśya. A Brāhmaṇa who falls from his own duty becomes afterwards a Śūdra. But by practising the following good works a Śūdra becomes a Brāhmaṇa."

The period thus witnessed a conflict of ideas. In practice, the old class distinctions had not yet been reduced to a rigid caste, and the supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas was far from being an established fact.

If we turn from the Epics to the Buddhist literature we find the same state of things. The great Buddha denounced the arbitrary distinctions of caste, and proclaimed the equality of all. The Brāhmaṇic pretensions, no doubt, reached very high, but they were scattered to the winds by the irresistible logic of the great master. The supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas is never recognised in the Buddhist and the Jaina literature, and the preference is always given to the Kshatriyas. Thus in enumerating the four castes, they begin with the Kshatriya and not with Brāhmaṇa.

Marriage among different castes was in vogue, but the Brāhmaṇical literature of the period seems to imply, that although a Brāhmaṇa could marry a girl belonging to other castes, a Brāhmaṇa girl could not be married to any one but a Brāhmaṇa. This is categorically denied in the Buddhist literature, which maintains just the contrary view, *viz.* that a Kshatriya girl could not be married to a Brāhmaṇa, though a Brāhmṇa girl might be married to a Kshatriya.

A comparison of these texts leaves no doubt that the caste was in the making, and although

marriage within one's own class was preferred, there was as yet no absolute restriction about inter-marriage between different castes. The Brāhmaṇas and the Kshatriyas occupied the chief position in society, but none of them conceded the supremacy to the other. There was no question of the prohibition of inter-dining, and men might pass from one caste to another, though it was growing difficult in course of time.

The lot of the low castes, however, became more and more miserable. The marriage with the Śūdras was looked upon as degrading, and even eating food cooked by them was going into disuse. Some of them, like the Chaṇḍālas, were treated as Pariahs of the present day. They lived outside the city, and not only touch, but even the sight of them was impure.

The caste-system was thus creeping like a shadow on the fair face of India, and the shadow was gradually lengthened with the declining day. It was a speck of black cloud that cast its shade on the brilliant culture and civilisation of the Aryans. The cloud was as yet no bigger than a man's hand, but it was destined erelong to assume threatening proportions, and envelop the atmosphere in an impenetrable gloom,

ushering in the dark night long before it was due.

It is refreshing to pass from the discussion of caste to a topic which showed the great liberality of Hindu society. It will be remembered that, during the period under review, foreign invaders like the Greeks, the Parthians, the Sakas and the Kushānas settled in India. All these elements were finally absorbed by the Hindu society, and not a trace remained of their separate individual characteristics. A number of inscriptions record the gradual transformation of these barbarian hordes,—how they adopted the language, religion, manners, and customs of the people, and were finally incorporated into the Hindu society by matrimonial ties. The case of the Western Satraps furnishes a very good illustration. The names of its early kings were uncouth, such as Ghsamotika, Chashṭana and Nahapāna, but their successors bore purely Indian names like Viśvasena, Rudrasiṅha, Vijayasena, Rudrasena etc. Then they gave up their barbaric language and religion, became pious devotees of Hindu gods, and adopted Sanskrit as their language. They went even

Foreign Elements in the Hindu Population.

further, and entered into matrimonial relations with Brāhmanical royal dynasties of India. Thus in everything they became pure Hindus.

The same liberal spirit was shown abroad by the Buddhist and Brāhmanical missionaries. The former carried their propaganda all over Asia, and brought its nomadic hordes within the pale of Indian culture, while the latter raised the people in the Far East from their primitive barbarism to a high state of progress and refinement.

On the other hand, the Indians freely borrowed from other nations in order to improve their arts and science. Their numismatics drew its main inspiration from the Graeco-Bractrians. As regards other arts and architecture, too, we can say of them what has been said of the Greeks. 'They had a remarkable capacity for seizing what was good in the art of other nations. But although they borrowed largely both from the Greeks and the Persians, not only technical processes, but decorative patterns, animal types and such-like motives,—the spirit of their productions was always inherently their own.' Thus the Indo-Aryans displayed remarkable

The debt of the Hindus to foreign culture.

capacity for assimilation and absorption, and in this respect they compare favourably with other nations, both ancient and modern.

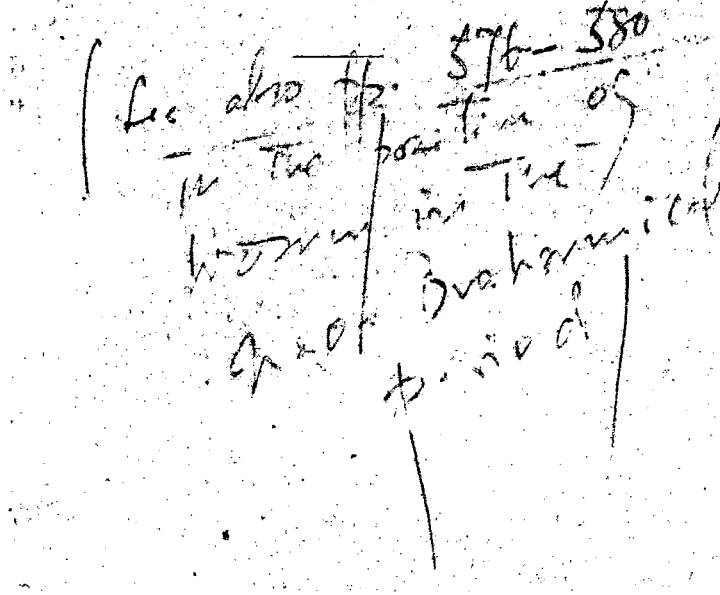
In conclusion a word may be said about the position of woman. Like the development of caste, we find the beginnings of a retrograde movement in this direction. The change of attitude towards women is apparent in the reluctance of Buddha to admit them into his religious Order. He ultimately gave consent at the eloquent persuation of Ānanda, and rationalism triumphed for the time being. The choice of Buddha was fully justified by the rare intellectual attainments of the Buddhist nuns, and some of their literary compositions are still preserved in the famous Therī-gāthā.

Position of woman.

The spirit of the time is also correctly indicated by Megasthenes. He says that the 'Brāhmaṇas do not communicate a knowledge of philosophy to their wives.' What a strange contrast to the relation between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī that has been described above! But Megasthenes admits that some women did pursue philosophy.

The general education of women is frequently

referred to in the literature of the period. On the whole we must conclude that even in this period women had a fair share of culture and education, and sometimes reached high eminence in various branches of arts and sciences. But an idea was gradually gaining ground that knowledge and learning were not the proper sphere of women. This, added with a growing disregard for the honour of women, to which reference has already been made, was destined to bring down the women to a degrading position in centuries to come.



CHAPTER VIII.

TRADE, INDUSTRY, COLONISATION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE.

The various religious movements described above must not lead any one to suppose that the activity of the ancient Indians was confined to this sphere alone. Their spiritual achievements were no doubt very great, but these were not accompanied by a neglect of, or indifference to secular affairs, as is commonly supposed. In point of fact, the Indians of old were keenly alive to the extension of dominions, acquisition of wealth, and the development of trade, industry, and commerce. The material prosperity they gained in these various ways was reflected in the luxury and elegance that characterised the society. A brief reference to each of these topics is essential for a proper understanding of the ancient Indian civilisation.

We have already described how the Aryans had gradually spread over the whole of Northern India. During the period under review they extended their supremacy over the whole of

the Deccan and South Indian Peninsula. The process of conquest connot be traced in detail, but it appears that the Aryan missionaries paved the way for the military conquest of many of these provinces. The story of Agastya shows their adventurous spirit in the south, and we read in the Rāmāyana how the Aryan sages were often disturbed by the wild tribes, called Rākshasas, in their southern homes, and sought the aid of the Kshatriya princes. Things were probably not very different from what took place in the 19th century, giving rise to the apt epigram—"where missionaries go to-day, the gunboat follows tomorrow." The result was not merely a military, but also a cultural conquest of South India. The language, literature, religion, manners and customs of the Aryans were adopted by the Dravidian people, when their last strongholds in the extreme south were conquered by their eternal foes. Indeed it appeared as if the South would be as completely Aryanised as North India, and even the last vestige of Dravidian civilisation would be extinguished altogether. Future events showed, however, that it was not to be. After a few

The Aryan conquest of Deccan and South India.

centuries, there was a national awakening, and a distinct re-action in favour of the old order of things. The old language and literature was revived, and although the modern Tamil, Telugu and other Dravidian languages show clear traces of extensive Aryan influence, they are assuredly of non-Aryan stock. In other aspects of civilisation, too, although Aryan influence is supreme, the Dravidian element is clearly perceptible. There are even some tribes which have successfully preserved the old social order of the Dravidians, although it is radically different from the Aryan. But, on the whole, the fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan culture was so great, that henceforth the historian finds it necessary to use the term Indian, rather than Aryan. It is difficult to assign any precise date to the southern extension of the Aryans, but the whole movement may be generally referred to the period between 600 and 325 B. C. Thus, in course of 1500 years, the Aryans reached the utmost limits of India.

The South not completely Aryanised.

The five centuries that followed witnessed further extension of their power, beyond the seas and mountains that gird India all around. Ceylon

The Colonial Empire of India.

was colonised before 3rd century B. C. At about the same time the Indians settled in Upper and Lower Burma and Siam. As early as the first or second century A. D., a Hindu kingdom was founded in South Annam. The kingdom was named Champā, not impossibly after the city of the same name in Bengal, though this is doubted by many. At about the same or at an earlier period, the Indians had colonised Cambodia, and carried there the Indian art and culture, of which splendid monuments may be seen even to-day. About the first century A.D., Java was colonised by the Indians, and its six hundred monuments still remain as undying testimony to the adventures of Indian colonists. Malay Peninsula and the neighbouring islands of Sumatra, Bali and Borneo were also colonised by the Indian adventurers. Throughout these regions, the art, literature, law, and the religious (mainly Brāhmanical) and social institutions of India were firmly established; and the military conquest was thus followed by a complete cultural conquest.

Towards the North and West the conquest of Herat by Chandragupta Maurya, the missionary

activity of Aśoka, and the supremacy of the Indo-Kushāṇa kings over the Central Asian states, brought India into intimate contact with Africa, Europe and the rest of Asia. The excavations of Sir Aurel Stein in Khotan leave no doubt that there were regular Indian colonies in that region. Beneath the sands of the desert of Gobi, he has unearthed the ruins of cities which were peopled by Indians about two thousand years ago. Documents written in Indian character and Indian language, coins with Indian legends, figures of familiar Brāhmaṇical gods like Gaṇesa and Kuvera, specimens of Indian sculpture and architecture, mostly Buddhist, memorials of Buddhism, and thousand other things still tell the tale of Indian adventures beyond the 'Roof of the World'. Later on, Indian missionaries carried their civilising influence further North, into the colder regions of Mongolia and Siberia. After Buddhism was introduced into China in the first century A. D., Indians flocked there in large numbers, and almost established a colony. Indian culture was carried from China to Korea, and from Korea to Japan and the neighbouring islands. Thus the whole of Northern, Eastern

and South-Eastern Asia imbibed Indian culture and civilisation to a considerable extent.

As to Western Asia the facts are not so well-known, but there are grounds for the belief that Buddhism at one time spread from Hindu-kush to the Mediterranean. Brāhmanism had also some hold on these countries. There was a colony of Indians on the upper Euphrates in Armenia as early as the second century B. C., and temples were raised there in honour of Brāhmanical gods like Krishna. Thus the cultural conquest of India was more or less complete in the whole of Asia.

India also came into contact with foreign nations by means of trade. The early history of the mercantile activity of the Indians is lost in obscurity. Some find allusion to Indian trade in the Old Testament, while others trace it to still greater antiquity. Enough remains, however, to show that as early as the eighth century B. C., there was a regular trade relation, both by land and sea, between India on the one hand and Mesopotamia, Arabia, Phoenicia and Egypt on the other. From the fourth century B. C., trade and maritime activities were highly

Trade with foreign countries.

developed, and the Board of Admiralty and the Naval Department were highly organised. It was this naval supremacy that enabled the Indians to conquer the islands in the Indian Archipelago. Shortly after, there grew up a regular traffic between India and China, both by land and sea.

There was a mercantile colony of Indians in an island off the African coast in the first century A. D. The adventurous spirit of the Indians carried them even as far as the North Sea, while their caravans travelled from one end of Asia to the other.

A book, called the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, written by a Graeco-Egyptian sailor in the first century A. D., gives a very detailed and interesting account of Indian trade from the author's personal knowledge. He came to India and found the Indian coast studded with ports and harbours, carrying on a brisk trade with foreign countries. The chief articles of export from India were spices, perfumes, medicinal herbs, pigments, pearls, precious stones like diamond, sapphire, turquoise and lapis-lazuli, animal skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn, muslin, indigo, ivory, porcelain and

tortoise shell; the chief imports were cloth, linens, perfume, medicinal herbs, glass vessels, silver, gold, copper, tin, lead, pigments, precious stones and coral.

The value of Indian trade may be estimated from the well-known passage of Pliny, in which he recorded that India drained the Roman empire of a hundred million *sesterces* every year. Pliny's statement is corroborated by the discovery, in India, of innumerable gold coins of the Roman emperors, which must have come here in course of trade.

Such a volume of external trade presupposes keen industrial activity all over the country. Indeed, the literature and inscriptions of the period contain frequent references to various arts, crafts and professions followed by the people at large. The army supplied occupation to quite a large number of people who served as foot-soldiers, charioteers, cavalry and elephant-riders. They must have also supported such trade and industries as dealing in horse and elephants, and working in wood and metals in order to get the requisite supply of chariots, sea-going vessels and weapons of war. The

Industrial activity.

supply of wood and metals necessitated the clearing of forests and working of mines, and Kauṭilya lays down elaborate regulations for both. There was a royal officer called 'Ākarādhyaksha,' 'Superintendent of mines,' possessing necessary scientific knowledge. Aided by experts in mineralogy, and equipped with mining labourers and necessary instruments, he was to examine and work at all the mines in the kingdom, only those which involved large outlay being leased out to private parties. Another royal officer, Superintendent of metals, looked to the manufacture of copper, lead, tin, mercury, brass, bronze, bell-metal, and sulphurate of arsenic, as well as of commodities made out of them. The Superintendent of Ocean-mines attended to the collection of conch-shells, diamonds, precious stones, pearls, corals, and salt, and also regulated the commerce in these commodities. The Superintendent of forest produce looked to the preservation and maintenance of forests, and the manufacture of all kinds of wooden articles which were necessary for life or for the defence of forts. A very important industry, connected with this, was that of shipbuilding on a very large scale.

The growing luxury of the people led to the development of various industries. The jewellers' and lapidaries' arts as well as the art of glass-making "had reached a high pitch of excellence long before the 3rd century B. C." Working of gold, silver, ivory and a variety of gems and other precious substances figures prominently in Kautilya's book. Fragrant substances of various descriptions, fine fabrics made of cotton, wool, and silk, variety of garments, blankets, and skins, and beverages of all kinds, were manufactured by a large section of the population. The art of painting, masonry, and stone-cutting had also risen to great importance on account of the palaces, temples and other monuments built by the king, the merchants and the aristocracy.

Agriculture was naturally one of the main industries, but not, as now, practically the sole industry of the people. Various kinds of grains, vegetables, roots, fruits, flowers, and medicinal herbs were produced, and oils and sugar were manufactured. Cattle-breeding, poultry, and fishery were important industries, not only for the supply of milk, butter, and clarified butter, but also for meats of various birds and animals,

for which there was a large demand. A host of other minor industries may be mentioned, such as those of potters, dyers, leather-workers, confectioners, garland-makers, rush-workers, basket-makers, weavers, blacksmiths, and stone-cutters of ordinary type, all supplying the necessaries or luxuries of life.

Internal Trade.

A host of traders and merchants carried the products of these various industries from one end of the country to the other by means of boats and bullock carts. Sometimes hundreds of bullock carts, gathering together and forming what is called a caravan, traversed from one end of the country to the other, and occasionally we hear of bands of volunteer police being hired to protect the merchandise on the way from thieves and robbers. By means of rivers, canals, and highways, the commodities were despatched to the ports and harbours with a view to their export to foreign countries in sea-going vessels. Traders and merchants of various descriptions and their fabulous wealth are very frequently referred to in books and inscriptions.

The trade and industry of the period were characterised by highly developed organisations.

The institution called 'Sreni' was a corporation of men following the same trade, art, or craft, and resembled the guilds of mediaeval Europe. Almost every important industry had its guild, which laid down rules and regulations for the conduct of members, with a view to safe-guard their interests. These rules and regulations were recognised by the law of the land. Each guild had a definite constitution, with a President or a Headman, and a small Executive Council. Sometimes the guilds attained to power and prestige, and in all cases the head of the guild was an important personage in Court. The guild sometimes maintained armies and helped the king in times of need, though, at times, there were quarrels and fights between different guilds which taxed the power of the authority to its utmost. One of the most important functions of these guilds was to serve as local banks. People kept deposits of money with them with a direction that the interest accruing therefrom was to be devoted to specific purposes, every year, so long as the Sun and the Moon endure. This is the best proof of the efficiency and organisation of these bodies, for people would

Organisation in Trade and Industry.

hardly trust them with permanent endowments, if they were not satisfied with their working. Sometimes the guilds proved to be centres of learning and culture, and, on the whole, they were remarkable institutions of ancient India.

There were also other forms of corporate organisations besides guilds. Trade was carried on on Joint Stock principles ; there was Traders' League, and sometimes we hear even of 'Corner' or 'Trust', *viz.*, 'the Union of traders with a view to cause rise and fall in the value of articles and make profits cent. per cent.'

The above facts prove beyond doubt that a keen business instinct characterised the society, and trade, commerce and industry flourished in ancient India to a very high degree.

The enormous trade activity, joined to the natural resources of the country, made India very wealthy. Indeed India was reputed to be the richest country, and the 'Wealth of India' became a proverbial expression from very old times. Many stories are current of the fabulous wealth of Indian merchants. Anāthapiṇḍika, a celebrated merchant of Kośala, desired to present

The Wealth of India.

a fine park in Śrāvastī, called Jetavanā, to Buddha, but the owner would not part with it save on the impossible condition that he must have as many gold coins as could be spread over the grounds in the park. Anāthapiṇḍika closed with the offer, and a carving on the railings of the Bharhut Stūpa, dating probably about the second century B. C., still depicts the whole scene, showing particularly how cartloads of coins were being spread over the ground.

In a Jaina Canonical book, the householder Ānanda, who was ultimately converted to Jainism, is said to have 'possessed a treasure of four crore measures of gold deposited in a safe place, a capital of four crore measures of gold put out on interest, a well stocked estate of the value of four crore measures of gold, and four herds, each herd consisting of ten thousand heads of cattle.' Such stories are, no doubt, partly due to popular exaggeration and conventional way of describing things, but they indicate, in a general way, the economic condition of the country. An idea of the wealth of Indian merchant princes may also be obtained from the number of pious donations and

endowments made by them. For example, the Karle Cave, the finest in India, and probably in the whole world, was the gift of a single merchant.

Wealth inevitably brings luxury in its train. The shrewd Megasthenes observes that the Indians "love finery and ornament. Their robes are worked in gold and ornamented with precious stones, and they wear also flowered garments made of the finest muslin." The literature of the period contains abundant evidence of the luxury of the people. We read of fine buildings, several stories high, of brick, stone or wood, with fine carved railings of the same materials, rooms with coloured walls and painted frescoes, covered terraces, and over-hanging eaves; bath rooms of stone and brick, with antechamber, fire-places, chimneys, and cells to be used as cooling rooms after steam bath; rectangular chairs, arm chairs, sofas, state chairs, cushioned chairs, chairs raised on pedestal, chairs with many legs, cane-bottomed chairs, straw-bottomed chairs; bedsteads of equally varied character, with carved legs, representing feet of various animals; slippers of blue, yellow, red, brown,

The luxury of the people.

black, orange or yellowish colour; shoes with edges of the same variety of colours, having double, treble or manifold linings, and adorned with lion-skins, tiger-skins, panther-skins, antelope-skins, cat-skins, squirrel-skins, and owl-skins; laced boots, boots lined with cotton, boots of various hues, like the wings of partridges, boots painted with rams' horns and with goats' horns, boots ornamented with scorpions' tails and sewn round with peacocks' feathers; shoes made of grass, or of leaves of the date-palm or of wool, and ornamented with gold, silver, pearl, beryl, crystal, copper, glass, tin, lead or bronze; jewels and precious stones, like diamond, ruby etc., used as ornaments by men and women; and utensils made of gold and silver.

Other articles may be named, but the above list is enough to give a fair idea of the ease and luxury of Indian life, and the height to which materialistic civilisation had reached in olden days.

But the wealth and luxury of ancient India was not counterbalanced, as in modern western countries, by a host of paupers. Fortunately there was no factory system to turn out

generations of deformed humanity. Home industries organised on an elaborate plan brought subsistence and competence to every door, and although famine and other calamities were not absolutely unknown,—for human ingenuity has not yet been able to permanently provide against them,—they were few and far between. On the whole, the following picture of Indian life drawn by Megasthenes cannot be said to be very far from truth.

Economic condition of the masses.

"The inhabitants, in like manner, having abundant means of subsistence, exceed in consequence the ordinary stature and are distinguished by their proud bearing. They are also found to be well skilled in the arts, as might be expected of men who inhale a pure air and drink the very finest water. And while the soil bears on its surface all kinds of fruits which are known to cultivation, it has also under ground numerous veins of all sorts of metals, for it contains much gold and silver, and copper and iron in no small quantity, and even tin and other metals, which are employed in making articles of use and ornament, as well as the implements and the accoutrements of war.

"In addition to cereals, there grows throughout India much millet which is kept well watered by the profusion of river streams, and much pulse of different sorts, and rice also, and what is called *bosporum* as well as many other plants useful for food, of which most grow spontaneously. The soil yields, moreover, not a few other edible products fit for the subsistence of animals, about which it would be tedious to write. It is accordingly affirmed that famine has never visited India and that there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food."(1)

Elsewhere Megasthenes bestows high encomiums on Indian life and manners. "The Indians live happily enough, being simple in their manner and frugal. They never drink wine except at sacrifices. Theft is of very rare occurrence. Their houses and property they generally leave unguarded. The simplicity of their laws and their contracts is proved by the fact that they seldom go to law.

Life and manners.

Truth and virtue they hold alike in esteem. Hence they accord no special privileges to the

(1) Megasthenes—Indica, pp. 31-32.

old unless they possess superior wisdom".(1) At the same time Megasthenes disapproves of a custom which is prevalent to a great extent even to the present day, *viz.* that the Indians eat alone and have no fixed hours for meals.

A life of ease and luxury is favourable for the growth of art and literature, and the period under review witnessed remarkable progress in both. India may even be said to have reached the high-water mark of its artistic achievements during this age. It has been remarked by a high authority that the history of Indian art is written in decay, and that the period of Aśoka, the Maurya, may be said to be the culminating point in its progress. We know hardly anything of Indian art before the time of Aśoka, and very little actual remains of the period have survived. It must not accordingly be supposed, however, that the Indians had little or no knowledge of art before Aśoka. The literary testimony is sufficient to demolish this absurd hypothesis entertained too long by a host of European scholars, and no one can possibly doubt that the perfection of Aśokan

High development of art.

(1) Ibid, pp. 69-70.

art presupposes a long period of continuous and steady development of which no record has yet been found.

The artistic achievements of Aśoka may be classified under the following heads:

Aś'okan Art.

1. Stūpas.
2. Pillars.
3. Caves.
4. Residential buildings.

1. The *stūpas* were solid domes of brick or stone masonry. The Buddhists and Jainas erected them, either to commemorate a noted event or a sacred spot, or to deposit some relics of Buddha, Mahāvīra or other religious saints. The size and dimensions of the *stūpas* varied from small structures less than a foot in height and diameter to those hundred times as big. Aśoka was a great builder of huge *stūpas*, and tradition ascribes to him 84,000 of them. Nine hundred years later, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang counted hundreds of them all over India and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, few of them have survived to our own day. The great *stūpa* at Sanchi is generally believed to have been built by Aśoka, and the following

Stūpas.

description of it may serve as a fair specimen of Aśoka's *stūpa*.

"The great *stūpa* consists of an almost hemispherical dome, truncated near the top, and surrounded at its base by a lofty terrace which served in ancient days as a procession path, access to which was provided by a double flight of steps built against it on the southern side. Encircling the monument on the ground level is a second procession path, enclosed by a massive balustrade of stone. This balustrade, which is of plain design unrelieved by carvings of any kind, is divided into four quadrants by entrances set approximately at the cardinal points, each one of which is adorned by a gateway lavishly enriched with relief on both the inner and outer sides".(1) It may be remarked here that the present gateways were later additions to the Aśokan *stūpa* which probably also underwent other additions or alterations in later ages.

2. Of the scanty remains of Aśokan art, the most beautiful and at the same time the most characteristic specimens are furnished by the stone pillars. It is not possible to determine the total number of

Pillars.

(1) Marshall—Guide to Sanchi.

stone pillars erected by Aśoka's command, but the number may be set down between thirty and forty, if not more. Each of these columns consists mainly of two parts, the shaft and the capital. The shaft is monolithic i.e. made up of one piece of stone. The Lauriya Nandangarh Pillar represents one of the finest specimens and is thus described by V. Smith. "The shaft of polished sandstone, 32 feet 9½ inches in height, diminishes from a base diameter of 35½ inches to a diameter of only 22½ inches at the top—proportions which render it the most graceful of all the Aśoka Columns"(1). The same scholar further observes with regard to the monolith shafts of Aśoka columns in general. "The fabrication, conveyance, and erection of monoliths of such enormous size—the heaviest weighing about fifty tons—are proofs that the engineers and stone-cutters of Aśoka's age were not inferior in skill and resource to those of any time or country"(2).

The capital which surmounted the pillars was also monolithic, and was chiefly remarkable for the animal figures in the round which formed

(1) Smith—Fine Art, pp. 20-22.
(2) Ibid, p. 22.

its topmost member. The lion and the elephant on the capitals respectively of Rampurwa and Sankisa pillars are fine examples. But by far the most magnificent capital is that of the Sarnath column—"the finest piece of sculpture of its kind so far discovered in India." "The capital measures 7 feet in height...It is surmounted by four magnificent lions standing back to back, and in their middle was a large stone wheel, the sacred Dharmachakra symbol... It apparently had 32 spokes, while the four smaller wheels below the lions have only 24 spokes. The lions stand on a drum with four animal figures carved upon it, viz., a lion, an elephant, a bull, and a horse, placed between our wheels. The upper part of the capital is supported by an elegantly shaped Persepolitan bell-shaped member. The lion and other animal figures are wonderfully life-like and the carving of every detailing is perfect".(1)

As remarked before, the entire capital is made out of one block of stone. Its workmanship has evoked rapturous applause from all critics of art. V. A. Smith remarks that "it would be difficult to find in any country an ex-

(1) Ann. Rep. Arch. Surv., 1904-5 p. 69.

ample of ancient animal sculpture superior or even equal to this beautiful work of art, which successfully combines realistic modelling with ideal dignity, and is finished in every detail with perfect accuracy."(1) Sir John Marshall considers them to be "master-pieces in point of both style and technique—the finest carvings, indeed that India has yet produced and unsurpassed by anything of their kind in the ancient world."(2)

The Caves.

3. Aśoka and his grandson Daśaratha excavated cave dwellings for the residence of monks. A series of interesting caves are situated in the Barabar Hills, 16 miles north of Gaya. The Sudāma cave, dedicated by Aśoka to the mendicants of the Ājīvika sect in his 12th year, "consists of two apartments: an outer, 32 ft. 9 inches in length, and 19 ft. 6 inches in breadth, and beyond this a nearly circular apartment 19 ft. 11 inches by 19 ft."(3) The Karna Chaupār cave, excavated in the 19th year, 'is simply a rectangular hall, measuring 33 ft. 6 inches by 14, with an arched

(1) Smith—Fine Art., p. 60.

(2) Ann. Rep. Arch. Surv. 1904-5, p. 36.

(3) Fergusson—Hist. of Architecture, Vol. I. p.p. 130-131.

roof rising 4 ft. 8 inches above walls 6 ft. 1 in. in height.'(1) These chambers hewn out of the hard and refractory gneiss had their interior walls "burnished like mirror," and are "wonderful monuments of patient skill and infinite labour."

Residential Buildings.

4. Unfortunately there are no extant specimens of the residential buildings of the Maurya age. But that they were magnificent appears not only from Megasthenes' description of the building of Pāṭaliputra, quoted above, but also from the rapturous applauses of Fa-Hien. Speaking of the palaces of Aśoka, the Chinese pilgrim remarks: "The royal palace and halls in the midst of the city, which exist now as of old, were all made by spirits which he [Aśoka] employed, and which piled up the stones, reared the walls and gates, and executed the elegant carving and inlaid sculpture-work,—in a way which no human hands of this world could accomplish."(2)

The Indian art which thus attained to a high standard of excellence during the period of the Mauryas, continued to flourish in the subsequent

(1) Ibid—p. 130.

(2) Fa-Hien by Legge, p. 77.

periods, and in some respects made further progress. This is most notably the case in the construction of cave-dwellings. During the four or five hundred years that followed the downfall of the Mauryan empire, hundreds of caves were erected in different parts of India. These not only served as residences for the wandering monks, but also as *chaitya-halls* or churches. The caves of Asoka, although showing high technical skill, were not richly carved. But many of the caves of the next period are decorated with fine sculptures and ornaments, and rank as very high in point of artistic achievement. The cave at Karle, between Bombay and Poona, is the finest example of this later series of caves. 'It resembles an early Christian church in its arrangements; consisting of a nave and side-aisles, terminating in an apse or semidome, round which the aisle is carried. The general dimensions of the interior are 124 ft. 3 inches from the entrance to the back wall, by 45 ft. 6 inches in width, the height being 45 ft. from the floor to the apex. Fifteen pillars on each side separate the nave from the aisles; each pillar has a tall base, an octagonal shaft,

Post-Mauryan Art.

and richly ornamented capital, on the inner front of which kneel two elephants, each bearing two figures. generally a man and a woman, but sometimes two females, all very much better executed than such ornaments usually are; behind are horses and tigers, each bearing a single figure.(1)"

Another instance of the progress of Indian art is to be seen in the highly ornamented gateways added to the *stūpas*, the most notable case being that of the four gateways of the Sanchi *stūpa*. Nothing but a special treatise on the subject will enable the reader to appreciate the wealth of ornaments lavished on the four monuments which are covered with masses of sculpture 'representing scenes in the life of Buddha, domestic and sylvan scenes, processions, sieges and groups of ordinary and extra-ordinary animals.'(2) The gateways and the railing of the Bharhut *stūpa*, and the railing and the *stūpa* itself at Amarāvati were also decorated with a multitude of fine sculptures. In variety and phonetic value these sculptures have never been excelled in the whole history of art.

(1) Fergusson.—Hist. of Architecture. Vol. I. Pp. 143—145.
(2) Smith—Fine Art. P. 70.

There were various schools of sculpture in the post-Aśokan period, the most notable being those of Gāndhāra, Mathurā, Sārānātha and Amarāvatī. A number of good specimens with well marked peculiarities of style and technique have been discovered in each of these places, and formed subjects of special treatment. The Gāndhāra school, as its name implies, flourished in the North-western frontier of India. As has already been related, this region was ruled over by a number of Greek princes for about three hundred years. The influx of this new element produced a novel school of art in this meeting ground of East and West, in which the skill and technique of the Greek art was applied to Indian ideals and Indian subjects. The result was an Indo-Hellenic school, which produced some of the finest sculptures that ancient India can boast of. It no doubt influenced to some extent, as it was itself influenced by, the other schools of Indian art, such as those of Mathurā and Amarāvatī, but the nature and extent of this influence are matters of controversy. It failed, however, to penetrate deeply into the interior, and had no

The different Schools of Sculpture.

share in the later development of Indian art. 'But outside India the Gandhāra school achieved a grand success by becoming the parent of the Buddhist art of Eastern or Chinese Turkestan, Mongolia, China, Korea and Japan.'

This brief sketch of the development of art may be concluded with a general observation.

General view of Indian Art.

In India, art has always been a hand-maid of religion. The period under review saw the great preponderance of Buddhism, and hence the art was employed mostly in the service of that religion. The architects built Buddhist *stūpas*, monasteries, and churches, while the sculptors found their motives in the legends of Buddha, and the stories associated with his life and religion.

But within this limitation, the artists showed a broad conception of life, and fine appreciation of the beauties of nature. Trees, plants, lakes, animals, rivers, human figures and other motives drawn directly from nature are all depicted in lovely combinations, and 'every scene in the relief sculptures of Bharhut or Sanchi is full of the joy of life.'

The Jainas and the followers of Brāhmanical

religion also employed artists, but their extant products are far less in number. It has been customary to classify arts as the Buddhist, Jaina or Brāhmanical. This is not, however, strictly accurate. True classification of art depends upon time and localities, and not upon the particular religion which the artist may be called upon to serve. It would be wrong therefore to think of Buddhist or Jaina style in the domain of art.

Book III.

From c. 300 A. D. to c. 1200 A. D.

CHAPTER I.

The Gupta Empire.

After the downfall of the Kushānas and the Andhras no great political power arose in India for some time. For about a century, India was divided into a large number of independent states whose varying fortunes and mutual struggles it is not possible to enumerate in any detail. There were kingdoms as well as non-monarchical states, and on the whole the political situation was not unlike what we met with at the beginning of the sixth century B.C.

The rise of the Gupta Dynasty.

About the beginning of the fourth century A. D., a chief called Sri-Gupta, or Gupta, ruled over a petty kingdom in Magadha. He was succeeded by his son Ghaṭotkacha. Neither the father nor the son seems to have possessed any considerable power. But with Chandragupta, the son of Ghaṭotkacha, began a new epoch in the history of the family.

An era known as the Gupta era started from the accession of Chandragupta in 320 A. D.

Chandragupta is also styled Mahārājādhirāja in striking contrast to the title Mahārāja of his two predecessors. These facts indicate that he raised the small principality to the status of an important kingdom by extending its boundaries in all directions. The means by which he accomplished this are not definitely known. He married a princess of the Lichchhavi family named Kumāradevī, and had her portrait engraved on his coins together with his own. His son and successor, the great emperor Samudragupta, took pride on his descent, on the mother's side, from the Lichchhavis. These facts give rise to a natural presumption that the matrimonial connection with the Lichchhavis materially contributed to the political greatness of the Guptas. This is, however, a mere conjecture for which definite proof is yet lacking.

Chandragupta.

The exact boundaries of Chandragupta's kingdom are unknown, but it probably extended to the west as far as Allahabad. He died about 340 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Samudragupta.

Samudragupta is one of the greatest military genius that India ever produced. His whole

reign was a vast military campaign. He was an embodiment of the political principles preached by Kautilya *viz.*, "Whoever is superior in power shall wage a war," "whoever is possessed of necessary means shall march against his enemy." He first of all waged a ruthless war of extermination against his neighbouring kings in Northern India. He seems to have advanced as far as the Chambal, and, within this area, all the kings were killed, and their kingdoms incorporated into the growing Gupta empire. It was unnecessary for the valiant emperor to proceed further, either towards the east or towards the west, for the eastern kingdoms like Bengal, Assam and Nepala, and the western non-monarchical tribal states like those of the Mālavas, Yaudheyas, Arjunāyanas, Madras and Ābhīras, proffered submission of their own accord, and agreed to lay taxes to the Gupta Emperor. Indeed, the terror of the Gupta arms was such that even the distant Kushāna kings of Afghanistan and the Saka kings of Gujarat sought the favour of Samudragupta.

Samudragupta.

His conquests in Northern India.

But the most difficult undertaking of the

Gupta Emperor was unquestionably the great military expedition to Southern India along the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Passing through the forest tracts of Central Provinces, he proceeded along the Orissan Coast, and then marching through Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavery, Krishna and Nellore districts, his victorious army reached as far as the far-famed Pallava kingdom of Kāñchī, now represented by Conjeevaram, south-west of Madras. The march along the coast suggests a joint operation by the navy. Although there is no definite proof of this, we know for certain that many islands in the Indian Ocean were either conquered by the great Gupta monarch, or submitted to him out of fear, thus clearly indicating his possession of a powerful navy.

His Southern Campaign.

The Southern expedition of Samudragupta, though highly successful from a military point of view, did not lead to any permanent conquest More than twelve kings were defeated in battle and taken prisoners, but as Samudragupta could not hope to rule over their dominions permanently, he thought prudent to reinstate them, probably as tributary kings. It reflects

great credit on the political sagacity of Samudragupta that he knew the limitation of his power and capacity. He was content with a direct rule over the consolidated dominions of Northern India, and an acknowledgment of supremacy from the rest. Had he essayed the almost impossible task of ruling the whole of India, like Aśoka, the Gupta empire would probably have met with an early end like its predecessor. But it is chiefly due to the organisation of Samudragupta that the vast empire which he left behind was gloriously maintained by his successors for nearly a hundred years more.

Personality of Samudragupta.

Samudragupta was thus not merely the first soldier of his age, but a statesman of no mean order. He was, besides, a man of culture. The court poet describes him not only as brave and skilful in battle, but also as a celebrated poet and a musician. That these attributes were not mere fanciful exaggerations of the poet, appears from some coins of the emperor in which he is represented as playing upon the lyre. We are further told that he possessed a noble bearing, and was the favourite of his royal father

as well as of the people at large. It even seems probable that although not the eldest son he was selected as his successor by Chandragupta I. The Gupta kings were patrons of Brāhmanical religion, and Samudragupta restored the Aśva-medha sacrifice which had fallen into abeyance for a long time. But he was of tolerant spirit, and extended his favour to other religions. This is well illustrated by his gracious permission to the Buddhist king of Ceylon to build a monastery for his subjects at Bodh-Gayā. It appears that the Ceylonese pilgrims to Bodh-Gayā felt great inconvenience for want of a suitable residence, and represented their grievances to the king of Ceylon. The latter sent an envoy with rich presents to Samudragupta to obtain permission to build a monastery for his subjects, and the Gupta Emperor graciously sanctioned the laudable project.

Samudragupta died towards the close of the fourth century A.D., and was succeeded by Chandragupta II, the worthy son of a worthy father. He not only successfully maintained what his father had left, but also added to it by conquests of his own. The Śaka rulers of Gujarat and

Chandra-gupta II.

Kathiawar Peninsula, known in History as the Western Satraps, had been ruling in that region for about three hundred years. Although not threatened by Samudragupta, they found it politic to court the favour of the great Gupta emperor. But Chandragupta inherited an empire which almost touched on the borders of the Saka kingdom, and he felt powerful enough to reduce these foreign chiefs. He accordingly invaded their territory with a powerful army. The details of the struggle are unknown, but the last of the long line of Saka Satraps was killed, and their dominions were annexed by Chandragupta II. This conquest extended the Gupta empire upto the Arabian Sea, its natural frontier towards the west. The new acquisitions were, however, also important from other points of view. The Gujarat coast contained the important ports and harbours for vessels plying between India and the Western world. Masters of these stations, the Gupta kings came into possession of a vast source of wealth. Besides, their empire was now opened up, as it were, to the Western World. The free intercourse thus established between the

The end of Saka rule.

Indian empire and the countries of the west was of far-reaching consequence.

Chandragupta II was thus fully justified in assuming the proud title of Vikramāditya. He is usually identified with the King Vikramāditya of Indian legends who is credited with having defeated the Sakas and established the famous Vikrama Samvat in 58 B.C., and whose court is said to have been graced by Navaratna (nine gems) including the famous Kālidāsa. Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty no doubt defeated the Śakas and it is just possible that the poet Kālidāsa lived in his court. But it is difficult to explain his connection with the Vikrama Samvat which was current for about five centuries before his time. It has been suggested that the era was not originally founded by any Vikramāditya, but later on associated with a king of that name. Convincing proofs, are, however, lacking on this point, and the origin of the Vikrama Samvat and the identity of king Vikramāditya must still be reckoned among the insoluble problems of Indian history.

Vikramāditya.

Chandragupta II died about 413 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Kumāragupta. He

enjoyed a long reign of more than forty years and seems to have successfully maintained the vast inheritance. He even performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. But towards the close of his reign, hordes of the Hūnas, that terrible scourge of mankind, invaded India and threatened the mighty fabric of the Gupta empire. For a long time, the fortune of the Guptas was tottering, but the heroic energy and the military genius of the crown-prince Skandagupta at last altered the situation. The Hūnas were checked and the empire was saved. So terrific was the conflict that the heir to the mighty empire had to pass a night on the bare ground. India, which was thus delivered from the fury of these fierce barbarians, did not fail to show its gratitude to its saviour. We are told that songs of praise in honour of Skandagupta were sung in all directions by men, women and children. In the midst of this great triumph, the old and aged emperor Kumāragupta breathed his last, and Skandagupta, the hero of the nation, succeeded him. He was probably advanced in age; but in any case he ruled for only ten or twelve years from 455 to 467

Kumāragupta.

Skandagupta.

A.D. The fight with the Hūṇas and another, probably allied, tribe, the Pushyamitras, continued at intervals throughout his reign. The Hūṇas did not abandon the idea of conquering India, and were repeatedly knocking at her gates, but so long as Skandagupta lived and ruled, he successfully guarded the frontier against them. The constant wars were, however, draining the imperial resources, a fact which is even to-day testified to by a number of debased coins of the Gupta emperor. Skandagupta was succeeded by Puragupta, another son of Kumāragupta. Puragupta's mother was the chief queen of Kumāragupta, and as we do not know anything about the mother of Skandagupta, we cannot say whether the two were brothers or step-brothers. Puragupta was succeeded by his son and grandson *viz.* Narasiṁhagupta and Kumāragupta II. The short and un-eventful reigns of these three kings comprise a period of about ten years. Then followed Budhagupta whose relationship with his predecessors is unknown. He ruled from 476 to about 500 A.D., and was the last of the great Gupta emperors,—his dominions

Puragupta.

Budhagupta.

having extended from Bengal to Malwa, if not further towards the west. Names of other isolated Gupta kings are known from coins and inscriptions, but neither their relationship with the Imperial Guptas, nor the extent and duration of their power can be ascertained. One of these, Bhānugupta, whose date is known with some degree of certainty, flourished in 510 A.D.; but the Gupta empire may be said to have broken up at about 500 A.D., and there can be scarcely any doubt that the principal factor which contributed to this downfall was the repeated Hūna aggressions from the north-west.

India under the Guptas.

The period of Gupta supremacy which roughly covers two centuries, was one of peace and prosperity for India. The administration was highly organised and was far more liberal than in the Maurya times. Fa-Hien, a Chinese pilgrim travelled through the Gupta Empire during the reign of Chandragupta II, and has left a very pleasing picture of the country. The taxes were light and the administration very liberal. Cruel punishments, so much in vogue in Maurya times, were abolished, and harassing rules and regulations like Registration and

Passports were unknown. Fa-Hien everywhere witnessed the wealth and luxury of the people, and the economic condition was very satisfactory. Trade and commerce flourished, and the people followed various arts and crafts. There was, besides, a tremendous intellectual and religious revival, accompanied by wonderful achievements in art and architecture, which will be described in detail in later chapters.

CHAPTER II.

Political History of Northern India from C. 500 A.D. to C. 650 A.D.

The break-up of the Gupta Empire was followed by inevitable results. The provincial powers declared their independence and the whole of North India was divided into a number of independent states. In the home provinces of the Guptas we find a long line of rulers, all of whom except one had their names ending in Gupta. It is not possible to determine whether they were connected in any way with the imperial Guptas. There were altogether eleven kings in this family which is known in History as the 'Later Guptas of Magadha.' The kings probably ruled between 500 and 700 A.D. They had to fight hard with their western neighbours, the Maukharis, whose territory corresponded to the present United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and who were rapidly rising to power. The Maukharis conquered part of Magadha and some branches of the family ruled even in the Gaya District. Two of their kings,

Later Guptas.

The Maukharis.

Īśānavarman and his son Śarva Varman, styled themselves Mahārājādhirāja, and this pretension to supreme power was backed by conquest of extensive territories including the Andhra country. But the principal event in the history of the Maukharis, and the one which entitles them to be commemorated in Indian History, is the stubborn opposition they offered to the Hūṇas. It has been already related how these black marauders, the scourge of civilised world, were knocking at the gates of India during the last days of the Gupta Empire, till that great fabric collapsed to the ground. The break-up of that mighty empire removed the barrier which hitherto kept them in check, and the Hūṇas poured like a deluge upon the fair valleys and cities of India. It is painful to describe the scenes that followed. Rapine, massacre, and incendiarism marked the route of the barbarians. Cities were blotted out of existence, finest buildings were reduced to a heap of ruins, and temples and monasteries, even where they were not violently pulled down, stood empty and deserted. The valley of the Kabul and Swat rivers, one of the most flourishing centres of Indian civilisation, was

The Hūṇas.

so completely devastated that the greater part of it has ever since remained outside the pale of civilisation, fit only for the habitation of wild tribes like those with whom the British government are fighting year after year.

The terror which the advancing Hūṇas inspired in the millions of Indian hearts can better be imagined than described. The arms of Skandagupta were no longer there to protect them, and the Hūṇas rapidly overran the Punjab and Rajputana and established themselves at Gwalior. From that base they advanced towards the east and south, and conquered the whole of Malwa. It looked as if the whole of India would lie prostrate before them. It was at this critical moment that the Maukharis stood as bulwark of Indian civilisation. Under the leadership of Īśānavarman the Indians fought stubbornly to protect their hearth and home. The Hūṇas had become a great power both in Asia and Europe. Under Attila they hurled defiance at the Eastern and the Western Roman Empire from the banks of the Danube, and now their Asiatic dominions extended from Persia to China. Their Indian capital was Sākala or Sialkot in the Punjab, and they were

led by two valiant leaders, Toramāna and his son Mihirakula. The task to which the Indians set themselves was thus a heavy one, but after a long and arduous struggle the Maukhari chief succeeded in checking the Hūṇas and thus saved Eastern India from their aggression.

The task of Īśānavarman was probably facilitated by the fact that almost at the same time, another great hero arose in the south with a grim determination to drive away the rapacious barbarians. This was Yaśodharman also known as Vishṇuvardhana. An impenetrable mystery hangs round his early career. We do not know any thing about his parentage or family. He suddenly rose into prominence as a great conqueror, and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Mihirakula, sometime about 530 A.D. Thus the Hūṇa menace was removed, and India once more breathed freely after nearly a century. It is but fair to add that the Gupta kings of Magadha, true to the tradition of their predecessors, ungrudgingly lent their aid in crushing the hated Hūṇas.

Yaśodharman.

Yaśodharman seems to have conquered nearly the whole of Northern India from the

Arabian sea, and also a considerable part of Southern India. We are told that his arms penetrated as far as the Himalayas, and that he was lord of the countries which were not possessed even by the Guptas or the Hūṇas. "He never bent his head to any one except the God Śiva" runs the proud panegyric, "but obeisance was made to his feet by even the famous king Mihirakula."

The end of Yaśodharman's career is as mysterious as its beginning. One asks in vain as to what became of the vast empire which this great hero had carved out for himself. For we know as little of Yaśodharman's successors as of his predecessors, and the only supposition we can make is that his dominions were conquered by the victorious Maukharis. So Yaśodharman stands out as an isolated grand figure in History. He rose and vanished like a meteor without leaving any trace behind.

Of the various other powers that arose out of the ruins of the Gupta empire, two only need specific mention. The Maitraka clan, under its leader Bhaṭārka, established a kingdom in Surāshṭra

The Maitrakas of Valabhī.

or Kathiawar Peninsula with Valabhī as capital. The earlier chiefs of the dynasty were probably feudatory to the Hūṇas, but soon after the destruction of that power they declared their independence. From this time the boundaries of the kingdom were rapidly extended and Valabhī became not only a seat of learning and culture, but also a centre of trade and commerce. The Maitraka clan continued as an important power for well nigh three hundred years when they were overthrown by Arab invaders from Sind.

Another state which was founded about the same time as Valabhī, but was destined to play a far more distinguished part in Indian history was that of Thaneswar. The first three kings of this dynasty are mere names and do not seem to have exercised considerable powers. The fourth king Prabhākara-vardhana extended his kingdom at the expense of his neighbours, and assumed the imperial title of Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja. His sovereignty probably extended to the whole of the Punjab in the north-west and part of Malwa in the south. He was busy in his aggressive expeditions when he died in

Kingdom of Thaneswar.

604 A.D., leaving two sons Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana, and a daughter Rājyaśrī married to the Maukhari king Grahavarman. Rājya-vardhana being the elder of the two sons succeeded his father.

Kingdom of Bengal.

While Prabhākara-vardhana was rapidly extending the boundaries of his kingdom towards the west and south, a new power had arisen in the east, in Bengal. The people of Bengal are not known to have played any important political part in Indian history till after the down-fall of the Imperial Guptas. In the middle of the sixth century A.D., they came to the forefront, and their power extended beyond the provincial boundary. They were, however, defeated by the Maukharis, and their ambition was checked for the time being. Half a century later, the throne of Gauda or Bengal was occupied by Śaśāṅka. He belongs to the same type of military adventurers as Yaśodharman, and we know equally little of his predecessors and successors. Like Yaśodharman he rose and vanished like a meteor leaving behind only the record of a splendid military career. Under him Bengal

Śaśāṅka.

commenced that career of aggrandisement which was ultimately destined to raise her to the position of imperial supremacy. Unfortunately, all that we know of this first national hero of Bengal comes from the side of his inveterate enemies, and it is not a little difficult to discover the real amount of truth from their malicious exaggerations. It is certain that he extended the power of Bengal to Ganjam in the south, and Kanauj in the west. The Kanauj region was then occupied by the Maukharis, whose enmity with Bengal commenced half a century ago, when they checkmated her efforts towards expansion in the west. But the Maukhari king Grahavarman, as already related, married the daughter of Prabhākara vardhana, and this alliance no doubt strengthened his position. As a counter-move against this, Śaśāṅka contracted an alliance with the king of Mālava, who was glad to obtain the aid of such a powerful ally against the king of Thaneswar who was invading his territories.

Thus, at the time when Rājya-vardhana ascended the throne, there were two political leagues in Northern India under the leadership of the two most powerful kingdoms of Bengal

and Thaneswer. It appears that the Bengal group took the initiative and completely surprised the Maukhari capital. The king Grahavarman was killed and the queen Rājyaśri confined into prison.

So complete was the surprise that the news of the battle and its distressing end reached Rājya-vardhana at the same time. He at once proceeded with a force of 10,000 cavalry to avenge the wrongs done to his sister. His promptness of action had its reward. He met with an advance-guard of the evemy under the king of Mālava and defeated him. But with the small force at his command, he could not re-take Kānyakubja, and recover his sister. Within a short time, he was himself killed by Śaśāṅka, and his discomfited host returned to Thaneswar (606 A.D.).

An impenetrable mystery hangs round this tragic episode. The partisans of Rājya-vardhana have ascribed his murder to foul treachery on the part of Śaśāṅka, but there are reasons to believe that this is a perversion of truth for party purposes. Our two principal authorities, Bānabhatta and Hiuen Tsang were both hostile to Śaśāṅka, and cannot be looked upon as

impartial. But while they agree as to the treachery of Śaśāṅka, they widely differ as to the circumstances under which it was played. On the other hand, the contemporary inscription says that Rājya-vardhana "gave up his life in the mansion of his foe owing to his adherence to a promise." Between these widely divergent accounts, it is impossible to arrive at any definite conclusion. Certain it is, that Rājya-vardhana failed in his enterprise and lost his life.

On the death of Rājya-vardhana the councillors of state offered the throne to his younger brother Harsha-vardhana. At first the nobles of the court hesitated to offer, and the young Harsha-vardhana was reluctant to accept the terrible responsibilities of kingship at such a critical time, but all doubts and fears were set at rest by the indomitable energy and military genius which the young king displayed on his accession. His first care was for his sister. News arrived that she had been set free from the prison of Kanauj by the magnanimity of his foe, but felt so distracted at the news of her brother's death, that she retired to the Vindhya forests. There Harsha traced her, just at the very moment

Harsha-vardhana.

when out of sheer desperation, she was going to throw herself into fire with all her attendants.

Having rescued his sister, Harsha next proceeded on a career of conquest to the east with a view to avenge the death of his brother.

His conquests.

He was successful in his military enterprise, and conquered a great part of Northern India. Hiuen Tsang tells us that "he waged incessant warfare, until, in six years, he had fought the five Indias. Then, having enlarged his territory, he increased his army, bringing the elephent corps up to 60,000, and the cavalry to 100,000, and reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon." This sweeping statement about the success of Harsha's arms requires some correction. In the first place, the chief object of his military campaign was not fulfilled. For Sasanka seems to have reigned in glory till at least 619 A.D., as in an inscription dated in that year, he is invoked as the suzerain power by a feudatory chief in the Ganjam District. Secondly, Harsha's attempts to carry his arms beyond the Narmadā completely failed, and he sustained a decisive defeat in the hands of the Chalukya ig of the south. It is probable, however,

that at a later period his sovereignty extended to Bengal. At the time of his death his suzerainty was acknowledged all over Northern India, excluding the Punjab and Rajputana, but including the Kathiawar peninsula. Kanauj was the capital of this vast empire.

It is not, however, as a great conqueror alone that Harshavardhana figures in Indian History. He has earned an undying reputation for his peaceful activities, so vividly described by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang who travelled all over India during his fourteen years' stay in this country (630—644 A.D.), and came into intimate personal contact with the great emperor.

His administration.

Harshavardhana was unwearied in his efforts towards maintaining an efficient government in the country. He personally looked into the affairs of state, and constantly travelled over different parts of his empire to see things with his own eyes. The result was that his civil administration was carried on on benign principles, though it is obvious that degeneration had set in since the days of the Imperial Guptas. The roads were evidently less safe, for the Chinese pilgrim himself was robbed by brigands r

than once, and the criminal code was more sanguinary. Mutilation of the nose, ears, hands or feet was penalty for serious offences, and ordeals by fire, water, weighment and poison seem to have been much in vogue.

His literary activities.

The great emperor was not only a patron of learning but himself an author of no small merit. Three of his Sanskrit plays, Nāgānanda, Ratnāvalī and Priyadarśikā have survived the trials of time, and deservedly achieved high reputation among lovers of Indian Literature. He gathered around him a circle of learned men, of whom Bānabhatta, the author of Harshacharita (Biography of Harsha) and Kādambarī, is the most well-known.

His religion

Harshavardhana was probably Saiva in faith, but he was not only tolerant of, but actually devoted to other religious sects as well. His charitable institutions were numerous. Like Aśoka, he built rest-houses and hospitals, and endowed numerous religious establishments both Brāhmanical and Buddhist. Later in his life, he seems to have shown distinct partiality towards Buddhism, and forbade the slaughter of animals. He is

said to have erected thousands of Buddhist *Stūpas* on the banks of the Ganges, and a number of monasteries at the sacred places of the Buddhists. Besides, he annually summoned a convocation of the Buddhists, where discussions and disputations were held among the Brethren, and regarded those who were most successful in debate. Moral excellence was the only passport to his favour. He befriended princes and statesmen who were virtuous, and would not even deign to converse with those who were of opposite character.

Hiuen Tsang.

Harshavardhana became the patron of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who is lavish in his praises of the great emperor. Most of the facts we have stated about Harshavardhana are known from the wonderful records left by the pilgrim, which, besides, give us a detailed picture of the condition of India such as we do not find anywhere else. Harshavardhana met the Chinese pilgrim in Bengal, and being delighted in his company, held a special assembly at Kanauj in his honour. It was attended by twenty tributary kings, four thousand Buddhist monks, and about three

Harsha's assembly at Kanauj.

thousand Jainas and orthodox Brahmanas. On the west bank of the Ganges, the king built a spacious monastery, and a tower 100 ft. high, and put a golden image of Buddha of his own height within the latter. A little to the west of this was built the temporary palace of the king and pavillions for other guests. Every morning a small golden image of Buddha 3 ft. in height was carried in splendid procession from the royal palace to the tower. The king himself, dressed as Sakra, and escorted by 500 war-elephants, held the canopy and scattered pearls, gold, silver flowers, and various other precious substances on the way. A long train of caparisoned elephants carried the tributary kings, their escorts, and other guests, and 100 great elephants carried musicians who sounded their drums and raised their music. After the procession was over, the king offered to the image of Buddha tens, hundreds and thousands of silken garments, decorated with precious gems. Then, after the feast, the men of learning assembled in the hall to discuss the most abstruse subjects, the Chinese pilgrim being of course accorded the place of honour. In the evening the guests retired to their dwellings.

This solemn programme was repeated every day, for about a month, when the monastery suddenly took fire, and was partially destroyed. Harshavardhana was surveying the scene from the top of a *Stūpa* when a fanatic, knife in hand, rushed towards him. The attempt failed, and the assassin confessed that he was engaged by the Brāhmaṇas who were infuriated at the excessive favour shown by the king towards the Buddhists. These men had deliberately set the monastery on fire in order to kill the king in the confusion which would follow. The chief culprits were punished and the rest were pardoned.

After the ceremony at Kanauj had closed amid these tragic incidents, the Emperor, accompanied by the Chinese pilgrim, proceeded to Prayāga (Allahabad), where he used to celebrate another solemn festival at the end of every five years, at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna. All the vassal kings attended, and the king had already summoned there the followers of different religious sects, the poor, the orphan and the needy for receiving gifts.

Towards the west of the junction of the two rivers there was a great plain, called "the Arena

of charitable offerings," as from very ancient times kings from different parts of India frequented this spot for the purpose of practising charity. Here the Emperor amassed his treasure and performed the ceremony, which lasted for about 3 months, and has been vividly described by the biographer of Hiuen Tsang.

Religious assembly at Prayag.

"On the first day they installed the image of Buddha and distributed precious articles of the first quality and clothing of the same character.

The second day they installed the image of Āditya-deva (Sun-God) and distributed in charity precious things and clothing to half the amount of the previous day.

The third day they installed the image of Īśvara-deva and distributed gifts as on the day before.

The fourth day they gave gifts to 10,000 Buddhist Bhikkhus, each receiving 100 pieces of gold, one pearl, one cotton garment, various drinks and meats, flowers and perfumes.

For the next twenty days gifts were bestowed upon the Brāhmanas.

For the next ten days alms were bestowed

upon those who came from a distance to ask for charity.

For the next month gifts were made to the poor, the orphans and the destitute.

By this time the accumulation of five years was exhausted. Except the horses, elephants and military accoutrements, which were necessary for maintaining order and protecting the royal estate, nothing remained. The king even freely gave away his gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel, and bright head-jewels.

All being given away, he begged from his sister an ordinary second-hand garment, and having put it on, he paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions, and exulted with joy with his hands closed in adoration.

This ceremony being over the assembled kings severally distributed among the people their money and treasure for the purpose of redeeming the royal necklaces, head-jewels, court vestments, etc., and restored them to the king; and then after a few days these same things were again given away in charity, as before."

Thus finished the remarkable ceremony which Emperor Harshavardhana performed after

the example of his ancestors, at the end of every five years. As he informed the Chinese pilgrim, this was the sixth of its kind during his reign. He did not live to see another, and died at the end of 646 or the beginning of 647 A.D.

Harsha's successors.

Harshavardhana does not appear to have left any heir to his throne which was usurped after his death by his minister Arjuna or Arunāśva. A curious story is related in Chinese books of a fight between Arjuna and Wang-hiuen-t'se, the head of a Chinese mission to Harshavardhana which visited India shortly after his death. Arjuna is said to have plundered the property of the Mission, and killed some of its escorts, upon which Wang-hiuen-t'se fled to Tibet. The king of Tibet, who was married to a Chinese princess, sent troops to his aid, with which he came back, defeated Arjuna, and by dint of several bloody victories conquered a considerable territory in Indian plains. It is difficult to estimate the historical value of this somewhat strange episode, and in any case the truth of the details may be doubted.

CHAPTER III.

Political History of Northern India from c. 650 A.D. to c. 800 A.D.

Amid the confusion which followed the death of Harshavardhana his great empire passed away without leaving any trace behind. The futile attempts of his minister to govern the kingdom, and the strange Chinese expedition which his own folly had invited, have been referred to above. The victorious Chinese army which dealt the death-blow to the empire is said to have received substantial aid from Bhāskaravarman king of Kāmarūpa or Assam valley, and there is good evidence that he played an important part in Indian politics about that time.

Kāmarūpa.

The ancient kingdom of Kāmarūpa has generally remained outside the currents of Indian history. It does not appear to have been included in the Maurya Empire, nor, so far as we know, had it any political relations with other early kingdoms. While the rest of India was convulsed by the upheaval of new religious sects, Kāmarūpa retained the Brāhmanical religion to the last.

It paid taxes to the great Gupta kings, but retained its autonomy in internal administration. The kings of Kāmarūpa traced their descent from Naraka, the son of Vishnu, and his son, the great epic hero Bhagadatta. But the earliest historical dynasty is undoubtedly that founded by Pushyavarman early in the fourth century A.D. Bhāskaravarman, twelfth in descent from Pushyavarman, ascended the throne towards the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century A.D. He sent an ambassador to Harshavardhana, immediately after the latter's accession, with a view to establish friendly relations between the two kingdoms. It is not difficult to divine the real object of this embassy, if we remember the height of power to which the kingdom of Bengal was raised about this time by Saśāṅka. The king of Kāmarūpa dreaded the power of this neighbour, and tried to secure his position by availing himself of the enmity which had sprung up between Saśāṅka and the Lord of Thaneswar. There was thus the combination of Thaneswar, Kanauj and Kāmarūpa against that of Bengal and Malwa,—with what results we have already seen. Bhāskaravarman must have realised, when it

was too late, the consequences of alliance between unequal powers. For, after the removal of the dreaded rival by the death of Śaśāṅka and the absorption of his kingdom by Harsha, Bhāskaravarman came to be looked upon more as a feudatory vassal than an equal ally. He was not only forced to send the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang to Harshavardhana at the point of bayonet, but he had to attend the pompous ceremonies at Kanauj and Allahabad along with other vassal states of the Kanauj empire. No wonder that he fed fat his grudge by aiding the Chinese expedition against the successor of Harshavardhana on the throne of Kanauj. He was, however, too shrewd to lend this aid for nothing, and when that strange episode was over, he made himself master of Eastern India. He pitched his victorious camp in the capital of his late rival Śaśāṅka, and thus increased the power and prestige of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa to an extent never dreamt of before.

But the greatness of Kāmarūpa did not last long. Bhāskaravarman was shortly after overthrown by a barbarian, Sālastambha by name, and Kāmarūpa passed under Mlechchha rule for well-nigh three hundred years.

The next power to rise into importance were the later Guptas of Magadha. It has been already related how this dynasty was founded at the break up of the Gupta Empire. Throughout the early period of its existence it had to fight hard with the Maukharis who ultimately conquered a portion of Magadha. Mahāsenagupta, the fifth king of this line, defeated Susthitavarman the father of Bhāskaravarman, on the bank of the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra). His son Mādhavagupta was, however, obliged to ackowledge the supremacy of Harshavardhana. But with the death of the great emperor the family regained its power and importance. They were probably kept in check for some time by the rising power of Bhāskaravarman, but about 675 A.D. Ādityasena, son of Mādhavagupta, gained sufficient power and prestige to justify the assumption of imperial titles. Under him and his three successors, Devagupta, Vishnugupta and Jivitagupta, who all assumed imperial titles, the kingdom of Magadha occupied the position of supremacy in Eastern India.

The Later Guptas.

But once more the Magadhan kingdom was shattered by the growing power of Kanauj.

The history of this kingdom, since the abortive attempts of the minister of Harsha to maintain his master's empire, is obscure in the extreme. In the beginning of the eighth century A.D., however we find a very powerful monarch on the throne of Kānyakubja. This was Yaśovarman, another military adventurer of the type of Yaśodharman and Śaśāṅka. He was not only a great conquerer but also a patron of poets. Bhababhūti, the sweet nightingale of Sanskrit literature, lived in his court, and as long as Sanskrit language survives, Yaśovarman's name will remain, bound up with one of its greatest poets. Other poets of lesser renown also graced his court, among whom the name of Vākpati stands pre-eminent. This poet has sought to immortalise his patron king by describing his exploits in a *prākrit* poem of unusual merit, called *Gauḍavaho* or the 'Slaying of the king of Gauḍa.' We learn from this poem that the king of Gauḍa, probably Jīvitagupta II, the great-grandson of Ādityasena, ruled over extensive territories, including Magadha, but his capacity was not equal to the task of governing such a vast kingdom. On the approach of Yaśovarman he

Yaśovarman of Kanauj.

took fright and fled, apparently leaving Magadha in possession of the victor. The nobility of Bengal, were, however better than their master, and next year they forced their cowardly king to face the invader. Vākpati describes with eloquence the brave fight put up by the Bengali heroes. But all the same the battle ended in their defeat and the death of their king, and Yaśovarman overran the whole of Bengal up to seashore.

Yaśovarman next proceeded in his career of conquest towards the south, and then marching along the Narmadā towards the west he reached the Western Ghats. Thence he moved northwards and conquered Marudeśa (Rajputana) and Śrīkantha (Thaneswar) and after visiting the Himālaya mountains returned to his capital at Kanauj.

Yaśovarman was unquestionably the most powerful king about this time, and maintained diplomatic relations with the great Chinese Emperor. In the year 731 A.D. he sent his minister to the Chinese court, but neither the object nor the result of the mission is known to us. We know, however, that in alliance with Lalitāditya, king of Kashmir, he led a

campaign against the Tibetans, defeated them and blocked the passes leading to that mountainous territory. As the Chinese Emperor was then engaged in hostilities with the Tibetans, Yaśovarman probably sought to make a common cause against his northern foe. The enmity between Yaśovarman and the Tibetans is easily explained when we remember how they had taken part in Indian politics and already conquered Nepal. Moreover, the Tibetan king had helped Wang-hiuen-t'se, to successfully defy the power of Kanauj and plunder the rich cities of India shortly after the death of Harshavardhana.

Yaśovarman ruled with glory and splendour till about 740 A.D., when his ambitious ally Lalitāditya, king of Kashmir, grew jealous of him, and sought to play the imperial role at his expense. Hostilities broke out on the most flimsy pretext, and a protracted struggle followed, ending in the defeat and death of Yaśovarman, and the absorption of his kingdom in the growing empire of Kashmir.

We must now proceed to describe the rise and growth of this new empire in northern India. The early history of the kingdom of

Kingdom of Kashmir.

Kashmir is full of legendary traditions, but not long before the middle of the seventh century A.D. Durlabhavardhana, a chief of obscure origin, obtained the throne by marrying the daughter of the late king. It was during his reign that the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited Kashmir. As the pilgrim informs us, Durlabhavardhana ruled not only over Kashmir proper, but a part of the north-western Punjab as well. He was followed by his son Pratāpāditya II who ruled with moderation and justice, and built the town of Pratāpapura. He was succeeded by his three sons. The eldest Chandrapida, who was powerful enough to be recognised as king by the emperor of China in 720 A.D., was renowned for his piety and justice. It is recorded by Kalhana that when the king began to build a temple, a leather-tanner refused to give up his hut which lay on the site. When the matter was reported to the king, he considered his own officers to be at fault, not the tanner. "Stop the building," he cried out, or "have it erected elsewhere." The tanner himself came to the king and represented: "Since my birth this hut has been to me like a mother

witness of good and evil days. I cannot bear to see it pulled down to-day." Still he agreed to give up his hut "if His Majesty would come to his dwelling and ask for it in accordance with propriety." As soon as the king heard this, he went to his home and bought up the hut with money. The reign of this king was full of just acts like this, and he may almost be said to have been a martyr to them. Once he punished a Brāhmaṇa who had secretly murdered another Brāhmaṇa by means of witchcraft. The former felt deep wrath over his punishment and was instigated by the king's younger brother Tārāpīḍa to use his witchcraft against the king. Thus died the noble king Chandrāpīḍa after a reign of eight years and a half. The fratricide Tārāpīḍa then ascended the throne. His inglorious rule of four years was full of cruel and bloody deeds. He was followed by his younger brother Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa, the greatest king of the dynasty.

Lalitāditya.

Lalitāditya ascended the throne about 724 A.D. He was 'eager for conquests and passed his life chiefly on expeditions.' As already related, he entered into an alliance with Yaśovarman and defeated the

Tibetans. Like Yaśovarman, and probably for similar reasons, he sent a diplomatic mission to the Chinese emperor in order to induce him to make a common cause against the Tibetans. The mission was received with honour by the emperor who recognised the king of Kashmir as his royal ally, but no military assistance was sent from China. But even unaided, Lalitāditya succeeded in defeating not only the Tibetans but also the mountainous tribes on the north and north-western frontier of his kingdom, such as the Dards, Kāmbojas and Turks.

But the most important of the expeditions of Lalitāditya was that against Yaśovarman to which reference has already been made. By that victory Lalitāditya not only made himself master of Kanauj, but also acquired the theoretical right of suzerainty over the vast conquests of his late rival. In order to effectively assert these rights, Lalitāditya marched towards the east and overran Magadha, Bengal, Kāmarūpa and Kaliṅga. He then marched against the Chālukyas of the south, but it is difficult to ascertain how far he had penetrated into the Deccan, and the amount of success

he achieved in this direction. He next seems to have conquered Malwa and Gujarat, and defeated the Arabs of Sindh, somewhere near the border of that country. These extensive conquests made the kingdom of Kashmir, for the time being, the most powerful empire that India had seen since the days of the Mauryas or was ever likely to see again under the rule of her native princes. No wonder that for centuries the Kashmirians celebrated the victories of the great emperor whom, with pardonable exaggeration, they chose to call the universal monarch.

Lalitāditya lavished the great resources of this mighty empire in adorning his kingdom with beautiful towns, and decorating the towns with fine buildings, monasteries, temples and images of gods. The most famous of his works is the Mārtanda temple, ruins of which still form "the most striking remains which have survived of the ancient architecture of Kashmir"

Kalhana, the author of Rājatarangini has drawn a magnificent picture of this celebrated king. But two incidents have left an indelible stain on the character of this great emperor. Once in a fit of drunkenness he ordered

the town of Pravarapura to be burnt down, though afterwards he repented of it and was glad to find that the ministers had disobeyed his orders. The second case was more serious. He summoned the king of Bengal to Kashmir and promised him safe-conduct, making the image of Vishnu Parihāsakeśava the surity for his promise. All the same he had the king of Bengal killed by assassins. It is as difficult to find any motive for this foul treachery as to condone it in any way. The sequel of this story is interesting in the extreme. A few devoted followers of the murdered king undertook the long journey from Bengal to Kashmir, and invested the temple of the god who had been made the surety. The priests closed the gates, but they were forced open. The Bengali heroes reached the statue of Vishnu Rāmasvāmin, and mistaking it for that of Parihāsakeśava, they overturned it and broke it into pieces, while they were all being cut up by the Kashmirian soldiers who had just arrived from the capital. Kalhana pays a just tribute to the heroism of the small but devoted band of Bengalis. "What of the long journey which had to be accomplished, and what of the

devotion for the dead lord? Even the creator cannot achieve what the Gaudas did on that occasion. Even to this day the temple of Rāmasvāmin is seen empty, whereas the world is filled with the fame of the Gauda heroes."

Lalitāditya died about 760 A. D. after a reign of thirty-six years. He was followed by a succession of weak kings who were unable to maintain the power and prestige of the family. One among them, Jayāpīḍa, fifth in descent from Lalitāditya, seems to have made a serious attempt to regain the lost supremacy, but no conspicuous success attended his efforts. The dynasty, however, continued to rule over Kashmir till about the middle of the ninth century A.D.

Successors of Lalitāditya.

While the Kashmirians were gradually receding into the background, two new powers arose in Northern India that were destined to play the imperial role with far greater success. These were the Pālas and the Gurjaras, the story of whose rise, growth, and decay carries us almost to the end of the period of Hindu supremacy. Indeed, from the close of Lalitāditya's reign to the invasions of Mahmud of

Ghazni, the history of Northern India is but the history of those two mighty powers.

The Gurjaras.

The early history of the Gurjaras is shrouded in mystery. There is hardly any doubt that they entered India at a comparatively late period, probably along with the Hūnas when they overwhelmed the great Gupta empire towards the close of the fifth century A.D. Cities and districts named after the Gurjaras mark the successive stages of their advance through the Punjab to Jodhpur in the heart of Rajputana. There, in the centre of Rajputana, to the west of the Aravalli hills, they formed their main settlements which for long were known as Gurjaratrā, the earlier form of Gujarat. Prabhākara-vardhana, the king of Thaneswar, waged wars against them, but apparently without success, for they ruled over an independent kingdom even when Harsha-vardhana founded his empire in Northern India. The ruling family belonged to the Pratīhāra clan, and hence the dynasty of kings is known in history as the Gurjara-Pratihāra. It appears that the Gurjaras proceeded from their main settlements at Rajputana further towards the east and south and a branch dynasty was ruling at Broach.

The Gurjara-Pratīhāras had been settled in Rajputana for a century when a formidable rival appeared in the west. These were the Arabs who had imbibed along with their new religion a warlike spirit from the Prophet Muhammad. Their enthusiastic nature, bordering on fanaticism, was thoroughly roused, and they rushed forth to spread the new religion and carry on military conquests all over the world. Verily they wrought wonders. Syria and Egypt were conquered within six years of the death of the Prophet; Africa, Spain and Persia fell in quick succession; and before a century had elapsed, the empire of the Caliphs, as the successors of the Prophet were called, extended from the Loire in the heart of France to the Oxus and Kabul rivers.

The Arabs.

Such was the formidable tribe which had reached the frontiers of India, and cast longing eyes on her fair plains and cities. They had already made several plundering raids into India both by land and sea, but no important success was gained till 712 A.D., when a dispute having arisen between Caliph Walid and Dāhir,

The Arab conquest of Sindh.

king of Sindh, the former sent a military expedition to force the submission of the Indian king. The detachment having failed, a regular army was sent under Muhammad bin Kasim. One by one all the important strongholds of the kingdom were captured by the Muhammadan general, and Dāhir, who contested every inch of ground, was forced to make his last stand before the gates of his capital-city Alor. An unfortunate incident practically decided the fate of this last battle. Dāhir's elephant, being wounded, rushed away from the battle-field, and the disappearance of the king led to so great a panic and confusion, that although the king, himself wounded, returned to the field shortly after, order could by no means be restored. Dāhir fought with desperate courage and gallantly fell fighting in the midst of his enemies.

The unworthy son of this worthy father fled for his life, but the widowed queen more than made amends for the crime of her son. Having collected the remains of the army she defended the capital with stubborn courage till provisions failed. Then followed a strange scene, a precursor of many others in India, but without

any parallel in the history of the world, both ancient and modern. Faced with the alternative of death or dishonour the men and women of the capital chose the former. A big fire was kindled in the courtyard. The women gaily decorated themselves, took leave of their husbands and other relations, and then with joyous face threw themselves and their children into the blazing flame. The men silently watched the terrible scene till the fire had devoured all that was dear and near unto them in this world; then they threw the gates wide open, and, sword in hand, rushed into the midst of the enemy. The Muhammadan soldiers long remembered the day when the handful of Indians perished to a man, after having fought with the desperate courage which certain death never fails to inspire. When the victorious Muhammadan general made his triumphal entry into the capital, the dying embers of the flame told him the awful tale of heroic sacrifice.

Such was the beginning of the Arab domination in India. Surprise has often been felt why the victorious forces were satisfied with Sindh alone, and failed to carry their arms into the interior of India. Various theories have

been put forth to explain why the 'conquerors' of the world stopped merely at the gates of India, and even failed to retain what they had conquered. The real explanation is not, however, far to seek. It has been already related that Lalitaditya, the king of Kashmir, gained success against the Arabian forces, and it is legitimate to suppose that the imperial forces of Kashmir checked their onward progress for the time being. Further, there is incontestable evidence that from the very beginning the Gurjaras stood as bulwarks of Indian defence against the vanguards of Islam. That there was no lack of desire on the part of the Arabian government to extend their dominions into the interior of India is proved by the military expeditions they sent for the purpose from time to time. The most formidable of these was despatched about 725 A.D. when the Muhammadans overran Cutch, Kathiawar Peninsula, northern Gujarat and southern Rajputana, and probably even advanced as far as Malwa. It appeared as if the whole of northern and southern India would fall within their grasp. But Northern India was saved by a chief of the Gurjara Pratihāra clan

The Arab advance checked by the Gurjaras.

and the gates of the Deccan were successfully defended by the forces of the Chālukya king of Badami.

The Pratīhāra chief who had thus saved Northern India was named Nāgabhata and he ruled over Avanti, the present Malwa, in the first half of the eighth century A. D. He was succeeded by his two nephews Kakkuka and Devarāja, and then came Vatsarāja, the son of the last named king. Vatsarāja, who was ruling in 783 A. D., was a very powerful ruler, and consolidated the Pratīhāra dominion by extensive conquests in Northern India. He even defeated the king of Gauḍa or Bengal, and had thus well-nigh established unquestioned supremacy over the greater part of Northern India, when an unforeseen event deprived him of the great prize almost within his grasp. Before, however, proceeding to describe this incident it will be well to take note of the condition of Bengal which thus fell an easy prey to the Pratīhāra king.

The early successes of the Gurjaras.

After the death of Śaśāṅka, Bengal had lost all political solidarity. As we have seen above, it was conquered by Harshavardhana and, after

the downfall of his short-lived empire, by Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa. At the beginning of the eighth century, a king of the Śaila dynasty made himself master of Paundra or northern Bengal, and this was followed by the invasions of Yaśovarman and Lalitāditya as has been recorded above. About the middle of the eighth century, Harsha of Kāmarūpa conquered the country and the last stroke was dealt by Vatsarāja the Gurjara-Pratīhāra chief.

Pitiable condition of Bengal.

These successive foreign invasions brought about complete anarchy and confusion throughout the kingdom. There was no central authority and each landlord established an independent principality like the feudal barons of Middle ages. Might was right, and the sword was the only arbitrator. In short, all the miseries of an anarchical state were harassing the people of Bengal. But the evil brought its own remedy. The chiefs, unable to bear the misery any longer, agreed to elect Gopāla as the ruler of the whole kingdom. Unfortunately, no details of this remarkable act of personal sacrifice and political sagacity have been preserved to us. It

Election of Gopāla.

reminds us of a similar event in Japan, not long ago, when the semi-independent feudal Barons surrendered their powers to the Mikado, and thereby made their country what it is to-day. Whether the events in Bengal were parallel to those of Japan we cannot say, but the results were equally remarkable. Gopāla consolidated his dominions from Himālaya to the sea, and brought peace and prosperity after the anarchy and misrule of a century and a half, during which the country had sunk to the lowest pitch of misery and degradation. He left a flourishing kingdom to his son and successor Dharmapāla, who was destined to raise it to a height of greatness and splendour not dreamt of before. As the name of Gopāla and his successors ends in Pāla, the dynasty founded by him is known in history as the Pāla dynasty. The date of his accession is not definitely known but may be placed in the last quarter of the eighth century A. D.

CHAPTER IV.

Political history of the Deccan upto the rise of the Rashtrakutas.

In South India, as in the North, the downfall of an Imperial dynasty almost inevitably gave a fresh lease of life to the independent provincial powers. So after the Sātavāhana family had passed away in the first half of the third century A. D., the Deccan plateau as well as the Southern Peninsula witnessed the rise of a number of independent kingdoms. For about three centuries, the whole country south of the Narmadā was partitioned among various powers, too numerous to be mentioned in detail. We must content ourselves with a brief reference to the more important among them.

Various kingdoms in the Deccan and South India.

1. **The Vakatakas.**—The Vākāṭaka dynasty flourished about the beginning of the fourth century A. D. in the neighbourhood of Berar. Altogether eight kings of the dynasty are known. The first, Mahārāja Pravarasena I is described as a *Samrāj*, or Universal king, who performed a multitude of Vedic sacrifices, including four Aśvamedhas. The fourth king

Rudrasena II married Śrī Prabhāvatī, daughter of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II. The eighth king Harisena conquered Kuntala, Avanti, Kaliṅga, Kośala, Trikūṭa, Lāṭa and Andhra countries. The dynasty seems to have lost its power towards the close of the fifth century A.D., but during its rule for two centuries, the kingdom was adorned with fine sculptures, temples and caves, including some of the famous caves of Ajaṇṭā.

2. **The Kadambas.**—The Kadambas ruled over the present districts of Belgaum, Dharwar and North Kanara, and the North-western part of Mysore. The founder of the dynasty was a Brāhmaṇa devoted to the study of sacred scriptures. But being insulted by the Pallavas, and failing to obtain any remedy by virtue of his spiritual powers, he gave up Śāstras (scriptures) for the Śastra (sword), and founded a principality. Although Brāhmaṇas, the Kadambas were great patrons of Jainism, and one of the kings is said to have married his daughters to the Gupta and other kings. There were two or three branches of the family ruling at the same time in different parts of the country, the capital of the main branch being at Vaijayantī. The period of their

greatness may be placed between the fourth and the sixth century A. D. Almost throughout this period the Kadambas were carrying on a struggle with the Pallavas and the Gangas which did not lead to any decisive result. About the middle of the sixth century A. D., the northern provinces of their kingdom were conquered by the Chalukya kings, while the rest of their territories passed into the hands of the Gangas half a century later.

The Pallavas.—The Pallavas rose to political greatness in the third or fourth century A. D. There does not seem to be any truth in the hypothesis, once generally accepted, that they were Parthian in origin. They seem to have rather been an indigenous tribe of the South Indian peninsula, either identical with or allied to the Kurumbas. The earliest capital of the Pallava kings was at Kāñchī, and their sway extended to Bellary and Guntur districts. The Pallavas felt the brunt of the attack of Samudragupta, and their king Vishnugopa was defeated by the great Gupta emperor. In the following centuries the Pallavas occupied a predominant position in the South Indian peninsula. King Simhavishnu, who flourished towards the close

of the 6th century A. D., conquered Chera, Chola, Pāṇḍya and Ceylon, and thus united the whole of the Peninsula under the Pallavas.

The Chalukyas.—Whilst the Pallavas were establishing their supremacy in the Southern peninsula, a new dynasty was rising rapidly to power in the Deccan plateau. These were the Chālukyas who had probably immigrated into South India from the north at some unknown period in history. They claimed to have originally ruled over Ayodhyā for a pretty long time, but it can hardly be accepted as a historical fact. Certain it is that about 550 A. D., one of their chiefs called Pulakeśin carved a small principality around Vātāpipura (Badami) which henceforth became its capital. Pulakeśin performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. His sons, who succeeded him, were also great conquerors. The elder, Kīrtivarman, defeated the Kadambas and annexed part of their territory. Later on, he pushed forward his conquests as far as Konkan in the north, and Bellary and Kurnool districts in the south. The younger, Maṅgaleśa, defeated the Kalachuris and extended the boundaries of the kingdom to the river Mahī. The kingdom thus embraced

Their origin

the whole of the present Bombay Presidency with the exception of Sindh, Kathiawad and northern Gujarat.

Mangalesa wanted to leave the throne to one of his sons. Pulakesi II, the son of Kirtivarman, however, put forth his legitimate claim and there ensued a civil war which ended in the defeat and death of Mangalesa.

Pulakesi II

Pulakesi secured the throne, but internal discord and confusion proved to be the signal for the revolt of the newly conquered provinces, and what was worse still, the Chalukyas were themselves attacked by other powers. It reflects no little credit to the valour and generalship of Pulakesi II that he not only overcame the difficulties and reasserted his supremacy over the revolted territories, but also made extensive conquests in the north and south. When he had thus established his power in the Deccan, he had to meet a new foe. The emperor Harshavardhana, having consolidated his power in the north, now tried to cross the Narmada. The Chalukya king, however, successfully defended his territories against the emperor of the north and inflicted a crushing defeat upon him. This great achievement,

which saved south India from the domination of the north, was remembered for ages by a grateful posterity. But Pulakeśī did more than this. The Lātas, the Mālavas and the Gurjaras of Northern India acknowledged his suzerainty, and in the north-east he defeated the southern Kośalas and the Kaliṅgas. His arms were also equally successful in the east and south. He conquered Veṅgi (between the Krishna and the Godavery), inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Pallavas, and advanced within a few miles of their capital, Kāñchī. He then crossed the Kāverī and invaded the Cholas. These, along with the Keralas and the Pāṇḍyas, accepted the alliance of the Chālukya king who again dispersed the Pallava army.

His conquests

These great victories made Pulakeśī II the undisputed master of not only the whole of India south of the Vindhyas, but also of considerable territories to the north of that natural frontier. His reputation seems to have travelled beyond the confines of India, and it is believed that letters and presents were interchanged between him and king Khusrū II of Persia.

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang pays a just tribute to the power and virtues of Pulakeśī

and the valour and heroism of his subjects. We read in his memorable account the following interesting sketch of the people of Maharashtra and their king Pulakesi II.

"The disposition of the people is honest and simple; they are tall of stature, and of a stern, vindictive character. To their benefactors they are grateful; to their enemies relentless. If they are insulted, they will risk their life to avenge themselves. If they are asked to help one in distress, they will forget themselves in their haste to render assistance. .....If a general loses a battle, they do not inflict punishment, but present him with woman's clothes, and so he is driven to seek death for himself. The country provides for a band of champions to the number of several hundred. Each time they are about to engage in conflict, they intoxicate themselves with wine, and then one man with lance in hand will meet ten thousand and challenge them in fight. .....Moreover, they inebriate many hundred heads of elephants, and taking them out to fight, they themselves first drink their wine, and then rushing forward in mass, they trample everything down, so that no enemy can

Hiuen Tsang's account.

stand before them. (But inspite of these military habits) the men are fond of learning."

So far about the people, but the Chinese pilgrim continues:—"The king, in consequence of his possessing these men and elephants, treats his neighbours with contempt. His plans and undertakings are wide-spread, and his benificent actions are felt over a great distance. His subjects obey him with perfect submission."

Hiuen Tsang then records how Harshavardhana, although master of the whole of Northern India, failed to conquer these stubborn people. We read how "Harshavardhana has gathered troops from the five Indies, and summoned the best leaders from all countries, and himself gone at the head of his army to punish and subdue these people, but he has not yet conquered these troops".

This account was written about 641 A. D., when Pulakeśi II was evidently at the zenith of his power. But hardly had a year rolled by before his name and fame were a thing of the past. The Pallavas, who were so disastrously defeated by Pulakeśi in the earlier part of his reign, had now grown in power under their capable ruler

The death of Pulakeśi II.

Narasimha-varman I and sought to avenge their disgrace. In the fight which ensued, the great emperor Pulakesi was defeated and killed, and his empire lay prostrate before the victorious hosts of the enemy. The Pallavas plundered and devastated Badami, the Chalukya capital, and the Chalukya sovereignty remained in abeyance for about thirteen years. Thus ended the career of the great emperor Pulakesi II, adding one more illustration of the proverbial instability of the goddess of royal fortune.

The Eastern Chalukyas.

While the Chalukyas were thus shorn of power and dignity, a branch of them was rapidly consolidating its power over the territories between the Krishna and the Godavery. These were conquered by Pulakesi II and left in charge of Yuvaraja Vishnuvardhana, "dear younger brother" of the king. But, sometime before 632 A. D., the Yuvaraja established himself there as an independent king, and founded what was known as the Eastern Chalukya Branch. The family remained independent of the main or Western Branch, and exercised uninterrupted sway over the kingdom down to the 12th century A. D.

But the main Chalukya dynasty was not long

in recovering its fortune. Vikramāditya I, a younger son of Pulakeśi II, but one who seems to have been specially selected by the emperor for the succession, made unceasing efforts to retrieve the fortunes of his family. His efforts were crowned with success after thirteen years, when, at the end of a long and protracted struggle, the Pallavas were crushed, and their capital surrendered to him. Gradually peace and order was restored in the empire, and Vikramāditya I had the supreme satisfaction of finding his authority re-established in the whole of his paternal dominions.

Restoration of Chalukyan power.

Vikramāditya was succeeded by his son and grandson Vinayāditya I and Vijayāditya I, both of whom were great heroes, and had assisted him in the task of reconquering and re-organising the empire. Both these kings pushed their conquests to Northern India, but no detailed account of their expedition is known to us. The next king was Vikramāditya II, who twice defeated the hereditary foe viz, the Pallavas, and occupied their capital Kāñchī. But the most memorable event in his reign was the invasion of the Arabians. These vanguards

of Islam had, as already related, obtained a footing in Sindh as early as 712 A.D., and then, after overrunning Sindh, Northern Gujarat, Malwa and Southern Rājputana, proceeded towards the Deccan with the desire of conquering all the southern kings. They entered Lāta, the northernmost province of the Chālukyas, but were defeated by the Chālukya army and forced to retreat. Southern India was thus saved, but this was the last great act of the dynasty whose record is full of brilliant achievements. For, under the next king Kīrtivarman II, the sovereignty was wrested by the Rāshtrakūtas, and the Chālukya supremacy came to an end. This event may be placed at about 753 A. D., although Kīrtivarman nominally ruled over some parts of his kingdom for a few years more.

The fall of the Chālukyas.

The Rāshtrakūtas who thus secured the mastery of the Deccan seem to have been indigenous people of the country. The family had been ruling over some petty principality for four generations, when king Dantidurga defeated Kīrtivarman II and obtained paramount sovereignty in the Deccan. Dantidurga extended his

The Rāshṭrakūṭas.

dominions far and wide, and when he died childless, his uncle Kṛishṇarāja succeeded to the vast possessions of the family. The Chālukyas tried to regain their power, but were again reduced by Kṛishṇarāja. He consolidated the Rāshṭrakūṭa power by other conquests, but his greatest achievement was the building of the famous rock-cut temple of Kailāsa at Ellora. The next king Govinda II was hopelessly addicted to sensual pleasures, and hence his younger brother Dhruva took the reins of government in his own hands. Govinda II attempted to recover his power with the help of friendly chiefs, but Dhruva defeated him in a pitched battle and formally deposed him.

With the succession of Dhruva a new era began in the history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. They were no longer content with their dominions in the south, but looked wistfully towards the rich plains of Northern India. Their history, at this stage, forms a part of the general history of India and will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Struggle for supremacy—the Rashtrakutas, the Palas and the Gurjara-Pratiharas.

The detailed statements given in the last two chapters will make it quite clear that towards the close of the 8th century A. D. there were three great powers in India, viz. the Pālas, the Gurjara-Pratihāras and the Rāshtrakūtas. The Pratihāra king Vatsarāja, one of whose known dates is 783 A. D., seems to have ruled over considerable territories in Rajputana and Central India. It appears that while Vatsarāja was laying the foundations of the future greatness of his family in the west, the Pālas had established a strong monarchy in Bengal in the east. The former gradually expanded his kingdom towards the east while the latter did the same in the opposite direction. Under the circumstances it was inevitable that there would be a trial of strength between the two. As a matter of fact there was an encounter between Vatsarāja and the king of Gauda somewhere between the Ganges

The three great powers.

and the Jumna. The king of Gauḍa who must have thus extended his power at least as far as Allahabad in the west was defeated by Vatsarāja. The vanquished king was either Gopāla or more probably his son Dharmapāla, and this struggle may be said to have originated the eternal hostility between the Pālas and the Gurjaras. But while the Pratīhāras and the Pālas were fighting for an empire in Northern India, a new claimant appeared on the scene. These were the Rāshṭrakūṭas, who had already established undisputed supremacy in Southern India, and were now trying to assert their supremacy in the north. King Dhruva crossed the Vindhyas, defeated both the Pālas and the Gurjaras, and overran Northern India as far as the Ganges.

Thus commenced that tripartite struggle for empire between the Pālas, the Gurjaras and the Rāshṭrakūṭas which was the most important factor in the political history of India during the next century. The keynote of the struggle seems to have been the possession of the imperial city of Kanauj for which each of these tried and succeeded in turn. In order that the account of this struggle might be intelligently followed

we arrange below, in a tabular form, the list of kings of the three rival dynasties so far as we are concerned with them here.

Gurjara Pratīhāra.	Rāshṭrakūṭa	Pāla
Vatsarāja (783 A.D.)	Dhruva (C. 779-794 A.D.)	Dharmapāla (C. 780-815 A.D.)
Nāgabhaṭa (815 A.D.)	Govinda III (794-814 A.D.)	Devapāla (815-850 A.D.)
Rāmabhadra.	Amoghavarsha: (814-877 A.D.)	
Bhoja (843-890 A.D.)		Vigrahapāla (C. 850-860)
Mahendrapāla (890-910 A.D.)	Krishna II (902A.D.)	Nārāyaṇapāla (860-915)

As will be seen from the above table, the first encounter took place between the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva, the Pratīhāra Vatsarāja, and the Pāla king Dharmapāla. The Rāshṭrakūṭas achieved a complete triumph, but the death of Dhruva, sometime before 794 A. D., ushered in a period of confusion in their kingdom. Twelve kings in the south formed a confederacy against Govinda III, the son and successor of Dhruva, and the new king had also to cope with the treacherous hostilities of the Gaṅga chief. While his own hands were thus busy in the

Short-lived triumph of Dhruva.

south, he seems to have left his northern possessions in charge of his younger brother Indrarāja. To the northern kings this was a good respite and they were not slow to take advantage of it. Dharmapāla, who was probably less affected by the Rāshṭrakūṭa blow seems to have first entered the field and made his suzerainty acknowledged by almost all the important states of Northern India.

In particular he defeated Indrāyudha, king of Kanauj, and placed his own nominee Chakrāyudha on the throne. The great imperial assembly which he held at that famous city was attended by the vassal kings of Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gāndhārā and Kīra, and the imperial ambitions of the Pāla kings of Bengal were thus fully realised.

Empire of Dharmapāla.

The ever-shifting political combination of the time, however, made it difficult, if not impossible, for any king to enjoy undisturbed a long and prosperous reign. The Gurjara power was merely stunned by the Rāshṭrakūṭa blow, not killed, and Nāgabhaṭa, the son and successor of Vatsarāja set himself to the task of retrieving the fortunes of his family. He first made him-

self master of Sindhu, Andhra, Vidarbha and Kaliṅga, and then felt strong enough to try his strength with his two great rivals. He attacked and defeated Chakrāyudha, the nominee of Dharmapāla on the throne of Kanauj, and this necessarily precipitated a conflict with Dharmapāla himself. The battle probably took place at Monghyr, and Nāgabhaṭa scored a great victory over his rival. Urged on by his triumph, Nāgabhaṭa conquered in quick succession the Ānartta, Mālava, Kirāta, Turushka, Vatsa and Matsya countries.

Nāgabhaṭa

While Nāgabhaṭa was thus wresting the empire from the hands of Dharmapāla, the latter sought the aid of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Govinda III who had settled the affairs of his kingdom by this time. Sometime between April 807 A.D. and July 808 A. D. Govinda III undertook a military expedition to the north like his father. Dharmapāla, with his protégé Chakrāyudha, waited upon him. Nothing could resist the onslaught of the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces. Nāgabhaṭa fled away in fear, nobody knew whither. Govinda III overran his territory and proceeded upto the Himālaya mountains. Well might he exclaim

Govinda III.

like the later Peshwas, that his horse could run from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin without treading upon others' territory.

Thus the imperial dreams of Nāgabhaṭa, like those of his father, were rudely disturbed by the lancers of the south. But the Rāshṭrakūṭa king was not left free to enjoy his conquests. His dominions were torn asunder by internal dissensions. The governor of Lāṭa was expelled by his younger brother in 812 A. D., and the revolutionary movement, thus set on foot, afterwards developed into an attempt to prevent the accession of Amoghavarsha, the son of Govinda III.

This unexpected imbroglio in the Rāshṭrakūṭa affairs once more left the Pālas and the Gurjaras free to fight among themselves. It is difficult to follow the details of the struggle, but the Pālas seem to have got the upper hand. Devapāla, the son and successor of Dharmapāla, ruled as the undisputed master of Northern India, while Rāmabhadra, the son of Nāgabhaṭa, enjoyed little power. Devapāla is said to have defeated the Draviḍas, Gurjaras and the Hūṇas, and conquered Utkala and Kāmarūpa. It is therefore not without justification that the

Devapāla

court poets described his empire as extending from the Himalaya to the Vindhyas and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian sea.

Devapāla ruled for at least 38 years, and the fame of his prowess reached the distant isles in the Indian Archipelago, where centuries ago adventurous Indians had established a colonial empire. Mahārāja Bālaputradeva, the Lord of Suvarnnadvīpa (Sumatra), erected a monastery at Nālanda, and on his request Devapāla granted five villages for its maintenance.

Weak successors of Devapāla

With Devapāla ends the most glorious period of the Pāla history. His successor Vigrahapāla ruled for a short period and preferred an ascetic life to an aggressive military career. He was followed by Nārāyanapāla whose long reign of more than half a century saw the decline of the great imperial fabric raised by Dharmapāla and Devapāla.

While the fortunes of the Pāla empire were in the hands of weaklings who preferred ascetic life to an agressive military career, a youth of remarkable energy and military skill had ascended the throne of the Pratīhāras. This was Bhoja who had succeeded his father Rāmabha-

dra in or about 843 A. D. Almost immediately after his accession he tried to re-establish the glory of his family. But he was defeated by Devapāla and fared no better against the Rāshṭrakūṭas. But although his early attempts proved a failure Bhoja did not give up all hopes. The death of Devapāla and the pacific policy of his successors must have furnished a golden opportunity to the Pratīhāra king. He secured the aid of the powerful Chedi rulers, who were gradually rising into prominence, and probably also of the Guhilot king. Assisted by these powerful chiefs, Bhoja had probably no great difficulty in inflicting a crushing defeat upon the unwarlike king that sat upon the throne of Dharmapāla and Devapāla. Fortune also favoured Bhoja in another direction. The Rāshṭrakūṭa king Kṛishṇa II was involved in a life and death struggle with the eastern Chālukyas who occupied and burnt his capital city. Bhoja was thus freed from any fear in this quarter, and with the two powerful rival kingdoms thus laid low, he had ample opportunity of satisfying his imperial ambitions. With the exception of Kashmir, Sindh, Magadha,

Bhoja founds the Pratīhāra empire.

Bengal, and Chedi, the whole of Northern India was conquered by Bhoja. Having fixed his capital at the imperial city of Kanauj, the great emperor seems to have enjoyed the undisturbed possession of these extensive territories. He died about 890 A. D., leaving a consolidated empire, for which Vatsarāja and Nāgabhata had fought in vain, to his son and successor Mahendrapāladeva.

Under Mahendrapāladeva the kingdom of Magadha, or at least a considerable portion of it, was added to the Pratīhāra empire. Thus the victory over the eastern rival was complete after a struggle of more than a century, and the Pratīhāra empire reached its high-water mark of success and glory.

Mahendrapāladeva.

At the beginning of the tenth century, then, the Pratīhāra king Mahendrapāla ruled over an empire that, to quote the phraseology of the court poet of Devapāla, stretched from the source of the Ganges to that of the Revā (i. e. from the Himalaya to the Vindhyas) and almost from the eastern to the western ocean. The struggle for empire between the three great rival powers of the ninth century A. D. had thus had its logical

end. Dhruva and Govinda III, Dharmapāla and Devapāla, Bhojadeva and Mahendrapāla, each played in turn the imperial role. But their empires, like the ocean waves, rose to the highest point only to break down. So it had proved with the Pāḷas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas and so it was destined to be in the case of the Pratīhāras. For the later history of this dynasty is but the history of the decline and downfall of the mighty empire.

CHAPTER VI.

Downfall of the Pratihara empire—Invasions of Sultan Mahmud.

The emperor Mahendrapāla was succeeded by his two sons, Bhoja II and Mahipāla. Of the first we know very little, but the reign of the second was a prosperous one, at least in its earlier part. The empire remained intact and the poet Rājaśekhara, who lived in the court of Mahīpāla, describes him as the Mahārājādhirāja of Āryāvarta, and refers to his victories over the Muralas, the Mekalas, the Kalingas, the Keralas, the Kuntalas and the Ramathas.

The great extent and prosperity of the Pratihāra empire is also attested to by the Muhammadan traveller Al Masudi, a native of Baghdad, who visited India in the year 915-16 A. D. It appears from his statements that the Pratihāra empire reached the Rāshtrakūta territory in the south and included a part of Sindh and the Punjab. Al Masudi says that the king is rich in horses and camels, and maintains four armies in the four quarters of the world;

each 700,000 or 900,000 strong. Regarding the political relations of the king of Kanauj, we are told by Al Masudi, that of the four armies maintained by him, that of the north wars against the prince of Multan, and that of the south fights against Balharā i. e. the Rāshṭrakūṭa king.

The hostility with the Rāshṭrakūṭas, which Mahīpāla had inherited from his predecessors, proved, however, as fatal to his flourishing empire as it was to those of Vatsarāja and Nāgabhaṭa.

Sack of Kanauj

Within a year or two of Al Masudi's visit, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Indra III defeated Mahīpāla and pursued him upto the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, while the imperial city of Kanauj was devastated by his soldiery. Thus the Rāshṭrakūṭas had a complete victory over the Pratīhāras, and the empire of Bhoja and Mahendrapāla lay prostrate at the feet of their southern rivals. But once more the internal dissensions of the Rāshṭrakūṭas saved the Gurjaras. Indra III died almost immediately after his brilliant victories and was succeeded by Amoghavarsha II. Govinda IV, the younger brother of the king, however, usurped the throne by directly or indirectly causing the death of his elder brother.

Govinda IV was of licentious habits and displeased all men by taking to vicious courses. His body became enfeebled, and constitution deranged, till he was removed from the throne by his subjects.

Thus the internal circumstances of the Rāshṭrakūṭas proved extremely unfavourable for the maintenance of their possessions in the north. Mahīpāla seized this opportunity, and was loyally supported by his feudatory chiefs in his endeavour to restore the fallen fortunes of his family. Whether he was able to recover all the territories he had lost it is difficult to determine. At the time of his death, in 931 A. D., his kingdom stretched as far as Benares in the east. The Ganges, the Jumna, the Betwa and the Dasan rivers seem to have formed its boundaries on the south-east while to the south it probably reached the Vindhyas.

But although Mahīpāla may be credited with retrieving his fortunes to a great extent, there can be no question that the prestige of the Pratihāras sustained a serious blow. As is usual in these circumstances, subordinate chiefs began to assert independence and new powers arose within the empire. Thus began the

decline and downfall of the great Pratīhāra empire, and the process of disintegration presents a historic parallel to that which overtook the Mughal empire in the eighteenth century. Mahīpāla was succeeded by his three sons, Mahendrapāla II, Devapāla, and Vijayapāla, one of whose known dates is 960 A. D. During the reign of these three kings the disintegration of the Pratīhāra empire was all but complete.

The Chandellas.

The new political situation is best illustrated by the changed attitude of the Chandellas. The Chandellas rose into prominence in the 9th century A. D. and established a kingdom, called Jejākabhukti, in the Bundelkhand region. They were feudatories of the Pratīhāra emperors, and their chief Harshadeva had loyally assisted Mahīpāla in regaining his kingdom. Yaśovarman, son of Harshadeva, however, threw off the allegiance and was described as a scorching fire to the Gurjaras. The decline of the Pratīhāra empire left the field free for his ambitious enterprises. He carried on successful wars against the Gauḍas, Kośalas, Kāśmīras, Mithilas, Mālavas, Chedis, Kurus and Gurjaras, and conquered the Kālañjara mountain which

henceforth became the stronghold of his kingdom. The Pratihāra ruler was indeed still invoked as the suzerain power in official documents, probably very much in the same way as the rulers of Oudh and Hyderabad found it convenient to pay a nominal allegiance to the emperors at Delhi, but Yaśovarman carved out a principality which was independent for all practical purposes.

The Chandella power rapidly advanced under Dhanga, the son and successor of Yaśovarman. He is said to have obtained the empire after defeating the Kānyakubja king, which means that he gave up even the formal acknowledgment of the Pratihāra suzerainty. By the year 954 A. D. he extended his power upto the Jumna in the north and Gwalior in the north-west. The occupation of Gwalior must have been a severe blow to the power and prestige of the Pratihāras, as their powerful rival thereby obtained a secure footing in the very heart of the kingdom. In course of his long reign, extending over the latter half of the tenth century A. D., Dhanga made further encroachments upon the territory of the Pratihāras, and seems to have extended his kingdom as far as Benares in the east.

The success of the Chandellas was a signal for the final disruption of the Pratīhāra empire. The Kalachuris who dwelt in the neighbourhood of the Jubbulpore district asserted their supremacy. They were a very ancient power, and their history reaches back to the 3rd century A. D., when they established an era, known after them as the Kalachuri era, in 249 A. D. During the seven hundred years that followed, we find occasional glimpses of their greatness. Kokalladeva, who flourished in the latter half of the 9th century A. D. was a powerful chief, and probably helped Bhoja of Kanauj in establishing his empire. His family was, however, subordinate to the Pratīhāras till the middle of the tenth century A. D., when his great-grandson Lakshmaṇarāja followed the example of the Chandellas and established an independent principality. He was a powerful hero and is credited with victory over Vaṅga, Lāṭa, Pāṇḍya, Gurjara and Kāśmīra. In the eleventh century A. D. the Chedi kingdom was divided into two parts Dāhāla and Mahākośala with capitals respectively at Tripura (near Jubbulpore) and Ratanpur.

The Kalachuris.

About the same time Mūlarāja of the Chaulu-

kya clan, belonging probably to the Gurjara tribe, established the independent kingdom of Anhilwara in Gujarat which included parts of southern Rajputana. A little later, the Kachchhapaghātas established themselves round Gwalior, which they had conquered from Dhanga before 977 A. D., and their king Vajradāman inflicted a crushing defeat upon the ruler of Kanauj. In the west, Jayapāla, the king of the Shahi dynasty of Kabul which was founded by the Brahmin vizier of the Turkish ruler (probably descendants of Kanishka) towards the close of the 9th century A. D., aggrandised himself at the expense of the Pratihāras. He extended his power upto the Hakra, the lost river of the Indian desert, and fixed his capital at Bathinda, south-east of Lahor. Other powers also rose on the ruins of the Pratihāra empire, the two most notable of them being the Paramāras of Malwa under Muñja, and the Chāhamānas (Chauhāns) of Sākambharī (Sambhar) and Ajmir under Vigraharāja.

Chaulukyas.

Kachchhapaghātas

Brahmin Sahi Dynasty

Paramāras and Chāhamānas

Thus when Rājyapāla, the son of Vijayapāla,

had ascended the throne of Kanauj in the last quarter of the tenth century A. D., India presented the same political features as inevitably followed the disruption of a mighty empire. The Pratihāra rule was practically confined to Kanauj and its neighbourhood, while the rest of the empire was divided among rival independent kingdoms. As so often happened in the past, a political re-adjustment would probably have taken place sooner or later, if the Indian states were left to themselves. But this was not to be. Just when the military strength of North India had been exhausted by the age-long struggle for supremacy among the great powers, and before as yet the country had time to take its breath, an Islamic power appeared from the west, and changed the whole situation. The states that were fighting for supremacy were all involved in a common ruin.

About 960 A. D. Alptegin, a Turkish slave of the Samani kings, had carved an independent principality in the Soleiman Hills round Ghazni. The kingdom passed on after his death to one of his Turkish slaves named Sabuktegin about 975 A. D. Jayapāla, the Shahi king, who, as already

related, ruled over extensive territories from the Hakrā river in the east to the mountains of Kabul in the west, did not like the rise of a Muhammadan power so near his borders, and invaded the new kingdom. The two armies met near Jelalabad, but before there was any engagement, a furious thunderstorm broke out, and induced Jayapāla to retreat, after concluding a treaty with Sabuktegin. Once safely back in his kingdom Jayapāla refused to observe the treaty. This brought about exactly what Jayapāla had hitherto sought to prevent, and Sabuktegin assembled an army with a view to invade India. Jayapāla, who foresaw the danger of a Muhammadan invasion long ago, did not underrate its gravity, and asked for the assistance of other Indian chiefs to save the honour of their motherland. The appeal was immediately responded to by the king of Kanauj, as well as the Chāhamāna and Chandella kings.

Kingdom of Ghazni.

As has already been related, the Islamic forces had obtained a footing in India as early as the eighth century A. D. They, however, failed to make any lasting impression beyond the territory of Sindh. This was mainly due to the

Pratīhāras, who had stood as a bulwark against the aggression of the Mussulmans ever since their first raids into India proper. Nāgabhaṭa, the founder of the dynasty, owed his greatness to a successful campaign against them early in the 8th century A. D., when they seemed to carry everything before them. During the following period, when the power of the Pratīhāras was at its highest, these were looked upon as the greatest enemies of the Muhammadan faith. Al Masudi says that while the Rāshṭrakūṭas were friends of the Muhammadans, the Gurjara king of Kanauj was constantly at war with them. With the decline of the Pratīhāras no power was left strong enough to oppose a successful resistance to the aggressions of Islam, and when the Ghaznevite kings seized this favourable opportunity to push forward the outpost of Islam into the heart of India, Jayapāla, the king immediately affected, could only send a piteous appeal to the powerful chiefs of India. The Pratīhāra king of Kanauj, shorn of power and dignity as he was, remembered the proud role his family had played, and when the call of duty came about 991 A. D., he joined the confederacy that Jayapāla had formed against his Muhammadan

foe, along with his whilom vassal chiefs of the Chāhamānas and the Chandellas. The imperial banner of the Pratihāras was unfurled in the valley of the Kurram river in far distant Afghanistan in defence of faith and country. But although the river was dyed crimson with the blood of hundreds and thousands of Indian patriots, Sabuktegin gained the day and made himself master of all the territories up to the Indus.

Defeat of the Hindu confederacy.

Subuktegin died in 997 A. D. His son Mahmud had been appointed governor of Khorasan, a rich province in eastern Persia, by the Samani kings who had at last been reconciled to the new dynasty. Sabuktegin nominated his younger son Ismail for the throne of Ghazni, and the latter caused himself to be proclaimed as king immediately after his father's death. But he was defeated by Mahmud, who conquered Ghazni and declared himself king. About this time anarchy and confusion in the Samani state enabled Mahmud to throw off his allegiance to that power. He received an investiture from the Caliph and assumed the title of Sultan, indicating his independent sovereignty.

Sultan Mahmud

Mahmud was undoubtedly the first soldier of his age. Master of extensive territories from the Indus to the heart of Persia, he determined to pursue the Indian policy of his father on a much bigger scale. He marched towards India with 10,000 chosen horse. The old king Jayapāla met his adversary near Peshawar, but was defeated and taken prisoner, and Mahmud pursued his march beyond the Sutlej. Although Jayapāla was released on promise of paying tribute, he did not choose to survive the disgrace, and burnt himself to death in a pyre which he set on fire with his own hands.

What followed took the breath of India away. Year after year Sultan Mahmud repeated his incursions into India. He directed his march against a notable place, plundered everything that fell on his way, destroyed temples within his reach, and returned home, laden with booty, with the supreme satisfaction of advancing his own religion by the destruction of the idols. He was out for ruthless devastation of territories and the desecration of temples. He did not care so much for establishing an empire in India, but his ambition was satisfied by plundering

her rich treasures and breaking the idols of her numerous temples.

But the Indians were not insensible to the danger which threatened their country and religion. Ānandapāla, the son and successor of Jayapāla, had organised a confederacy in which the kings of the principal states of western and central India took part. The old king Rājyapāla of Kanauj, true to the traditions of his family, joined the holy war, and the Chandellas also took prominent part in it. The immense host, the largest Indian army that had yet taken the field in defence of their faith and country, boldly advanced into enemy's territories. It was the last desperate struggle for India's freedom, and so well was this understood, and so profoundly did the sacred cause impress the heart of India, that not only contingents daily came from far and near to augment the immense host, but even "Hindu women sold their jewels, melted down their golden ornaments, and sent their contributions from a distance to furnish resources for this holy war." The only notable power in northern India that did not join this great national movement was the Pāla

Second Hindu confederacy.

ruler of Bengal. But with this single exception, the sons of Āryāvarta nobly responded to the call of their motherland, and gave lie direct to the charge that modern historians have brought against them, *viz* lack of union and patriotism at the time of a national crisis.

Sultan Mahmud did not underrate the strength of his enemy; but he was a hero of hundred fights, and the courage and military genius that enabled him to rout the innumerable host of Ilak Khan, king of the whole of Tartary up to the walls of China, did not fail him at this critical moment. With the true instincts of a general, he did not risk everything by a general assault, but took up a defensive position near Peshawar and fortified it by means of trenches. His plan was to provoke the Indians to attack his entrenched camp so that his deficiency in numbers might be made up by the strength of his position. For once in his life he made a miscalculation. The Indians attacked the camp with "astonishing fury", and cut down horse and rider till three to four thousand men of Mahmud were killed in the first charge.

Napoleon once said that it is not *the men*

but *a man* that decides the fate of a battle. Never was the truth of this dictum more fully demonstrated. Sultan Mahmud, undaunted by these reverses, kept discipline in his army and calmly surveyed the situation, while the Indian army, flushed with success, did not maintain either order or discipline. The Indian general himself took part in the melee, while one of those unfortunate incidents that have again and again decided the fate of Indian battles, snatched away the victory from his grasp. The elephant on which he was mounted took fright and fled from the battlefield. The Indians lost heart at what they took to be the desertion of their general, and the fury of their charge abated. The keen eye of Sultan Mahmud at once detected the true situation, and he charged home with 10,000 select horse. The Indians dispersed in all directions but the Sultan would give them no quarter. It was then a pure butchery, and twenty thousand Indians lay dead on the field. Inspite of the stubborn bravery of the Indian soldiers, the day was lost on account of bad generalship.

Victory of Sultan Mahmud.

The Sultan followed up his victory by the

plunder of Nagarkot. There was no garrison to protect it as they had joined the late wars, and "700,000 golden *dinaras*, 700 *mans* of gold and silver plate, 200 *mans* of pure gold in ingots, 2000 *mans* of unwrought silver, and twenty *mans* of various jewels, including pearls, corals diamonds, and rubies", fell into his hands.

Henceforth the Sultan hardly met with any opposition worth the name in his periodical excursions into India. Altogether seventeen expeditions are set to his credit, all characterised by massacre, plunder, devastation, and desecration of temples. Two of these were directed against the imperial city of Kanauj which exceeded all others in splendour and magnificence. Rājyapāla tried in vain to check Mahmud in the frontier of his kingdom, and unable to defend his capital wrth his small following, crossed over to Bari on the other side of the Ganges. The Sultan captured the seven forts that guarded Kanauj and then massacre and plunder were let loose on the fair city (1019 A.D.). Next year he captured Bari and then proceeded against the Chandella king, but could not gain much success. Jayapāla II, the successor of Ānandapāla, opposed him and the

Sack of Kanauj.

Sultan annexed the whole of the Punjab to his kingdom. The last important expedition of Mahmud was directed against the celebrated temple of Somnath in 1024 (or 1025) A. D. The Indians made a brave resistance, and for three days repulsed the Muslim hordes from the walls of the city. The king of Gujarat and the neighbouring chiefs joined the defence, and in the battle that ensued, the Muhammadan army was almost beaten back, when the stubborn courage and superior skill of Sultan Mahmud reversed the fortunes of the day. When the Sultan entered the temple, he was struck with awe at the grandeur and magnificence of the structure. The priests of the temple implored him to protect the image and even wanted to pay a handsome ransom. The reply of the Sultan was characteristic of the man. He said that he would rather be remembered as the breaker than the seller of idols, and with his own hand broke the image, probably a Sivalinga, to pieces. The treasures which the Sultan secured at this place were incalculable and are said to have exceeded all his former captures. On its way back to Ghazni, the Sultan's army suffered great miseries in the desert of Rajputana. It is said that a

Sack of Somnath.

priest of Somnath, in order to avenge its destruction, assumed the role of a guide to Mahmud's army, and lured it to what he thought would be a sure destruction. The Sultan, however, extricated his army and reached Ghazni in safety. His attention was now drawn to the western territories and he conquered the greater part of Persia. Soon after this brilliant achievement the Sultan died at Ghazni in A.D. 1030.

Sultan Mahmud was undoubtedly one of the greatest military genius that the world has ever seen. His cool courage, prudence, resourcefulness and many other good qualities of head and heart command universal respect and admiration. But inspite of all these, the historian of India cannot regard Sultan Mahmud save as a freebooter of the worst type. He drained the country of its enormous wealth, and brought incalculable misery upon its inhabitants. His ferocity and avarice knew no bounds and his religious zeal, bordering on fanaticism, led him to violate wantonly the most sacred sentiments of a great people. We miss in him that dignified idealism which seldom fails to impart a grace and charm to the most ruthless conqueror. His

Character of Sultan Mahmud.

imagination was not fired even by the ambition of founding an empire to which the common consent of all ages and nations has attached something of a noble and generous impulse. From first to last his Indian policy was inspired merely by the primitive instincts of plunder, devastation, massacre and desecration.

It is too often assumed that the invasions of Sultan Mahmud had no permanent results, so far as India was concerned. Nothing can be a greater mistake. He exhausted the military and economic resources of the country, and the Muslim occupation of the Punjab served as the key to unlock the gates of Indian empire. Big cracks had already been made therein and it was no longer a question of whether but when that mighty structure would fall.

CHAPTER VII

The Muhammadan conquest of Northern India.

The sack of Kanauj and Bari by Sultan Mahmud dealt the death-blow to the Pratīhāra empire. The empire passed away, but its carcase remained, and then followed the feast of vultures. The Chandellas and the Kachchhapaghātas fell upon the old unfortunate Rājyapāla and he met a heroic death on the battle-field. He was succeeded by Trilochanapāla, one of whose known dates is 1027 A.D. With him ended the line of the Imperial Pratīhāras, who had fully justified their designation by defending the gates of India for more than two hundred years.

End of the Pratīhāra dynasty

For half a century Kanauj was ruled by petty chiefs who may or may not have any relation with the Pratīhāras. In the last quarter of the eleventh century, Chandradeva of the Gāhaḍavāla clan carved out a kingdom with Kanauj as capital, and assumed the proud title of Mahārājādhirāja. The most famous

king of the dynasty was Mahārājādhirāja Govindachandra, who ruled for nearly half a century and established his suzerainty over Magadha. His grandson Mahārājādhirāja Jayachchandra ascended the throne in 1170 A.D., and is described by Muhammadan writers as the greatest sovereign in India.

The Gāhadavālas

To the east of the Gāhadavālas ruled the Pālas. We have already described the brief spell of imperialism enjoyed by the early kings of this dynasty, and the gradual decline of their power on the rise of the Pratihāras. From that time the Pālas ruled as a local power in eastern India, although continually troubled by foreign invasions. The Kalachuris, Chandellas, and the Rāshtrakūtas made occasional raids into their territory and sometimes conquered portions of their dominions. Towards the close of the tenth century A.D., the Kāmbojas occupied their dominions, and the Pāla king Vigrahapāla had to fly to his eastern provinces; but his son Mahīpāla (C. 980-1030 A.D.) recovered the paternal territories. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Pālas the Kalachuris advanced as far as Mithilā before 1019 A.D., and about the

The Pālas.

same time the Chola king Rājendra Chola and a Chālukya king invaded the Pāla dominions. To the credit of Mahīpāla it must be said that he not only recovered the paternal dominions from the Kāmboja usurper, and successfully defended his country against the Kalachuris, Cholas and Chālukyas, but also extended his dominions up to Benares before 1025 A.D. It is only fair to emphasise the fact that the peculiar circumstances through which his country was passing must have made it impossible for Mahīpāla to take part in the confederacy of Hindu states against Sultan Mahmud.

Mahīpāla II, the great-grandson of this king, ascended the throne about the middle of the 11th century A. D. His cruel and tyrannical conduct led to a successful revolt engineered by the Kaivarta chief Divvoka. Divvoka, his brother Rudoka, and the latter's son Bhīma ruled in succession. At last Rāmapāla, the youngest brother of Mahīpāla II, regained the throne with the help of the feudatory states, but the power and prestige of the family was gone for ever.

About the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 12th century we find a new power in

Bengal, the Senas. They belonged to a Kshatriya clan of Karnāta and probably came to Bengal along with Vikramāditya VI when that Chālukya prince undertook an expedition against Bengal, Assam and other northern countries. The Senas at first settled in Rādha (W. Bengal). The first notable king of the new dynasty was Vijaya Sena who defeated the Pāla king Madanapāla and conquered Bengal. He pushed his conquests to Assam and Mithilā, and probably also to part of Magadha, although the Pāla kings still ruled over a portion of the last named province. Vijaya Sena was succeeded by his son and grandson Ballāla Sena and Lakshmana Sena who extended their dominions to Kalinga in the south and Benares in the west. The Senas, although foreigners, thoroughly identified themselves with the people, and the period of their reign is associated with important social changes the effect of which is still to be seen to-day.

The Senas.

The Kalachuris and the Chandellas were, as before, the chief political powers in Central India. Gāngeyadeva Kalachuri was one of the greatest kings of his dynasty. He and his son Mahārājadhirāja Karna

The Kalachuris.

raised the power and glory of the family to an extent unknown before, and their suzerainty was established as far as Tirhut. Karṇadeva tried his strength with the Pāla king of Magadha and defeated Bhoja, the Paramāra king of Malwa. But he was himself defeated by the Chandella king Kīrtivarman about the middle of the eleventh century A. D., and forced to give up his imperial ambitions. His descendants, however, continued to rule as a local power of considerable importance till the end of the twelfth century A. D. The Hayobansi Rajputs of the Balia District in U. P. claim descent from them.

The Chandellas.

Kīrtivarman Chandel, like his predecessors Yaśovarman and Dhaṅga, was an ambitious ruler, and increased the power and prestige of his family during his long rule in the latter half of the eleventh century A. D. The next powerful king was Madanavarman who widely extended his territories. His grandson Mahārājādhirāja Paramardin who ascended the throne before 1167 A. D. was, however, defeated by Chauhān Pṛithvīrāja, and his kingdom was conquered by the Muhammadan forces of Shihabuddin in 1203

A. D. But his successors continued to rule as Mahārājādhirāja till 1286 A. D., and petty chiefs of the dynasty continued to rule in the locality for three hundred years more. The present Rājā of Gidhaur is said to be a representative of the ruling family.

The Paramāras.

The Paramāra dynasty was founded at Malwa in the 9th century A. D. with its capital at Dhārā. The two most important kings of this dynasty were Muñja and Bhoja. Muñja's reign was almost a continuous fight with his southern neighbour, the Chālukya king Tailapa II. He came off victorious in no less than six campaigns, but was defeated in the seventh. He was taken captive and beheaded by his relentless enemy.

Bhoja, the nephew of Muñja, ascended the throne in 1018 A. D. and his glorious reign of more than forty years is still remembered in numerous Indian legends. Popular tradition has invested him with all the qualities of an ideal king, and even to-day the name of Bhoja stands for all that is good and great in an Indian king. He was a great patron of learning and himself an author of considerable reputation. He established a Sanskrit

college within the precincts of the temple of Sarasvatī and his wide range of knowledge included diverse subjects such as architecture, astronomy and poetry. As already related, he was defeated by Karṇadeva, the Kalachuri king, and with him departed the greatness of the dynasty, though it continued as a local power until the beginning of the 13th century.

Karṇadeva was helped by the Chaulukya king of Gujarat in his expedition against Bhoja. As has already been related, the Chaulukya (Solaṅkī) kingdom was founded by Mūlarāja in the latter part of the 10th century A. D. The capital was situated at Anahilapāṭaka, better known as Anhilwāra, which rapidly rose to be one of the most important cities. The kings of the dynasty had to fight with Sultan Mahmud and other Muhammadan invaders and continued to rule till the middle of the 13th century.

The Chaulukyas.

But by far the most important power in India, subsequent to the invasion of Sultan Mahmud, was that of the Chāhamānas (Chauhāns). It has been already stated how they had founded an independent principality, which included

The Chāhamānas.

Sākambharī (Sambhar) and Ajmir, during the decline of the Pratihāra empire, and joined the confederacy of Hindu states against Islamic invaders. Several branches of the family ruled in different parts of Marwar in Rajputana, and they became famous for their prowess and bravery. About the middle of the twelfth century A. D., Vigrahārāja ascended the throne. He united the different branches under him and increased the power of the clan to an extent unknown before. He is even said to have wrested Delhi from a chief of the Tomara clan. He was also a famous author and a great patron of learning. He was succeeded by his brother Someśvara, and the son of the latter was the famous Pṛithvīrāja.

Pṛithvīrāja

The name of Pṛithvīrāja occupies a unique place in Indian history. As the last great Hindu emperor of Northern India, his memory has been embellished by popular legends and formed a theme of many a popular ballad. The celebrated poet Chānd Bardāi, the court-poet of Pṛithvīrāja has immortalised his royal patron in his famous epic Pṛithvīrāja Raisā. Another work of the same character called Pṛithvīrāja Vijaya has

recently come to light. Unfortunately, the two works vary in important details, and it is not a little difficult to construct a genuine history of this great hero. Certain it is that in 1182 A.D. he defeated the Chandellas after capturing their strong fortress of Mahobā, and was looked upon as the greatest king in Northern India. It is almost equally certain that the Gāhaḍavāla king Jayachchandra of Kanauj was his sworn enemy, and the hostility between the two paved the way for the destruction of Indian independence. As to the origin of this hostility, two circumstances have usually been accepted as historical facts. It is said that both Pṛithvīrāja and Jayachchandra were grandsons of the Tomara king through their mothers, and as the latter, having no male issue, adopted Pṛithvīrāja as his heir, Jayachchandra was jealous of his cousin. This story is, however, discredited by Pṛithvīrāja-Vijaya according to which Pṛithvīrāja's mother did not belong to the Tomara clan at all. The second circumstance explaining the enmity between the two chiefs savours more of romance than history. We are told that Jayachchandra celebrated a Rājasūya *Yajña* at Kanauj, followed by a Svayamvara ceremony, for the marriage of

his daughter Samyuktā. The latter served as a bait and almost all the notable chiefs attended. Prithvīrāja, however, disdained to join the assembly and thereby tacitly admit Jayachchandra as his superior. He was thereupon represented by a stone statue. Samyuktā, however, placed the nuptial wreath round the neck of the statue, and during the night Prithvīrāja, who was present in the city in disguise, carried her off in the cover of darkness, but not without a severe fighting.

But the true fame of Prithvīrāja rests upon his fight with the Muhammadan invaders from Ghor. Ghor is the name of a mountainous country to the east of Herat and was inhabited by the Afghans converted to Muhammadan faith. It was conquered by Sultan Mahmud and became a dependency of the kingdom of Ghazni. About the middle of the twelfth century A. D. hostility arose between the two states and was accompanied by unusual acts of cruelty and treachery. At last Behram, the king of Ghazni, was defeated and his kingdom fell into the hands of his rival. The city of Ghazni, embellished by the Indian spoils of Sultan

Kingdom of Ghor

Mahmud, was at that time one of the most splendid in the whole world. But Alauddin, king of Ghor, treated the city of Sultan Mahmud in exactly the same way as the latter had done in his Indian expeditions. Ghazni was given up to flames, ravage and massacre for three (according to some accounts seven) days. Almost all its magnificent buildings were destroyed and the finest city of Asia was all but blotted from the face of the earth. So terrible Nemesis did her work and the injury done to India was cruelly avenged, though by foreign hands.

The kings of Ghazni now found a shelter in their Indian province of the Punjab, but hostility continued with the house of Ghor. That kingdom shortly passed into the hands of Ghiyasu-d-din Ghori who associated his brother Shihabu-d-din Ghori in his government, the epithet Ghori being usually attached to the kings of Ghor. Shihabu-d-din who was entrusted with eastern affairs naturally turned his attention to India. He advanced into the Punjab and took Uch, but was disastrously defeated in an expedition to Gujarat by the Chaulukya king Mūlarāja II. Shihabu-d-din, was, however, more successful in Sind and within a few years

wrested the Punjab from Khusru Mallik, the last king of the House of Ghazni.

The conquest of the Punjab brought the dominions of the Ghori kings to the confines of the kingdom of Prithvīrāja and a struggle between the two was inevitable. The armies met at Tarain or Talawari in 1191 A. D. Shihabu-d-din vigorously charged the centre of the Indian army, but his wings gave way and he was completely surrounded. With great difficulty, and by dint of stubborn courage, he extricated himself with a few followers. But Prithvīrāja gained a complete victory and annihilated the army of his opponents. It was the last great military achievement of the Hindus like the last bright glimmer of the lamp before it is finally extinguished.

Shihabu-d-din never forgot this great insult and is reported to have said that "he never slumbered in ease, or waked but in sorrow and anxiety." Burning for revenge he collected a vast army of the hardy mountaineers of Central Asia, and next year again marched towards India. Prithvīrāja met him in the same field, and was joined by contingents of a number of other Indian kings who displayed once more their

sense of unity in face of a common danger. Pṛithvīrāja sent a message to Shihabu-d-din asking him to retire, and the latter complacently replied that he was referring the matter to his brother, the king. Having thus allayed the suspicions of the Indians who were encamped quite close by, Shihabu-d-din suddenly attacked them about day-break and threw them into confusion. But order was at last restored in the Indian camp and the Indian army advanced to the attack. Baffled in his attempts to overwhelm the Indian army by a surprise attack, Shihabu-d-din now began to retire, and the Indian army pursued him in hot haste. Once more the lack of generalship and discipline among the Indian soldiers snatched away the victory which their bravery had won. Eager for pursuit they broke out in scattered and disorderly groups, while the army of Shihabu-d-din, even in course of flight, maintained excellent order and discipline. As soon as Shihabu-d-din saw the rank of his enemy broken and disorderly, he charged home with 12,000 chosen horse and completely routed the Indian hosts. A number of Indian chiefs vainly endeavoured to rally, and

Defeat of Pṛithvīrāja.

lay dead on the field. Prithvīrāja himself was taken prisoner and killed in cold blood. Thus ended the terrible day and the sun of Hindu glory set for ever on the fatal plain of Tarain.

The rest may be briefly told. Shihabu-d-din followed up his victory by the conquest of Ajmir which became a tributary state under an Indian chief. On his return to Ghazni, Kutbu-d-din, whom he left in charge of his Indian dominions, conquered Delhi and other places. Next year Shihabu-d-din himself defeated Jayachchandra of Kanauj, and thereby extended the banner of Islam to Benares. The eastern conquests were completed by Muhammad-ibn-Bakhtyar Khilji, a lieutenant of Kutbu-d-din. He wrested Behar from a Pāla king, defeated Laksh-mana Sena of Bengal by a sudden raid upon Nadiya, and conquered western and northern Bengal. The only effective check which Kutbu-d-din received was from the Chaulukya king of Gujarat who was supported by other chiefs. Kutbu-d-din was defeated and forced to shut himself up at Ajmir till re-inforcements from Ghazni enabled him to take the field. He occupied the capital, Anhilwara, but could not

The Muhammadans conquer Northern India.

subdue the province. He, however, defeated the Kalachuris and the Chandellas and the only power in Central India that remained unsubdued was the Paramāras of Malwa. Thus in less than fifteen years after the second battle of Tarain, the whole of Northern India, with the exception of Eastern Bengal, Malwa and Gujarat, passed into the hands of the Ghori king.

Shihabu-d-din Ghori, also called Muizzu-d-din Muhammad-bin-Sam, and sometimes briefly Muhammad Ghori, ascended the throne after his brother's death, but was himself killed in 1206 by a party of hill tribes, called Gakkars. Their relations were killed in Indian wars and, in order to take revenge, they had stealthily marched into the royal camp on the bank of the Indus by swimming across the river. The death of Muhammad Ghori was a signal for the disruption of his vast empire. Nasiru-d-din Kubacha became master of Sindh and Multan, while the rest of the Ghori dominions in Northern India passed to Kutbu-d-din.

It is needless to add that the Muhammadan conquest of India was attended with horrors and cruelties beyond description. When Ajmir was captured, thousands of its inhabitants were

put to the sword and the rest sold as slaves; and this was by no means an exceptional incident. Even religious establishments suffered the same fate. So completely did they massacre the monks in a Buddhist monastery in Bihar, that when they looked for somebody to explain the books in the library, not a living soul was to be found. Temples, monasteries and other splendid monuments were wilfully destroyed and their materials used for building mosques.

CHAPTER VIII

Nepal and Kashmir.

In order to complete the historical sketch of Northern India we must give some account of the two outlying kingdoms of Nepal and Kashmir.

§ 1. Nepal.

Nepal is the only kingdom of ancient India that has maintained its independence up to the present time. The early history of the country is purely traditional. It is said to have been ruled at first by a dynasty of cowherds (gopālas) consisting o kings. They were overthrown by a dynasty of Āhirs or Ābhīras who, as we have seen above, played an important part in the history of western India in the early centuries of the Christian era. During the reign of the third king of this dynasty Nepal was conquered by the Kirātas. The Kirāta is a well known tribal name in Ancient India. It is referred to in Vedic, Epic and subsequent literature, and

Early history.

was probably a general designation of the Tibeto-Burman families living between the Himalaya and the Gangetic delta. Twenty-nine Kirāta kings ruled in Nepal when the country was conquered by a Kshatriya prince from India named Nimisha. The dynasty of Nimisha consisted of five kings, the last of whom was overthrown by the Lichchhavis.

With the Lichchhavi conquest begins the authentic history of Nepal. The Lichchhavis were a well-known clan living in Videha at the time of Gautama Buddha. They were conquered by Ajātaśatru at the beginning of the fifth century B.C., and we do not hear of them again till they reappear under a monarchical constitution in Nepal in the second or third century A.D. It is probable that when North India was invaded by the barbarous hordes from Central Asia, the Lichchhavis left the plains and sought the protection of the fastnesses of the Himalayas. About twenty-eight kings of this dynasty ruled for four or five hundred years. A new era was started, in Nepal about 111 A.D., and this date probably marks the accession of the Lichchhavis to power. As has been said above, a Lichchhavi

The Lichchhavis.

princess was married to Chandragupta I at the beginning of the fourth century A.D., and under Samudragupta Nepal had to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Gupta Empire. But with the decline of the Gupta Empire the Lichchhavis became very powerful, and under Mānadeva, who reigned towards the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century A.D., their sway extended beyond the valley of Nepal both towards the east as well as towards the west. About the beginning of the seventh century A.D. there were some internal troubles, due perhaps to the resuscitation of the power of the Ābhīras. Aṁśuvarman, a powerful minister at the court, took advantage of this to establish his own supremacy, and ultimately usurped the throne. He married the daughter of the last Lichchhavi king and founded a new royal dynasty which is known as Vaiśya-Thākuri, Vaiśya being the name of a Rajput clan to which Aṁśuvarman belonged.

Aṁśuvarman.

Shortly before this time the nomads of Central Asia, who lived to the west of the Chinese empire, were organised by a powerful leader who founded a kingdom in Tibet. Under the second king of this dynasty, Srong-btsans-Gam-po,

the Charlemagne of Tibet, the kingdom was extended in all directions. The king of Nepal, with some other potentates of India, had to acknowledge the supremacy of this new power, and was practically forced to give his daughter in marriage to its barbaric chief.

The death of Aṁśuvarman was followed by some troubles, and a Lichchhavi chief was again placed on the throne. Aṁśuvarman's son was probably a fugitive in Tibet, but his line was restored by his grandson Narendra Deva who ascended the throne before 643 A. D. Śivadeva, son of Narendra Deva, married a Maukhari princess, a grand-daughter of Ādityasena, the emperor of Magadha, while his son Jayadeva married the daughter of Harsha, the king of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kaliṅga, Kośala and other places. As this Harsha is said to have belonged to the ace of Bhagadatta, he was probably a king of Kāmarūpa. We thus find that the kings of Nepal had matrimonial relations with all the neighbouring chiefs.

For about 150 years after the death of Jayadeva Nepal was a dependency of Tibet, which was then one of the most powerful states in Asia. In 838 the kingdom of Tibet passed on

to one Dharma, or Glaṇ Darma. His brutality and cruelty led to revolutionary outbreaks, and the consequent dismemberment of the Tibetan empire. Nepal took this opportunity to free itself from the yoke, and the event was apparently celebrated by the foundation of a new era, known as Nepāla Samvat, in the year 879 A.D. In any case the new era marks a new chapter not only in the political history of Nepal, but also in its economic prosperity. Prosperous towns grew up on all sides and Katmandoṷ, the present capital city, was either established or raised to an important position about this time.

Tibetan Supremacy

Nepāla Era.

From about the beginning of the eleventh century A. D. the feudal princes became very powerful in Nepal. The kingdom was divided among two or three kings ruling in different parts, with Patan, Katmandoṷ and Bhatgaon as their capitals, and the feudal barons often elected new members to the kingship. Towards the close of the 11th century A.D. Nepal was conquered by the Karṇāṭaka king of Tirhut, called Nānyadeva, who made himself master of the entire territory, and reigned in all

Nānyadeva

the three capitals (1098—1118 A.D.). After his death, the old dynasty was re-established in Nepal, although it probably acknowledged the nominal suzerainty of the successor of Nānya-deva who ruled at Tirhut. Shortly after this, a new line of kings, with names ending in Malla, appear in Nepal. They probably belonged to the old Malla clan, which with the Lichchhavis played such a prominent part in ancient India at the time of Gautama Buddha. Arimalladeva, the founder of this Malla dynasty, flourished at the beginning of the 13th century A.D. In 1287 the Khasias invaded Nepal from the east and devastated the country. Although their conquest was short-lived, the political solidarity of Nepal was lost, and it was destined to be subjugated by another enemy at no distant date.

Malla Dynasty

The descendants of Nānyadeva continued to rule at Tirhut long after the rest of Northern India had passed into the hands of the Muhammadans. In the cold season of 1324-1325 A.D. Ghiyasu-d-din Tughlak came to Tirhut on his way from Bengal to Delhi. The reigning king Harisiṁha, unable to resist, fled to Nepal and established his

Harisiṁha.

suzerainty over it without much difficulty. The kings of the Malla dynasty were suffered to exist as local chiefs, and the successors of Harisiṁha-deva remained the real suzerains of the land for about 100 years, till Yaksha Malla, who ascended the throne about 1425 A.D., became undisputed master of the Nepalese territory. He was a great conqueror, and is reckoned to be the greatest king of the Malla dynasty. But an unwise move on his part brought ruin to his family.

He divided his vast possessions into four kingdoms, and gave them to his four children, a daughter and three sons. The inevitable struggle between these states, and the anarchy and confusion that set in, exhausted the resources of Nepal till in 1768 it fell an easy prey to Prithi Narayan (Pṛithvī Nārāyaṇa), the Rajput king of Gourkha, a small principality in the basin of the seven-Gaṇḍakis. The present rulers of Nepal are descendants of this chief.

Gourkha conquest

§ 2. Kashmir.

The history of Kashmir possesses a unique interest inasmuch as we are in a position to

follow its course in a far more detailed manner than is possible with any other kingdom in India. This is due to the remarkable historical work by Kalhana called Rājataraṅginī to which reference has already been made.

We have already traced the history of Kashmir upto the reign of Jayāpida. He was followed by his son Lalitāpīda, one of the most infamous kings that disgraced the throne of Kashmir. He ascended the throne towards the close of the eighth century A.D., and ruled or misruled for 12 years (782-794 A.D.). He was a slave to his passions and neglected his royal duties. No wonder that the kingdom became the prey of courtesans and was 'defiled by immorality'. He had a concubine, the daughter of a spirit-distiller, named Jayādevī. Lalitāpīda was succeeded by his brother (794-801 A.D.), and the latter by the son of Jayādevī, called Brihaspati. During Brihaspati's reign (801-812 A.D.) the royal power was usurped by the five brothers of Jayādevī, who ultimately killed him. The brothers squandered the resources of the country, and at last fell out among themselves. Bloody battles ensued, and the fabric of government almost

Lalitāpīda

completely callapsed. A few puppets of the family of Lalitāditya were placed on the throne by the contending parties, till at last, Avantivarman, grandson of Utpala, the eldest of the five brothers, was raised to the throne by the minister Śūra. Thus ended the Kārkoṭa dynasty which produced brilliant kings like Chandrāpiḍa and Muktāpiḍa.

The Utpala Dynasty:—The new king Avantivarman (855-883 A.D.) restored peace and put the government on a firm basis. He erected the town of Avantipura and a large number of temples, whose ruins, "though not equal in size to Lalitāditya's structures, yet rank among the most imposing monuments of ancient Kashmir architecture." The minister Śūra wielded exceptional authority owing to the part he had played in the elevation of his master to the throne. But he was a type of the just and able statesmen who have played such prominent part in Indian history as royal ministers. He was a great patron of learned men and honoured them with a seat in the king's court. We are told that "the scholars, who were granted great fortunes and high honours, proceeded to the court in

Avantivarman.

vehicles worthy of kings." He built a town, erected temples and endowed monasteries. The king and the minister felt mutual regard for each other, and Kalhana tells an interesting story in this connection. One of the feudal barons of Kashmir was attached to the minister, and, emboldened by this connection, took away the villages belonging to a temple where the king had gone to worship Siva. The king noticed the poverty of the priests, and, on enquiry, learnt the truth. He did not say anything, but 'left the worship under pretence of indisposition.' On being apprised of the situation, Sūra sent for the feudal baron, and as soon as the latter arrived, cut off his head. He then inquired after the health of the king, and made him rise from his couch and complete the worship. The historian truly remarks that "such a king and such a minister, whose relations were never disfigured by the blemish of mutual hatred, have not otherwise been seen or heard of." One of the most important events in the glorious and peaceful reign of Avantivarman was the great engineering operations which were carried out by the skilful Suyya for the drainage of the valley and its irrigation. These not only

protected the country from disastrous floods, but extended the area of cultivation. The immense material benefits thus conferred upon the country stirred the popular imagination, and the memory of the great engineer is still preserved by the town of Sūryapura called after him. The manner of Avantivarman's death was characteristic of his life. He was a Vaishṇava at heart, but, out of regard for the minister, bore himself outwardly as a worshipper of Śiva. When his end was drawing near, he disclosed the secret to Sūra with folded hands, and "listening to the end to the recital of the Bhagavadgītā, and thinking of Vaikuṇṭha or the residence of Vishṇu, he cast off his earthly life with a cheerful mind."

The death of Avantivarman was followed by a strife for succession among the numerous descendants of Utpala, but his son Śaṁkaravarman secured the throne, mainly owing to the exertions of the Chamberlain Ratna-vardhana. Śaṁkaravarman's reign (885-902 A.D.) is memorable for his foreign expeditions. He first of all conquered Dārvābhisāra and Trigarta, and thus recovered the hill tracts immediately to the south of Kashmir

Śaṁkaravarman.

which were lost during the last days of the Kārkoṭa dynasty. But the greatest victory of Saṁkaravarman was against the king of Gūrjara (between Jhilam and Chinab) in the Punjab, which extended the territories of Kashmir in that direction. The king of Gūrjara was supported by the illustrious Lalliya Sāhi.

Lalliya was the Brahman vizier of the last of a long line of Turkish kings, who ruled in the Kabul region from the days of the Kushāna Emperors. Having usurped the throne of his master, he founded a royal dynasty, called the Hindu Sāhiya dynasty, which barred the gates of India against the Muhammadans for more than a century, and two of whose kings, Jayapāla and Ānandapāla figured as prominent leaders of Indian opposition to the Sultans of Ghazni. King Saṁkaravarman desired to remove Lalliya Sāhi from his sovereign position, but did not meet with much success. The result of his encounter with the Pratīhāra king Bhoja seems to have been equally indecisive.

At home Saṁkaravarman disgraced his reign by "skilfully designed exactions" and consequent oppression. Equally oppressive for the cultivators were the excessive demands made for

forced labour. Kalhaṇa describes with much bitterness the baneful effects of this regime, 'which favoured only the rapacious tribe of officials, and left men of learning unprovided with emoluments.' Śaṁkaravarman's reign had a tragic end. After conquering numerous territories on the banks of the Indus he was returning through Urasa, when, in course of a conflict with the inhabitants on account of the quartering of his troops, a man of a low caste struck him with an arrow. It is interesting to note how his death was concealed by his ministers till they reached a place of safety. We are told that by means of cords, which made his head bend down and rise like that of a puppet, they caused him to return the greetings of feudatories who had come to do homage. Gopālavarman, the son of Śaṁkaravarman then ascended the throne, and ruled the kingdom (902-904 A. D.) under the guardianship of his mother Sugandhā. The widowed queen-mother was a woman of dissolute character, and bestowed her favours on the minister Prabhākaradeva. The latter plundered the riches of the kingdom, and when the king remonstrated, had his royal master murdered by sorcery (904 A. D.).

Gopālavarman's brother was then raised to the throne, but he died after 10 days. Then Sugandhā herself assumed the royal power, but after two years, the Tantrin soldiers, the Praetorian guard of Kashmir, placed on the throne a child of ten years called Pārtha (906-921 A. D.). Eight years later Sugandhā returned at the head of an army, but was defeated, imprisoned and killed. The Tantrins now became all-powerful in the state. The fabric of civil government almost completely collapsed, and the whole kingdom was a scene of oppressions, miseries and calamities. A terrible famine broke out in 917-18 A. D., and while the people died in thousands, the king's ministers and the Tantrins became wealthy by selling stores of rice at high prices. The wretched king had to contest his position with his father, Pangu, and sometimes the one and sometimes the other gained the power through intrigues with the Tantrins. The court was dissolute and licentious in the extreme, and the two queens of Pangu vied with each other in offering to their ministers, as fees, the pleasures of love, along with rich presents, in order to secure the throne for their respective sons. At

The Tantrins.

last in 921 A. D. the Tantrins dethroned Pārtha and began to make and unmake kings at their pleasure. The throne was usually offered to the highest bidder. Thus Chakravarman and Śūravarman were successively placed on the throne and set aside. Then Pārtha was restored, only to be driven away, and Chakravarman, who offered great riches, was once more made king. As he could not pay the Tantrins, he fled in fear, and Śambhuvardhana was installed as king. Chakravarman now gathered a number of feudal chiefs, and with their countless hosts set forth to regain the kingdom. The Tantrins were signally defeated in a great battle and Chakravarman became king for the third time. Once firmly seated on the throne, Chakravarman abandoned himself to vile cruelties and excesses. He raised a low caste Ḍomba girl to the rank of chief queen, and subservience to her low-caste relatives became the only passport to high office and royal favour. The licentious practices of the court are too revolting to be described. At last Chakravarman was assassinated in the chamber of the Ḍomba girl, and such was the degradation of the court morality, that the murderers were freely urged on by the king's own wives to crush his knees with

a large stone, as he lay dying in the embrace of the Domba girl (937 A. D.).

The next king Unmattāvanti, or mad Avanti, was one of the worst despots that have ever disgraced a royal throne. The first acts of this depraved king were to starve his half-brothers to death and then to murder his father Pārtha. The horrible brutality that accompanied this act has no parallel in either history or fiction.

Mad Avanti

The old man was dragged away from his crying wife and children, and pulled along the street by his hair, and "then they killed him, unarmed as he was, emaciated by hunger and parched up, crying and naked". The king looked at the dead body with supreme pleasure, while his officers extolled before him their own prowess by pointing out the limbs where they had severally dealt their blows. One of them now struck his dagger into the dead body of Pārtha, and, amused thereby, the king struck up a long-continued laugh.

This mad and miscreant parricide had the womb of pregnant women cut open in order to see the child, and also used to cut off limbs of labourers in order to test their power of

endurance. At last death carried away the vile king in 939 A.D. and a supposititious son Sūravarman (II) succeeded him. Before a week was over Kamalavardhana, the Commander-in-Chief, rose in revolt and occupied the capital. Strangely enough, he did not ascend the throne, but left the choice of the king to an assembly of Brāhmaṇas. The late king had destroyed all his relatives, and in the absence of a member of the royal family, the assembly elected a learned but poor commoner, Yaśaskara by name, to the throne of Kashmir (939 A.D.).

Yasaskara.

The choice of the electors was fully justified by the benevolent rule of Yaśaskara. He restored order and discipline in the country, and Kashmir obtained a much needed respite after the late troubles. Kalhaṇa praises the manifold virtues of this king, and the beneficent nature of his rule. The unruly officials who plundered the royal treasury were brought under control, and the land became so free from robbery that at night the shops were left open in the bazzars, and the roads were secure for travellers. Trade and agriculture flourished, and the moral tone of the people rapidly improved. The king's

reputation for justice and fairness spread in all directions, and some interesting anecdotes about it are preserved by Kalhana.

On the death of Yaśaskara his child-son became king in 948 A.D., but he was killed by the minister Parvagupta who usurped the throne (949 A.D.). Parvagupta died next year and was succeeded by his son Kshemagupta. Bad by nature, he became still more terrifying through the society of wicked persons, and was given to dissipation with dice, wine, and women. This licentious king married Didda, daughter of the chief of Lohara and grand-daughter (daughter's daughter) of the Śāhi king Bhima Śāhi. He died of a foul disease (958 A. D.) and his child-son Abhimanyu became king under the guardianship of Didda.

Didda.

The queen-mother was a remarkable figure. Cruel, suspicious, unscrupulous and licentious in the extreme, she combined in her character an inordinate lust for power with statesmanlike sagacity, political wisdom and administrative ability. She drove away powerful officials from the court, and put down repeated revolts and popular risings by force or cunning. As Kalhana relates, those treacherous

ministers, who, during sixty years, (901-960 A.D.) had robbed sixteen kings from king Gopālavarman to Abhimanyu, of their dignity, lives and riches, were all, together with their descendants and followers, quickly exterminated by the angry queen, whose rule was firmly established over the whole land. On the death of Abhimanyu, his young son Nandigupta became king in 972 A.D. But Diddā destroyed both Nandigupta and two other grandsons who succeeded him, and herself assumed the throne in 980 A.D. Her debauchery and licentiousness now knew no bounds, and one of her paramours, Tuṅga by name, and originally a *Khaśa* herdsman, was made prime minister. During her rule of 23 years, rebellions constantly broke out against Tuṅga, and the Brāhmaṇas held solemn fasts against him. But Diddā ruled over the whole kingdom till her death in 1003 A.D. when her nephew Saṁgrāmarāja of the Lohara dynasty obtained peaceful possession of the throne.

Lohara Dynasty :—The notable event in the reign of the new king was the expedition under Tuṅga sent to help the Śāhi king Trilochanapāla, son of Ānandapāla, against Sultan Mahmud. Tuṅga obtained some successes,

but was ultimately defeated, and on his return to Kashmir he was treacherously murdered with his son.

The next king Harirāja died after a reign of 22 days (1028 A.D.). The licentious queen-mother, who is credited with the murder of her royal son, tried to secure the crown, but her young son Ananta was raised to the throne.

Ananta.

The early years of Ananta were full of troubles, but his courage was equal to the task. A revolt of the feudal chiefs was put down, and an invasion of the Dards and Muhammadans successfully repelled. Ananta's pious queen Sūryamatī played a leading part in this reign. She checked the extravagance and vagaries of the king, and gradually assumed full charge of the royal affairs. Her administration proved strong and efficient, and the authority of Kashmir was established over neighbouring hill tracts. But one feminine weakness destroyed all the good she had done. Blinded by filial affection, she made the king abdicate the throne in favour of her son Kalaśa (1063 A.D.). Kalaśa was a licentious youth, and his dissolute character soon disgusted his parents. Open hostilities broke out, and after

a prolonged struggle, Ananta committed suicide. Sūryamatī atoned for her faults by following her husband on the funeral pyre.

Kalaśa's character changed for the better after his parents' death, and he extended and consolidated the kingdom of Kashmir. His son Harsha, however, revolted against him. The king put him in prison and designated his second son Utkarsha as his successor. He was however, exasperated by his son's rebellion, and again took to the licentious life of his youthful days. On his death in 1089, due to these excesses, Utkarsha succeeded to the throne. He kept Harsha in confinement, but soon a rebellion broke out, and Harsha took advantage of it not only to regain his freedom, but to secure the throne which belonged to him by right.

Harsha.

King Harsha was a remarkable person in many ways. Possessed of exceptional prowess, he obtained renown by merits rarely to be found in other kings. Versed in many languages, a good poet in all tongues, and a depository of different branches of learning, he became famous even in other kingdoms. But there were strange contrasts in his character. "Cruelty and kindheartedness, liberality and

greed, violent selfwilledness and reckless supineness, cunning and want of thought,—these and other apparently irreconcileable features in turn display themselves in Harsha's chequered life."

The first acts of the king bore marks of sagacity and prudence. He retained the officials of the late regime, although some of them had acted against him. His confidence was well deserved, for when his brother raised a rebellion it was crushed without difficulty. Harsha introduced many elegant fashions in his court and encouraged learning by munificent gifts. He passed his nights in the assembly-hall, which was illumined by a thousand lamps, attending meetings of learned men, musical performances and dances. But Harsha fell a prey to the licentiousness which proved a veritable ruin to many of his predecessors. He placed three hundred and sixty women in his seraglio and squandered his riches right and left.

Harsha sent an expedition against Rājapurī and compelled its king to pay tribute. A dangerous conspiracy against him by his half-brother was sternly put down, and Harsha not

only killed its authors but also other near relatives who took no part in it.

The reckless extravagance of the king involved him in grave financial difficulties. New and oppressive taxes were imposed, and the king not only seized the treasures of the temples, but even melted their images for the valuable metal of which they were made.

Harsha then abandoned himself to sensuality and excesses of all kinds, and spent the ill-gotten money in wicked follies of revolting character. It is probable that the king had a fit of insanity upon him. That alone satisfactorily explains his incredible infatuations and horrible cruelties.

But the evil brought its own remedy. The king ruthlessly persecuted the feudal chiefs all over the kingdom and had arches and garlands made of their heads. The remaining chiefs combined under two brothers Uchchala and Sussala of the Lohara family, and raised the standard of rebellion. Troops and officials deserted the doomed monarch who fought till the last, and when the palace was burnt down, fled at night amid heavy downpour,

accompanied by only two attendants. He was, however, soon overtaken and beheaded (1101).

Uchchala, who now ascended the throne, was an able ruler and a cunning diplomat. He managed to put down the turbulent nobles and officials and consolidated the kingdom. But he fell a victim to a treacherous plot in 1111 A.D. A period of confusion followed, but ultimately Sussala occupied the throne in 1112 A.D. His cruelties and exactions provoked constant rebellions headed by the feudal chiefs. Bhikshāchara, the grandson of Harsha, put himself at the head of the rebels and drove away Sussala (1120 A.D.). The reign of Bhikshāchara was full of confusion and troubles, and at the end of a year Sussala recovered the throne. Bhikshāchara, however, continued the war with the help of some feudal lords, and at last had Sussala murdered in 1128 A.D. The latter's son Jayasimha, however, gained the throne, and within four months forced Bhikshāchara to leave the kingdom.

Although nominal peace was thus restored, the kingdom was utterly exhausted by the recent struggles. The power of the feudal lords had risen very high, and secure in their fortified

residences like the feudal lords of Europe in Middle ages, they defied the power of the king. Sussala's whole reign was an unceasing but unsuccessful struggle to break their power by force of arms. Jayasiṁha wanted to achieve the same object by cunning diplomacy and unscrupulous intrigue which sometimes led him to commit acts of striking ingratitude and treachery.

Jayasiṁha.

Before two years were over, Jayasiṁha was faced with open rebellions of the feudal chiefs, and Bhikshāchara returned to try his luck once more. After a hard fight Bhikshāchara was defeated and killed, but almost immediately a new rival arose in Loṭhana, a half-brother of Uchchala, who crowned himself at Lohara. The royal troops sent against him were forced to retreat, and the retreat soon developed into a complete rout. But Jayasiṁha's intrigue succeeded where his forces had failed, and Lohara was retaken. By similar ignoble means the king got rid of a number of powerful feudal barons, and although these broke into rebellion again and again, his cunning diplomacy was always successful. Jayasiṁha ruled for twenty-seven years (1128-1155) and he enjoyed comparative

peace during the last ten years of his reign. We even hear of a successful expedition undertaken by the king against the Yavanas during this period. Kalhana brings his memorable history to a close with the reign of Jayasimha. But Hindu rule was continued in Kashmir for two centuries more, and the old story of a succession of rebellions and internal disturbances repeated itself, till in 1339 A.D. Shah Mir deposed queen Kotā, the widow of the last Hindu ruler, and founded a Muhammadan dynasty.

Lessons of the History of Kashmir.

Although the history of Kashmir possesses in the main only a local interest, the somewhat prolonged narrative of events given above is not without importance even from the point of view of Indian history as a whole. As has been repeatedly mentioned in the text, by far the greater part of Indian history merely resolves itself into a history of the provincial states. Unfortunately, very few details of any provincial history are known to us, and we are therefore not in a position to form any concrete idea of these provincial governments. Kalhana's history furnishes a detailed account of one of

these states, and this may serve as a type of the rest.

Kalhaṇa's history teaches us several striking lessons. It shows us to what great extent the fate of a kingdom was dependent upon the character of its sovereign, and how little there was of that political consciousness of the community at large, which in every healthy state shapes its destiny. People patiently endured acts of wanton cruelty and despotic whim, and although there were rebellions, they were prompted by the class interests of the feudal barons, and not by the interests of the people at large.

The second great lesson of the history of Kashmir is the evil influence of harem upon the king and the kingdom. The incredible sensuality of the kings and queens of Kashmir, which brought untold sufferings upon the state, throws a lurid light on the manners and customs of the age, and gives a rude shock to the fond illusion of benevolent despotism of our ancient rulers.

Thirdly, the history of Kashmir portrays a sad lack of character among officials, both high and low. Among the large crowd which Kalhaṇa has drawn on his canvas, including persons of all

ranks from the king to the meanest official, the number of those who showed stead-fast loyalty, stern morality, a deep sense of duty, or even an appreciation of ordinary moral rules, is meagre in the extreme. Fourthly, Kashmir holds out before us a ghastly picture of court life, where debauchery reigns supreme, and intrigues and rebellions follow one another in quick succession.

Fifthly, patriotism and statesmanship in a broad sense is conspicuous by its absence. We do not find anything like a national rising against the Muhammadan foe. Nay, the kings of Kashmir even employed them to subserve their own ends. There is hardly any consciousness of India as motherland, characterising the actions of any of the Kashmir kings.

Some of these characteristics, notably the last, may be due to the isolated position of Kashmir, but it will not be unfair to assume that most of them is applicable to other mediaeval Indian states as well.

On the other hand, there were many relieving features to this dismal picture, equally typical of Indian states as a whole. Although in political development and barbarous cruelty, the people of Kashmir might very well be likened to the

Europeans in Middle Ages, still in refinement, culture, and all that go to make up civilization, they were in a far more advanced stage. Learning flourished and was very much appreciated in the country. Fine arts like music and dance were cultivated by the king and people alike. Art and architecture greatly prospered, and even the worst kings and their officials continued the pious practice of building temples and monasteries. In religion and philosophy Kashmir showed remarkable progress, and evolved a new school of Śaivism, whose humanity and rationality is in strange contrast to the horrible and ghastly picture of the other Śaiva sects that preceded it.

Although administration was sadly disgraced by wicked kings and their parasites, noble examples like those of Avantivarman and Yaśaskara show that the ideals of justice and good administration were both high and noble. A very interesting feature was the administrative ability displayed by the queens. Although, unfortunately, it was in most cases accompanied by a dissolute character, still the careers of Diddā, Sugandhā and Sūryamatī, apart from a host of minor ones, throw interesting light on the opportunities affor-

ded to women in public life, and their capacity for utilising them.

But the best period of Kashmir history is the one in which she enjoyed a brief spell of imperialism under Lalitāditya. All that was good and bright in a nation brilliantly shone forth, and the petty provincial state was raised to the pinnacle of glory by a succession of eminent rulers. The history of Kashmir since that date is written in decay.

CHAPTER IX.

History of the Deccan.

We have already recounted how the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty wrested the supreme power from the Chālukyas and then entered into a struggle for Indian empire with the two northern powers, the Pālas and the Gurjaras. We have also referred to the eminent success of Dhruva and Govinda III who carried on victorious expeditions in Northern India. The long reign of Amoghavarsha, the son of Govinda III, from 815 to 877 A.D., saw the decline of the Rāshṭrakūṭa power and the rise of the Pālas and the Gurjaras. He founded the city of Mānyakheṭa (modern Mālkhed in the Nizam's dominions) which henceforth became the capital of the family. Both Amoghavarsha and his son Akālavarsha or Kṛishna II claim victories against the northern powers, but they do not seem to have scored much success, as their hands were fully occupied with fight against the Eastern Chālukyas. Indra III, the grandson of Kṛishna II, was more successful and led a victo-

The Rāshṭrakūṭas.

rious expedition to Kanauj as has already been related. The dynasty ruled for half a century more, when the last king Karka II was defeated by Chālukya Tailapa about 973 A.D. Altogether 14 kings ruled in this dynasty from C. 753 A.D. to C 973 A.D.

The later Chālukyas.

The second Chālukya dynasty, known in history as the Chālukyas of Kalyāna from the name of their capital city (Kalyāna or Kalyānapura, modern Kalyāni in the Nizam's dominions) was probably allied to, but not a continuation of the first. Taila who founded the new dynasty was a powerful king. He not only defeated the Cholas in the south, but carried his victorious arms against the Chālukyas of Gujarat, the Paramāras of Malwa and the Kalachuris of Chedi. His fight with Muñja, the Paramāra king, and the defeat and death of the latter have already been referred to above. The next important king in the dynasty was Jayasimha who carried on successful wars against the Cholas, the Cheras and the Paramāras. His successor, Someśvara I Āhavamalla, was a great conqueror. He stormed Kāñchī and Dhārā, capitals respectively of the Cholas and the Paramāras, and utterly destroyed the

power of Karṇa, the Kalachuri king of Ḍāhala. Someśvara wanted to install his second son Vikramāditya as yuvarāja on account of his remarkable abilities, but he declined the honour in favour of his elder brother. Instead, he set out on a campaign of 'world-conquest' and conquered a large number of countries including Bengal, Assam, Ceylon, Veṅgī, Chola and Kerala. Āhavamalla was succeeded by his eldest son Someśvara II, but he was a cruel and tyrannical prince, and was dethroned by his brother Vikramāditya Tribhuvanamalla. Vikramāditya II (or Vikramāditya VI, if the earlier Chālukya line is taken into consideration) had a glorious reign of fifty years, in course of which he is said to have brought under subjection, kings of Kaliṅga, Vaṅga, Maru, Gurjara, Mālava, Chera and Chola. He also successfully fought with the Hoysala king Vishṇuvardhana. He was undoubtedly the greatest king of the dynasty and felt justified in starting an era of his own. This, however, did not long survive his death. He was succeeded in 1127 A.D. by his son Someśvara III, whose suzerainty is said to have been acknowledged by the kings of Andhra, Drāviḍa, Magadha and Nepāla. These northern expedi-

Vikramāditya VI.

tions of the successive kings of Karṇāṭa readily explain the establishment of royal dynasties of Karnātic origin in Northern India, such as that of Nānyadeva in Mithilā and Nepāl and the Senas in Bengal.

The Chālukya power rapidly declined after Someśvara III. Taila III, the second king after him, was practically kept under subjection by his commander-in-chief, named Vijjana or Vijjala of Kalaçhuri race, who proclaimed himself an independent monarch sometime between 1156 and 1162 A.D. He was, however, soon killed in course of a religious revolution and was followed by his two sons, who reigned till 1183. In that year Someśvara IV, son of Taila III, succeeded in wresting a considerable portion of his ancestral dominions. But his success was short-lived. While the Kalachuris and the Chālukays were fighting with each other, the Yādavas rose into importance and involved both of them in a common ruin.

The Yādavas.

The Yādavas claimed to belong to the family of Yadu to which the epic hero Krishna belonged, and literature and inscriptions contain elaborate account of their genealogy. Within historical times we find two

ruling families, one at Devagiri or Daulatabad, and the other, better known as Hoysalas, at Dorasamudra (modern Halevid) in Mysore. Both these families were feudatories to the Rāshṭrakūṭas and Western Chālukyas, and first came into prominence about the tenth century A.D. The southern family became very powerful at the beginning of the twelfth century A.D. and Vishṇuvardhana even invaded the Chālukya territory with a view to establish his suzerainty in the Deccan. His attempts were, however, foiled by the valiant Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI as noted above. The northern family was equally ambitious and more successful. Bhillama (1187—1191) defeated both the Kalachuris and the Western Chālukyas, and made himself master of the greater part of the Chālukya empire. He established his capital at Devagiri (Modern Daulatabad) and henceforth the family was known as the Yādavas of Devagiri.

The Hoysalas were not slow to take advantage of the situation, and renewed their efforts for establishing a preponderant position in southern ć itics. They easily defeated the nominal Chālukya king and then ensued a contest for upremacy between the two Yādava families.

Several battles took place, till in 1191 A. D. the Hoysala chief Vīra Vallāla II defeated and probably killed Bhillama in a decisive engagement. This victory gave him the possession of the southern dominions of the Chālukya territories, which Someśvara IV had wrested from the Kalachuris, and had later on passed to Bhillama. Vīra Vallāla then assumed the rank and titles of a paramount sovereign and even established a new era. But the Yādavas of Devagiri, though checked for the time being, rose to greatness under Singhana, the grandson of Bhillama. He defeated the Hoysalas, wrested back the territories acquired by them from his grandfather, and established the undisputed supremacy of the family. He made extensive conquests in the north. He invaded Gujarat several times, and also defeated the kings of Malwa, Mathura and Kāśī.

The Hoysalas.

Singhana.

He also defeated the Muhammadan rulers of the north, the Kalachuris or Chedis of Chattisgarh and Jubbulpore, the Śilāhāras of Kolhapur, the Kadambas of Goa, and the Pāndyas, and erected a column of victory on the banks of the Kavery. Thus during the long reign of Singhana (1210—

1247) who assumed the full titles of a paramount sovereign, the Yādavas of Devagiri ruled over an extensive empire including the Deccan, a part of southern India beyond the Kṛishṇā, as well as some territories north of the Vindhyas. The successors of Siṅghaṇa were capable rulers, and the empire remained intact upto the reign of his great-grandson Rāmachandra who ascended the throne in 1271 A. D. He was the last independent king of the dynasty. Alau-d-din Khilji, the nephew of the Muhammadan ruler of Delhi invaded his dominions in 1294. Being defeated in the open field, the king shut himself in his fort, and concluded a peace on condition of an annual tribute, cession of certain territories, and an immediate payment of "600 *maunds* of pearls, two of jewels, 1000 of silver, 4000 pieces of silk and other precious things." Some years later Rāmachandra refused to pay tribute, but was defeated by the Muhammadan general Malik Kafur in 1307 A. D. Five years later his son Saṁkara again asserted independence, but was again defeated and killed by Malik Kafur, in 1312 A. D. After the death of Alau-d-din Khilji, Harapāla, the son-in-law of Rāmachandra raised a revolt, but was taken prisoner and flayed alive.

Thus the Deccan became a Muhammadan province.

The Hoysalas also met with the same disgraceful end. The defeat of the Yādavas left the Muhammadans free to pursue their southern conquests. During the reign of Vīra Vallāla III, fourth in descent from the victorious chief of that name, Alau-d-din Khilji sent his general Malik Kafur to reduce Dorasamudra. The king was defeated and captured, and the country was subjugated (1310 A. D.). The province was not, however, formally annexed till 1327, when Dorasamudra was completely destroyed. Vīra Vallāla III, who was released from captivity, and his successors ruled as minor chiefs for fifty years more near Seringapatam.

The history of the Deccan cannot be concluded without a brief reference to two other important feudatory states, the Śilāhāras and the Kākatīyas.

Śilāhāras

The Śilāhāras appear to have been an independent power in the Deccan before the rise of the Chālukyas, but there is no certain evidence of this. Three of their families come to our notice as dependent chiefs of the Rāshtrakūtas, in northern

and southern Konkan and Kolhapur. The Śilāhāras of northern Konkan ruled for a period of 450 years from about 810 A. D. to 1260 A. D. They ruled over the present districts of Thana and Colaba under the Rāshṭrakūṭa sovereignty, and when that power was overthrown by the Chālukyas, they declared their independence. But it was of short duration, for in 1151 the Chālukyas of Gujarat established their supremacy over the state and later on it was conquered by the Yādavas of Devagiri. There were altogether 20 kings in the dynasty. The Śilāhāras of southern Konkan ruled from about 808 to about 1100 A. D., at first under the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and then under the Chālukyas, till their territories were conquered by the Kolhapur branch. This family comes into notice about the time of the downfall of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and seems to have been the most powerful of the three. They enjoyed semi-independence during the last days of the later Chālukyas, and one of their chiefs helped Vijjala to overthrow the last Chālukya king. After that event they ruled as an independent power till their country was annexed by the Yādava king Siṅghaṇa.

The Kākatīyas ruled over Tellingana, in the eastern part of the present dominions of the Nizam, as feudatories of the later Chālukyas. They assumed independence during the decline of that power, and the principality thus established continued till 1425 A. D. when it was destroyed by the Bahmani king Ahmad Shah. The capital of the kingdom was at Warangal, north-east of Hyderabad, and one of its most powerful rulers was Ganapati, who ruled during the first half of the 13th century A. D., and is said to have defeated the kings of Chola, Kaliṅga, Sevana, Karnāta and Lāta. His daughter Rudramā also successfully ruled over the state.

Kākatīyas.

CHAPTER X.

The Chola Empire.

The three Tamil states in the south, *viz.* Chera, Chola and Pāṇḍya, survived while everything else passed away, and continued their chequered existence throughout the Hindu Period. We have already seen how a fourth power, the Pallavas, had intruded into their territory, and for a time exercised domination over them all. But the Pallavas were engaged in constant struggles with the Chālukyas, and a defeat inflicted by the latter in 740 A.D. considerably reduced their power. When the Rāshṭrakūṭas succeeded the Chālukyas, the traditional hostility continued. The Pallavas were also engaged in hostilities with the Western Gaṅgas of Mysore. In the middle of the 9th century A.D. the Pāṇḍyas advanced northwards under their king Varaguṇa Varman. Towards the close of that century they, in alliance with the Cholas, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Pallavas, and the ambition of the latter for establishing supremacy in southern India was shattered for ever.

The end of the Pallavas.

The Cholas.

The Cholas, hemmed in between the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas, had hitherto played a very minor part, but they saw their opportunity in the exhaustion of the other contending powers. Vijayālaya who ascended the throne in 864 A. D., and ruled till at least 880 A.D., began to slowly extend his dominions. He captured Tanjore and made it his capital, and left the Chola kingdom much larger than he found it. His policy was successfully pursued by his son Āditya (880-907) who defeated the Pallavas and extended his territories up to the Rāshṭrakūṭa dominions. Parāntaka I (907—949), the next king, defeated the Pāṇḍyas and other minor powers in the south, and still further enlarged the Chola dominions.

The Rāshṭrakūṭas were anxiously watching the growing power of their new rival in the south, and took an early opportunity to crush it. In 949-50 A.D. the Rāshṭrakūṭas defeated and killed the Chola king Rājāditya, occupied Kāñchī, and laid siege to Tanjore. But the Chola power was saved by the internal troubles of the Rāshṭrakūṭas which shortly led to their downfall (see ante). When Rājarāja, the Great, ascended the throne in 985 A.D., his dominions included the whole of

efficiency of administration to an extent unknown before.

Rājādhirāja, the son of Rājendra Chola, who had been associated with his father in the government as early as 1018, succeeded him in 1035. He spent his time mostly in quelling the rebellions that frequently occurred in the vast empire left by his predecessors. He was eminently successful in maintaining order in his kingdom by inflicting crushing defeats upon the revolted kings of Chera, Pāṇḍya, Ceylon and other minor states. He then invaded the Chālukya dominions and carried fire and sword wherever he went. The Chālukya king Someśvara met him at Koppam, and in the sanguinary battle which ensued the Chola king lost his life (1052 or 1053 A.D.). The victory was, however, gained by Rājendra, the brother of the deceased Chola king, who got himself crowned in the battlefield.

Rājādhirāja.

The struggle between the Cholas and the Chālukyas continued during the next reigns, and many a sanguinary battle took place, the most notable of them being three battles at the junction of the Kṛishṇā and the Tuṅgabhadrā. Vīra Rājendra, the Chola king, who ascended

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Tamil land south of the Pennar, except the reduced kingdoms of the Pāṇḍyas and the Keralas in the south and west. He put down the rebellion of the Pāṇḍyas, annexed that country to his dominions, and gained a victory over the fleet of the Cheras. Having now secured his dominions from internal troubles he began his ambitious career of foreign conquest. He conquered Quilon (Kollam) in Travancore, the bulk of Mysore plateau, Coorg, Pāṇḍya, Kaliṅga, Ceylon and the Eastern Chālukya kingdom of Veṅgī. The Later Chālukyas, who had established themselves in the Deccan by overthrowing the Rāshṭrakūṭas, could hardly look upon this rapid extension of Chola power with equanimity. War soon broke out, but Rājarāja is said to have defeated the Chālukya king Satyāśraya. Rājarāja thus became the lord paramount of Southern India. He had also a powerful navy and conquered many islands of the Eastern seas. The famous temple of Tanjore is one of his greatest achievements in the domain of art.

Rājarāja, the Great.

Rājendra Chola, the son and successor of Rājarāja, came to the throne in 1012 A.D., during the life-time of his father, according to Chola

custom, and raised the Chola power to its climax. He conquered the Kerala country and put it in charge of his son, who was already ruling over Pāṇḍya as his viceroy. He then defeated the Chālukya king Jayasiṁha and sent his general to a conquering expedition in the north. The victorious general pushed his conquests as far as Bengal, having overrun in his way, Orissa, southern Kośala, Daṇḍabhukti and western and southern Bengal. But Rājendra Chola's victories were not confined to the land alone. His fleet crossed the sea and conquered the kingdom of Pegu (1025-27 A.D.), and Nicobar and Andaman islands.

Rājendra Chola.

Rājendra Chola was without doubt one of the greatest conquerors in Indian history and was fully justified in assuming the proud title of Gangaikoṇḍa, in memory of his victory in the Gangetic provinces. He also built a new capital called Gangaikoṇḍaśolapuram and lavishly decorated it with temples and palaces. One of his greatest achievements was a magnificent irrigation tank sixteen miles in length. Rājendra Chola was thus not only a great conqueror, but also excelled in arts of peace. Like his illustrious predecessors he improved the

efficiency of administration to an extent unknown before.

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the throne in 1062 A.D., gained victory in each of these battles and successfully ruled over the vast empire. He was succeeded by his son, but the latter was driven away within a year and the Chola empire was usurped by Kulottuṅga I.

Kulottuṅga I, the son of the Eastern Chālukya king Rājarāja, and the daughter's son of the great Rājendra Chola Gaṅgaikoṇḍa, had married the daughter of Rājendra, the victor at Koppam.

Kulottuṅga.

He set aside Adhirājendra, the son of Vīra Rājendra, put down the rebellions raised on his behalf, and firmly established himself on the Chola throne (1074 A.D.). He was a brave and vigorous king and many a martial exploit is set to his credit. During his long rule (1074-1118 A.D.) he repelled the repeated invasions of the powerful Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI (who espoused the cause of Adhirājendra whose sister he married), subdued the rebellions in his kingdom and conquered Malabar and Kaliṅga. The rise of the Hoysalas about this time was, however, an ominous factor, and already they had driven the Cholas beyond the Kavery, thus freeing the Mysore Plateau from their domination.

The reign of the successors of Kulottuṅga for the next hundred years (1118-1216) was uneventful from a political point of view, except for a prolonged war with the Ceylonese king on behalf of one of the rival clamants to the Pāṇḍya kingdom, and the rise of a number of feudatory states into importance. Other noticeable features were the rapid growth of the Eastern Gaṅgas in Kaliṅga and the Hoysalas in Mysore. The history of the Hoysalas has been already narrated above. The Eastern Gaṅgas, under Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga (1076-1147), extended their suzerainty from the Ganges to the Godavery.

The effect of all these factors was clearly seen in the reign of Rājarāja III (1216-1244), when more than once the Chola king had to defend himself against rebellious chiefs by invoking the aid of the Hoysalas. On one of these occasions, the Chola king became a prisoner in the hands of one of his feudal barons, and this was a signal for the disruption of the mighty empire. The troubles were increased by palace revolutions, and towards the close of the thirteenth century A.D., the feudal barons set up independent kingdoms, and the Chola king sank into an

The fall of the Chola power.

nsignificant position. The invasion of Malik Kafur in 1310 A. D. destroyed all the Hindu chieftaincies in this region, although half a century later a new kingdom arose which fairly rivalled the glorious Chola empire. This was the empire of Vijayanagar, the story of which occupies a prominent place in the Muhammadan period of Indian History.

The history of the two other Tamil states may be briefly told. We have already seen that they were subjected to the Cholas during the ascendency of that power. During its decline and fall they successfully asserted their independence and continued a chequered existence long after the Hindu period of Indian History.

CHAPTER XI.

Political Theory and Public Administration.

No remarkable changes are noticed in political theories or in the system of public administration, at least during the earlier part of the period. The royal power and prestige was probably on the increase, but the old ideals of popular government are freely expressed even in Sukranīti, one of the latest political treatises written during the period. It lays down in the right old spirit that "the ruler has been made by Brahmā a servant of the people, getting his revenue as remuneration." It emphasises the necessity of a Council 'for the deliberation of proposals and consideration of problems.' The king was to rule with the help of his ministers.* It is ordained that he should receive in written form the opinions of each separately with all his arguments, compare them

Royal Power.

"Even the king who is proficient in all the sciences and a past master in statecraft should never by himself study political interests without reference to ministers.

The wise ruler should ever abide by the well thought-out decisions of councillors, office-bearers, subjects and members attending a meeting,—never by his own opinions."

with his own opinion, and then do what is accepted by the many.' It is further laid down that the 'king should take the side not of his officers, but of his subjects', and 'should dismiss the officer who is accused by one hundred men.' Lastly, it is boldly decreed that "if the king be an enemy of virtue, morality and strength, people should desert him as the ruiner of the state."

The administrative system seems to have been more elaborately organised. The kingdom was regularly divided into *Bhuktis*, *Vishayas*, *Maṇḍalas*, *Bhogas*, and *Grāmas*, roughly corresponding to the modern 'Divisions, Districts, Subdivisions, Thānās and villages'. The governor of a Bhukti was appointed by the Central Government and he in his turn appointed the officer in-charge of a Vishaya. Some epigraphic records of the Gupta period have thrown interesting light on the functions of these 'Vishayapatis.' 'They had their headquarters in towns where they had their own offices, and were aided in their administrative work by a Board of Advisors consisting of four members representing the various important interests, viz (1) The Nagara-Sreshthin, the most wealthy man of

the town representing, perhaps, the rich urban population ; (2) The Sārthavāha (the chief merchant) representing, perhaps, the various trade-guilds ; (3) the Prathama-kulika (the chief artisan) representing, perhaps, the various artisan classes, and (4) the Prathama-Kāyastha (the chief scribe) who might have represented the Kāyasthas as a class, or might have been a Government official in the capacity of a Chief Secretary of the present day.

List of officials.

The minute organisation of the Government is also indicated by the very large number of officials referred to in contemporary epigraphic records, although the exact nature of these functionaries is not always easy to determine. Thus, in the Khālimpur copper plate of Dharmapāla, the emperor's commands conveying a grant of land are issued to the following :—

1.	Rājan	... Feudal chiefs
2.	Rājanaka	... Nobility.
3.	Rājaputra	... Royal princes.
4.	Rājāmātya	... Royal minister or Councillor.
5.	Senāpati	... Commander of army.
6.	Vishayapati	... Governor of a Vishaya.

7. Bhogapati ... Governor of a Bhoga.

8. Shashṭhādhikṛita ... (A superintendent or controller of the sixth part of the produce, due to the king ?)

9. Daṇḍaśakti ... (see No. 46 below)

10. Daṇḍapāśika ... Executioner or Police-officer.

11. Chauroddharaṇika ... Police-officer who has to deal with thieves.

12. Dauhsādha-sādhanika ... (see No. 45 below)—porter or superintendent of villages.

13. Dūta ... ... Ambassador.

14. Khola ... ...

15. Gamāgamika ... ...

16. Abhitvaramāna ... ...

17a-17e. Hasty-aśva-go-mahish-ājāvik-ādhyaksha ... Inspectors of elephants, horses, cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep.

18. Naukādhyaksha ... Inspector of fleet.

19. Balādhyaksha ... Inspector of the forces.

20.	Tarika ...	... (probably overseers of ferries, tolls and forests.)
21.	Śaulkika ...	... Custom-officer.
22.	Gaulmika ...	... Military officer.
23.	Tadāyuktaka	...
24.	Viniyuktaka	...
25.	Jyeshṭhakāyastha	... The chief writer (clerk or record-keeper)
26.	Mahāmahattara	... ...
27.	Mahattara	... (village elder ?)
28.	Daśagrāmika	... Probably the officer in charge of a group of ten villages.
29.	Karaṇa	... Accountant.

The copper plates of the Chandra, Varmma and Sena kings of Bengal add a few more officials as follow :—

30.	Rāṇaka	... (Feudatory rulers ?)
31.	Purohita	... Priest.
32.	Piṭhikāvitta	... ...
33.	Mahādharmādhyaksha	Chief-Justice.
34.	Mahāsāndhivigrahika	Minister of peace and war.
35.	Mahāsenāpati	... Commander-in-chief.

36. Mahāmudrādhikṛita .... Keeper of royal-seal.
37. Antaraṅga ... Royal physician.
38. Bṛihad-uparika ... ...
39. Mahākshapaṭalika ... Keeper of records.
40. Mahāpratīhāra ... Chief Warden.
41. Mahābhogika ... Chief groom.
42. Mahāvyūhapati ... Chief master of military arrays.
43. Mahāpīlupati ... Chief elephant-keeper.
44. Mahāgaṇastha ... Commander of a Gaṇa Squadron.
45. Daussādhika ... (probably same as No. 12 above) porter or superintendent of villages.
46. Daṇḍanāyaka ... (probably same as No. 9 above) Magistrate or Leader of army.
47. Māhāsarvvādhikṛita ... ...
48. Koṭṭapāla ... The fort-keeper.

This list is by no means exhaustive. For even the very inscriptions from which they are taken conclude with the following phrase: "and all other dependents of the king who are mentioned in the list of *adhyakshas* (heads of departments) but not specially named here"—the reference

being apparently to a list of *adhyakshas* such as we meet with in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra. Thus we see the old spirit still intact, and the old framework of the constitution still in vogue though modified and in some cases elaborated in course of time.

The Chola administration.

As a type of the administrative system we may refer to the administration of the Cholas which is known to us in some details from contemporary records. It was highly systematised from a very early date. 'The unit of administration was the village community, composed often of a single village or oftener of a group of villages. Each of these Unions had an assembly of its own. This assembly, subject to supervision by the divisional officers, exercised an almost sovereign authority in all the departments of rural administration (for a detailed account of these bodies see the next Chapter).

A number of these village Unions (*kūṛṛam*) constituted a district (*nāḍu*) and a number of these again formed a *koṭṭam* or Valanāḍu. A number of these divisions went to make a province (maṇḍalam). Each province was placed

under a Viceroy who was generally selected from the royal family. The whole Chola empire was divided into six such provinces.

'The lands under cultivation were carefully surveyed, and holdings registered, at least a century before the famous Domesday record of William the Conqueror. The inscriptions show that the Survey was correct to $\frac{1}{50,000}$ of a square inch. The royal dues were fixed and taken either in kind or in gold or in both. The total demand upon land, including customary taxes came up to nearly four-fifteenths of the gross out-turn.' (Aiyangar-Ancient India p. 158 ff.)

The emperors personally supervised the administration of state and issued orders which were committed to writing by the Royal Secretary. "Whatever was the order, it had to be approved of by the Chief Secretary (Olainayakam) and another high dignitary. Finally it was transmitted to the party concerned by the dispatching clerk, which again meeting with the approval of the Viceroy or Governor and the Assemblies concerned was registered and sent into the record office." (Ibid, p. 177.)

But the general tendency of the times,

specially after the downfall of the Gupta empire, seems to be towards the weakening of the popular control, and the establishment of unchecked bureaucracy or autocracy. How or when this state of things was gradually brought about it is not easy to determine. Different causes must have operated at different times and in different localities. But we may notice several circumstances which must have contributed more or less to this state of decline.

Anti-democratic spirit

In the first place, the final triumph of orthodox Brāhmaṇism against heterodox religious sects brought about a coalition between priestly and royal power. The priest looked to the king for patronage and maintenance of his creed and not unoften purchased the royal support by placing his own spiritual power and prestige at the disposal of his royal master. Thus it was that the king protected the social and religious hierarchy of the neo-Brāhmaṇism, if necessary even by force, while a sense of gratitude as well as motives of self-interest induced the Brāhmaṇa writers or expositors of the sacred law to exaggerate the royal power

and prestige in extravagant terms and decry all popular sentiment.

Secondly, the rapid growth of a rigid caste-system which divided the Indian community into so many water-tight compartments, while helping the growth of local corporate feelings, operated against the development of national sentiments. With the ideas of superiority and inferiority as well as impurity and untouchability inherent in the later growth of castes, it was idle to expect a concerted action on the part of the people in political matters. And the dissensions among the people served as a golden opportunity for the king to play the autocrat.

Thirdly, the wide development of religious sects was detrimental to the growth of the nation. The best intellects of the country devoted their energies to religious and philosophical studies, and only the mediocrities played any part in politics. It is a significant fact that politics as a science ceased to grow during the period, and the few books that were written merely recapitulated old ideas without adding anything new.

All these and other causes combined to bring about a set-back in the growth of political

ideas. But it is idle to lament over the result. We must remember that nations, like individuals, have to pass through boyhood, youth and old age. It is no more feasible for a nation than for an individual to keep up perpetually the brightness of boyhood or the vigour of youth without the decay of old age. We have traced the history of India from about 1500 B. C. and witnessed the growth of a vigorous civilisation from the primitive beginnings of Rigvedic Age. Towards the close of the period under review unerring signs of old age and decay are visible in the body-politic. The creative energy and adaptability to environments which distinguished it of old now give way to idle superstitions and an orthodox conservatism in social and political matters. The result is at first a stagnation and then a process of decay. Curiously enough, as in the case of an individual in old age, it is only in philosophy and religion that faint shadow of the old acuteness can still be perceived. But nothing could be of much avail when the whole civilisation was in the iron grip of death.

CHAPTER XII.

Growth of Local Self-government.

The period under review did not witness any important development in the political theories or any radical change in the system of public administration, but it was characterised by a remarkable growth of the local self-governing institutions such as the Village Communities and District-Unions. Their existence from a very early period has already been noticed before, but hundreds of inscriptions, mainly from South India, throw a flood of light on their nature and work, and testify to the most wonderful organisation that the political genius of India had evolved. The subject is too vast for adequate treatment here, and we shall briefly discuss it under the following heads :

Village Community.

I. The powers and functions of the Village Community.

II. The Constitution of the Village Community.

III. Larger Corporate Organisations.

I. Powers and Functions.

The village corporation practically exercised all the powers of a state within its narrow sphere of activity, and was looked upon as an integral part of the Constitution. It possessed corporate property which it could sell or mortgage for public purposes. It had extensive judicial powers and tried all cases, excepting serious crimes, within the boundary of the village. It was a trustee for public charities of all kinds and received deposits of money, land and paddy, under the condition to provide, out of their interest, the things stipulated by the donors. The corporation could regulate the market, impose taxes and even levy extra tolls for specific objects of public utility. It had also the power to exact forced labour from the inhabitants of the village. The provision of drinking water and proper maintenance of garden, irrigation, and means of communication demanded special care of the village corporations. During famine and scarcity the village corporations helped the poor people to tide over their difficulties. They borrowed money from the temple treasury and sometimes sold their property for the purpose.

Powers and Functions.

The Government recognised the heavy responsibility of the corporations and empowered them to regulate the payment of government dues with a view to the actual condition of the country. The village corporations fully realised their responsibility for maintaining temples and other local institutions. They also made provision for educational and charitable institutions and in most cases these were associated with local temples. We learn from an interesting record of the time of Rājendra Chola, that in order to secure success to the arms of the king, a village corporation made detailed provision for 340 students and 10 Professors for various branches of study. The corporations adopted measures for the safety of the village from robbers and enemies, and entertained high sense of honour for the local patriots who distinguished themselves in its defence. One Viśālayadeva repelled the Muhammadan raiders from a local temple and reconsecrated it. As a mark of gratitude the corporation assigned to him a specified quantity of corn from the harvest reaped by each individual, and conferred on him certain privileges in the temple. There are records of rent-free lands being granted

to several persons for having shed their blood in the cause of the country. In the 8th year of Rājarāja I a certain Kalipperumān lost his life in the act of defending his village, and the corporation provided for a premanent lamp to burn in the local temple in order to secure merit for the martyr. An interesting record registers the decision of a village corporation that the residents of their village should not do anything against the interests of their village, nor against the local temples and other institutions; that if they did so, they must suffer as the grāmadrohins (traitors to the villages) do and should not be allowed the privilege of touching Śiva.

The corporations possessed absolute authority over the village lands and were generally left undisturbed in the internal management of the villages. They were, however, responsible for the payment of taxes due from the village, and we have an instance on record where the members of a Village Assembly were arrested and imprisoned for the unpaid balance of the revenue. The royal officers supervised their accounts from time to time and they were liable to fine for dereliction of duty. In one case the corpo-

ration was actually fined by the king on the complaint brought by the temple authorities that it was misappropriating part of the revenues assigned to them. On the other hand, the corporation could bring to the notice of the king any misdoings of the servants of any temple within the area of the village. Some of the regulations passed by the corporation required the sanction of the king. On the other hand any royal charter affecting the status of a village had to be sent for approval to the Village Assembly before it was registered and sent to the Record Office. Sometimes the members of a village corporation had audience of the king on public business, and there are frequent references to cordial relations between the two.

II. The constitution.

The Assembly (Sabhā or Mahāsabhā) was the supreme governing body of all these village corporations, and exercised full authority in all matters concerning the village. Its constitution differed in different localities and probably also at different times. In some cases it consisted of all the male adults of the village, in others it was a select body. In such cases

regulations were prescribed for qualifying a villager for the membership of the Assembly. The number of men composing the Assembly varied. In one case it was 300, the total number of citizens being 400. In another case the strength of the Assembly was 512, but sometimes it reached the astoundingly high figure of 1000. In most cases, if not in all, there was a headman of the village. The status of the village assemblies, so far as it may be inferred from their meeting places, considerably varied, probably according to the importance of the villages which they represented. In some instances we hear of halls built by kings for their meetings. Generally, however, they met in local temples, while in some cases, the shade of a tamarind tree seems to have been considered as good enough for the purpose.

Although the Assembly was the supreme authority in the village corporations, the detailed administrative work seemed to have been carried on in most cases by one or more committees. The following list of more important committees will indicate their nature and importance.

The Committees.

1. Great men elected for the year.
2. Great men elected for charities.
3. Great men elected for tank.
4. Great men elected for gardens.
5. Great men elected for supervision of justice.
6. Great men elected for gold supervision.
7. Great men elected for supervision of wards.
8. Great men elected for supervision of fields.
9. Great men elected for management of temples.
10. Great men elected for the supervision of ascetics.

The nature and duties of the last nine committees are quite evident from their designation. The first committee, called also 'Annual Supervision Committee', probably looked over general and miscellaneous affairs not covered by the other Committees. Young and old men served in these committees, and in one instance we hear of a lady as a member of the Committee of Justice.

We are fortunate in possessing a very interesting and detailed account of the constitution of these Committees in a particular

instance. The village in question was divided into thirty wards The inhabitants of each ward assembled together and drew up a list of persons eligible for these committees. Honest villagers between 35 and 70 years of age, and possessing certain property and educational qualifications were alone eligible for election. Out of these, again, those who had been on any of the committees but did not submit their accounts, and those guilty of any of the five great sins, together with their kinsmen and relations, were left out of consideration. Men guilty of various offences and malpractices which are recorded in minute details were similarly disqualified. Out of the persons thus selected in every ward as eligible for serving on the committees one was elected by lottery, and all possible precautions were taken for ensuring fair play in the matter. The minute and lengthy regulations recorded for the purpose serve as a very interesting commentary on the political training of the people. The thirty persons thus chosen were then allotted to different committees on consideration of their specific knowledge and past experience. The elaborate rules laid down for

Election of Committees.

the election of committees most strikingly illustrate the ultra-democratic character of these village corporations. It is evident that the functions of these corporations were mainly carried on by means of these committees, and that is undoubtedly the reason why so great precautions were taken to safeguard them against corruption. The natural evils of a popular and democratic constitution were sought to be eradicated without injuring its spirit and vitality, and the regulations which were drawn up for the purpose must be pronounced to be a remarkable piece of legislation, characterised alike by sagacity and foresight. There was a regulation that only those who have not been on any of these committees for the last three years would be chosen. It was certainly calculated to give every villager a fair chance of serving on them and thus gaining the political training requisite for the responsible membership of the corporation to which he belonged. The method of electing members, carefully eliminating as it did all chances of corruption and personal influence, may be fairly compared with all that we know about the republican states of ancient and modern world.

III. Larger corporate organisations.

In addition to village corporations, the communal spirit among the people of South India was manifested on various occasions by the corporate activity of the populace of wider areas. Reference is made to a great district assembly meeting in a royal abode, and consisting of, among others, 'the sixteen' of the eight districts. In another case the people living in a district made an agreement with two persons that they should levy brokerage on all the betel-leaves imported into the said district and annually supply a stipulated quantity of them to the local temple out of the proceeds. The people of the district and the 'blameless five hundred men of the district' were appointed to supervise this arrangement. A Pāṇḍya inscription records that the residents of the eighteen sub-divisions of the seventy-nine districts assembled together and set apart the income derived by them from certain articles of merchandise to meet the cost of repairs to the temple. A Chola inscription informs us that the residents of a district imposed a tax upon themselves for the conduct of worship in a particular temple. In another case the residents of a district imposed a

certain contribution upon every village in order to construct an embankment on a river.

Many cases are on record where the people of a district assembled to try cases. We further hear of judicial assemblies consisting of the people from "the four quarters, eighteen districts, and the various countries", "the agriculturists from the 79 districts", and "the one thousand and five hundred men of the four quarters." The last phrase, together with such expressions as "the sixteen of the eight districts" and "the blameless five hundred of the district" clearly show that the principle of representation was fully understood, and in one case there is a pointed reference to 32,000 representatives of various localities. This fact taken along with reference to the "district assembly" and "the headman of the district" leaves no doubt that in some cases at least there was a definite and permanent organisation of a district. Intermediate between the organisation of a village and a district we find that of a sub-division.

But there were corporate organisations of areas larger than a district. An inscription of Rājarāja Chola refers to the "Great Assembly

of twelve districts", and an inscription of Travancore, of the 12th century A. D., mentions a corporate body of six hundred for the whole state.

We thus find a regular gradation of self-governing institutions with a village corporation at one end and the council of the whole state at the other. This was possible because of the principle of "representation." No ancient nations, including the Greeks and the Romans, ever hit upon this political expedient which alone could reconcile the principles of democracy with big territorial expansion. The political genius of India alone evolved this new machinery in politics which was to work miracles in other lands in subsequent ages.

CHAPTER XIII.

Religion.

§1. Buddhism.

In a preceding chapter we have described the rise of Buddhism and its growth and expansion as a world-religion. We have now to trace its decline and downfall in India. It is always difficult to assign a particular date for important religious movements, and therefore, without attempting to be too precise, we may say in a general way, that the period of Gupta supremacy was the dividing line between Buddhist ascendancy and decadence.

The Gupta emperors were followers of Hinduism, and although they were not hostile to the Buddhists, the latter did not find in them such special patrons as the Maurya or Kushāṇa emperors. The change in religious outlook is indicated by the statement in the Gupta inscriptions that Samudragupta restored the Aśvamedha sacrifice which had long been in abeyance. With the restoration of sacrificial forms we find also a

Downfall of Buddhism.

revival of the worship of Hindu gods and goddesses. Indeed the fourth and fifth centuries A. D., during which the Guptas exercised political supremacy in Northern India, were definitely marked by a strong revival of Hinduism and the decline of Buddhism. Nothing more significantly points to this change than the fact that whereas the numerous inscriptions of the pre-Gupta period, with only a few exceptions, refer to non-Brāhmanical religious sects like Buddhists and Jainas, the great majority of the inscriptions of the Gupta period refer to Brāhmanical religion. Towards the close of the fifth century A. D. the Hūna invasion dealt a death-blow to Buddhism in North-Western India. The Hūnas destroyed Buddhist temples and monasteries and massacred the Buddhist monks. Now Buddhism derived its spirit and vitality from the monastic system, and to destroy that was practically to destroy the religion. The monasteries were so to speak the garrisons which maintained the influence of Buddhism in surrounding countries, and as soon as they fell, Buddhism vanished all round. The monasteries, on account of their central situation, splendour and magnificence always served as a target of attack to the

foreigners Thus whereas the Hūna invasion, and later the Islamic invasion, spelt utter ruin to the Buddhists, other religious sects were not so hard hit at all.

The effects of the Hūna invasion can be clearly perceived in the annals of Hiuen Tsang. Throughout North-Western India he scarcely came across any trace of living Buddhism, but the ruins of thousands of temples and monasteries, deserted and dilapidated, told the tale of its former splendour. When Hiuen Tsang visited this country (629-645 A. D.) Harshavardhana's patronage of Buddhism gave a temporary lease of life and vigour to the decaying religion, but although the Chinese pilgrim did not plainly admit it, the facts recorded by him are sufficient to show that Buddhism had lost its stronghold except in Bengal and the United Provinces. In other parts of India Buddhism was carrying on a death struggle with Jainism and the newly revived Hinduism.

In the Pāla emperors of Bengal and Bihar, Buddhism found its last strong pillars of support. During the four centuries that the dynasty was in power, Buddhism enjoyed their unstinted patronage. The monasteries at Bodh-Gayā, Nālanda,

Vihāra, and Vikramaśilā kept up the traditions of old, and the Buddhist missionaries of the Pāla kingdom renovated the religion in Tibet where it still flourishes with unabated vigour.

Before the close of the 12th century A. D. Buddhism was driven away even from this last stronghold. The Senas conquered Bengal in the opening years of the century and firmly established Hinduism in the province. The Buddhists were now confined in the enclave of Behar, and when this province was conquered by the Muhammadans about 1198 A. D. Buddhism had no refuge in the land of its birth. Individuals or even small sects professing the religion might be found in the country for centuries to come, and may be said to exist even now, but Buddhism as a force in society vanished from India since 1200 A. D. never to return.

Cause of the downfall of Buddhism.

The extinction of Buddhism in India was brought about by many circumstances. The loss of royal patronage, internal dissension, and the foreign invasions, to which reference has already been made, served as potent causes of its downfall. To these may be added the spiritual decay caused by the spread of abhorrent, licentious

practices in the Buddhist Church, and renovated vigour of its old rival, the Brāhmanical Hinduism. The latter asserted its power and violently attacked the shortcomings of Buddhism. Two names stand out prominently in this contest of Hinduism against its late powerful rival, viz. Kumārila Bhatta (750 A. D.) and Saṅkarāchārya (C. 800 A. D.). Traditions have preserved the memory of many a successful disputation which these heroes held with their opponents, on the express condition that the vanquished should either adopt the religion of his opponent, or forfeit his life and surrender the property of the religious establishments, if he had any. Whatever we might think of these traditional stories there can be hardly any doubt that the downfall of Buddhism and the success of Hinduism was due in no inconsiderable degree to the intellectual superiority of the latter. Further, this victory was hastened and rendered easier by the degraded and sometimes depraved manners and customs of various sects of Buddhists.

But although we are accustomed to say that Buddhism has vanished from the land of its birth, that statement is hardly an accurate

expression. As a matter of fact Buddhism was assimilated by the neo-Brāhmanical religion popularly known as Hinduism. Mahāyānism, by its adoption of Sanskrit language, the worship of images, and the stress it laid upon faith and devotion as a religious factor, made a very close approach to Hinduism, and the later Buddhist sects like Sammitiya made a still nearer approach. On the other hand the Hindus imbibed the essential teachings of Buddhism. The Buddhist doctrine of *Ahiṁsā* or abstention from the slaughter of animals made such a profound impression, that even to-day the high class Hindus of the greater part of India are strict vegetarians. To crown all, the Buddha was included in the Hindu Pantheon and is still regarded as one of the ten incarnations by every orthodox and pious Hindu. This process of assimilation is visible even to-day in many temples all over India, where Buddhist images have been converted into Hindu gods and are being daily worshipped by pious Hindus.

Buddhism absorbed by Hinduism.

Thus while internal causes brought about the rapprochement between the two sects, external causes such as have been noticed above broke

the spirit of Buddhist sectarianism. The result was a fusion between the two. The Buddhist monasteries were broken by foreign foes, the monks were dispersed, and the vast population of lay devotees silently entered the fold of Hinduism. A similar process of fusion is going on to-day before our very eyes in Nepal.

§2. Jainism.

Jainism, unlike Buddhism, made considerable progress during the first part of the period under review. The Early Chālukyas and the Rāshtrakūtas patronised the Jaina religion, and it made great progress in the Deccan during their rule. Under the Later Chālukyas, however, "it ceased to be the conquering religion that it was," and, in the twelfth century A. D., Saivism and Vaishnavism superseded it to a considerable extent. Bijjala, the Kalachuri chief who usurped the throne of the Later Chālukyas, was a Jaina but succumbed to a revolution of the Lingāyat sect (i.e. those who worshipped the phallic form of Siva.). The Hoysalas, too, were Jainas, and though converted to Vaishnavism, protected the religion. But the Cholas and the Pāndyas were

bigoted Śaivas and are said to have persecuted the Jainas. The Pāndya king Sundara is said to have impaled 8000 of them, and pictures on the walls of the great temple at Madura represent their torture. Fortunately stories of such persecution are rare, and more than counterbalanced by numerous recorded instances of mutual toleration, sympathy and reconciliation.

But Jainism, like Buddhism, suffered more from the assimilative power of Hinduism. The process of Hinduisation is still going on, but Jainas, unlike Buddhists, have not been extinct in the land of their birth. At present there are about 14 *lakhs* of Jainas in India. This difference is chiefly to be explained by the fact that Gujarat, Southern India and Rajputana, their chief strongholds, had escaped the iconoclastic fury of the first Muhammadan invasion.

§3. Saivism.

The Hinduism which thus triumphed over the heterodox sects was, however, essentially different from the Brāhmanical religion of the Pre-Buddhist period. The new religion was no doubt theoretically based on the old Vedic

systems and beliefs, but it had characteristic features of its own which were fundamentally distinct, and it imbibed not a little of the spirit of the heterodox sects like Buddhism which were so long predominant in the country.

Neo-Brāhmanical religion.

The chief characteristic of the new religion was the predominance it gave to theistic systems like Vaishnavism and Saivism. Of course Vedic Texts were still recited, and Vedic sacrifices were not forgotten, but the new religion looked for inspiration to a new class of literature, mainly the Epics and the Purāṇas, and their ritual was quite different. The belief in Vishnu, Siva or Sakti as the supreme deity was quite distinct from the Vedic conception of a host of gods none of whom could claim to be superior to the other. Again, Sraddhā (faith), the watch-word of the Vedic religion, was replaced by Bhakti or devotion. In ritual the differences were equally great. The elaborate sacrifices in the open ground, or simple structures designed for the purpose, for propitiating gods and gaining favours of them, gave way to personal worship of the images of the supreme deity in temples dedicated to Him, and there arose Hindu temples which

in grandeur and magnificence far surpassed even the sacred structures associated with Jainism and Buddhism.

But the most significant change in the new Brāhmaṇical religion was the growth and development of sects, notably the Śaiva and Vaishṇava sects, the rise of which has already been noticed in an earlier chapter.

The worship of Śiva, apart from any sectarian spirit, seems to have been a general practice in those days. Great kings like Śaśāṅka and Harshavardhana, great poets like Kālidāsa and Bhababhūti, and great masters of prose like Subandhu and Bāṇabhaṭṭa seem to have been ardent worshippers of Śiva without probably belonging to any particular sect. The same might be said of quite a large number of ordinary people.

Śaiva sects.

But the Śaiva sects also developed very rapidly. By the 6th century A. D. they had spread to the extreme south of India and also become the predominant religion in Annam and Cambodia. In the 7th century A. D. the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang found 'very many professed Pāśupatas' as far west as Baluchistan. Even then Benares was a strong-

hold of the Śaivas. It was adorned with many temples and there was a copper-statue of god Maheśvara 'somewhat less than 100 ft. high.' The Chinese pilgrim describes the followers of the sects as follows; "Some cut their hair off, others tie their hair in a knot and go naked, without clothes; they cover their bodies with ashes and by the practice of all sorts of austerities they seek to escape from birth and death."

This description is confirmed by what we know of the different Saiva sects from their literature.

The Pāśupatas.

Thus according to the "Pāśupata" system, the following, among others, were recommended for bringing about righteousness, and attaining the highest powers of knowledge and action.

(1) "Besmearing the body with ashes and lying down in ashes."

(2) "Making of the sound 'hā ! hā ! hā !' by the forcible stretch of the throat and the lips."

(3) "Huḍukkāra (a holy sound resembling that of an ox made by striking the tongue on the palate)."

(4) "Walking as if one's legs and other limbs were disabled."

(5) "Doing a thing condemned by all as if one were devoid of the sense of discrimination between what should be done and what should be avoided."

'These fantastic and wild processes' were however, backed by philosophic, metaphysic and psychological concepts of no mean order.

The "Śaiva" school professed more moderate and rational doctrines. It laid stress upon 'twilight adorations, worship, muttering of formulas (*japa*), throwing oblations into the fire, occasional ceremonies for the attainment of eternal bliss, methods of the restraint of breath, abstraction, meditation, concentration, absorption in thought (*samādhi*), penances, purificatory ceremonies and the worship of the various phallic forms.'

The Śaiva school.

The theories and practices of the next two Śaiva schools, the "Kāpālas" and "Kālāmukhas," are most revolting in character. Some of them cannot be mentioned in a modern book for the sake of decency. Among others may be noted "(1) eating food in a skull ; (2) besmearing the body

The Kāpālas and Kālāmukhas.

with the ashes of a dead body ; (3) eating the ashes ; 4) holding a club ; (5) keeping a pot of wine ; and (6 worshipping the god as seated therein." These horrible practices are no doubt a reflex of the original character of the terrible and outlandish god Rudra-Śiva.

Kashmir Saivism.

Sir R. G. Bhandarkar aptly remarks that "it is a relief to turn away from this ghastly picture of the wild aberrations of human intellect and spirit to the system of Kashmir Saivism which is more humane and rational." The two branches of Kashmir Śaivism flourished respectively in the 9th and 10th centuries A. D. The metaphysical conceptions of this school were characterised by bold originality and the religious practices enjoined by it were healthy and conducive to the growth of spirituality. It kept clear of the wild and fantastic courses of discipline followed by the other schools mentioned above, and created an honourable place for Śaivism among the different systems of religion. This changed aspect of Śaivism seems to be due in no small measure to the influence of the great philosopher Śaṅkarāchārya who flourished in the 9th century A. D.

Among other important Saiva sects must be mentioned the Vīraśaivas or Liṅgāyats, whose philosophy was influenced both by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, and who gave great prominence to the Liṅga (Phallus) and the Nandin or Bull. This sect was raised into prominence, if not actually founded, by Bāsava, the prime-minister of the Kalachuri king Bijjala (see ante Bk. III Ch. IX). Bāsava fell out with the king and had him murdered by one of his disciples. Under Bāsava and his nephew Chenna-Bāsava the position of the sect was firmly established. It laid great stress upon *Bhakti* i.e. love and self-surrender, truth, morality, and cleanliness. It was further characterised by an anti-Brāhmaṇical spirit, and according to some, it originated among non-Brāhmaṇical Hindus out of a spirit of jealousy of the power exercised by the Brāhmaṇas. It is interesting to note how the Liṅgāyats deviate from some well-known Brāhmaṇical practices. Their widows are allowed to marry again. Instead of Yajñopavīta or sacred thread, they hang the *liṅga* by means of a silken cloth suspended round their neck, and a Śaivite formula is substituted for the usual *Gāyatrī mantra.* A similar anti-Brāhmaṇical

Liṅgāyats.

spirit is noticeable in other Saiva sects. The Kālāmukhas maintain, for example, that people of other castes may become Brāhmaṇas by a process of simple initiation.

The Śaiva religion became very popular in the south under the patronage of the Rāshtrakūtas and the Cholas, and magnificent temples and monastic establishments still testify to its former grandeur. Even the Buddhist Pāla kings of Bengal established Śaiva temples for the Pāśupata sects. The Sena kings were professed Śaivas and an inscription of Vijayasena refers to the erection of a magnificent temple in honour of Pradyumneśvara.

§4. Vaishnavism.

Vaishnavism too made rapid progress during the period under review. It was patronised by the Gupta, Chālukya and Hoysala kings, among others, and a large number of temples with Vishnuite images indicate its wide extent all over India. It also spread to Indian colonies in the Far East.

The doctrine of Vaishnavism, however, underwent some important changes. In the first place the theory of Avatāra or incarnation

i. e. the birth of the Divine Being in human shape, assumed great preponderance. The origin of this conception may be traced to a fairly early period of its history, but it played a very important part only during the period under review. The number and nature of these Avatāras are variously given in different treatises. At first the total number was six, but subsequently the number was raised to ten. Ultimately even Rishabha, the first Tīrthaṅkara of the Jainas, and Buddha came to be looked upon as Avatāras of Vishṇu. Naturally enough, Krishṇa was also regarded as an Avatāra though for historical reasons mentioned above he stands on a special ground. Of the other Avatāras, Rāma and Dattātreya alone still command a large number of followers.

Avatāras.

The next great change in the Vaishṇava religion was the addition of two new chapters in the life of Vāsudeva Krishṇa. The first is the story of the Child Krishṇa brought up among the cowherds, and the second is his amorous dalliance with the *gopīs* or cowherd girls. These phases of Krishṇa's life occupy such an

Myths about Krishṇa.

important position in modern Vaishnavism that it looks like a heresy to assert that they did not form part of the original creed. Still that seems almost undoubtedly to have been the case. Some ideas of a pastoral Krishna might be of fairly early age, and there is no inherent improbability in a religious teacher beginning his life as a shepherd, but many episodes connected with Kaṁsa, Nanda and Yaśodā, the miraculous elements in the story, such as the holding up of Govardhana, killing of Putanā etc. are evidently of later origin, as they are not referred to in early literature. Some scholars hold that these elements were added to the Krishna legend by the Ābhīras, a foreign tribe of nomadic character, who were settled in western India in the early centuries of Christian era or even before that. The romantic but somewhat licentious episodes of Krishna and the *gopis* or cow-herd girls seem to be of still later origin. A further development of this latter phase was the introduction of Rādhā, the chief consort of Krishna.

The devotional side of Vaishnavism was very much developed in south India, by the Ālvārs or Vaishnava Devotees. Twelve of them

have become very famous. Their Tamil songs are so much marked by depth of feeling and true piety that they are looked upon as Vaishṇava Veda. These songs are still very popular in South India, and their authors are held in so great veneration that their images are worshipped side by side with those of Vishṇu and his Avatāras.

Āḷvārs.

But the devotional cult of Vaishṇavism was faced with a great danger from two sides. On the one hand there was the vigorous growth of Mīmāṁsā school represented by Śabarasvāmin and Kumārilabhaṭṭa, who maintained that the old sacrificial rites were the only way to salvation. On the other hand, there was an upheaval of philosophic teachings which laid stress upon knowledge rather than faith, love or devotion. The famous Śaṅkarāchārya preached his Advaitavāda theory, according to which nothing really existed excepting one Universal Spirit, and there was, therefore, no scope for love or devotion, as that obviously requires two distinct entities, the 'lover' and the 'beloved'. The truly remarkable genius of Saṅkarāchārya, his profound learning, wonderful personality and unrivalled polemic abilities seemed to carry

everything before him from one end of India to another. The Vaishnavas were, however, equal to the occasion. A class arose known as Āchāryas who devoted themselves to the task of defending their faith on philosophic grounds. The first three Āchāryas were Nāthamuni, Yāmunāchārya and the famous Rāmānuja (11th century A. D.). Rāmānuja's name is only second to that of Saṅkara, and he gave a new turn to Vaishṇavism by his Viśishṭādvaitavāda theory which was a reply to Śaṅkara's Advaitavāda.

Āchāryas.

The most important Vaishṇava āchārya after Rāmānuja was Madhva or Ānandatīrtha who flourished in the 13th century A. D. He propounded new philosophical doctrines, but the most important change introduced by him was the elimination of the '*Vyūhas*, Vāsudeva and others.' The supreme spirit is mostly referred to as Vishṇu, and the old Bhāgavata system was thus replaced by pure Vaishṇavism. It may be noted that both Rāmānuja and Madhva discarded the "Cowherd" and the "Gopī (cowherd girls)" element of Vaishṇavism, but these rose into prominence in the system of Nimbārka who flourished after Rāmānuja. Though a Tailaṅga

Brāhmaṇa by birth, he lived and preached in Northern India. Kṛishṇa, surrounded by thousands of Gopīs with Rādhā as his chief lover, forms the most essential element of his sect, and these features still continue to form the preponderating element in Vaishṇavism of Northern India, thanks to the impetus given to it at a later date by Chaitanya. Nimbārka lived at Brindāvana, near Mathurā, the reputed scene of the early life of cowherd Kṛishṇa and his dalliance with the Gopīs.

There were many other important Vaishṇava āchāryas but their history falls beyond the scope of the present work.

CHAPTER XIV.

LITERATURE.

§1. Brahmanical literature.

It is impossible to form a correct appreciation of the culture and civilisation of the ancient Indian people without some reference, however brief, to their wonderful literature, and the system of education of which it was the visible product. Unfortunately, it is not possible to write the history of Indian literature in strict chronological order, and a general account of the important and characteristic works must suffice.

The literary efforts before the Guptas were mainly inspired by religion, and we have already referred above to the Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina literature. Similarly, during the period under review, the new Brāhmanical religion produced a literature of its own. This may be classified as Epics, Smritis Purāṇas and philosophic works.

The two epics Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata have already been discussed above (Book II,

chapter VII). The Smṛitis are metrical texts containing the rules and regulations for the guidance of society. They are based on Dharma-Sūtras and Gṛihya-Sūtras of the Vedic literature, but additions and alterations have been freely made to make them suitable to the changed conditions of society. Manu Smṛiti, the most well-known work of the kind, was probably composed between 200 B. C. and 200 A. D., but other important Smṛitis like Vishṇu, Yājñavalkya, Nārada and Bṛihaspati were composed during the period under review. The total number of such works is quite large and the commentaries on them larger still. The commentary not only explains the Smṛitis, but in doing so considerably modifies their doctrines to bring them in a line with the changed conditions of society. The present Hindu society is guided to a great extent by these commentaries, some of which were composed as late as the 16th century A. D.

Smṛitis.

It is difficult to define the Purānas or give an exact idea of their contents. They are a store-house of traditions, legends, myths, dogmas, rituals, moral codes and religious and philosophic principles.

Purānas.

The origin of this class of literature has probably to be traced to an earlier period, but the extant Purāṇas are almost without exception associated with new Hinduism, and products of the period under review. According to well established tradition, the Purāṇas are eighteen in number, but we actually find a greater number of texts, and there are besides upa-Purāṇas, or supplementary works. The Purāṇas served as the canon of the new religion, and being composed in simple language were extremely popular. Some of them are sectarian in character, and both Vishṇuites and Śivaites have special Purāṇas eulogising their particular deities. The more well-known among the Purāṇas are, Vāyu-Purāṇa, Matsya-Purāṇa, Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, Skanda-Purāṇa, Vishṇu-Purāṇa, and Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa.

Philosophy.

The Philosophical works of the period are many and varied in character. They are almost invariably associated with religion, and thus we have philosophic works of the Mahāyāna and other schools of the Buddhists, and those of the various schools of the Śaivas and Vaishṇavas. The best known name is that of Śaṅkara who established

the Vedānta system on a sound basis and has secured a world-wide reputation. Next to him may be mentioned Kumārila and Rāmānuja. The Buddhist and Jaina philosophers were many but need not be mentioned in detail.

§ 2. Secular Literature.

The religious literature mentioned above was supplemented by secular literature such as Kāvya or artificial poetry, drama, lyric, prose romance, and fables.

Kālidāsa.

The name of Kālidāsa stands foremost in the history of secular Indian literature, and he is credited with having written the best works in the first three classes. His Kāvyas such as Raghuvaṁśa and Kumārasambhava, dramas such as Sakuntalā and Vikramorvaśī, and lyric poems like Meghadūta are read all over the world, and will make him immortal as long as man has any taste for literature.

Yet, curiously enough, scarcely anything authentic is known of this famous poet. Not to speak of any details of his life, we are ignorant even of the time when he flourished.

According to tradition, he flourished in the court of Vikramāditya, the king of Ujjayinī, who is credited with the foundation of an era known as Vikrama Saṁvat in 58 B. C. There are, however, many difficulties in the way of accepting this tradition, and scholars now generally agree in placing Kālidāsa in the fifth century A. D.; probably Chandragupta II or Kumāragupta I was his patron.

Although Kālidāsa was the central and the most prominent figure, the secular literature did not begin and end with him, but flourished both before and after his time. Thus the Kāvyas flourished even long before the Christian era. The most famous work of the earlier period is the Buddha-Charita of Aśvaghosha, the poet, philosopher and religious teacher who flourished, according to the Buddhist tradition, at the time of Kanishka (see p. 252 above). Then some of the inscriptions of the Gupta emperors are written in good Kāvya style, and Harishena, the author of the Allahabad Prasasti "shows a mastery of style rivalling that of Kālidāsa and Daṇḍin." Of the later Kāvyas the more important are Kirātārjunīya of Bhāravi (6th c. A. D.), Bhaṭṭikāvya of Bhartṛihari

Kāvyas.

(7th c. A. D ?), Śiśupālavadha of Māgha (9th or 10th c. A. D. ?), and Naishadha-Charita of Śrīharsha (12th c. A. D.). A less known Prākṛit work is Gauḍa-Vaho (slaughter of the king of Gauḍa) of Vākpatirāja who flourished in the court of Yaśovarman of Kanauj, and extolled his master's victory over the king of Gauḍa.

In the field of lyric poetry Kālidāsa had no notable predecessor that we know of, with the exception of Hāla, a Sātavāhana king, who flourished in the first century A. D. His work known as 'Saptaśataka' or Gāthāsaptaśatī (700 verses), written in Prākṛita, contains many beautiful poems. Of the later poets Amaru, Bhartṛihari th c. A. D. ?), Bilhaṇa (11th c. A. D.) and Jayadeva (12th c. A. D.) are well-known.

Like Kāvya, the origin of Indian drama can be traced to great antiquity, but very few works anterior to Kālidāsa's time have survived. The dramatic work of Aśvaghosha has been referred to above (p. 252.). The works of Bhāsa, a poet mentioned with respect by Kālidāsa, have recently been discovered, and some of them such as Svapna-Vāsavadattā and Pratijñā-Yaugandharāyaṇa have won well deserved praises. In this field, however,

Drama.

Kālidāsa was followed by a number of worthy successors, such as Śūdraka (c. 6th c. A. D.), the author of Mrichchhakatika (Clay Cart), and the famous emperor Harshavardhana, the reputed author of Ratnāvalī and Nāgānanda. But by far the greatest name of this period is that of Bhababhūti, second, if at all, only to Kālidāsa. He lived in the court of Yaśovarman of Kanauj, and his best works are Uttara-Rāma-Charita and Mālatī-Mādhava. Next in point of time comes Viśākhadatta, the author of Mudrā-Rākshasa (c. 800 A. D.). About hundred years later flourished Rājaśekhara. He lived in the court of the Pratīhāra emperors Mahendrapāla and Mahīpāla, and his best known works (written in Prākṛita) are Karpūra-Mañjarī and Bāla-Rāmāyaṇa.

Prose Romances.

Of the Prose Romances, the earliest notable work is Daśakumāra-Charita by Daṇḍin (7th c. A. D), and Vāsavadattā of Subandhu is next in point of time (7th c. A. D.). Bāṇabhaṭṭa, the court-poet of emperor Harshavardhana was probably the greatest writer in this line. His works Kādambarī and Harshacharita are masterpieces of diction and style.

Sanskrit literature is particularly rich in fairy tales and fables. One of the most interesting works is Pañchatantra which was translated into Pehlevi, Arabic and Syriac at an early date, and thus found its way to the western countries. The celebrated and popular work Hitopadeśa is based upon Pañchatantra.

Fables.

An early work, Bṛihat-Kathā by Guṇāḍhya (1st or 2nd c. A.D.), is now lost, but its substance exists in two later versions. These are Kshemendra's Bṛihat-Kathāmañjarī and Somadeva's Kathā-sarit-sāgara, both belonging to the eleventh century A. D. The latter is a massive work about one fourth the size of Mahābhārata. Other well-known works of this class are Vetāla-Pañcha-Viṁśati, Siṁhāsana-dvātriṁśikā and Śuka-Saptati.

Besides the general secular literature mentioned above there were others of a technical character. Lexicons, grammar, dramaturgy and books on poetics, too numerous to mention in detail, have deservedly received a high recognition. Historical literature was least developed in ancient India. Beside Harsha-Charita and

Technical literature.

Historical literature.

Gauḍavaho mentioned above, reference may be made to six other similar works, viz. Vikramāṅkadeva-Charita, or the life of the later Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI, by the Kashmirian poet Bilhaṇa, Navasāhasāṅka-Charita or the life of the Mālava king Sindhurāja by Padmagupta (1000 A. D.), Bhoja-Prabandha or the life of the Paramāra king Bhoja by Ballāla, the Pṛithvīrāja-Raisa and Pṛithvīrāja vijaya, and Rāmacharita or the life of Rāmapāla, one of the last Pāla kings of Bengal, by Sandhyākara Nandī (12th c. A. D.). These works, though dealing with historical subjects, cannot be strictly called history in the modern sense of the term. The only work which can claim this character is Rājataraṅginī, a history of Kashmir written by Kalhaṇa in the 12th century A. D. There are, besides, many works containing royal genealogies which supply materials for history.

Politics and Economics.

But although history received but scant attention, the allied sciences of Politics and Economics reached a high degree of development. Many schools and individual writers flourished, but their works are mostly lost. Of the extant works

Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya is the best known. It is generally attributed to Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya, the famous minister of Chandragupta Maurya, but some think that it is a production of a much later date. It deals not only with Political Philosophy and administrative system, but also with International Law, military science, trade, commerce, industry, mining, metallurgy and sundry connected topics. The other well-known works are Kāmandakīya-Nīti and Śukra-Nīti.

Scientific literature.

In Mathematics and Astronomy Indian intellect reached a high level of success. The earliest scientific works were the Siddhāntas (4th c. A. D.) of which only a portion has survived. Of the later scholars who developed the science, the more well-known are Āryabhaṭa (born in 476 A. D.), Varāhamihira (6th c. A. D.), Brahmagupta (born in 598 A. D.) and Bhāskarāchāryya (born in 1114 A. D.). Great progress was also made in Physics and Chemistry.

Medical literature.

In medical science the Indians had made considerable progress. Charaka, the author of Charaka-Saṁhitā, was a contemporary of Kanishka. The next important name is that of Suśruta,

the author of the well-known Saṃhitā, who flourished earlier than fourth century A. D. Other well-known writers are Vāgbhaṭa and Chakrapāṇidatta (11th c. A. D.). Interesting medical treatises have been discovered in the deserts of Turkestan. The collection belongs probably to the fifth century A. D. and is known as the Bower Manuscript after its founder.

Miscellaneous.

Indian literature deals with sundry other subjects which cannot be noticed here in detail. The sexual science had a rich literature. There were treatises on horses, elephants, agriculture and horticulture, histrionic art, dancing, music (Saṅgītaratnākara), fine art and architecture (Māyamata). Even the arts of stealing and hawking had a literature. In short Sanskrit literature thoroughly represents the different phases of human thoughts and activities to which there is hardly any parallel except in quite modern times.

§ 3. The Jaina Canonical Literature.

Reference has already been made to the circumstances which divided the Jaina community into two rival sects, the Śvetāmbaras and the Digambaras, and led to the compilation

of the twelve Aṅgas by the former. The existing sacred texts, including these Aṅgas, thus belong exclusively to the Śvetāmbara sect, and were finally arranged in a council at Valabhī in the middle of the 5th century A. D. The texts were, however, based on those compiled in the council at Pāṭaliputra at the beginning of the third century B. C., and are thus ultimately traceable to Mahāvīra and his immediate disciples.

The sacred literature of the Svetāmbaras is written in a form of Prākṛita called Ārsha or Ardha-Māgadhī, and may be classified as follows :—

1. The twelve Aṅgas.
2. The twelve Upāṅgas.
3. The ten Prakīrṇas.
4. The six Chheda sūtras.
5. The four Mūlasūtras.
6. Miscellaneous texts, four in number.

1. The Twelve Angas.

1. The first Aṅga, Āyāraṁga-sutta (Āchārāṅgasūtra) deals with the rules of conduct which a Jaina monk was to follow. Minute prescriptions are laid down to safeguard the lives of

the least sentient beings, and great emphasis is laid upon the various forms of self-mortification. A monk should rather allow himself to be frozen to death than break his vow.

2. The second Aṅga, Sūyagaḍaṁga (Sūtrakṛitāṅga) is mainly devoted to a refutation of the heretic doctrines, with a view to enable the young Jaina monks to defend their faith against the arguments of the heretic teachers.

3-4. The third and fourth Aṅgas, Ṭhāṇaṁga (Sthānāṅga) and Samavāyaṁga, like Aṅguttaranikāya of the Buddhists, present the Jaina doctrines in an ascending numerical series.

5. The fifth Aṅga, the Bhagavatī, is one of the most important of Jaina canonical texts. It contains a comprehensive exposition of the Jaina doctrines, and gives a vivid description of the joys of heaven and the tortures of hell as conceived by the Jainas. One of the most important sections of the book contains legends about Mahāvīra and his predecessors and contemporaries. The fifth book, for example, contains an interesting account of Gosāla Makkhaliputta, the founder of the Ājīvika sect.

6. The sixth Aṅga, called Nāyādhammakahāo (Jñātādharmakathā) teaches the main principles

of the doctrine by means of parables, legends and stories.

7. The seventh Aṅga, Uvāsagadasāo (Upāsakadaśāh) narrates the story of ten rich merchants who were converted to Jaina faith, and having performed most rigorous ascetic practices, ultimately went to heaven.

8-9. The Aṁtagaḍadasāo (Antakṛiddaśāh) and Aṇuttarovavāiyadasāo (Anuttaraupapātikadaśāh), the eighth and ninth Aṅgas, contain stories of Jaina ascetics who 'saved their souls by following a course of rigorous self-torture,' leading to death. From literary point of view the texts are rather poor, their style being alike frigid, mechanical, and dreary in the extreme.'

10. Paṇhāvāgaraṇāiṁ (Praśnavyākaraṇāni) is a dogmatic treatise dealing with the ten precepts, ten prohibitions etc.

11. The eleventh Aṅga, Vivāgasuyaṁ (Vipākaśrutam) contains legends illustrating the consequences, after death, of good and bad deeds of a man done in this life.

12. The contents of the lost twelfth Aṅga Diṭṭhivāya (Dṛishṭivāda) are only imperfectly known from allusions in other texts. It seems

to have contained miscellaneous doctrines of a varied character.

To every one of these Aṅgas belongs one *Upāṅga*. The twelve Upāṅgas, however, possess very little literary interest, as their contents are mostly dogmatic and mythological in character. The second, Rāyāpasenaijja is of some literary merit, and contains a dialogue between the Jaina monk Kesi and a king Paesi (probably Prasenajit of Kosala). The fifth, sixth, and seventh Upāṅgas deal with Astronomy, Geography, Cosmology etc. The eighth Upāṅga Nirayāvalisuttam contains an interesting account of Ajātaśatru, but its historical authenticity is very doubtful.

The *ten Prakīrṇas*, as the name signifies (Prakīrṇna = scattered), deal with various doctrinal matters and are written in verse.

The *six Chhedasūtras*, like the Vinaya-piṭaka of the Buddhists, deal with disciplinary rules for monks and nuns, and illustrate them by various legends. The best known work is Kalpasūtra attributed to Bhadrabāhu, who was the sixth *thera* (head of the church) after Mahāvīra, and flourished about 170 years after the latter's death. Kalpasūtra forms a part of

the fourth Chhedasūtra and consists of three sections. The first, Jina-charita describes the lives of the Jinas, particularly of Mahāvīra, in a grandiloquent style. The second, Therāvalī, gives a list of the different Jaina schools, their branches and their founders. The third section deals with the rules to be observed by the monks. There is also another Kalpasūtra which forms the fifth Chhedasūtra and is looked upon as the principal treatise on the rules of conduct of the Jaina monks and nuns.

The *four Mūlasūtras* are very valuable Jaina texts. The first, the Uttarajjhayaṇa (Uttarādhyayanasūtra), forms, as a piece of religious poetry, one of the most important portions of the canon, and contains parables, maxims, ballads and dialogues.

Among the separate canonical texts which do not belong to any group, mention may be made of Nandisutta (Nāndīsūtra) and Aṇuogadāra (Anuyogadvāra) which are encyclopaedic texts, containing accounts of the different branches of knowledge pursued by the Jaina monks. This is not confined to religious matters but also refers to poetics, Arthaśāstra, Kāmaśāstra etc.

4. The Non-Canonical Jaina Literature.

In the field of non-canonical literature, mention must first be made of commentaries to the canonical texts. The oldest of these, called Nijjuttis (Niryuktis), may be traced as far back as the time of Bhadrabāhu. These were later developed into elaborate *bhāshyas* and *Chūrṇis* written in Prākṛita and Ṭikās and Vṛittis written in Sanskrit.

Commentaries.

One of the most famous commentators was Haribhadra who obtained great celebrity as a scholar and a poet. He flourished in the second half of the ninth century A. D. and is reputed to have composed 1444 works. Three other well-known commentators, Sāntisūri, Devendragaṇi and Abhayadeva flourished in the 11th century A. D. These commentaries, while preserving historical or semi-historical traditions of old, also contain quite a large number of legends and stories which are evidently of later origin. Indeed legends and fables form quite a prominent feature of the Jaina literature and there are many independent works containing single stories or collections of the same. Some of these are mentioned below :—

Single Stories.

(1) Kālakāchārya-Kathānaka—It is looked upon as very old and gives a legendary account of the conquest of Ujjayinī by the Śakas.

(2) Uttama-Charitra-Kathānaka—A story containing episodes, full of remarkable adventure.

(3-4) Champaka-Śreshṭhi-Kathānaka, and Pāla-Gopāla-Kathānaka ; written by Jinakīrtisūri in the middle of the 15th century.

Collection of Stories.

(1) Samyaktva-Kaumudī—It describes how a merchant and his eight wives attained samyaktva (perfection) in religion.

(2) Kathākośa—A rich mine of stories some of which have travelled beyond the boundaries of India. It contains the Jaina version of the Nala-Damayantī episode of Mahābhārata.

(3) Antarakathā-saṁgraha by Rājaśekhara (14th c. A. D.)

(4) Kathāmahodadhi by Somachandra (15th c. A. D.)

(5) Kathāratnākara of Hemavijaya (16th c. A. D.)

The Jainas further possess an extensive poetic literature of what are called *Charitras* and *Prabandhas*. The former narrate the stories of Tirthaṅkaras and mythical sages, while the latter give the story of Jaina monks and laymen who flourished in historical times. As these books are didactic in character, they should be regarded rather as collections of edifying stories grouped round an individual than a biography in the true sense of the term. The Charitras contain the story of individuals or the story of all the holy sages. One of the most famous works of this last type is Trishashṭiśalākāpurushacharita (lives of 63 best men) of Hemachandra.

Hemachandra.

The name of Hemachandra stands foremost among the Jaina authors. He was a versatile genius, and excelled in grammar, lexicography, poetics and metrics, in addition to Jaina religious teachings. He was born at Dhundhūka, a town in the neighbourhood of Ahmedabad, in the year 1089 A. D and died at the advanced age of 84 (1172 A. D.). Most of his life he spent at the capital of Gujarat under the patronage of the Chaulukya king Jayasiṁha Siddharāja (1094—1143 A. D.) and his successor Kumārapāla (1143—c. 1170 A. D).

Kumārapāla was converted to the Jaina faith by Hemachandra, and with the zeal of a new convert he tried his best to establish Jainism firmly in his kingdom. He prohibited slaughter of animals, erected Jaina temples and patronised the literary men of the Jaina sect. It was during his reign that Hemachandra wrote his famous biography of 63 good men, mentioned above, which ranks as a Mahākāvya among the Jainas. The book is divided into ten *parvas* and the last *parva*, Mahāvīra-charita, dealing with the life of Mahāvīra, is naturally regarded as very important. But more valuable still, from the point of view of literary history, is the appendix to this book, 'Pariśishṭaparvan' or Sthavirāvali-Charita, the biography of the earliest teachers of Jainism, whose names and order of succession may be regarded as historical. The stories themselves have seldom any historical value, but they have preserved modified version of those known from other sources, sometimes beyond the boundaries of India.

Lists of Jaina teachers are also furnished in various Paṭṭāvalis, and their history in the Gurvāvalīsūtra of Dharmasāgaragaṇi and the Therāvalī of Merutuṅga. The Prabhāvaka-

Charitra of Prabhāchandra and Pradyumnasūri (c. 1250 A.D.) gives the story of 22 Jaina teachers including Hemachandra himself.

There are also semi-historical works like Prabandha-Chintāmaṇi of Merutuṅga (1306 A.D.) and the Prabandha-kośa of Rājaśekhara (1349 A. D.) in which groups of legends are centred round historical persons, including Jaina teachers and kings like Bhoja, Vikramāditya, Śilāditya etc.

The Digambaras sometimes style the Charitras as Purāṇas, e.g. Padmacharita or Padmapurāṇa by Vimalasūri. There is also a Mahāpurāṇa, written partly by Jinasena and partly by his disciple Guṇabhadra, which contains, like Brāhmaṇical Purāṇas, an account of the various rites and ceremonies. Jinasena is also the author of Harivaṁśapurāṇa, which was completed in 784 A. D. The Jainas possess many prose romances. Mention may be made of 'Samaraichchakahā' of Haribhadra, and Upamitibhavaprapañchākathā of Siddharshi (906 A.D.).

The Jaina literature also contains a large number of romances in poems. Bāṇa's Kādambarī served as the model of Somadeva's 'Yaśa-

stilaka' (959 A.D.) and Dhanapāla's Tilakamañjarī (970 A.D.). The poet Harichandra wrote a Mahākāvya (Epic) called Dharmaśarmābhyudaya in imitation of Māgha's Śiśupālavadha. There is an interesting poem called Nemidūta by Vikrama in which the last line of every stanza is taken from Kālidāsa's Meghadūta. There are also other epic poems independently written, such as Malayasundarīkathā, Yaśodhara-charita of Kanakasena Vādirāja (10th c. A. D.) and Mrigāvatī-charitra of Maladhāri-Devaprabha (13th c. A.D.).

Kāvyas.

The Jaina literature is rich in religious lyrics. Mention may be made of Bhaktāmara-stotra of Mānatuṅga, Pavayanasāra (Pravachanasāra) of Kundakunda (7th c. A.D.), Uvaesamālā of Dharmadāsa, Śriṅgāravairāgya-taraṅginī of Somaprabha (1276 A.D.), and Gāthākośa, an anthology by Munichandrasūri (c. 1122 A.D.).

Lyrics.

This brief sketch of Jaina literature may be concluded by a reference to a few other writers who are held in high estimation by the Jainas.

Famous writers.

1. Umāsvāti or Umāsvāmin is reputed to have composed no less than 500 works. His

Tattvārthādhigamasūtra, looked upon as authority both by the Digambaras as well as the Śvetāmbaras, deals with cosmology, metaphysics and the ethics of the Jainas. Another of his works Srāvaka-prajñapti gives a systematic exposition of the Jaina religion mainly intended for the lay followers. He probably flourished in the 7th c. A.D.

2. Amitagati, the author of Subhāshitaratna-samdoha and Dharmapariksha, flourished during the latter part of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century A. D. His books contain a severe attack against the Brāhmanical religion, particularly the caste system. It is noteworthy that he reproduces many episodes from the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata in a distorted version.

3. Chāmunḍa-Mahārāja composed in 978 A.D. his Chāritrasāra, which deals with ethical principles of the Digambaras.

4. Śāntisūri's 'Jivaviyāra' is a remarkable work, dealing with Theology, Zoology, Botany, Anthropology, and Mythology at one and the same time.

CHAPTER XV.

The System of Education.

The extensive literature described above is the visible product of a rational system of education which had no parallel in the history of the ancient world. The importance of education was realised in India from very early times, and utmost emphasis was laid upon the acquisition of knowledge. The educational institutions were many and varied in character. In its simplest form it was the gathering of one or more students in the house of a teacher. The students were brought up as members of the household and they looked upon the teacher and his wife as their father and mother. As regards tuition fees, the practice varied. In some cases no fee was taken except something voluntarily given at the end. In other cases, the sons of rich men paid a lump sum to teachers as honorarium at the commencement of their study, while the poor students performed menial services in the teachers' house in lieu of paying fees.

Object of Education.

The object of this system of education was threefold; the acquisition of knowledge, the inculcation of social duties and religious rites, and, above all, the formation of character. All these three aims were kept distinctly in the forefront, but the greatest emphasis was laid upon the last. Even the greatest champion of Brāhmanism boldly laid down that "neither the study of the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor any self-imposed restraint, nor austerities ever procure the attainment of rewards to a man whose heart is contaminated by sensuality." And the control of passions must be of a thorough-going character, for "when one among all the organs slips away (from control), thereby (man's) wisdom slips away from him, even as the water (flows) through the one (open) foot of a (water-carrier's) skin." In order to achieve this high ideal of perfect mastery over senses, a life of strict discipline was prescribed for the student. He had to shun sensual pleasures of all kinds, and lead a simple austere life. He was inspired by the high ideals of the teacher with whom he lived in close and intimate contact, and imbibed social and moral virtues

by his precept and example. At the same time the tender side of his nature was nourished, and domestic virtues developed by the sweet and affectionate relationship with the wife and sons of the teacher.

Subjects of Instruction.

The subjects of instruction were fairly comprehensive, and included not only literature, both sacred and secular, with its accessories, Grammar, Logic and Philosophy, but also medical and military science, divination, magic and mechanical arts of all descriptions. The practical character of the teaching in science is well illustrated by the story of Jīvaka. After he had studied medical science at Takshaśilā for seven years his teacher adopted the following device in order to put his knowledge to the test. "Take this spade," said he, "and seek round about Takshaśilā a *yojana* on every side, and whatever plant you see which is not medicinal, bring it to me." Jīvaka accordingly walked round the city with a spade in hand but did not see anything that was not medicinal. When he reported this to his teacher, the latter was satisfied about his pupil's learning and permitted him to go home.

Takshaśilā (Taxila) was the most famous seat of learning in ancient India till the rise of Nālandā in the fifth century A. D. It had many famous teachers, and attracted students not only from all parts of India but also from other parts of the world.

There were other cities besides Takshaśilā which grew to be important seats of learning. Sometimes hundreds of students gathered round a teacher in these cities and were maintained at public expense. In some cases the teacher found the surroundings of the city life to be hindrances to proper education of his students, and retired to a solitary place. There the teacher lived in humble huts with his students, and maintained a precarious living with the assistance of their kinsfolk. As soon, however, as the reputation of the teacher spread abroad, the public help placed them above all wants. From these humble beginnings arose important institutions like the University of Nālandā, the crest-jewel of the educational institutions in the whole of Asia.

Origin of Universities.

It is difficult for us to realise at this distance of time the position and achievements of this

famous university of old. Advanced students from different parts of Asia flocked to it in order to complete their education, and no body without a Degree of Nālandā was thought much of in the educated world.

Nālandā.

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang studied at Nālandā for several years and has left a short but impressive account of its magnificence. 'There were thousands of similar institutions in India' says he, 'but none comparable to Nālandā in grandeur. There were 10,000 students who studied various subjects, including religious literature both Buddhist and Brāhmanical, and discourses were given from 100 pulpits every day. Piety of generations of kings not only adorned the place with magnificent buildings, both residential and lecture halls, but supplied all the material necessaries of this vast concourse of the teachers and the taught. The revenues of about 100 villages were remitted for this purpose, and two hundred householders in these villages supplied in turn the daily needs of the inmates.' The Chinese pilgrim aptly remarks: "Hence the students here, being so abundantly supplied, do not require to ask for the four requisites,

clothes, food, bedding and medicine. This is the source of the perfection of their studies, to which they have arrived."

Hiuen Tsang was impressed by the atmosphere of learning that prevailed at Nālandā. "The day is not sufficient for asking and answering profound questions. From morning till night they engage in discussion ; the old and the young mutually help one another."

Nālandā was meant for advanced students only, and the candidates for admission had to pass a severe preliminary test. Hiuen Tsang says that the teachers and students were men of the highest ability and talent, and their fame rapidly spread through distant regions. Learned men from different cities came in large number to settle their doubts, and the students of Nālandā were sure of honour and renown, wherever they went. In a word, the University of Nālandā was the embodiment of the highest ideal of education, and it was the visible monument of the role which India played as the teacher of Asia.

Nālandā continued as an important centre of learning down to the latest days of Hindu independence. Throughout this period thousands

of colleges flourished all over India and imparted education in all branches of study. These were maintained, sometimes by pious donations and sometimes at public expense, for the Indians never hesitated to loosen their purse strings for purposes of education. The type of men turned out by these educational institutions may be best described in the words of Hiuen Tsang. 'When they have finished their education and have attained thirty years of age, then their character is formed and their knowledge ripe. There are some deeply versed in antiquity, who devote themselves to elegant studies and live apart from the world, and retain the simplicity of their character. These rise above mundane presents and are as insensible to renown as to the contempt of the world. Their name having spread afar, the rulers appreciate them highly, but are unable to draw them to the court. The chief of the country honours them on account of their (mental) gifts, and the people exalt their fame and render them universal homage. Forgetting fatigue they expatiate in the arts and sciences; seeking for wisdom while "relying on perfect virtue" they count not 150 miles a long journey.

Results of Education.

Though their family be in affluent circumstances, such men make up their mind to be like the vagrants and get their food by begging as they go about. With them there is honour in knowing truth and there is no disgrace in being destitute."

It is not every age, it is not every nation, that can boast of the type of men described by Hiuen Tsang. But the effect of the wonderful system of education was also seen in the high level of average men in ancient India. The most unimpeachable testimony on this point is furnished by the foreign travellers who visited India from time to time. Thus Megasthenes writes.—"They live happily enough, being simple in their manners, and frugal. They never drink wine except at sacrifices. The simplicity of their laws and their contracts is proved by the fact that they seldom go to law. They have no suits about pledges or deposits, nor do they require either seals or witnesses, but make their deposits and confide in each other. Their houses and property they generally leave unguarded. Truth and virtue they hold alike in esteem. Hence they accord no special privileges to the old unless they possess superior wisdom." Such is the verdict

of a Greek statesman in the 3rd century B. C. Let us now turn to the account of a Chinese scholar in the 7th century A. D. Hiuen Tsang tells us.—"The Kshatriyas and Brahmans are clean-handed and unostentatious, pure and simple in life and very frugal. They are pure of themselves and not from compulsion. With respect to the ordinary people, although they are naturally light-minded, yet they are upright and honourable. In money matters they are without craft, and in administering justice they are considerate. They are not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct, and are faithful to their oaths and promises. In their rules of government there is remarkable rectitude, whilst in their behaviour there is much gentleness and sweetness." Thus according to the standards both of the East as well as of the West, Indian character was high and honourable. This was undoubtedly the result of the grand system of education which they had evolved,—a system which produced the most comprehensive literature and the best type of men.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRADE, COMMERCE, ART AND COLONISATION.

§1. Trade and Commerce.

During the period under review trade and commerce was in a flourishing condition. Not only was there a coasting trade between different parts of India, but a regular mercantile traffic was carried on between India on the one hand and the Eastern and Western countries on the other. Ships plied between ports on the Bay of Bengal and those in Further India, islands in the Indian Archipelago and China. Tāmralipti, represented by modern Tamluk in Bengal, was a famous port, and we read of many voyages to it from the Chinese ports. The people of Kaliṅga and the Tamil states had also a great share in this traffic, and there was constant communication between the eastern coast of India and the Indian colonies beyond the sea. Similarly there was a brisk trade between the western coast of India and the western countries such as Western Asia,

Maritime trade.

Africa and Europe. Fa-Hien who came to this country in the 5th century A. D. sailed from Tāmralipti to Java and again from Java to China in Indian merchantmen. Hiuen Tsang also refers to both inland and foreign trade of India. Referring to Surāshṭra he says, "the men all derive their livelihood from the sea and engage in commerce and exchange of commodities". Of the people of another kingdom in the west he says, "commerce is their principal occupation." From ninth century A. D. we get accounts of Indian trade from the Arab writers, for at this period the Arabians took a leading part in the trade of the Western world. Indian inscriptions also refer to the activities of merchants. Numerous clay-seals, discovered in the ruins of the ancient city of Vaiśāli, bear the names of a large number of traders, bankers and merchants, and refer to their corporate organisation. Dr. Bloch who discovered them concludes that "something like a modern Chamber of Commerce existed in Northern India, at some big trading centre, perhaps at Pāṭaliputra". Similarly the merchants of southern India were also distinguished for their corporate organisations. We read of

Mercantile Organisations.

"organisation of 505 merchants", and "an assembly of merchants from 18 sub-divisions of 79 districts meeting together in a conference". The Banañja Community had a most powerful organisation embracing merchants of different classes from distant parts of India. They are frequently referred to, and sometimes highly praised, in contemporary records. We learn from one of them "that they were brave men born to wander over many countries, penetrating regions of the six continents by land and water routes, and dealing in various articles such as horses, elephants, precious stones, perfumes and drugs either wholesale or in retail." Some of these trade-corporations enjoyed large prerogatives and political rights.

§2. Wealth and Prosperity.

The highly flourishing trade and commerce made the country enormously wealthy, and the reputation of the riches of India spread far and wide. Hiuen Tsang says with regard to Valabhī that "there are some hundred houses (families) or so who possess a hundred *lakhs*. The rare and valuable products of distant regions are here stored in

great quantities." Similar accounts of the enormous wealth of India are given by the Muhammadan writers. "The immense wealth," "plenty of gold" etc. of India are referred to in general terms by the Arab travellers of the ninth and following centuries. Again, the Arab historians refer to the enormous quantity of wealth plundered by the Muhammadan conquerors from India. Thus we are told that after the fall of Multan, Muhammad bin Kasim obtained a treasure amounting to thirteen thousand and two hundred *mans* weight of gold in one temple alone. Again, when Sultan Mahmud conquered Bhim-Nagar (Kangra), a contemporary writer records that the "treasures and precious jewels accumulated in it had attained such an amount that the backs of camels would not carry it, nor vessels contain it, nor writer's hands record it, nor the imagination of an arithmetician conceive it." Coming to details he says: "The treasures were laden on the backs of as many camels as they could procure and the officers carried away the rest. The stamped coins amounted to seventy thousand thousand royal *dirhams*, and the gold and silver ingots amounted to seven hundred thousand four hundred *mans*

in weight." The Sultan on reaching Ghazni spread his booty on a carpet in the court-yard of his palace, and the foreign ambassadors assembled to see the wealth which they had never yet even read of in books of the ancients, and which had never been accumulated by kings of Persia or of Rūm, or even by Karun who had only to express a wish and God granted it." Such is the description of the wealth of a single temple which was by no means the richest in India, for the same writer says with regard to the riches plundered at Thaneswar that "it is impossible to recount them." Similar stories of riches untold are narrated with regard to the sack of other cities. By the treaty between Alauddin Khilji and the Yādava king of Devagiri, the latter paid, among other things, "600 *maunds* of pearls, two of jewels and 1000 of silver." These accounts may be exaggerated to some extent, but they suffice to give a general idea of the immense riches of the country.

§3. Art and Architecture.

The enormous wealth of the country led to the development of art and architecture. The

Gupta period, remarkable for the religious and intellectual renaissance, also witnessed brilliant developments in this respect. Unfortunately, very few of the structures of this period have survived the ravages of foreign conquest, but the few that remain display the grandeur of the Gupta art. Reference may be made to the temple at Bhitargaon in the Cawnpur district which is "remarkable for vigorous and well-designed sculpture in *Terra Cotta*." Dr. V. Smith who has made a special study of Gupta art observes as follows:—

Gupta Art.

"Fragments, including some beautiful sculptures, indicate that magnificent stone temples of Gupta age stood at Sārnāth near Benares and elsewhere. Sārnāth has proved to be a treasure house of Gupta figures and reliefs, among which are many of high quality dating from the time of Samudragupta and his successors. The Gupta artists and craftsmen were no less capable in working metals. The pillar at Delhi, made of wrought iron in the time of Samudragupta, is a marvel of metallurgical skill. The art of casting copper statues on a large scale by the *cire perdue* process was

practised with conspicuous success. A copper image of Buddha about 80 feet high was erected at Nālandā in Bihar at the close of the sixth century ; and the fine Sultanganj Buddha, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, is still to be seen in the Museum at Birmingham. It dates from the reign of Chandragupta II. The highest development of the arts may be assigned to the fifth century, the age of Kālidāsa, in the reigns of Chandragupta II and his son. Two of the finest caves at Ajantā, Nos. XVI and XVII, were excavated in the same century of brilliant achievement. It is needless to dwell upon the high merits of the paintings in the Ajantā caves which are now freely recognized. A Danish artist, who has published a valuable professional criticism, declares that 'they represent the climax to which genuine Indian art has attained' ; and that 'everything in these pictures from the composition as a whole to the smallest pearl or flower testifies to depth of insight coupled with the greatest technical skill'.

The closely related frescoes at Sigiriya in Ceylon were executed between A. D. 479 and 497, just after the close of the reign of Skandagupta."

The artistic achievements of the period

following the Guptas are also very remarkable. There are still some fine temples at Kashmir and the ruins of many others. 'Many beautiful temples of granite, and large irrigation lakes in hill-clad valleys with gigantic stone embankments still testify to the architectural skill of the Chandellas'. The Jain temples on Mount Abu, "built wholly of white marble, are famous as unsurpassed models of the wonderful Rajputana style." In the east the temples of Purī, Bhuvaneśvar and Kanārak are living monuments of the high architectural achievements of ancient Orissa. The many fine images of gods and goddesses still testify to the existence of a flourishing school of sculptors in Magadha and Bengal under the Pālas and Senas.

Post-Gupta Art.

We get a vivid idea of the splendour and magnificence of these temples from the following account of the temples of Mathura by Al utbi, Secretary to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.

"In the middle of the city there was a temple larger and finer than the rest, which can neither be described nor painted. The Sultan thus wrote respecting it :—"If any should wish to construct a building equal to this, he should not

be able to do it without expending an hundred thousand thousand red *dināṛs*, and it would occupy two hundred years, even though the most experienced and able workmen were employed." Among the idols there were five made of red gold, each five yards high, fixed in the air without support. In the eyes of one of these idols there were two rubies of such value, that if any one were to sell such as are like them, he would obtain fifty thousand *dināṛs*. On another, there was a sapphire purer than water and more sparkling than crystal; the weight was four hundred and fifty *miskāls*. The two feet of another idol weighed four thousand four hundred *miskals*, and the entire quantity of gold yielded by the bodies of these idols, was ninety-eight thousand three hundred *miskāls*. The idols of silver amounted to two hundred, but they could not be weighed without breaking them into pieces and putting them into scales. The Sultán gave orders that all temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire, and levelled with the ground."

In South India there developed an altogether different architectural style from the seventh century A. D. The Pallavas were great builders

South Indian Art.

and their most famous works are the seven monolithic temples, popularly called Rathas or Pagodas, at Mamallapuram, 35 miles south of Madras. They also erected fine structural temples at Kāñchī or Conjeeveram. The Cholas, who wrested the political supremacy from the Pallavas also inherited their zeal for architecture, and they erected some fine and magnificent temples at Tanjore and Trichinopoly, the most notable specimens being the "Great Temple" at Tanjore, and another at Gangaikoṇḍapuram (Trichinopoly district).

The Chālukya and Hoysala art.

The architectural style in the Deccan was intermediate between those of Northern and Southern India. The most notable works of this style belong to the Chālukyas, the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Hoysalas. The Chālukyas erected some fine temples at Pattadakal and Badami. Of the many fine works of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the Kailāsa temple at Ellora is undoubtedly the most remarkable. It is a complete temple cut out of a rock. An entire hill-side was cut off to the extent of 160 ft. by 280 ft. and was converted into a magnificent monolithic temple

with spacious halls and finely carved pillars. Fergusson refers to it as "one of the most singular and interesting monuments of architectural art in India," and V. Smith calls it "the most extensive and sumptuous of the rock-cut shrines," and "the most marvellous architectural freak in India." The Hoysala temples at Halebid, Belur and many other localities in modern Mysore are characterised by a richly carved base or plinth, supporting a polygonal or star-shaped temple. The wealth and variety of sculptures on the base is unrivalled in any building, ancient or modern, and the Hoysala temples are appropriately referred to "as one of the most marvellous exhibitions of human labour to be found even in the patient east." There are other examples of fine art and architecture in ancient India too numerous to be mentioned in detail.

§4. Indian Colonies in the Far East.

The artistic genius of India was carried far beyond her shore to her distant colonies to which we may now briefly refer.

It is a curious fact that while India lost her independence by the Muhammadan invasion,

Indian kingdoms continued to flourish in the Far East. We have already referred to the origin of Indian Colonies in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Malay Peninsula, Annam and the islands of Indian Archipelago. During the period under review powerful kingdoms were established in these places, some of which survived till quite recent times. It is obviously impossible to deal with the history of these kingdoms separately in a hand-book on the history of India, but it is interesting to note that cities and kingdoms with Indian names such as Champā, Dvārāvatī, Vijayapura, Amarāvatī, Kāmboja, Kaliṅga and Ayodhyā flourished on all sides, and were ruled by Hindu kings long after the Muhammadans had firmly settled themselves in India. As noticed above, the cultural conquest of India in these regions was far more complete and far more important than political or commercial conquest, and this is testified to even to-day by the number of religious monuments built on Indian models. The most notable of the groups of monuments that still adorn these far off colonies of ancient Indians are the temples of Angkor-Vat in Cambodia, and the famous Boro-Budur in Java.

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the grandeur and magnitude of these wonderful works of art without a detailed description accompanied by profuse illustrations such as is out of question here. The temple of Angkor-Vat "is almost an exact square and measures nearly an English mile each way." Its general plan is "that of a series of courts each rising within and above the last, and this gradual rise, by which the pilgrim is led not only through colonnade after colonnade but up flight after flight of stairs, each leading to something higher but invisible from the base, imparts to the Cambodian temples a sublimity and aspiring grandeur which is absent from the mysterious halls of Dravidian shrines."

Angkor-Vat.

The Boro-Budur monument, it has been aptly remarked, "deserves to be included in any list of the wonders of the world". "It is a seven storeyed structure, the basement measuring over 400 ft. across. It is not, however, either for its dimensions or the beauty of its architectural design that Boro-Budur is so remarkable, as for the sculptures that line its galleries, which, if

Boro-Budur.

arranged consecutively in a row, would extend over nearly three miles of ground."

It is admitted on all hands that the inspiration of these monuments is purely Indian, and this is amply evidenced by the fact that the sculptures depict scenes from Buddhist or Brāhmanical books. Fergusson held that the builders of Boro-Budur migrated from Western India. According to him "the character of the sculptures and the details of the ornamentation in caves at Ajantā, Nasik and other places are so nearly identical with what is found in the Javan monument, that the identity of the workmanship is unmistakable."

CHAPTER XVII.

Hindu Society.

We have had occasion to notice in a previous chapter that one of the chief distinctions of Indo-Aryan culture was its great power of assimilation and absorption. We have seen, how, not only the aborigines with whom the Indo-Aryans first came into contact in this country but also the foreign hordes like the Greeks, Parthians, Sakas and Kushānas were gradually absorbed in the vast Indian society. To this list we may now add the Hūnas and the Gurjaras. For, inspite of their pretended pedigrees reaching back to mythical heroes of Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, it has now been satisfactorily established that the Hūnas, Gurjaras and other allied tribes who invaded India in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. form important elements among the Rajput population. The imperial Pratīhāras, for example, who were admittedly of Gurjara stock, re-appear in mediaeval history as the Parihāras, one of the four famous "Agnikulas"

The Catholicity of the Hindus.

i.e. the Rajput clans who are alleged to have issued out of the fire-pit at Mount Abu.

It is thus quite clear that at the beginning of the period under review the Indo-Aryan society had the same catholicity as of old. The last crowning act of this spirit was the absorption of Buddhism by the Hindu society to which reference has already been made.

Their power of assimilation also remained unabated. They drew inspiration from Persian paintings and derived considerable help from the Romans in the development of Astronomy.

In strange contrast, however, with this liberal catholicity of old times, we find the growth of a spirit of narrow exclusiveness which was destined to bring utter ruin to the Hindus. This aspect of their civilisation is forcefully described by Alberuni in the following words :—

Growth of narrowness.

"All the fanaticism of the Hindus is directed against those who do not belong to them, against all foreigners. They call them Mlechchhas *i.e.* impure, and forbid having any connection with them, be it by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating and drinking with them, because thereby they think they

would be polluted. They consider as impure anything which touches the fire and the water of a foreigner; and no household can exist without these two elements. They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it, or was inclined to their religion. This, too, renders any connection with them quite impossible and constitutes the widest gulf between us and them.

"The Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited and stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste, among their own people, still much more, of course, from any foreigner. According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs, and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever. Their haughtiness is such that, if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khurāsān and Persis, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar. If they

travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not as narrow-minded as the present generation is."

The sad picture of narrowness and bigotry so brilliantly sketched by the shrewd and critical Arab scholar is an unerring sign of the degradation of the Hindu society in the 11th century A.D. It is all the more disheartening if we remember the previous history of the Indians in their relation with the outside world. Well might an historian exclaim "From what heighth fallen into what low pit thou seest."

Evil effects of the caste system.

In looking out for a cause for so great a change our attention is immediately drawn to the caste system which had assumed a rigid form since the revival of Brāhmanical religion. It has already been noted that in the Vedic period society was divided into distinct classes such as the Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. This was neither unusual nor productive of great evils. Similar distinctions are still observable in European society. Compare, for example the Lords, the Clergy, the Middle class and the Labourers in England. But these

class distinctions are a long way off from the rigid system of caste, and there were many intermediate stages between the two. The essential features of the caste system, *viz.* the ascendancy of the Brāhmaṇas, the determination of caste by the accident of birth, and the prohibition of inter-dining and intermarriage between different castes, are all matters of slow growth. None of these was sanctioned by ancient scriptures and none of them was established without a hard struggle which continued almost upto the end of the Hindu period. In the end, however, the Brāhmaṇas succeeded in spite of stubborn resistance of the Kshatriyas, and the decline and fall of Buddhism set the final seal to their supremacy. Once assured of their supreme position, the Brāhmaṇas set to work with a vigour, consistency and organisation which should have been reserved for a better cause. It is difficult to name any social change more miraculous than what the Brāhmaṇas had accomplished. Taking their stand on ancient śāstras or sacred scriptures, they introduced new elements into society which were utterly against the spirit and letter of those very śāstras. Thus, inspite of practical

instances to the contrary, recorded in ancient books, they enunciated the bold doctrine that none but an issue of Brāhmaṇa parents could become a Brāhmaṇa. In the face of the fact that even the late Manusaṁhitā approves of certain forms of intermarriage between different castes, marriage was strictly confined within the caste. But the strangest phenomenon was reserved to the last. Though the sacred literature permits the cooking of food, even sacrificial food, by a śūdra, and although no ancient books, having the least pretension to a sacred character, prohibit inter-dining among different castes, elaborate regulations were laid down for controlling 'food' and 'touch', and the Brāhmaṇas were polluted if they even crossed the shadow of a low caste !

Slowly but steadily the Brāhmaṇas managed to degrade the rest of the society to a state of marked inferiority and subordination. The Kshatriyas wielded royal authority and hence enjoyed some amount of social prestige, but this was gradually counterbalanced by more and more restricting the rank and title of Kshatriyas to a microscopic minority. The Vaiśyas were similarly dealt with. Ultimately

the Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas practically vanished from Indian society, and their descendants, divided among the large number of professional castes we see arround us to-day, sank into the position of the Śūdras, to which the descendants of various aboriginal races, incorporated in Aryan society, had already been consigned, as so many different castes.

Thus we find in Manusaṁhitā that the Ābhīras, Mallas, Khasas, Andhras, Vaidehas and Magadhas are described as castes, whereas they were really famous tribes. Similarly, the weavers, potters, carpenters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths etc. originally denoted groups of men following those professions, but they were later on stereotyped as castes. This took place later than the age of Manusaṁhitā, for they are there included in the list of professions and not of castes. But in Manusaṁhitā we find a systematic attempt of explaining the origin of this motley group of castes by definite and comprehensive theory. These castes are divided into two categories. The castes of the first category are said to have been formed by those Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas, who were at various times degraded to the rank of Śūdras for

omitting their sacred duties or failure to consult the Brāhmaṇas. The origin of castes of the second category is explained by what is known as the theory of Mixed Caste.

According to this theory the issue of a marriage between different castes formed altogether a separate caste, and the different castes were derived by mixed marriages among the original four castes and the resultant sub-castes. The theory bears the stamp of absurdity on its very face and need only be stated to be rejected in scorn. Fancy, it seeks to explain the origin of the Chīnas, Yavanas, Śakas, Sātvatas and Ābhīras in one of these ways ! Nor is the theory, when carefully scrutinised, always complimentary to the Brāhmaṇas. The Chaṇḍālas, for example, are said to have been the offspring of Śūdra father and Brāhmaṇa mother. As the number of Chaṇḍālas is considerably larger than that of the Brāhmaṇas, are we to believe that the Brāhmaṇa girls were more attached to the Śūdras than to men of their own caste, although there could be no legal marriage between the two ? But whatever we might think of the theory, the resulting state of things was entirely satisfactory to the high pretensions of the

Brāhmaṇas. The position of honour now incontestably belonged to them, and as law-makers of society they were the arbiters of the destiny of the rest of the population. They practically monopolised all learning and culture. The Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas of old shared it with them, but there were hardly any remnants of them left in society, and those that were, were at the tender mercies of the Brāhmaṇas who could degrade them into Śūdra castes. The political conditions of the last three or four centuries also helped the Brāhmaṇas a great deal. The royal authority mainly rested in the hands of the descendants of the Hūṇas and Gurjaras like the Rajputs, or the aborigines of the soil recently incorporated in Aryan society like the Chandellas. These kings no doubt ranked as Kshatriyas, but they had no glorious traditions behind them, and their recent origin obliged them to look up to the Brāhmaṇas for the social prestige and status which was in the power of the Brāhmaṇas alone to give. These were, therefore, naturally subservient to the Brāhmaṇas who could always use them as lever against anybody who dared to contest their supremacy.

The Hindu society now resembled that unfortunate human being whose head and feet alone were active but whose intermediate limbs were maimed or paralysed. It is obvious that the one was as much capable of healthy growth and progress as the other. It is equally obvious that the Brāhmaṇas alone cannot be held responsible forth is lamentable state of things. After all, people get what they deserve. The Brāhmaṇas could not have asserted their ascendancy if the people possessed a manly spirit and vigour, and could tear asunder the chains of superstition by which they were bound to the perpetual servitude. Anyone who, not unnaturally, fails to realise how a gifted people like the Hindus could readily submit to the yoke of these superstitions, need only look around him to-day. He will see how a race of men, not inferior in moral and mental qualities to any on earth, is still bound down to those very shackles of superstition. He will see how inspite of the knowledge of the ancient Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Sūtras, and Smṛitis, millions of men in Bengal unwillingly submit to the dictates of a Brāhmaṇa writer of the 15th century, dictates which are in flagrant contrast with the injunctions of the

ancient sacred literature. He will be confronted with the strange spectacle of a people adhering neither to common sense nor to traditions of her best days, but bowing down with reverent awe to an all-devouring Moloch—the superstitious customs of degenerate days.

The evils that the caste system engendered cannot be overestimated. Its effect upon the arts and crafts of India has by no means been exaggerated a bit in the following eloquent denunciation by the late Mr. R. C. Dutt.

"The results were disastrous, so far as arts were concerned. Genius was impossible, except among priests and kings. Men held in a perpetual moral bondage and servitude never learnt to aspire after greatness and glory. Men to whom honour was impossible never learnt to deserve honour and distinction. In other countries a Cincinatus might leave his plough and wield the destinies of his nation, or a Robert Burns might give expression to a nation's sentiments in thoughts that breathe and words that burn; but in India the cultivator's fate was sealed, he could never break through the adamant wall of social rules. Among other people a sculptor, a painter or an

architect, like Phidias or Praxiteles, like Raphael or Michael Angelo, might, by the force of his genius, win the highest honour in his country. But in India that highest honour was the exclusive privilege of the Brāhmana and the Kshatriya, honour to an architect or to a sculptor was simply out of the question. Under healthier influences the humblest artisan or engineer might rise to be a Watt or a Stevenson, but in India the artisan and the engineer were chained by shackles of steel, which it was impossible for them to break. Held in comparative degradation and contempt, the artisan and the mechanic never learnt to soar beyond the fixed rules of their arts, and gave no indications of a great idea, a bold conception, a new invention or an original genius. Hindu architects covered India from Orissa and Ellora to Tanjore and Rameswaram with temples and edifices. The patience, the industry, the attention to minute details, the ingenuity, and the skill displayed in these works will bear comparison with those of any nation, ancient or modern, on the face of the earth. But the conception of a great architect, the genius of a true artist is often wanting in these

magnificent edifices. A Brāhmana poet in Ujjayinī has conceived a Sakuntalā in verse, but there is "no Sakuntalā in stone" among the millions of sculptured figures in India.

"By her position and her civilisation India should have been the mistress of the Indian Ocean, as Greece and Rome were of the Mediterranean; and a Hindu mercantile navy should have swept the seas from China to Egypt. But the genius of Brāhmanas and Kshatriyas did not descend to the art of navigation; civilized India depended on the rude Arabians for commerce with the West; and the imperfect maritime communication which the Hindus had with Sumatra, Java and China in the Buddhist period,—as we know from Fa Hian's pages, was soon forgotten, and it was considered a sin to cross the seas. Hindu genius struggled against the dishonour cast on arts, Hindu architects and sculptors and goldsmiths and weavers attained all that it was possible to attain, by skill and industry and ingenuity and long training; but the genius which marks the literature and thought of ancient India is absent in her industrial arts,

her mechanical inventions and her maritime enterprise."

But the results of the caste system were equally disastrous in other directions. The division of people into close compartments prevented the growth of national feeling. A Brāhmana of Bengal had more in common with a Brāhmana of Kanauj, than either had with a citizen or peasant of his own province. Like mediaeval Europe India was divided horizontally and not vertically. In Europe, however, the class interests were gradually subordinated to national interests, but the rigidity of the caste system in India kept the class interests perpetually alive, and true national sentiment was never awakened in the minds of the people. Above all, the caste system with its superstitious outgrowths and purificatory ceremonials brought about that narrowness of outlook and haughty exclusiveness which have been noticed by Alberuni. This exclusiveness, again, was in a way responsible for the political downfall of India. For it is the aloofness from the outer world which kept the Hindus ignorant of the development of science, particularly of military science, among other Asiatic nations, and

neither dogged obstinacy nor brilliant courage could make up for that deficiency. A careful study of the series of Muhammadan invasions which ultimately overwhelmed the Indian states leave the impression upon every mind that the Indian soldiers were not a whit inferior to the Muhammadans in respect of courage, valour and endurance, but they suffered defeat inspite of this, because the Hindus did not keep pace with the progress of military science abroad, and they were unaware of those military tactics in which their opponents excelled. It is true that the foreigners had conquered India even before, but their conquests seldom extended beyond the borderlands and were never of long duration. The Indians successfully contested their grounds and always succeeded in ultimately repelling the foreign foe. Their inability to do the same in the case of Muhammadan invasions, and the subjugation of the whole country by this foreign race, is a measure of their degradation which was brought about in no small degree by the system of caste. It may, of course, be argued that the caste is not the cause, but a phenomenon of the weakness and degradation of the people which made Muhammadan con-

quest possible. There is possibly a great deal of truth in this argument, but there can hardly be any doubt that the growth of caste and the degradation of people acted and reacted upon each other, and each stage in the development of caste system was but a milestone in the downward march of the Hindus to sure destruction.

But the caste system was not the only untoward feature of the society that the neo-Brahmanical religion had evolved. The lowering of woman as a class from the high position she had once enjoyed marked its degradation in no less conspicuous manner. This changed attitude is evident from the tone of Manu-Saṁhitā, the Veda of the Brahmanical revival. Manu has no doubt some honeyed phrases echoing the noble sentiments of old. We read, for example: "Women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law who desire their own welfare. Where women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields reward." But these sweet phrases are cast into shade by the practical

Degradation of woman as a class.

regulations recommended by the law-giver. The fundamental doctrine of women's perpetual subjection is boldly laid down: "In childhood, a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead, to her son: a woman must never be independent." The natural affectionate relation between husband and wife is completely marred by the studied inferiority in which women are placed. "Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure (elsewhere), or devoid of good qualities, (yet) a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife. She who shows disrespect to (a husband) who is addicted to some evil passion, is a drunkard or diseased, shall be deserted for three months, (and be) deprived of her ornaments and furniture." But the husband is not required to follow a similar line of conduct. For "she who drinks spirituous liquor, is of bad conduct, rebellious, diseased, mischievous or wasteful, may at any time be superseded (by another wife)"! Nay, more; the husband could supersede his wife on much less serious ground. "A barren wife may be superseded in the eighth year, she whose children (all) die

in the tenth, she who bears only daughters in the eleventh, but she who is quarrelsome, without delay." And the poor wife was to bear this degradation with stoic calmness; for "a wife who, being superseded, in anger departs from her husband's house, must either be constantly confined or cast off in the presence of the family." Sometimes she could even be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo. The poor wife was expected to follow her husband even in death by burning herself alive, but the husband 'having given sacred fires to his wife who dies before him, may marry again, and again kindle the fires.' Strangest of all, women who once even composed Vedic hymns were not allowed to study the Vedas and perform sacrificial rites.

Manu prohibited the remarriage of Hindu widows, but it is quite evident that such remarriage was prevalent in his time. Similarly, in other respects, too, the injunctions of Manu-Saṁhitā were probably a foretaste of what was expected to happen in future, rather than an indication of the actual circumstances in his time. But the deliberate attempt to degrade the position of women which is perceptible in

the Manu-Saṁhitā was destined to bear fruit at no distant date.

The iniquitous barrier which the Indians had raised between man and man, and man and woman, sapped the strength and vitality of national as well as domestic life. No wonder they fell an easy prey to a nation which not only preached but practised the universal brotherhood of man.

In conclusion I may repeat the memorable words of my illustrious country-man, the late Mr. R. C. Dutt, which should be read and re-read by every thoughtful Indian. "No nation has greater reasons to be proud of its past than the Hindus. But the proudest nations of the earth are at the same time those who are the most keenly alive to their shortcomings, and most eagerly assiduous in removing them; and greatness does not long survive where such endeavour is wanting. India, too, has had her shortcomings, and it is necessary that we should remember them and seek to remove them. And we should never forget that monopoly is hurtful to those who hold it, as to those who are excluded from it; and that a monopoly of learning and honour is the worst kind of

monopoly that the world has known. The nation is degraded under a permanent social subjection, and then drags down the monopolists in the common national ruin."

THE END.

APPENDIX I.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTES.

Introduction. I. For an interesting account of the Physical features of the country, cf. Camb. Hist. Ch. I. For further study of the subject, cf. Imperial Gazetteer of India.

II. The original texts referred to on p. 11 have all been published. The following are available in English version.

Harsha-Charita—Translated by Cowell and Thomas.

Rajatarangini— „ „ A. Stein.

For the Greek accounts cf. Mc. Crindle's translation of the original texts in 6 vols. and Schoff's Edition of the "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea." For the Chinese accounts cf.

1. Fa-Hien—Translated by Legge.
2. Hiuen Tsang „ „ S. Beal
   — „ „ Watters. (This is a better translation, but is generally in the nature of a summary rather than a running translation.)
3. I-tsing. Translated by J. Takakusu.

The book of Alberuni has been translated into English by E. Sachau.

As to Archaeology, the more important inscriptions are now published in Epigraphia Indica, a current Official Journal exclusively devoted to this purpose. Important inscriptions have also been edited in the past in antiquarian Journals such as "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (J. R. A. S.)", "Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal," (J. A. S. B.), "Indian Antiquary (Ind. Ant. or I. A.)" and "Journal of the Behar and Orissa Research Society (J. B. O. R. S.)." Reference may also be made to the numerous publications of the Archaeological Survey of India either in the shape of Annual Reports or special monographs on particular subjects.

As to coins, they are mainly dealt with in the following publications, though scattered references in antiquarian Journals are numerous.

1. A. Cunningham—Coins of Ancient India.
2. Series of articles on the coins of the Greeks, Sakas, Kushanas and Later Indo-Scythians contributed to Numismatic Chronicle by the same author, and also published separately.
3. Cunningham—Coins of Mediaeval India.
4. P. Gardner—Catalogue of the Coins of the Greek and Scythic kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum.
5. E. J. Rapson—Indian Coins.
6. R. B. Whitehead—Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore, Vol. I. (This deals with the Coins of the Greeks, Sakas, Parthians and Kushanas only.)
7. V. A. Smith—Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.
8. E. J. Rapson—Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, the Western Kshatrapas etc., in the British Museum.
9. J. Allan—Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties etc. in the British Museum.
10. Ancient Indian Numismatics (Carmichael Lectures, 1921) by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar.

The two following may be recommended as suitable handbooks for beginners.

1. R. D. Banerji—Prachina Mudra (In Bengali.)
2. C. J. Brown—The Coins of India (Heritage of India Series.)

Chapter 1. pp. 17-21.

Our knowledge of the history of India before the Aryan settlement is extremely vague, and the subject requires a treatment involving technical knowledge of pre-historic antiquities. Those who want to pursue the subject further may consult Imperial Gazetteer vol. II, Chap IV. (with the references contained therein), 'Pre-Historic India' by Panchanan Mitra, M. A., and Camb. Hist. pp. 612-615. A full bibliography is given on pp. 692-693 of the last mentioned work.

The recent discoveries at Mohen-jo-Daro are expected to throw fresh light on this subject and a monograph dealing adequately with the new finds is eagerly awaited.

For Dravidian civilisation and early South Indian History,

Cf. 1. S. K. Aiyangar—Beginnings of South Indian History.

2. Do —Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture.

3. R. K. Mukherji—Dravidian elements in Indian Polity. (Ashutosh Jubilee Volume III. part I p.125.)

4. Whitehead—The village Gods of South India.

5. Elmore—Dravidian Gods in modern Hinduism.

P. 23. A vast literature has grown up on the question of the original home of the Aryans, their migration and cognate questions. The earlier views on this subject are summarised in Muir's "Original Sanskrit Texts", Vol. II. Chap II. For the modern views, cf. articles on 'Aryan' and "Indo-European Language" in Encyclop. Britannica, Camb. Hist., Ch. III. and the references given there. The most important evidence recently brought to light is that of the Boghaz-Koi inscriptions dating from about 1400 B. C. which contain the names of familiar Vedic deities, Indra, Varuna, and the great twin brethren, the *Nasatyas*. The importance of this inscription for fixing the antiquity of Vedic Culture is indeed very great. Unfortunately the scholars are not unanimous in accepting the view that the gods mentioned above represent Vedic deities, thereby carrying the beginning of Vedic civilisation to a date much anterior to 1400 B. C. cf. Camb. Hist. p. 72-3, p. 320 fn. (2).

For a discussion of the linguistic and ethnographical classification of Indian people cf.

1. Census Report, 1901, by H. Risley.
2. Imperial Gazetteer Vol I. p. 292 ff.

Ch. II. For the history of Indian Literature (including Vedic, later Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jaina and secular literature) the best book is that by M. Winternitz (Geschichte der Indischen Litteratur vols I-III). I have principally relied on this book in writing Bk. I-Ch. II, Bk. II-Ch. VI, and Bk. III-Ch. XIV. Unfortunately, the

text being written in German, it cannot be utilised by average Indian reader. Among other books may be mentioned,

1. Macdonell—History of Sanskrit Literature,
2. Weber—The History of Indian Literature.
3. Maxmuller-History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature (Nos. 2 and 3 though well written are much antiquated)

P. 41. On the origin and antiquity of the art of writing in ancient India,

Cf. 1. Issac Taylor—The Alphabet.
2. Buhler—On the origin of Brahmi Alphabet.
3. Do.—Indian Palaeography (Ind. Ant. 1904, Appendix).
4. D. R. Bhandarkar—Ashutosh Jubilee Volume III, Part I. p. 493 (His views on neolithic Script p. 511-12 have, however, proved erroneous).

Ch. III. The view that the Aryan settlements at the time of Rigveda were mainly confined to the Punjab is adopted on the authority of Max Muller, Weber, Muir and many other scholars. Some modern scholars hold the view that the 'bulk of the Rigveda' was composed rather in the country round the Sarasvati river south of modern Ambala (cf. Camb. Hist. p. 79 and f. n. 1). But this view seems to rest on very insufficient grounds.

For further study of the subject dealt with in Chapters III. and V.

cf. 1. Macdonell-History of Sanskrit Literature (Vedic period).
2. Kaegi—Rigveda.
3. P. T. S. Iyengar—Life in Ancient India.
4. Camb. Hist.—Chs. IV, V, IX-XII.
5. H. D. Griswold—Religion of the Rigveda.
6. Barth—The Religions of India.
7. Hopkins—The Religions of India.
8. Macdonell—Vedic Mythology.
9. Bloomfield—The Religion of the Veda.
10. Do The Atharvaveda.
11. J. Muir—Original Sanskrit Texts.
12. Macdonell and Keith—Vedic Index (A very good book for reference.)

Two very good German books on this subject are "H. Zimmer—Altindisches Leben" and "J. Jolly—Recht und Sitte". An English translation of both these volumes will be a great boon to Indian readers.

On the caste system, of (1) "Corporate Life in Ancient India" by R. C. Majumdar, ch. V and the references contained therein. (2). S. V. Ketkar—The History of caste in India.

Ch. IV. "Ancient Indian Tradition" by Pargiter, of which a summary is given on pp. 85 ff. deals with the political history of India from the earliest days of Aryan settlement, an ambitious task which no one else has yet attempted. The book no doubt suffers from the faults of a pioneer work, and is open to criticism in many respects. But it is valuable as having laid the foundations of an altogether new kind of study. Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhury's "Political History of Ancient India" deals with the period "from the accession of Parikshit to the extinction of the Gupta Dynasty." It is an extremely valuable contribution to the study of Indian History before 6th century B. C., and may be consulted with profit by any student who wants to know something beyond the general outline of history sketched in the text.

P. 77. The assumption made in the text that the Aryans of the Punjab gradually spread further east is not unanimously accepted. Some hold the theory of a second Aryan immigration into the valley of the Ganges through Gilgit and Chitral. Others are of opinion that while the early Aryan immigrations into the Punjab "were no mere incursions of armies but gradual progressive movements of whole tribes, the waves of tribal migration were impeded about the longitude of Sirhind and the Indo-Aryan influence farther east was due rather to warlike or peaceful penetration than to the wholesale encroachment of multitudes." Both these theories are mere hypotheses to explain the undeniable ethnic and linguistic differences prevailing between the different parts of Northern India.

cf. 1. Camb. Hist. pp. 43 ff.

2. R. P. Chanda.. Indo-Aryan Races.

3. Muir's Original Sanskrit Texts Vol. II, Chap III.

For further studies on the political history comprised in Chs. I-III.

cf. 1. Rhys Davids—Buddhist India (Chs. I-II)
2. B. C. Law—Kshatriya Clans in Buddhist India.
3. B. C. Law—Some Kshatriya Tribes of Ancient India.
4. B. C. Law—Ancient Mid-Indian Kshatriya Tribes.
5. Camb. Hist.—Ch. VII, Chs. XIII-XXIV.
6. Smith—*History, 4th Edition*, Chs. II-X.
7. H. C. Ray Chaudhury—Political History of Ancient India pp. 45-270.
8. Bhandarkar—Carmichael Lectures, 1919, Lecture II.

Ch. I. P. 125. The account of the Saisunaga dynasty, as given in the text, is based on the Puranas. The Ceylonese Chronicles, Dipavâmsa and Mahavamsa, regard Bimbisara as the founder of the dynasty and place Sisunaga lower in the list. This view has been adopted in authorities Nos. 7 and 8 above.

The Chronology of this chapter is based on the assumption that the death of Buddha took place at about 483 B. C. The Ceylonese tradition that the event is to be placed in 543 B. C. was rejected by the European scholars but has recently been revived by Mr. K. P. Jayaswal (cf. his articles in J. B. O. R. S.). Mr. V. Smith, too, has accepted this view in his Oxford History of India and re-arranged the chronology accordingly. (cf. p. 70.)

Ch. II. It will be noted that the career of Asoka has been further dealt with in detail in separate chapters ; e.g. political history (pp. 139 -141), public administration (pp 165-168), propagation of Buddhism (pp 206-212) and patronage of art (pp. 302-308.)

There is an extensive literature on Asoka. A few select books only are mentioned below—

1. V. A. Smith—Asoka.
2. D. R. Bhandarkar—Asoka.
3. Hultzsch—Inscriptions of Asoka.

Our chief sources of information about Asoka are his numerous inscriptions. These are translated in all the three texts mentioned

above, which also contain full bibliographical references to numerous critical discussions of various passages in Asokan inscriptions and other related matters.

Ch. III. P. 153. The date of Kanishka has proved the most vexed problem of Indian Chronology. Much has been written on this subject, but no final solution is possible without fresh evidence. Some place his accession in 78 A. D. and regard him as the founder of the Saka era. The late Dr. Fleet, and some scholars following him, placed the same event in 58 B. C, thus regarding him as the founder of the Vikrama-Samvat. Others put his reign early in the Second century A. D., while some even push it as late as Third Century A. D.

Cf. J. R. A. S. 1903 (1-65), 1913 (627 ff, 911 ff). Indian Antiquary, 1908 (25 ff), and also a number of articles on this and cognate subjects in J. R. A. S. 1903-1915.

P. 155—The chronology of the Andhras is a matter of dispute For further study on this subject cf.

Sir R. G. Bhandarkar—Early History of the Deccan (2nd Edition.)

Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar—Dekkan of the Satavahana. Period (Ind. Ant. 1918-1920).

Rapson—Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty (Introduction.)

V. A. Smith—Andhra History (Z. D. M. G. 1904)

Ch. IV. Our chief source of information is Kautilya's Arthasastra. It has been edited by R. Shamasastry, Jolly and Schmidt, and T. Ganapati Sastri. There is also an English translation by R. Shamasastry.

Scholars are divided in their opinion as to the authenticity of the book. Some hold it to be a genuine production of Kautilya alias Chanakya, the prime-minister of Maurya Chandragupta, while others deny this claim and regard the book as a later production. An extensive literature has grown up as a result of this discussion.

For the former view cf.

(1) R. Shamasastry—Introduction to English Translation of Arthasastra ; Calcutta Review, April, 1925 P. 115.

(2) R. K. Mukherjee—Introduction to Dr. N. Law's 'Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity.'

(3) Jacobi's articles (translated in Indian Antiquary 1918 pp. 157, 187.)

(4) Jayaswal—Hindu Polity pp. 203 ff.

(5) N. Law—Calcutta Review 1924, Sept. (512), Nov. (228) and Dec. (466.)

For the latter view—cf.

(1) Jolly (Iutroduction to his Edition of Arthasastra.)

(2) Winternitz.—Calcutta Review, April, 1924 pp. 1 ff.

(3) Keith—J. R. A. S. 1916 p. 130.

The question must be regarded as open until other evidences come to light.

The study of political theories and public administration in Ancient India has made great progress in recent years. The following books may be recommended for advanced study.

1. P. N. Banerji—Public Administration in Ancient India.
2. U. Ghoshal—A History of Hindu political Theories.
3. B. K. Sarkar—The political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus.
4. K. P. Jayaswal—Hindu polity.
5. R. C. Majumdar—Corporate Life in Ancient India. (Chaps. II, III.)
6. K. D. Nag—Les Theories Diplomatiques de 1' Inde Ancienne (This book is being translated into English in the Journal of Indian History.)
7. N. Law—Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity.
8. N. Law—Inter-State Relations in Ancient India.
9. R. Shamasastry—The Evolution of Indian Polity.
10. P. N. Banerji—International Law and Customs in ancient India.

Ch. V. §1. The best hand-book on Buddhism is Kern—Manual of Indian Buddhism.

For further studies cf.

1. Rhys Davids—Buddhism, its History and Literature.
2. „ Buddhism.
3. „ Buddhist India.
4. „ Indian Buddhism (Hibbert Lectures, 1881).
5. Kern— Histoire du Bouddhisme (Originally written in Dutch and translated into French).
6. N. Dutt—Early History of the spread of Buddhism and the Buddhist schools.
7. Oldenberg—Buddha.

On the organisation of the Buddhist Church cf. R. C. Majumdar-Corporate Life in Ancient India Ch. IV.

On Buddhist Councils, cf. the article by R. C. Majumdar in "Buddhistic Studies" Edited by Dr. B. C. Law (pp. 26- 72).

P. 207. Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar has opposed the view, generally held, that the Kalinga War was the direct cause of Asoka's conversion to Buddhism. (Bhandarkar—Asoka, pp. 76ff)

P. 208. The "General Council" of Asoka is only referred to by the Ceylonese authors. Its historical character may be doubted. In any case it was attended by only a section of the Buddhists and not the whole body.

§2. The best handbooks on Jainism are :—

1. Barodia—History and Literature of Jainism.
2. Jagamendra Lal Jaini—Outlines of Jainism (mainly Philosophical.)
3. Mrs. S. Stevenson—The heart of Jainism.

For further studies cf.

Camb. Hist. Chap. VI.

Buhler—On the Indian sect of the Jainas.

For a complete bibliography cf. "Guerinot—Essai de Bibliographie Jaina."

§3-4. For advanced studies on Vaishnavism and Saivism cf.

1. "R. G. Bhandarkar—Vaishnavism, Saivism and minor religious systems.
2. H. C. Ray Chaudhury—Early History of the Vaishnava sect.

For general studies on Indian religions.

cf. 1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.

2. Eliot—Hinduism and Buddhism Vols. I-III.

Ch. VI. The account of Buddhist literature as given in the text is entirely based on "Winternitz—Geschichte der Indischen Litteratur Vol II." the best and most comprehensive work on this subject. Among other authorities may be mentioned.

1. Rhys Davids—Buddhist India.
2. Do. Buddhism, its History and Literature pp. 44-ff.
3. Do. Indian Buddhism (Hibbert Lectures p. 34ff)
4. Oldenberg—Introduction to Vinaya texts.

P. 241. The "Jatakas" have all been edited by Fausboll and translated into English (Cambridge University Press.)

P. 258. For *Brahmanical literature* see refs. under Vedic Literature (Bk. I, Ch. II.)

Ch. VII. The critical study of the Epics has given rise to an extensive literature, mostly in German. A good general account will be found in "Winternitz" Vol I, pp. 259-440.

Among English writings on the Epics may be mentioned :—

Hopkins—The Great Epic of India.

Hopkins—The Social and Military position of the Ruling caste. (J. A. O. S. Vol. XIII.)

C. V. Vaidya—The Mahabharata, a criticism.

Do. Riddle of the Ramayana.

Do. Epic India.

The only critical study of the Ramayana is that by H. Jacobi in his famous book "Das Ramayana."

cf. also a very interesting paper on

"The Ramayana and the Mahabharata—a sociological study" by N. Ghosh in Ashutosh Jubilee Volume III Part II pp. 361—407.

Ch. VIII. P. 285. For the Aryan conquest of the Deccan

cf. 1. Carmichael Lectures Vol. I, Ch. I.

2. R. G. Bhandarkar—Early History of the Deccan, 2nd Ed., sect. II-III.

P. 287. For the colonial expansion in the Far East,

cf. R. C. Majumdar—Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East, Vol I.

The Indian colonisation in Central Asia is dealt with by Sir A. Stein in a number of publications which have all been superseded by his monumental work "Ser-India"

P. 289. On the trade and maritime activity

cf. G. Rawlinson—Intercourse between India and the Western World.

R. K. Mookerji—A History of Indian Shipping and Maritime activity.

Schoff—Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.

R. P. Chanda—Early Indian Seamen (Ashutosh Jubilee volume III, part I P. 105.)

P. 295. On Trade-Organisations,

cf. R. C. Majumdar—Corporate Life in Ancient India, Ch. I.

P. 298. The list of furniture and articles of luxury is taken from Vinaya Pitaka.

P. 300. On Economic conditions in ancient India

cf. 1. Rhys Davids—Buddhist India Chs, III, V, VI.

2. Camb. Hist.—Ch VIII.

3. Fick—Social Organisation in North-Eastern India in Buddha's time (Translated into English by Dr. S. K. Maitra).

4. J. N. Samaddar—Economic condition of Ancient India.

5. S. K. Das—The Economic History of Ancient India.

6. N. C. Banerji—Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India.

P. 302. For general history of Indian Art.

cf. 1. V. A. Smith—Fine Art in India and Ceylon.

2. Fergusson—History of Indian and Eastern Architecture.

3. E. B. Havell—Indian Sculpture and Painting.

4. Do —A Handbook of Indian Art.

5. Do —The Ideals of Indian Art.

6. Do —The Ancient and Mediaeval architecture in India (Mr. Havell's books, though open to criticism in many respects, give a new interpretation, and bring fresh ideas on the subject).

7 Camb. Hist. Chap. XXVI

For Art associated with Buddhism.

cf. Grunwedel—Buddhist Art in India (Translated by A. C. Gibson and Burgess).

2. A. Foucher—The Beginnings of Buddhist Art.

P. 303. For Asokan Art.

cf. V. A. Smith—Asoka, Chap. III.

P. 311. For Gandhara Art

cf. Foucher—L' Art Græco-bouddhique du Gandhara.

There exists, besides, a large number of monographs on important buildings, and valuable informations are scattered in the publications of the Archæological Department.

BOOK III.

Ch. I. The history of the Guptas is derived mainly from their coins and inscriptions. The inscriptions were collected together and edited by Fleet, but some important inscriptions have been discovered since. For the coins cf. "Allan—Catalogue of Gupta Coins". The Introduction to this book gives a good resume of historical information.

P. 318. The idea that Samudragupta returned from his victorious campaign in the south through Maharashtra and Khandesh has proved untenable. It was due to an erroneous identification of Devarashtra and Erandapalla. Both these places were situated in the Eastern coast.

P. 324. The chronology of the successors of Kumaragupta is involved in difficulties. For a full discussion on this subject.

cf. R. C. Majumdar—The successors of Kumaragupta I (J. A. S. B. 1921, p. 249)

Do. Revised chronology of the last Gupta Emperors (Ind. Ant. 1918, p. 161.)

The view stated therein is now generally accepted.

Chs. II-III. For a detailed study of the Political history from 600-1200 A.D.

cf. C. V. Vaidya—History of Mediaeval Hindu India Vols. I-III.

For an account of Sasanka, cf.

I. R. P. Chanda—Gaudarajamala (in Bengali) pp. 7 ff.

2. R. C. Majumdar—Early History of Bengal, pp. 16 ff.

P. 338. The accepted views about the large extent of Harshavardhana's empire may be doubted. (cf. R. C. Majumdar—Harshavardhana, a critical study. J. B. O. R. S. 1923.)

The account of Harshavardhana is principally based on 1. Banabhatta—Harshacharita. (Tr. by Cowell and Thomas)

2. Hiuen Tsang's account (1. Tr. by Beal. 2. Tr. by Watters.)

3. Life of Hiuen Tsang—S. Beal.

P. 349. On later Guptas cf. Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhury,—Political History of India pp. 29 ff.

P. 352. The account of Kashmir is based on Kalhana's Rajatarangini.

Ch. IV. P. 367. For the Vakatakas cf. V. Smith in J. R. A. S. 1914, p. 387.

For the political history of the Deccan and South India advanced students may consult the following books.

1. R. G. Bhandarkar—Early History of the Deccan.

2. Fleet.—Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts. Both these works form parts of Bombay Gazetteer Vol. I., which is a rich treasure house of valuable historical information.

3. G. J. Dubreuil—Ancient History of the Deccan.

4. Do. The Pallavas.

P. 372. The generally accepted view that embassies were exchanged between Pulakesi and Khusru II of Persia may be doubted.

cf. R. C. Majumdar—Khusru II and Pulakesi (Journal of Indian History Vol. IV. Part. II)

Ch. V. For the Rashtrakutas see Refs. under Ch. IV. For the Gurjaras, cf. "R. C. Majumdar—The Gurjara Pratiharas"-Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University, Vol. X. (also published separately).

For the Palas. cf. 1. R. P. Chanda—Gauda-rajamala. (In Bengali)

2. R. D. Banerji—Palas of Bengal.

3. Do. Banglar Itihash. (In Bengali.)

For the chronology of the Pala kings.

cf. R. C. Majumdar—Chronology of the Pala Kings J. A. S. B., 1921, pp. 1 ff.

Chapter VI. For an account of the invasions of Sultan Mahmud cf.—the records collected in "Eliott—History of India as told by its own historians".

Chapter VII. P. 410. The very important and interesting episode of the Kaivartta revolt is known from Ramacharita or 'Lfei of Ramapala' written by Sandhyakara Nandi whose father held an important office under the king. "It is a curious work being written throughout in double *entendre*. Read one way, it gives the connected story of the Ramayana. Read another way, it gives the history of Ramapala." The book was discovered and edited by M.M. Haraprasad Sastri (Memoirs, A. S. B.)

P. 411. On the Senas, cf. 1. R. P. Chanda-Gauda-rajamala.
2. R. D. Banerji-Banglar Itihasa.

For the vexed question of Sena Chronology cf. 'R. C. Majumdar—Chronology of the Sena kings, J. A. S. B. 1921, P. 7 ff.

For a different interpretation of the La Sam or Sena Era commencing in 1119-20 A. D, cf. Dr. H. C. Ray Choudhury in Ashutosh Jubilee volume III Part II. Page 1ff.

Chapter VIII. For the history of Nepal, the best authority is 'S. Levi—Le Nepal'. Earlier writings on the Subject by Fleet and Bhagwanlal Indraji, though still relied upon by many modern writers, are hopelessly out of date.

P. 430. The history of Kashmir, as given in the text, is a summary of Rajatarangini (Tr. by Stein).

Chapter IX. See Refs. under Chapter IV. (BK. III).

Ceapter X. On the history and particulary the admirable administrative system of the Cholas cf. S. K. Aiyangar—Ancient India.

Chapter XI. cf. Refs. under Book. II. Chapter IV.

Additional information is obtained from Sukraniti (Tr. by B. K. Sarkar) and the contemporary inscriptions.

P. 478. The account of 'Chola administration' is based on Aiyangar's book mentioned above.

Chatper XII. For fuller discussion on this subject cf. "R. C. Majumdar—Corporate Life in Ancient India, 2nd Edition P. 156ff.

Chapter XIII. cf. Refs. under book II Chapter V. On the causes of the decline of Buddhism in India cf. P. Bagchi's article in Ashutosh Jubilee Vol III, Part II, P. 405ff.

Chapter XIV. cf. Refs. under Book I. Chapter II; Book II. Chapter VI. On the origin and character of the Purana literature cf. B. C. Majumdar's article in Ashutosh Jubilee Vol. III Part II P. 7.

The account of Jaina literature in the text is principally based on Winternitz-Geschichte der Indischen Litteratur, Vol. II.

Chapter XVI. cf. Refs. under Book II Chapter VIII.

For South Indian Art.

cf. 1. G. J. Dubreuil—'Archeologie du sud de l' inde.
2. Do -Dravidian Architecture.

For Ajanta Paintings.

cf. 1. Griffiths—Ajanta Frescoes.
2. Lady Herringham—Ajanta Frescoes.

Cf. also "A. Foucher—The Influence of Indian art on Cambodia and Java—Ashutosh Jubilee vol. III Part I. P. 1 ff.

APPENDIX II.

Identification of ancient places mentioned in the text.

[The following two books, on which this geographical note is principally based, may be recommended for further study.

1. Pargiter—Mārkándeya Purāna (Eng. Translation)—the chapter entitled "Description of the World."

2. Cunningham—Ancient Geography of India—Edited by S. N. Majumdar.

Several articles of Pargiter in J. A. S. B. may also be consulted.

Many of the following names indicate both a tribe as well as a country ; some, both a city and a country.]

Ānartta.—Western part of Kathiawar Peninsula. The famous city Dvārakā was its capital.

Aṅga—The modern districts of Bhagalpur and Monghyr, and portion of Purnia.

Avanti—Western Malwa. Sometimes it designated the whole of Malwa.

Chedi—It occupied the country along the south bank of the Jumna from the Chambal on the N. W. to Karwi on the S. E. Malwa and the hills of Bundelkhand formed its southern limit.

Chera—The four kingdoms Chera, Chola, Pāṇḍya and Satyaputra, mentioned in Aśoka's edicts, were situated in the extreme south of the Indian Peninsula. Their limits varied from time to time. Roughly speaking, Chera occupied the Malabar Coast, Chola, the Coromandel Coast and Pāṇḍya lay between the two, generally corresponding to Travancore. The identification of Satyaputra is still a matter of keen controversy.

Chola—See under Chera.

Gauḍa—It originally denoted a part of Bengal, but was later on used as a designation of the whole province. Karṇasuvarṇa, the capital of Gauḍa, has been identified with Rangamati, 12 miles south of Murshidabad.

Girivraja—The capital of Magadha. It is now represented by the ruins at Rajgir in the Behar Sub-division.

Gurjara—The Gurjara tribe gave its name to various places in N. W. India. About the 9th and 10th century A. D. the country now called Rajputana was known as Gurjaratrā-bhūmi. This name, corrupted into Gujarat, was applied to the modern province of that name, after its conquest by the Chaulukyas, a branch of the Gurjara tribe.

Hastināpur—See under Kuru.

Kaliṅga—It comprised modern Orissa about as far north as the town Bhadrak in the Balasore District and the sea-coast southward as far as Vizagapatam.

Kāñchī, the capital of the Pallavas, is represented by the modern city of Conjeeveram near Madras.

Kapilāvastu—The site of this city has been identified by the discovery of the Rumindei pillar of Aśoka. The pillar marks the exact birth-place of Buddha *i.e.*, the Lumbini Grove (E. long. 80°. 20' ; N. Lat. 27°. 29').

Kārushas—The Kārushas originally dwelt in the Shahabad District but later on migrated towards the S. W. and occupied the hilly tract, of which Rewa is the centre, extending from the Ken in the west to the confines of Behar in the East.

Kāśī, modern Benares, was the name of the capital as well as the country.

Kauśāmbī, the capital of the Vatsas, has been identified with Kosam on the Jumna, about 30 miles west of Allahabad.

Kirāta—The Kirātas formed a series of allied yet distinct tribes or clans inhabiting the Himalayan range and its southern slopes from the Punjab to Assam and Chittagong.

Kośala roughly corresponds to modern Oudh. Its earlier capital Ayodhyā was about 1

mile from modern Fyzabad. Srāvastī, the later capital, has been identified with Sahet-Mahet in Bharaich and Gonda districts.

Kuru—The kingdom of the Kurus extended from the Sarasvatī to the Ganges. It was divided into three parts, Kurukshetra, the Kuru proper, and Kurujāngala (the forest tract). Its southern boundary was Khāndava. Its capital Hastināpura is usually identified with an old town, 22 miles N.E. of Meerut.

Kusinagara, the place where Buddha died, has been identified with Kasia, 35 miles to the east of Gorakhpur.

Lāta—Eastern portion of Gujarat.

Magadha—It comprised the modern districts of Patna, Gaya and Shahabad.

Mālava—Modern Malwa.

Matsya—Modern Alwar State with portions of Jaypur and Bharatpur.

Nālandā, the site of the famous University, has been located in the village of Bargaon, 7 miles north of Rajgir. Excavations,

which are still going on, have unearthed many interesting remains.

Oḍra or Uḍra originally comprised W. Midnapur and probably Manbhum, E. Singbhum and S. Bankura.

Pañchāla—It roughly corresponds to Budaon, Farrukkabad and the neighbouring districts. It was divided into two kingdoms, N. Pañchāla (capital, Ahichchhatra) and S. Pañchāla (cap. Kāmpilya). Ahichchhatra has been identified with Ramnagar in Bareilly Dt. and Kāmpilya with Kampil in Farrukkabad district.

Pāṇḍya—See under Chera.

Pauṇḍra must have comprised the modern districts of the Sāontāl Parganas and Birbhum and the northern portion of the Hazaribagh Dt.

Pāvā—There were at least two cities of this name. One was near Kuśinagara and has been identified with the village Padaravana 12 miles to the N. N. E. of Kasia. The other was the place where Mahāvīra died. This is still a famous place of pilgrimage

for the Jainas and situated within the Bèhar Subdivision.

Pundra comprised the district of Maldah, the portion of Purnia east of the river Kosi and part of Dinajpur and Rajshahi.

Suhma—It comprised the modern districts of Hooghly, Howrah, Bankura and Burdwan and the eastern portion of Midnapur.

Takshaśilā—This famous city, the seat of an ancient University, has been identified with the ruins near Shahdheri, 12 miles N. W. of Rawalpindi. Excavations have unearthed many interesting monuments.

Tośāli—This has been tentatively identified with Dhauli where a recension of the 14 Rock Edicts of Aśoka has been discovered.

Utkala denoted the tract from Balasore to Lohardaga and Sarguja.

Vaiśāli—This city, the famous capital of the Lichchhavis, has been identified with the small village of Basarh in the Muzaffarpur district.

Valabhī—The kingdom of Valabhī comprised the Kathiawar peninsula and the districts of Bharoch and Surat. The capital city of the same name is represented by the ruins at Wala 18 miles N. E. of Bhaonagar.

Vaṅga—It must have comprised the modern districts of Murshidabad, Nadia, Jessore and parts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Faridpur.

Vatsa—The country along the Jumna, to the west of Allahabad, with Kauśāmbī (q.v.) as its capital.

Vidarbha—It roughly corresponded to modern Berar.

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