

**ABBOTT EVELYN, DUNCKER
MAX**

**THE HISTORY OF
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4 (OF 6)**

Max Duncker

The History of Antiquity, Vol. 4 (of 6)

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The History of Antiquity, Vol. 4 (of 6)

BOOK V. THE ARIANS ON THE INDUS AND THE GANGES

CHAPTER I. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

It was not only in the lower valley of the Nile, on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and along the coast and on the heights of Syria that independent forms of intellectual and civic life grew up in antiquity. By the side of the early civilisation of Egypt, and the hardly later civilisation of that unknown people from which Elam, Babylon, and Asshur borrowed such important factors in the development of their own capacities; along with the civilisation of the Semites of the East and West, who here observed the heavens, there busily explored the shores of the sea; here erected massive buildings, and there were so earnestly occupied with the study of their own inward nature, are found forms of culture later in their origin, and represented by a different family of nations. This family, the Indo-European, extends over a far larger area than the Semitic. We find branches of it in the wide districts to the east of the Semitic nations, on the table-land of Iran, in the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges. Other branches we have already encountered on the heights of Armenia, and the table-land of Asia Minor (I. 512, 524). Others again obtained possession of the plains above the Black Sea; others, of the peninsulas of Greece and Italy. Nations of this stock have forced their way to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean; we find them settled on the western coast of the Spanish peninsula, from the mouth of the Garonne to the Channel, in Britain and Ireland no less than in Scandinavia, on the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic. Those branches of the family which took up their abodes the farthest to the East exhibit the most independent and peculiar form of civilisation.

The mutual relationship of the Arian, Greek, Italian, Letto-Sclavonian, Germanic, and Celtic languages proves the relationship of the nations who have spoken and still speak them; it proves that all these nations have a common origin and descent. The words, of which the roots in these languages exhibit complete phonetic agreement, must be considered as a common possession, acquired before the separation; and from this we can discover at what stage of life the nation from which these languages derive their origin stood at the time when it was not yet divided into these six great branches, and separated into the nations which subsequently occupied abodes so extensive and remote from each other. We find common terms for members of the family, for house, yard, garden, and citadel; common words for horses, cattle, dogs, swine, sheep, goats, mice, geese, ducks; common roots for wool, hemp or flax, corn (*i. e.* wheat, spelt, or barley), for ploughing, grinding, and weaving, for certain metals (copper or iron), for some weapons and tools, for waggon, boat and rudder, for the elementary numbers, and the division of the year according to the moon.¹ Hence the stock, whose branches and shoots have spread over the whole continent of Europe and Asia from Ceylon to Britain and Scandinavia, cannot, even before the separation, have been without a certain degree of civilisation. On the contrary, this common fund of words proves that even in that early time it tilled the field, and

¹ Whitney, "Language," p. 327; Benfey, "Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft," s. 598.

reared cattle; that it could build waggons and boats, and forge weapons, and if the general name for the gods and some names of special deities are the same in widely remote branches of this stock, – in India, Iran, Greece, and Italy, and even on the plains of Lithuania, – it follows that the notions which lie at the base of these names must also be counted among the common possessions existing before the separation.

We can hardly venture a conjecture as to the region in which the fathers of the Indo-European nations attained to this degree of cultivation. It must have been of such a nature as to admit of agriculture beside the breeding of cattle. The varieties of produce mentioned and the domestic animals point to a northern district, which, however, cannot have reached down to the ocean, inasmuch as no common roots are in existence to denote the sea. This proof is strengthened by the fact that in all the branches the wolf and bear alone among beasts of prey are designated by common roots. If we combine these considerations with the equal extension of the tribes of this nation towards east and west, we may assume that an elevated district in the middle of the eastern continent was the abode of the nation while yet undivided.

The branches which occupied the table-land of Iran and the valley of the Indus were the first to rise from the basis acquired in common to a higher civilisation; and even they did not attain to this till long after the time when Egypt, under the ancient kingdom of Memphis, found herself in the possession of a many-sided culture, after Babylon had become the centre of a different conception of life and development. The western branches of the Indo-Europeans remained at various stages behind their eastern fellow-tribesmen in regard to the epochs of their higher culture. If the Greeks, who were brought into frequent contact with the civilisation of the Semites, came next in point of time after the eastern tribes, and the Italians next to the Greeks, it was only through conflict and contact with the culture of Greece and Rome that the western branches reached a higher stage, while the dwellers on the plains of the Baltic owe their cultivation to the influences of Germanic life. Finally, when the West European branches, the Indo-Germans, had developed independently their capacities and their nature, when in different phases they had received and assimilated what had been left behind by their Greek and Roman kinsmen, and formed it into the civilisation of the modern world, their distant navigation came into contact with the ancient civilisation, to which their fellow-tribesmen in the distant East had finally attained some 2000 years previously. With wonder and astonishment the long-separated, long-estranged relatives looked each other in the face. But even now the ancient, deeply-rooted, and variously-developed civilisation of the eastern branch maintains its place with tough endurance beside the mobile, comprehensive, and restlessly-advancing civilisation of the west.

On the southern edge of the great table-land which forms the nucleus of the districts of Asia, the range of the Himalayas rises in parallel lines. The range runs from north-west to south-east, with a breadth of from 200 to 250 miles, and a length of about 1750 miles. It presents the highest elevations on the surface of the earth. Covered with boundless fields of snow and extensive glaciers, the sharp edges and points of the highest ridge rise gleaming into the tropic sky; no sound breaks the deep silence of this solemn Alpine wild. To the south of these mighty white towers, in the second range, is a multitude of summits, separated by rugged ravines. Here also is neither moss nor herb, for this range also rises above the limits of vegetation. Much lower down, a third range, of which the average elevation rises to more than 12,000 feet, displays up to the summits forests of a European kind; in the cool, fresh air the ridges are clothed with birches, pines, and oaks. Beneath this girdle of northern growths, on the heights which gradually sink down from an elevation of 5000 feet, are thick forests of Indian fig-trees of gigantic size. Under the forest there commences in the west a hilly region, in the east a marshy district broken by lakes which the mountain waters leave behind in the depression, and covered with impenetrable thickets, tall jungles, and rank grass – a district oppressive and unhealthy, inhabited by herds of elephants, crocodiles, and large snakes.

The mighty wall of the Himalayas decides the nature and life of the extensive land which lies before it to the south in the same way as the peninsula of Italy lies before the European Alps. It protects

hill and plain from the raw winds which blow from the north over the table-land of Central Asia; it checks the rain-clouds, the collected moisture of the ocean brought up by the trade winds from the South Sea. These clouds are compelled to pour their water into the plains at the foot of the Himalayas, and change the glow of the sun into coolness, the parched vegetation into fresh green. Owing to their extraordinary elevation, the mountain masses of the Himalayas, in spite of their southern situation, preserve such enormous fields of ice and snow that they are able to discharge into the plains the mightiest rivers in the world. From the central block flow the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra, *i. e.* the son of Brahma.

Springing from fields of snow, which surround Alpine lakes, the Indus descends from an elevated mountain plain to the south of the highest ridge. At first the river flows in a westerly direction through a cleft between parallel rows of mountains. In spite of the long and severe winter of this region, mountain sheep and goats flourish here, and the sandy soil contains gold-dust. To the south of the course of the river we find depressions in the mountains, where the climate is happily tempered by the nature of the sky and the elevation of the soil. The largest of these is the valley of Cashmere, surrounded by an oval of snowy mountains. To the west of Cashmere the Indus turns its course suddenly to the south; it breaks through the mountain ranges which bar its way, and from this point to the mouth accompanies the eastern slope of the table-land of Iran. As soon as the Himalayas are left behind, a hilly land commences on the left bank, of moderate warmth and fruitful vegetation, spreading out far to the east between the tributaries of the stream. The river now receives the Panjab, and the valley is narrowed in the west by the closer approach of the mountains of Iran; in the east by a wide, waterless steppe, descending from the spurs of the Himalayas to the sea, which affords nothing beyond a scanty maintenance for herds of buffaloes, asses, and camels. The heat becomes greater as the land becomes flatter, and the river more southerly in its course; in the dry months the earth cracks and vegetation is at a standstill. Any overflow from the river, which might give it new vigour, on the melting of the snow in the upper mountains, is prevented for long distances by the elevation of the banks. The Delta formed by the Indus at its mouth, after a course of 1500 miles, contains only a few islands of good marsh soil. The sea comes up over the flat shore for a long distance, and higher up the arms of the river a thick growth of reeds and rushes hinders cultivation, while the want of fresh water makes a numerous population impossible.

Not far from the sources of the Indus, at the very nucleus of the highest summits of the Himalayas, rise the Yamuna (Jumna) and the Ganges. The Ganges flows out of fields of snow beneath unsurmountable summits of more than 20,000 feet in height, and breaking through the mountains to the south reaches the plains; here the course of the river is turned to the east by the broad and thickly-wooded girdle of the Vindhya, the mountain range which rises to the south of the plains. Enlarged by a number of tributaries from north and south, it pours from year to year copious inundations over the low banks, and thus creates for the plains through which it flows a fruitful soil where tropic vegetation can flourish in the most luxuriant wildness. This is the land of rice, of cotton, of sugar-canes, of the blue lotus, the edible banana, the gigantic fig-tree. On the lower course of the river, where it approaches the Brahmaputra, which also at first flows between the parallel ranges of the Himalayas towards the east, in the same way as the Indus flows to the west, there commences a hot, moist, and luxuriant plain (Bengal) of enervating climate, covered with coco and arica palms, with the tendrils of the betel, and the stalks of the cinnamon, with endless creepers overgrowing the trunks of the trees, and ascending even to their topmost branches. Here the river is so broad that the eye can no longer reach from one bank to the other. In the region at the mouth, where the Ganges unites with the Brahmaputra, and then splits into many arms, the numerous waters create hot marshes; and here the vegetation is so abundant, the jungles of bamboo so thick and impenetrable, that they are abandoned to the rhinoceros, the elephant, and the tiger, whose proper home is in these wooded morasses.

Into this wide region, which in length, from north to south, exceeds the distance from Cape Skagen to Cape Spartivento, and in breadth, from east to west, is about equal to the distance from

Bayonne to Odessa, came a branch of the family, whose common origin has been noticed, and their civilisation previous to the separation of the members sketched. The members of this branch called themselves Arya, *i. e.* the noble, or the ruling. In the oldest existing monuments of their language and poetry these Aryas are found invoking their gods to grant them room against the Dasyus,² to make a distinction between Arya and Dasyu, to place the Dasyus on the left hand, to turn away the arms of the Dasyus from the Aryas, to make the hostile nations of the Dasyus bow down before the Aryas, to increase the might and glory of the Aryas, to subjugate the "Black-skins" to them.³ In the epic poetry of the Indians we find mention of black inhabitants of Himavat (*i. e.* inhabitants of the snowy mountains, the Himalayas), and of "black Çudra" beyond the delta of the Indus. By the same name, Çudra, the Aryas designated the population which became subject to them in the valley of the Ganges; and when they advanced from the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges towards the south, to the coasts of the Deccan, they found there also populations of a similar kind. Even at the present day the inhabitants of India fall into two great masses, essentially distinguished from each other by the formation of their bodies and their language. In the broad and inaccessible belt of the Vindhya mountains, which separates the peninsula of the Deccan from the plains of the two rivers, are situated the tribes of the Gondas, men of a deep-black colour, with thick, long, and black hair, barbarous manners, and a peculiar language. Closely allied to these nations are the slim and black Bhillas, of small stature, who inhabit the western slopes of the Vindhyas to the sea; and the Kolas, who dwell in the mountainous district of Surashtra (Guzerat), and to this day form two-thirds of the inhabitants of this district.⁴ On the eastern declivities and spurs of the Vindhyas we find in the south the Kandas, in the north the Paharias, nations also of a dark colour and thick long hair. Distinct from these rude savages, less dark in colour, and exhibiting other modes of life, are the tribes which possess the coasts of the Deccan, the Carnatas, Tuluwas, and Malabars on the west, the Tamilas and Telingas on the east. Opposed to all these tribes are the Aryas, with their light colour and decisively Caucasian stamp. These once spoke Sanskrit, and are still acquainted with the language, and to them is due the development of civilisation in these wide districts.

This juxtaposition of two populations, of which one is in possession of the best districts in the country, while of the other only fragments are in existence (combined masses are not found except in the most inaccessible regions), – the indications supplied by these invocations, according to which the light-coloured population on the Indus was in conflict with the "Black-skins," – the fact that the light-coloured population, both on the Ganges and the coasts of the Deccan, has always taken up an exclusive and contemptuous position towards the darker tribes existing there, justify the conclusion that the whole region from the Indus to the mouths of the Ganges, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, once belonged to the dark population, and that the Aryas are immigrants. These immigrants partly drove back the ancient population, and confined it in hardly accessible mountains or morasses, partly forced it to submit to their rule and accept their civilisation, partly allowed it to live among them, as now, in a despicable and subordinate position. In historical times we can trace this process, by which the old population was driven back or civilised, on the coasts of the Deccan and in Ceylon. From the position of the remnant of this population on the Ganges, and these invocations of the Aryas, which spring from a time when they were not yet established in the land of the Ganges, we may conclude that a similar process went on in a severer form on the Indus. Following the example of the Indians, modern science collects the languages of these inhabitants of India, who are found under and among the Aryas, so far as they at present exist, under the names of the Nishada and Dravida

² "Rigveda," 1, 59, 2; 7, 5, 6; 10, 69, 6. Cf. Manu, 10, 45. That in the Rigveda the Dasyus are always enemies, and even evil spirits, is beyond a doubt, and cannot excite any wonder when we remember how the Indians confound the natural and supernatural; Muir, "Sanskrit Texts," 22, 358 ff. On the original meaning of the word Dasyu, and its signification in the Mahabharata, cf. Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, 633.

³ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 110, 113.

⁴ Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 440.

languages.⁵ The language of the Brahuīs to the west of the Indus, – they were settled there, or at least retired from thence, at the time of the immigration of the Aryas, – the Canaresian, the Malayalam, the language of the Tamils, of the Telingas, the Badaga of the inhabitants of the Nilgiri, on the southern apex of the Deccan, are closely related, but to which of the great stems of language they are to be apportioned is not determined.⁶

The immigration of the Aryas into India took place from the west. They stand in the closest relation to the inhabitants of the table-land of Iran, especially the inhabitants of the eastern half. These also call themselves Aryas, though among them the word becomes Airya, or Ariya, and among the Greeks Arioi. The language of the Aryas is in the closest connection with that of the Avesta, the religious books of Iran, and in very close connection with the language of the monuments of Darius and Xerxes, in the western half of that region. The religious conceptions of the Iranians and Indians exhibit striking traits of a homogeneous character. A considerable number of the names of gods, of myths, sacrifices, and customs, occurs in both nations, though the meaning is not always the same, and is sometimes diametrically opposed. Moreover, the Aryas in India are at first confined to the borders of Iran, the region of the Indus, and the Panjab. Here, in the west, the Aryas had their most extensive settlements, and their oldest monuments frequently mention the Indus, but not the Ganges.⁷ Even the name by which the Aryas denote the land to the south of the Vindhya, Dakshinapatha (Deccan), *i. e.* path to the right⁸, confirms the fact already established, that the Aryas came from the west.

From this it is beyond a doubt that the Aryas, descending from the heights of Iran, first occupied the valley of the Indus and the five tributary streams, which combine and flow into the river from the north-east, and they spread as far as they found pastures and arable land, *i. e.* as far eastward as the desert which separates the valley of the Indus from the Ganges. The river which irrigated their land, watered their pastures, and shaped the course of their lives they called Sindhu (in Pliny, Sindus), *i. e.* the river⁹. It is, no doubt, the region of the Indus, with the Panjab, which is meant in the Avesta by the land *hapta hindu* (*hendu*), *i. e.* the seven streams. The inscriptions of Darius call the dwellers on the Indus Idhus. These names the Greeks render by Indos and Indoi.

Can we fix the time at which the Aryas immigrated into India and occupied the valley of the Indus? As we proceed it will become clear that it was not till a late period that the nation began to record the names of the kings of their states, that they never wrote down in a satisfactory manner their legends and the facts of their history, and that we cannot find among them any trustworthy chronology. Even with the assistance of the statements of western writers, we can only go back with any certainty to the year 800 B.C. for the dynasties of the kingdom of Magadha, the most important kingdom in ancient times on the Ganges. But if at this period the Aryas held sway not on the upper Ganges only, but also on the lower, they must have been already settled on the Indus for centuries. If the narratives already given of the foundation of the Assyrian kingdom and the war of Semiramis on the Indus (II. 9 ff) were historical, the Aryas must have been settled in that country even at this date, *i. e.* about 1500 B.C. They must have lived there under a monarchy which could place great forces in the field, and they must have been already acquainted with the use of elephants in war. Stabrobates, the name of the king of the Indians who met Semiramis and repulsed her, would become Çtaorapati, *i. e.* lord of oxen, in the language of the Aryas. But after what has been previously said (II. 19 ff), we can only allow this narrative to have a value for the conceptions existing in Persian epic poetry about the foundation of the empire of Assyria, and the campaigns of Assyrian rulers to the distant East.

⁵ Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 461.

⁶ According to Whitney ("Language," p. 327), the language of the Kolas and Santals is quite distinct from the Dravidian languages. Lassen's view on the relation of the Vindhya tribes to the Dravida and the Nishada is given, *loc. cit.* 12, 456.

⁷ The Ganges (Ganga) is mentioned only twice in the Rigveda, and then without any emphasis or epithet; "Rigveda," 10, 75, 5; 64, 9. This book is of later origin; Roth, "Zur Literatur und Geschichte des Veda," s. 127, 136, 137, 139.

⁸ This name, it is true, may also have arisen from the fact that the Indians turned to the east when praying.

⁹ The root *syand* means "to flow."

In their statements about India we can only, at most, expect to find a repetition of the information existing about that country in the western half of Iran in the seventh or sixth century, and even this takes a form corresponding to the views expressed in the poems. In the monuments of the kings of Assyria we found the elephant and the rhinoceros among the tribute offered to Shalmanesar II., who reigned from 859-823 B.C. (II. 320); the inscriptions of Bin-nirar III. (810-781 B.C.) pointed to campaigns of this king extending as far as Bactria (II. 328); we were able to follow the marches of Tiglath Pileasar II. (745-727 B.C.) in the table-land of Iran as far as Arachosia (III. 4). Hence the Assyrian tablets do not as yet supply any definite information about the land of the Indus. Arrian has preserved a notice according to which the Astacenes and Assacenes, Indian nations on the right bank of the Indus, between the river and Cophen (Cabul), were once subject to the Assyrians.¹⁰ The Indian epics extol the horses of the Açvakas, who, in them also, are an Indian nation, and we may venture to regard them as the Assacenes of Arrian. Alexander of Macedon found them in that region; they could place many warriors in the field against him on their high mountain uplands. But the observation in Arrian, even if we attach weight to it, does not carry us far in answering the question when the Aryas came into the valley of the Indus, for it does not make it clear at what period the Açvakas were subject to the Assyrians. More may be gained, perhaps, from the Hebrew scriptures. We saw that about 1000 B.C. Solomon of Israel and Hiram of Tyre caused ships to be built and equipped at Elath, on the north-east point of the Arabian Gulf. These ships were to visit the lands of the south, and we saw what wealth they brought back from Ophir after an absence of three years (II. 188). They are laden with gold, silver, precious stones, and sandal-wood in abundance, the like of which was not seen afterwards; peacocks, apes, and ivory.¹¹ Now ivory, sandal-wood, apes, and peacocks are the products of India, and peacocks and sandal-wood belong to that land exclusively. It is true that they might have been transported to the south coast of Arabia or the Somali coast of East Africa by the trade of the Arabians, or even of the Indians (I. 321); but the ships of Solomon and Hiram would not need to be absent for three years in order to obtain them there. For our question it is decisive that the names with which the Hebrews denote apes, peacocks, and sandal-wood, *kophim*, *tukijim*, *almugim*, are Sanskrit (*kapi*, *çikhi*, *valgu*), and from this it follows that the Aryas must have been in possession, at any rate, of the land of the Indus and the coast of that region as early as 1000 B.C. The book of the law of the Aryas mentions a nation Abhira. According to the Aryan epics this nation possessed cows, goats, sheep, and camels. Ptolemy places a land Abiria at the mouth of the Indus, and to this day a tribe of the name of Ahir possesses the coast of the peninsula of Cashtha (Kattywar).¹² These Abhiras may therefore have been meant by the Ophir of the Hebrews. It is true that the genealogical table in Genesis puts Ophir among the tribes which are said to spring from Joktan, but no doubt it includes under the name of Joktan all the nations of the south-east known to the Hebrews. If the ships of Hiram brought back gold in abundance from their voyages to the mouth of the Indus, this can only have been conveyed to the lower Indus, where there is no gold, from the upper Indus, which is rich in gold, and from other upland valleys in the Himalayas, where the mountain streams carry down this metal. Hence about the year 1000 B.C. there must have been a lively trade between the upper and lower Indus. Further, if the Phenicians and Hebrews purchased sandal-wood among the Abhiras, this can only have been transported to the mouth of the Indus by sea, and the coast navigation, which is rendered easy in the Indian Sea by the regular occurrence of the monsoons, for sandal-wood nowhere flourishes except in the glowing sun of the Malabar coast. Whatever may have been the case with this trade, products of India, and among them such as do not belong to the land of the Indus, were exported from the land about 1000 B.C., under names given to them by the Aryas, and therefore the Aryas must have been settled there for centuries previously. For this reason, and it is confirmed by

¹⁰ Arrian, "Ind." 1, 3; "Anab." 4, 25.

¹¹ 1 Kings ix. 26-28; x. 11, 12, 22.

¹² Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 651 ff.; 22, 595 ff.

facts which will appear further on, we may assume that the Aryas descended into the valley of the Indus about the year 2000 B.C., *i. e.* about the time when the kingdom of Elam was predominant in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, when Assyria still stood under the dominion of Babylon, and the kingdom of Memphis was ruled by the Hyksos.

We have no further accounts from the West about the Aryas till the year 500 B.C., and later. It is not improbable that the arms of Cyrus reached the Indus. The Astacenes and Assacanes are said to have been subject to the Medes after the Assyrians; then Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, imposed tribute upon them.¹³ As Cyrus subjugated Bactria, fought in Arachosia, and marched through Gedrosia, we may assume that he compelled the nations of the Aryas on the right bank of the Indus to pay tribute. It was in conflict with the Derbiccians, to whom the Indians sent elephants as auxiliaries, that Cyrus, according to the account of Ctesias, was slain. Darius, as Herodotus tells us, sent messengers to explore the land of the Indus. Setting out from Arachosia, they proceeded from Caspapyrus (Kaçpapura), a city which, according to Hecataeus, belonged to the Gandarii¹⁴—*i. e.* without doubt from Kabura (Cabul) down the Indus to the sea. According to Herodotus' account the Gandarii, together with the Arachoti and Sattagydaë, paid 170 talents of gold yearly; the rest of the Indians paid a larger tribute than any other satrapy – 360 talents of gold.¹⁵ The Indians who paid this tribute were, according to Herodotus, the most northerly and the most warlike of this great nation. They dwelt near the city of Caspapyrus, *i. e.* near Cabul; their mode of life was like that of the Bactrians, and they obtained the gold from a sandy desert, where ants, smaller than dogs, but larger than foxes, dug up the gold-dust.¹⁶ Darius tells us himself, in the inscriptions of Persepolis, that the Gandarii and the Indians were subject to him. Like Herodotus, these inscriptions comprise the tribes of the Aryas on the right bank of the Indus as far down as Cabul under the name of Indians, so that the Açvakas were included among them. The Gandarii, as is shown by their vicinity to and connection with the Arachoti, lay to the south of Cabul. In the epos of the Indians the daughter of the king of the Gandharas is married to the king of the Bharatas, who lie between the Yamuna and the Ganges, and the Buddhist writings speak of the Brahmans of the Gandarii as the worst in India.¹⁷ In the campaign of Xerxes, Herodotus separates the Gandarii from the rest of the Indians who are subject to the Persian kingdom. The first, he says, were armed like the Bactrians; with the rest marched the Ethiopians of the East, equipped almost like the Indians; but on their heads they had the skins of horses' heads, with the ears and mane erect, and their shields were made from the skins of cranes. These Ethiopians of the East were not distinguished from the others in form and character, but by their language and hair. The Libyan Ethiopians, *i. e.* the negroes, had the curliest hair of all men; but the hair of the Eastern branch was straight.¹⁸ We have already observed that now, as in the days of Xerxes, remains of the dark-coloured pre-Aryan population of India are found on the right bank of the Indus (p. 10).

Of the Indians "who never obeyed Darius,"¹⁹ Herodotus tells us that they lived the furthest to the east of all the nations about which anything definite was known. Still further in that direction were sandy deserts. The Indians were the largest of all nations, and the Indus was the only river beside the Nile in which crocodiles are found (they are alligators).²⁰ The remotest parts of the earth have always the best products, and India, the remotest inhabited land to the east, was no exception. The birds and the quadrupeds were far greater in size here than elsewhere, with the exception of the horse; for the Nisæan horses of the Medes were larger than the horses of the Indians. Moreover, India possessed

¹³ Arrian, "Ind." 1, 3.

¹⁴ Steph. *sub. voc.*

¹⁵ Herod. 3, 94, 105; 4, 44.

¹⁶ Herod. 3, 102 ff.

¹⁷ "Mahavança," ed. Turnour, p. 47.

¹⁸ Herod. 7, 66, 70.

¹⁹ Herod. 3, 101.

²⁰ Herod. 3, 94; 4, 44.

an extraordinary abundance of gold, of which some was dug up from mines, and some brought down by the rivers, and some obtained from the deserts. The wild trees also produced a wool which in beauty and excellence surpassed the wool of sheep; this the Indians used for clothing. There were many nations of the Indians, and they spoke different languages. Some were stationary; some dwelt in the marshes of the rivers, and lived on raw fish, which they caught in canoes made of reeds, and every joint of the reed made a canoe. These Indians wore garments of bark, which they wove like cloths, and then drew on like coats of mail. Eastward of these dwelt the Padæans, a migratory tribe, who ate raw flesh; and when any one, even the nearest relative, among them was sick, they slew him, in order to eat the corpse. This custom was also observed by the women. Even the few who attained to old age they killed, in order to eat them. Other Indian nations lived only on herbs, which they ate cooked, and troubled themselves neither about their sick nor their dead, whom they carried out, like the sick, into desert places. All the nations spoken of were black in colour.²¹

These, the oldest accounts from the West on the ancient pre-Aryan population of India, and on the black-skins of the Rigveda, we owe to Herodotus. His statements about their physical formation are correct; those on their savage life may be exaggerated; but even to this day a part of these nations live in the marshes and mountains in a condition hardly removed from that of animals.

The contrast between the light-coloured and dark population of India, between the Aryas and the ancient inhabitants, did not escape Ctesias. India, he maintained, was as large as the rest of Asia, and the inhabitants of India almost as numerous as all the other nations put together. The Indians were both white and black. He had himself seen white Indians, five men and two women. The sun in India appeared ten times as large as in other lands, and the heat was suffocating. The Indus was a great river flowing through mountains and plains; in the narrowest places the water occupied a space of 40 stades, or five miles, in the broadest it reached 100 stades.²² The river watered the land. In India it did not rain, and there were no storms there, though there were violent whirlwinds which carried everything before them.²³ On the Indus grew reeds small and great; the stoutest reeds could not be spanned by two men, and the height of the largest was equal to the mast of a ship.²⁴ The fruit of the palms also in India was three times as large as in Babylonia, and the sheep and goats there were equal in size to asses elsewhere, and had such enormous tails that they had to be cut off to enable them to walk. Ctesias goes on to describe the large cocks of India, with their beautiful combs, and broad tails of gold, dark-blue, and emerald; the peacocks, the many-coloured birds with red faces, dark-blue necks, and black beards, which had a human tongue, and could speak Indian, and would speak Greek if they were taught; the little apes with tails four cubits long.²⁵ He was the first to describe the elephant to the Greeks.²⁶ He had seen these animals, and had been present in Babylon when the elephants of the Persian king had torn up palm trees with their roots out of the ground. These animals could even throw down the walls of cities. In war the king of India was preceded by 100,000 elephants, and 3000 of the strongest and bravest followed him.²⁷

²¹ Herod. 3, 96, 98 ff.

²² Ctes. "Ecl." 1.

²³ "Ecl." 1, 8.

²⁴ "Ecl." 6.

²⁵ Ctes. "Ecl." 3; Aelian, 16, 2.

²⁶ Herodotus only makes a passing mention of the elephant in Libya, 4, 191.

²⁷ Aelian 17, 29. Arrian also ("Anab." 4, 14) maintains that the Indus is 100 stades in breadth, and even broader; Megasthenes also relates that the elephants tore down walls, and that the bamboo was a fathom in thickness. Strabo, p. 711. That Ctesias followed Persian-Bactrian accounts is clear from the fact that the scene of all his history is the north-west of India. He knows that India is a civilised land, though he also believes that it obeys only one king; he knows the veneration of the Indians for their kings, their contempt of death, and some products of Indian industry. The fabulous stories of the Pygmæans, Dog-heads, Shovel-eared, Shadow-feet, and Macrobii he did not invent, but copied. Similar marvels of men with dogs' heads, and without a head, and of unicorns, are narrated by Herodotus, only he ascribes these stories to the western Ethiopians, not to the eastern (4, 191). Homer had already sung of the Pygmæans ("Il." 3, 6). Hecataeus had spoken of the Shovel-eared and Shadow-feet (fragm. 265, 266, ed. Klausen), and also Aristophanes ("Aves," 1553). Of the griffins, the one-eyed Arimaspians, the long-lived, happy Hyperboreans, Aristæus of Proconnesus had told and Æschylus had

After the army of Alexander of Macedon had encamped in the Panjab, the Greeks could give more accurate accounts of India. Megasthenes assures us that India reached in breadth, from west to east, an extent of from 15,000 to 16,000 stades (1940 to 2000 miles), while the length, from north to south, was 22,000 stades (2750 miles);²⁸ and in these distances he is not very greatly in error, for, measured in a direct line, the breadth is 13,600 stades (1720 miles), and the length 16,400 stades (2050 miles). To the north India was bounded by lofty mountains, which the Greeks called Caucasus, and the Indians Paropamisus (Paropanishadha²⁹), and Emodos, or Imaos. Emodos, like Imaos, is the Greek form of the old Indian name for the Himalayas, Haimavata (Himavat).³⁰ In India there were many great mountains, but still greater plains; and even the mountains were covered with fruit-trees, and contained in their bowels precious stones of various kinds – crystals, carbuncles, and others. Gold also and silver, metals and salt, could be obtained from the mines,³¹ and the rivers carried down gold from the mountains.³² The streams of India were the largest and the most numerous in the world. The Indus was larger than the Nile, and all the rivers of Asia; the Ganges, which took an easterly direction on reaching the plains, was a great river even at its source, and reached a width of 100 stades, or 12½ miles. In many places it formed lakes, so that one bank could not be seen from the other, and its depth reached 20 fathoms.³³ The first statement is exaggerated, the second is correct for the lower course of the river. The Indus, according to Megasthenes, had 15 navigable affluents, and the Ganges 19, the names of which he could enumerate.³⁴ In all there were 58 navigable rivers in India.

This abundance of streams in India the Greeks explained by the fact that the lands which surrounded the country – Arian, as the Greeks call eastern Iran, Bactria, and the land of the Scythians – were higher than India, so that the waters from them flowed down, and were collected there.³⁵ The water was also the cause of the great fertility of India, which the Greeks unite in extolling. The rivers not only brought down, as Nearchus observes, soft and good earth into the land from the hills,³⁶ but they traversed it in such a manner that, from the universal irrigation, it was turned into a fruit garden.³⁷ Onesicritus tells us that India is better irrigated by its rivers than Egypt by its canals. The Nile flows straight on through a long and narrow land, and so is continually passing into a different climate and

sung long before Ctesias (above, III. 232). Megasthenes repeats the legends of the Pygmæans, Shovel-eared, Shadow-feet, Dog-heads, and adds accounts of men without mouths, and other marvels. Ctesias, therefore, had predecessors as well as followers in these stories. The fantastic world with which the Indians surrounded themselves, the nicknames and strange peculiarities which they ascribed to some of the old population and to distant nations, reached the Persians, and through them the Greeks. "Kirata" of small stature in the Eastern Himalayas, against which Vishnu's bird fights, Çunamukhas (Dog-heads), "brow-eyed" cannibals, "one-footed" men, who bring as tribute very swift horses, occur in the Indian epics, and in other writings. On the divine mountain Meru, according to the Indians, dwell the Uttara Kuru, *i. e.* the northern Kurus, who live for 10,000 years, among whom is no heat, where the streams flow in golden beds, and roll down pearls and precious stones instead of gravel. Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 1, 511; 2, 653, 693 ff.; Muir, *loc. cit.* 22, 324 ff. According to the cosmology of the Buddhists, whose Sutras also knew these Uttara Kuru, Mount Meru is the centre of the world. To the south of Meru is Yambudvipa, to the north the region of the Uttara Kuru, who live for 1000 years, while the inhabitants of Yambudvipa only live for 100 years. Burnouf, "Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme," p. 177; Koppen, "Buddh." p. 233. Ptolemy, obviously following Indian sources, puts the Ὀρτορα Κόρρα to the north of the Imaos, beyond the highest range, which with the Indians is a spur of the divine mountain Meru. This land and nation is obviously the garden of Yima and his elect, whom the myth of Iran places on the divine hill. These are the long-lived Hyperboreans of the Greeks, who dwell in the remote north beyond the Rhipæan mountains – one of the old common myths of the Aryan and Greek branch of the Indo-Germanic stock.

²⁸ Megasthenes and Eratosthenes in Strabo, pp. 689, 690; Arrian, "Ind." 3, 8.

²⁹ Lassen explains Paropamisus as Paropa-nishadha, "lower mountain," in opposition to Nishadha, "high mountain," by which the high ridge of the Hindu Kush is meant, *loc. cit.* 12, 27, n. 4.

³⁰ Muir, "Sanskrit Texts," 22, 324, 328.

³¹ Strabo, pp. 690, 691.

³² Diod. 2, 35; Strabo, pp. 700, 717.

³³ Megasthenes in Strabo, pp. 690, 702; cf. Arrian, "Ind." 4. Diodorus allows the upper Ganges a breadth of 30 stades, at Palibothra a breadth of 32 stades – 2, 37; 17, 93.

³⁴ Arrian, "Ind." 4.

³⁵ Diod. 2, 37.

³⁶ Strabo, p. 691.

³⁷ Diod. 2, 37.

different air, while the Indian rivers flow through much larger and broader plains, and continue long in the same region. Hence they are more nourishing than the Nile, and the fish are larger than the fish in the Nile;³⁸ they also refresh the land better by their moist exhalations.³⁹ Besides, there were the inundations caused by the rivers; and the land was also watered by the heavy rains, which fell constantly each year at a fixed period with the regular winds, so that the rivers rose fully 20 cubits above their beds, – a statement quite accurate, – and in many places the plains were changed into marshes,⁴⁰ in consequence of which the Indus had sometimes taken a new channel through them.⁴¹ Since, then, the warmth of the sun was the same in India as in Arabia and Ethiopia, – for India lay far to the south, and in the most southern parts of the land the constellation of the Bear was seen no longer, and the shadows fell in the other direction, i. e. to the south, —⁴²while in India there was more water and a moister atmosphere than in those other countries, the creatures of the water, air, and land were much larger and stronger in India than anywhere else.⁴³ Further, as the water in the river and that which fell from heaven was tempered by the sun's heat, the growth of the roots and plants was extraordinarily vigorous. The strength of the tiger, which, according to Megasthenes, is twice the size of the lion, the docility of the elephant, the splendour of the birds, were the admiration of the Greeks. With horror they saw the whale for the first time in the Indian waters. Nearchus caused his ship to be rowed forward at double speed to contend with this peaceful monster of the deep.

According to the statement of Megasthenes – which for the land of the Ganges is quite correct – there are two harvests in India. For the winter sowing rice and barley were used, and other kinds of fruit unknown to the Greeks; for the summer sowing, sesame, rice, and bosmoron; while during the rainy season flax and millet were planted, so that in India want and famine were unknown.⁴⁴ Equally luxuriant in growth were the herbs and reeds. There was a reed there which produced honey without bees (the sugar-cane); and in Southern India cinnamon, nard, and the rest of the spices grew as well as in Arabia and Ethiopia.⁴⁵ The Greeks did not know that the cinnamon is a native of India only, and that the bark came to them from that country, though it came through Arabia. The marshes of India were filled with roots, wholesome or deadly; the trees there grew to a larger size than elsewhere; some were so tall that an arrow could not be shot over them, and the leaves were as large as shields. There were other trees there of which the trunks could not be spanned by five men, and the branches, as though bent, grew downwards till they touched the earth, and then, springing up anew, formed fresh trunks, to send out other arches, so that from one tree was formed a grove, not unlike a tent supported by many poles. Fifty or even 400 horsemen could take their mid-day rest under such a tree. Nearchus even goes so far as to say that there were trees of this kind under which there was room for 10,000 men.⁴⁶ There were also trees in India which produced intoxicating fruits. This description of the Indian fig tree and the statements about the shelter its branches afford are not exaggerated. By intoxicating fruits the coco and fan-palms are, no doubt, meant, from which palm-wine is made.⁴⁷

The northern, *i. e.* the light-coloured, Indians, or Aryas, are said by the Greeks of this period to have most closely resembled the Egyptians in the colour of their skin and their shape. They were light, delicate, and slim of body, and not so heavy as other nations. They were free from diseases,

³⁸ Strabo, p. 695.

³⁹ Diod. 2, 37.

⁴⁰ Strabo, pp. 690, 691.

⁴¹ Aristobulus in Strabo, pp. 692, 693; cf. Curtius, 8, 30, ed. Müttzell.

⁴² These statements, which are quite correct, are found in Megasthenes in Strabo, p. 76; Diod. 2, 35.

⁴³ Strabo, p. 695; Diod. 2, 35.

⁴⁴ Strabo, pp. 690, 693.

⁴⁵ Strabo, p. 695.

⁴⁶ Strabo, p. 694; Arrian, "Ind." 11.

⁴⁷ Strabo, pp. 692, 693. Arrian ("Ind." 7) mentions the Sanskrit name of the umbrella palm, *tala*, and tells us that the shoots were eaten, which is also correct.

for their climate was healthy, and their land possessed good air, pure water, and wholesome fruits. The southern Indians, *i. e.* the non-Aryan population, who were at that time far less broken up in the Deccan by Aryan and other settlers than now, and must therefore have existed in far greater masses, were not quite so black as the Ethiopians (the negroes), and had not, like them, a snub nose and woolly hair. Strabo was of opinion that their colour was not so black owing to the moist air of India, which also caused the hair of the inhabitants to be straight.⁴⁸ Of the 200 millions, at which the population of India is now estimated, more than 150 millions either spring from the Aryas or have adopted their civilisation. The number of the dark-coloured races, dwelling in the mountains and broad marshes, who have remained free from the dominion of the Aryas, the Mohammedans, and the English, and are, therefore, strangers to their civilisation, is estimated at 12 millions.

⁴⁸ Arrian, "Ind." 6, 17; Strabo, pp. 96, 690, 696, 701, 706, 709.

CHAPTER II. THE ARYAS ON THE INDUS

We have already examined the earliest date at which the kings who reigned in antiquity in the lower valley of Nile attempted to bring their actions into everlasting remembrance by pictures and writing. The oldest inscription preserved there dates from the period immediately preceding the erection of the great pyramids. The same impulse swayed the rulers of Babylon and Asshur, of whom we possess monuments reaching beyond the year 2000 B.C. The Hebrews also began at a very early time to record the fortunes of their progenitors and their nation. With the Indians the reverse is the case. Here neither prince nor people show the least interest in preserving the memory of their actions or fortunes. No other nation has been so late in recording their traditions, and has been content to leave them in so fragmentary a condition. For this reason, fancy is in India more lively, the treasures of poetry are more rich and inexhaustible. Thus it becomes the object of our investigation, from the remains of this poetry, and the wrecks of literature, to ascertain and reconstruct, as far as possible, the history of the Indians. From the first the want of fixed tradition precludes the attempt to establish in detail the course of the history of the Aryan states and their rulers. Our attempts are essentially limited to the discovery of the stages in the advance of the power of the Aryas in the regions where they first set foot, to the deciphering of the successive steps through which their religious views and intellectual culture were developed. And when we have thus exhumed the buried history of the Indians, we are assisted in determining its periods by the contact of the Indians with their western neighbours, the Persian kingdom, and the Greeks, and by the accounts of western writers on these events.

The oldest evidence of the life of the Aryas, whose immigration into the region of the Indus and settlement there we have been able to fix about 2000 B.C., is given in a collection of prayers and hymns of praise, the Rigveda, *i. e.* "the knowledge of thanksgiving." It is a selection or collection of poems and invocations in the possession of the priestly families, of hymns and prayers arising in these families, and sung and preserved by them. In the ten books which make up this collection, the poems of the first book are ascribed to minstrels of various families; in some the minstrel is even named. "This song was made by Dirghatamas, of the race of Angiras;" "this new hymn was composed by Nodhas, a descendant of Gautama." Of the other books, each is ascribed to a single family of priests – to the Gritsamadas, Viçvamitras, Vamadevas, Atris, Bharadvajas, Vasishthas, and Kanvas. The tenth book contains isolated pieces which found no place in the earlier books; several of these pieces bear the stamp of a later origin, as they exhibit a more complicated ritual, the operation of various classes of priests, and reflections of an abstract character.⁴⁹

We see, then, that from ancient times there were among the Aryas families in possession of effectual invocations of the gods, who knew how to pronounce and sing the prayers at sacrifice, and offer the sacrifice in due form. We may gather further from the Rigveda that these families were distinguished by special symbols. The family of Vasishtha had a coil or knot of hair on the right side,⁵⁰ the family of Atri had three knots, the family of Angiras five locks, while the Bhrigus shaved their hair.⁵¹ Sung for centuries in these families, in these circles of minstrels and priests, these poems were thus revised and preserved, until at length out of the possessions of these schools arose the collection which we have in the Rigveda. We find frequent mention in the poems of the invocations of ancient

⁴⁹ Max Müller, "Hist. of Sanskrit Liter." p. 481 ff. Kaegi, "Rigveda," 1, 9 ff.

⁵⁰ Roth, "Literatur des Veda," s. 120.

⁵¹ In the later hymns of the Rigveda, Angiras and Bhrigu are combined with other sages and minstrels of old time into a septad of saints (10, 109, 4), and designated the great saints. They are, beside Bhrigu and Angiras, Viçvamitra, Vasishtha, Kaçyapa, Atri, Agastya. The eight saints from whom the eight tribes of the Brahman priests now in existence are derived are: Jamadagni, Gautama, Bharadvaja, Viçvamitra, Vasishtha, Kaçyapa, Atri, Agastya. Jamadagni is said to have sprung from Bhrigu; Gautama and Bharadvaja from Angiras.

time, of the prayers of the fathers, and hence what is in itself probable becomes certain – that we have united in the Rigveda poems of various dates, and invocations divided in their origin by centuries.

Though the minstrels of the poems of the Rigveda could look back on a distant past, though they could distinguish the sages of the ancient, the earlier time, and the present, and the men of old from those of the later and most recent times,⁵² there is yet nothing in these poems to point to an earlier home, to older habitations, or previous fortunes of the nation, unless, indeed, we ought to find an indication of life in a more northern region in the fact that the older poems in the collection count by winters, and the later by autumns.⁵³ In any case there is no remembrance of earlier abodes, and therefore we must conclude that even the oldest of these poems had been sung long after the immigration. If the assumption established above, that the immigration took place soon after 2000 B.C., is approximately probable, the extinction of any memory of earlier abodes and fortunes will hardly allow us to carry back the origin of the oldest songs of the Veda beyond the sixteenth century B.C.

On the other hand, the hymns of the Veda contain conceptions of the creation and early ages of the world, the outlines of which, like the conception of the contrast between the men of the old time and the present, must have been brought by the Aryas into the land of the Indus from the common possession of the Aryan tribes. The oldest man, the father and progenitor of the Aryas, is, in the hymns of the Veda, Manu, the son of Vivasvat, *i. e.* "the illuminating," the sun. Frequent mention occurs in these poems of the "father Manu," of "our father Manu," "the paternal path which Manu trod," "the children of Manu," "the people of Manu." Manu brought the first offering to the gods of light; with Atharvan and Dadhyanch he kindled the first sacrificial fire; he has set Agni to give light to all the people, and to summon the gods, and prayed to him with Bhrigu and Angiras.⁵⁴ Five races of men sprung from Agni – the Yadus, the Turvaças, Druhyus, Anus, and Purus.⁵⁵ Beside Manu stands Yama (*geminus*), like Manu, the son of Vivasvat. In the hymns of the Rigveda he is the assembler of the people, the king, the pattern of just dealing. He "has discovered the path which leads from the deeps to the heights;" he "has removed the darkness," and "made smooth the path of the godly." He first discovered the resting-place from which no one drives out those who are there. From the depth of the earth he first ascended to the heights of heaven; he has had experience of death, he has entered

⁵² Muir, "Sanskrit texts," 3, 117 ff.; 121 ff.

⁵³ A. Weber, "Ind. Studien," 1. 88.

⁵⁴ Muir, "Sanskrit texts," 12, 160 ff.

⁵⁵ Kuhn in Weber, "Ind. Stud." 1. 202. The Çatapatha-Brahmana (Weber, "Ind. Stud." 1. 161) tells us that Manu, when washing his hands in the morning, took a fish in his hands, which said to him – "Spare me, and I will save thee; a flood will wash away all creatures." The fish grew to a monstrous size, and Manu brought him to the ocean; and it bid Manu build a ship, and embark on the ocean. When the flood rose, the fish swam beside the ship, and Manu attached it by a rope to the horn of the fish. Thus the ship passed over the northern mountains. And the fish told Manu that he had saved him, and bade him fasten the ship to a tree. So Manu went up as the waters sank from the northern hills. The flood carried away all creatures; Manu alone remained. Eager for posterity, Manu offered sacrifice, and threw clarified butter, curdled milk, and whey into the water. After a year a woman rose out of the water, with clarified butter under her feet. Mitra and Varuna asked her whether she was their daughter, but she replied that she was the daughter of Manu, who had begotten her, and she went to Manu and told him that he had begotten her by the sacrifice which he had thrown into the water. He was to conduct her to the sacrifice, and he would then receive posterity and herds. And Manu did so, and lived with her with sacrifice and strict meditation, and through her began the posterity of Manu. Cf. M. Müller, "Hist. of Sanskrit Liter." p. 425 ff. The later form of the Indian legend of the flood is found in an episode of the Maha-bharata. Here the fish appears to Manu when he is performing some expiatory rites on the shore of a river. The fish grew so mighty that Manu was compelled to bring it into the Ganges, and when it became too large for this into the ocean. When swimming in the ocean the fish announced the flood, and bade Manu and the seven saints (Rishis) ascend the ship, and take with them all kinds of seeds. Then the fish drew the ship attached to his horn through the ocean, and there was no more land to be seen; for several years all was water and sky. At last the fish drew the ship to the highest part of the Himavat, and with a smile bade the rishis bind the ship to this, which to this day bears the name of Naubandhana (ship-binding). Then the fish revealed himself to the seven saints as Brahman, and commanded Manu to create all living creatures, gods, Asuras, and men, and all things movable and immovable; which command Manu performed. The legend overlooks the fact that the new creation was unnecessary, as we have already been told that Manu brought seeds of everything on board ship. The poems of the Rigveda present no trace of the legend of the flood. It may have arisen in the land of the Ganges, from the experience of the floods there, unless it is simply borrowed from external sources. In any case it is of later date; the Çatapatha-Brahmana is one of the later Brahmanas. Weber, "Ind. Stud." 9, 423; Kuhn, "Beiträge," 4, 288. I cannot follow De Gubernatis, "Letture," p. 228, ff, *seqq.*

into heaven, and there gathered round him all the godly and brave. "He went before us, and found for us a dwelling-place on a plain, which no one takes from us, whither the fathers of old time have gone; thither his path guides every child of earth."⁵⁶

Manu and Yama are not unknown to the mythology of the nations of Iran. With the Iranians Yama is Yima; his father, according to the laws of the Bactrian, the language of East Iran, is not Vivasvat, but Vivanghat. The meaning is of course the same. According to the myths of Iran, Yima is the sovereign who first established the *cultus* of fire, and first tilled the field with the plough. In his reign of 1000 years there was neither heat nor cold, hunger nor thirst, age nor sickness, hate nor strife. And when this golden age came to an end, Yima continued to live an equally happy life in his garden on the mountain of the gods (*i. e.* in heaven), where the sun, moon, and stars shone together, where there was neither night nor darkness, in everlasting light with the elect. In the Rigveda the sacrificers of old time, who kindled the fire with Manu, and offered the first sacrifice, – Angiras, Bhrigu, Atharvan, and their families, – are half divine creatures, though not quite on an equal with Manu and Yama. They were ranged with the spirits of light, and shone like them, though with less brilliancy.⁵⁷ In the faith of the Aryas the good and pious deed confers supernatural power; it makes the body light, and therefore like the body of the gods. The myths of Iran also praise certain heroes and sages of old time, who sacrificed first after Yima.

We can ascertain with exactness the region in which the greater number of these poems grew up. The Indus is especially the object of praise; the "seven rivers" are mentioned as the dwelling-place of the Aryas. This aggregate of seven is made up of the Indus itself and the five streams which unite and flow into it from the east – the Vitasta, Asikni, Iravati, Vipaça, Çatadru. The seventh river is the Sarasvati, which is expressly named "the seven-sistered." The land of the seven rivers is, as has already been remarked, known to the Iranians. The "*Sapta sindhava*" of the Rigveda are, no doubt, the *hapta hendu* of the Avesta, and in the form Harahvaiti, the Arachotus of the Greeks, we again find the Sarasvati in the east of the table-land of Iran. As the Yamuna and the Ganges are only mentioned in passing (p. 11), and the Vindhya mountains and Narmadas are not mentioned at all, the conclusion is certain that, at the time when the songs of the Aryas were composed, the nation was confined to the land of the Panjab, though they may have already begun to move eastward beyond the valley of the Sarasvati.⁵⁸

We gather from the songs of the Rigveda that the Aryas on the Indus were not one civic community. They were governed by a number of princes (*raja*). Some of these ruled on the bank of the Indus, others in the neighbourhood of the Sarasvati.⁵⁹ They sometimes combined; they also fought not against the Dasyus only, but against each other. They ruled over villages (*grama*), and fortified walled places (*pura*), of which overseers are mentioned (*gramani*, *purpati*).⁶⁰ We find minstrels and priests in their retinue. "Glorious songs of praise," says one of them, "did I frame by my skill for Svanaya, the son of Bavya, who dwells on the Indus, the unconquerable prince." Other poems in the Veda tell us that the princes make presents to the minstrels and priests of cows, chariots, robes, slave-women, and bars of gold. Whatever we may have to deduct from these statements on the score of poetical exaggeration, they still show that the court and possessions of the princes cannot have been utterly insignificant. The descriptions of the ornaments and weapons of the gods in the Rigveda are without a doubt merely enlarged copies of the style and habit of the princes. The gods travel in golden coats of mail, on splendid chariots, yoked with horses; they have palaces with a thousand pillars and

⁵⁶ Kaegi, "Rigveda," 2, 58.

⁵⁷ On the Bhrigus see A. Weber, "Z. D. M. G." 9, 240. Kuhn, "Herabkunft," s. 21 ff.

⁵⁸ On the Sarayu, which is mentioned, "Rigveda," 4, 30, 14, and 10, 64, 9, cf. Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 644.

⁵⁹ "Rigveda," 1, 126, 1; 8, 21, 18.

⁶⁰ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 451, 456.

a thousand gates; they linger among the lights of the sky, like a king among his wives.⁶¹ From these pictures, by reducing the scale, we may represent to ourselves the life and customs of the princes in the land of the Indus.

From the numerous invocations for victory and booty, it follows that the life of the Aryas in the Panjab was disturbed by wars, that raids and feuds must have been frequent. War-chariots, and infantry, standard-bearers, bows, spears, swords, axes, and trumpets are mentioned.⁶² We learn that those who fought in chariots were superior to the foot-soldiers. "There appears like the lustre of a cloud when the mailed warrior stalks into the heart of the combat. Conquer with an unscathed body; let the might of thine armour protect thee. With the bow may we conquer cattle; with the bow may we conquer in the struggle for the mastery, and in the sharp conflicts. The bow frustrates the desire of our enemy; with the bow may we conquer all the regions round. The bow-string approaches close to the Bowman's ear, as if to speak to or embrace a dear friend; strung upon the bow, it twangs like the scream of a woman, and carries the warrior safely through the battle. Standing on the chariot, the skilful charioteer directs the horses whithersoever he wills. Laud the power of the reins, which far behind control the impulse of the horses. The strong-hoofed steeds, rushing on with the chariots, utter shrill neighings; trampling the foe with their hoofs, they crush them, never receding." Again and again are the gods invoked that the bow-strings of the enemy may be snapped.⁶³

The poems of the Veda distinguish the rich from the poor. The cultivation of the land is practised and recommended. Corn (*dhana*), barley, beans, and sesame were sown, but the rice of the Ganges valley is unknown. Channels also are mentioned for leading water on the land.

Healing herbs are not unknown to the poems, nor the person who is skilled in applying them, the physician. We find in them the desire for health and a long life,⁶⁴ blessed with abundance, with sons and daughters. Beautiful garments, precious stones, adorned women with four knots of hair, dancers, wine-houses, and dice are repeatedly mentioned. Weaving and leather-work are known, and also the crafts of the smith, the carpenter, the wheelwright, and the shipbuilder.⁶⁵

Among the Aryas of those days more attention must have been given to the breeding of cattle than to the cultivation of the field. A great number of similes and metaphors in the hymns of the Veda show that the Aryas must have lived long with their flocks, and that they stood to them in relations of the closest familiarity. The daughter is the milkmaid (*duhitar*), the consort of the prince is even in later poems the buffalo-cow (*mahishī*), the prince is at times the cow-herd, or protector of cows (*gōpa*), the assembly of the tribe and the fold which encloses the cows are called by the same name (*gōshtha*), and the word expressing a feud (*gavishthi*) denotes in the first instance the desire for cows. Similes are taken especially from cows and horses. Beside cattle and horses, buffaloes, sheep, and goats are mentioned. The gods are invoked to protect and feed the cows, to increase the herds, to make the cows full of milk, and satisfy the horses, to lead the herds to good pastures, and protect them from misfortune on the way. At the sacrifices parched corn was sprinkled for the horses of the gods.⁶⁶

In regard to the ethical feeling and attitude of the nation, we learn from the hymns of the Rigveda that it was filled at that time with a courageous and warlike spirit, with freshness and enjoyment of life. Liberality and fidelity were highly praised; theft and plunder held in contempt; faithlessness and lying severely condemned. The friend of the gods could look forward to horses, chariots, and cows. Beautiful to look upon, and filled with vigorous strength, he will shine in the assembly of the people. There is a lively feeling that the gods feel themselves injured by untruth

⁶¹ "Rigveda," 7, 18, 2; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 455.

⁶² "Rigveda," 1, 28, 5; 6, 47, 29.

⁶³ "Rigveda," 6, 75, in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 469, 471.

⁶⁴ Roth, "Das lied des Arztes," "Rigveda," 10, 97. "Z. D. M. G." 1871, 645.

⁶⁵ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 457, 461, 465.

⁶⁶ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 463.

and falsehood, by neglect and improper offering of the sacrifice, and the conscience is awake. The gods are earnestly entreated to forgive the sins of the fathers, and those committed by the suppliants, in wine, play, or heedlessness, to soften their anger, and spare the transgressor from punishment or death. If princes and nobles did not content themselves with one wife, monogamy was nevertheless the rule, so far as we can see. The beautiful maiden is accounted happy because she can choose her husband in the nation. Many a one certainly would be content with the wealth of him who seeks her.

In the beneficent forces and phenomena of nature, which are friendly and helpful to men, the religious conceptions of the Aryas see the power of kindly deities; and in all the influences and phenomena which injure the prosperity and possessions of men they see the rule of evil deities. To the Aryas light was joy and life, darkness fear and death; the night and the gloom filled them with alarm, the light cheered them. With gladsome hearts they greeted the returning glow of morning, the beams of the sun, which awaken us to life. The obscuring of the sun by dark clouds raised the apprehension that the heavenly light might be taken from them. In the heat of the summer the springs and streams were dried up, the pastures were withered, the herds suffered from want, and therefore the more fervent were the thanks of the Aryas to the spirits who poured down fructifying water from heaven, and caused the springs, streams, and rivers again to flow full in their banks.

The basis of these views the Aryas brought with them into the valley of the Indus. Their name for the deity of light —*deva*, from *div*, to shine – is found among the Greek, Italian, Lettish, and Celtic nations in the forms θεός, *dii*, *diewas*, and *dia*; it recurs in the Zeus (*dyaus*) of the Greeks, and the Jupiter (*dyauspitar*) of the Romans. The god of the upper air is with the Aryas Varuna, the Uranos of the Greeks. And these were not the only ideas possessed by the Aryas before their immigration. When they had broken off from the original stem of the Indo-European tribes, they must for a time have lived in union with another branch of the same stem, which inhabited the table-land of Iran, and only after a long period of union did they become a nation, and emigrate to the East. The nucleus of the view of the nature and action of the gods is identical in the Aryas and the tribes of Iran to such a degree that it can only have grown up in a common life. In both it lies in the struggle and opposition in which the spirits of light stand to the spirits of darkness, the spirits who give water to the spirits who parch up all things – in the contest of good and evil gods. It is assistance and protection against the evil spirits, the boon of light and water, which is sought for in the worship of both nations. The names of the deities of light, which the Indians and the Iranians serve, are the same. Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, Ushas are invoked on the Indus and Sarasvati as well as on the Hilmend, in Bactria and Media. Here, as there, the beneficent morning wind which drives away the clouds of night is called Vayu; the same drink offerings were offered under the same names in both nations to the good gods. With the Indians Atharvan lights the sacrificial fire;⁶⁷ among the Iranians the fire priests are called Athravas. The chief of the evil spirits, against which the good spirits have to contend, is called Veretra among the Iranians, and Vritra among the Indians; another evil spirit is called Azhi (*Aji*) in one nation, Ahi in the other. Such was the development given to the common inheritance from the parent stock, attained while the Airyas and Aryas lived together; and after the community was broken up, and the two nations became separated, those views received a peculiar shape in each. The point in this special development reached by the Aryas while yet in the Panjab we know from the poems of the Rigveda.

To the Iranians, as to the Aryas, the brightness of fire was a friendly spirit which gave light in darkness. To it, among both nations, almost the first place was allotted. By far the greatest number of invocations in the Rigveda are addressed to this spirit, Agni (*ignis*). When the darkness of evening came on, the glowing fire scared the beasts of prey from the encampment of men and the herds, and so far as the flame shone it drove back the evil spirits of the night.⁶⁸ Then the demons were seen from a distance hovering round the kindled fire, and the changing outlines of their forms were seen on the

⁶⁷ "Rigveda," 10, 21, 5. Above, p. 29.

⁶⁸ "Rigveda," 1, 94, 7; 1, 140, 1.

skirts of the darkness. Thus in the Rigveda, the fire-god is a bringer of light, who overpowers the night with red hues, who drives away the Rakshasas, or evil spirits; he is the conqueror and slayer of demons, with sharp teeth and keen weapons, a beautiful youth of mighty power. But the fire of the hearth also unites the family, and provides them with nourishment. As such Agni is the gleaming guest of men, the dear friend and companion of men, the far-seeing house-lord, who dwells in every house, and despises none; a god, giving food and wealth;⁶⁹ the protector, leader, and guide of his nation. As his power carries the sacrificial gifts to the gods, he is also the priest of the house; to the sensuous conception of the Aryas he is the messenger of men to the gods; his gleam leads the eye of the gods to the sacrifice of men; hence he is himself a priest, the first of priests, the true offerer of sacrifice, the mediator between heaven and earth, the lord of all religious duties, the protector and supporter of the worship. With his far-reaching tongue, the smoke of the kindled fire of sacrifice, he announces to the gods the gifts offered, the prayers which accompany the sacrifice, and brings the gods to the place of offering. Through Agni they consume their food. He is to the gods what the goblet is to the mouth of men.⁷⁰ With a thousand eyes Agni watches over him who brings him food, *i. e.* wood, and pours fat and clarified butter into his mouth; he rejects not the gifts of him who possesses neither cow nor axe, and brings but small pieces of wood; he protects him from hunger, and sends him all kinds of good; in the battle he fights among the foremost, and consumes the enemy like dry underwood. When he yokes to his chariot the red, wind-driven horses, he roars like a bull; the birds are terror-stricken when his sparks come consuming the grass; when, like a lion, he blackens the forest with his tongue, and seizes it with his flames, which sound like the waves of the sea; when he shears off the hair of the earth, as a man shaves his beard, and marks his path with blackness. Nothing can withstand the lightning of the sky, the sounding winds, and Agni; by his power the gods Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman are victorious.⁷¹

In the conception of the Indians Agni was born from the double wood; in this he lay concealed. They kindled fire by friction. A short staff was fixed in a round disc of wood, and whirled quickly round till fire was kindled.⁷² This process was the birth of Agni. The disc was compared to the mother, the staff to the father; the disc was impregnated by friction, and soon a living creature springs forth from the dry wood. At the moment of birth this golden-haired child begins to consume his parents; he grows up in marvellous wise, like the offspring of serpents, without a mother to give suck. Eagerly he stretches forth his sharp tongue to the wood of the sacrifices; with gnashing and neighing he springs up like a horse on high, when the priests sprinkle melted butter; streaming brightly forth, he rolls up the sacred smoke, and touches the sky with his hair, uniting with the sun.⁷³ Yet not on earth only is Agni born; he is born in the air and the sky by the lightning; in the lightning he descends to earth, and he is thus the twice-born. But as the lightning descends in the torrents of the storm, Agni is also born from the water of the sky, and is thus the triple-born; he is also named the bull begotten in the bed of water.⁷⁴ "We call on Agni, who gives food, with solemn songs," we are told in a hymn. "We choose thee as a messenger to the all-knowing; thy rising gleam shines far into the sky. To thee, rich youth, is every sacrifice offered; be gracious to us to-day, and for the future. Sacrifice thyself to the mightiest gods; bring our sacrifice to the gods. Mighty as a horse, who neighs in the battle, give rich gifts, O Agni, to the suppliant. Bring thyself to us, O mighty one; shine, most beloved of the gods; let the winged smoke ascend. Bring thyself to us, thou whom the gods once gave to man upon the earth. Give us treasures; gladden us. Come, ascending at once to help us, like Savitar; shine and

⁶⁹ "Samaveda," by Benfey, 2, 7, 2, 1.

⁷⁰ "Samaveda," by Benfey, 1, 1, 2, 2; 1, 1, 1, 9.

⁷¹ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 212 ff.

⁷² Kuhn, "Herabkunft des Feuers," s. 23 ff., 36 ff., 70 ff.

⁷³ Kaegi, "Rigveda," 1, 23.

⁷⁴ The triple birth is explained differently in the poems of the Rigveda and in the Brahmanas.

protect us from sin by knowledge; make us strong for action and life; destroy our enemies; protect us, Agni, from the Rakshasas; protect us from the murderer and cruel bird of prey, and from the enemy who plans our destruction, thou shining youth. Strike down the enemies who bring no gifts, who sharpen their arrows against us, thou who art armed with a gleaming beam as with a club, that our enemies may never rule over us. No one can approach thy darting, strong, fearful flames; burn the evil spirits, and every enemy."⁷⁵

If Agni scared away the spirits of the night for the Aryas, they greeted with the liveliest joy the earliest light, the approach of breaking day, the first white rays of the dawn, which assured them that the night had not been victorious over the light, that the daylight was returning. These rays are for them a beautiful pair of twins, the brothers of Ushas, the morning glow, the sons of the sky.⁷⁶ They are named the two Aṅvins, *i. e.* the swift, the horsemen; and also Nasatyas, *i. e.* apparently, the trustworthy, or guileless. Swift spirits, they hasten on before the dawn. As they pass onward victorious against the spirits of the night, and each morning assist the earth against the darkness, they are the helpers and protectors of men. That this conception of the Aṅvins springs from the common possession of the parent-stock of the Indo-Europeans, is proved by the Dioscuri of the Greeks. Dioskouroi means, "the young sons of the sky," and in the myth of the Greeks they are the brothers of Helena, *i. e.* of the Bright one, the Light; and if, in this myth, they live alternately in heaven and in the gloom of the under-world, this fact is no doubt founded in the idea that the first beams which break forth from the night belong to the darkness as much as to the light. In the Rigveda, the Aṅvins are compared to two swans, two falcons, two deer, two buffaloes, two watchful hounds. They are invoked to harness their light cars, drawn by swan-like, falcon-like, golden-winged horses, to descend and drink the morning offering with Ushas (the Ἀῦωζ, Ἥωζ of the Greeks.) They heal the sick, the blind, the lame, and make the old young again, and strong; they give wealth and nourishment, they accompany ships over the wide sea, and protect them. In invocations in the Rigveda to the Aṅvins, in which the benefits done by them to the forefathers are extolled and enumerated, we find: "Aṅvins, come on your chariot which is yoked with the good horses, which flies like the falcon, and is swifter than the wind, or the thoughts of men, on which ye visit the houses of pious men; come to our dwelling. On the chariot, whose triple wheel hastens through the triple world (the Indians distinguish the heaven of light, the region of the atmosphere and the clouds, and the earth as three worlds) approach us. Make the cows full of milk, and feed our horses, and give us goodly progeny. Approach in swift, fair-coursing chariots; listen, ye bounteous, to my prayer; ye Aṅvins, whom the men of old extol as driving away want. The falcons, the swift-winged ones, who fly like the vultures in the sky, may they bring you, ye Nasatyas, like water streaming from heaven, to the sacrifice. In old days ye gave nourishment to Manu; ye speedily brought food to Atri in the dark dungeon, and freed him from his bonds; ye restored light to the blind Kanva, ye bounteous ones, whom we love to praise. With your onward flying horses ye brought Bhujyu without harm from the wide pathless sea; for Çayu, when he prayed to you, ye filled the cow with milk, and gave to Pedu the white horse, clear-neighing, fearful, who is victorious over enemies, and defeats them. Even as ye were of old, we invoke you, beautiful-born, to come to our help; come with the swift flight of the falcons to us, for I summon you to a sacrifice prepared at the first light of the eternal dawn."⁷⁷

This dawn is in the hymns of the Veda a ruddy cow, a tawny mare, a beautiful maiden, who is born anew every day, when the Aṅvins yoke their chariot.⁷⁸ Many are the generations of men that she has seen, yet she grows not old. Like a maiden robed for the dance, like a daughter adorned by her mother, as a loving wife approaches her husband, as a woman rising in beauty from the bath,

⁷⁵ "Rigveda," 1, 36; cf. 1, 27, 58, 76.

⁷⁶ *Divo napata*: "Rigveda," 1, 182, 1, 4.

⁷⁷ "Rigveda," 1, 112, 116, 117, 118, 119, according to Roth's rendering; cf. Benfey's translation, "Orient," 3, 147 ff.

⁷⁸ "Rigveda," 1, 92; 1, 30; 4, 52; 10, 39, 12.

smiling and trusting to her irresistible charms, unveils her bosom to the eye of the beholder, so does Ushas divide the darkness and unveil the wealth hidden therein. From the far east she travels on her gleaming car, which the ruddy horses and ruddy cows bring swiftly over thirty Yojanas, and illumines the world to the uttermost end. She looses the cows (*i. e.* the bright clouds) from the stall, and causes the birds to fly from their nests; she awakes the five tribes (p. 30), as an active housewife wakes her household, and sets each to his work; she passes by no house, but everywhere kindles the sacrificial fire, and gives breath and life to all. Occasionally the hymns call upon her to accelerate her awakening, to linger no longer, to hasten that the sun may not wither her away.⁷⁹ "Come, Ushas," we find in invocations, "descend from the light of the sky on gracious paths: let the red cows lead thee into the house of the sacrificer. The light cows bring in the gleaming Ushas; her beams appear in the east. As bold warriors flash their swords, the ruddy cows press on; already they are shining clear. The bright beam of Ushas breaks through the dark veil of black night at the edge of heaven. We are beyond the darkness. Rise up. The light is there. Thou hast opened the path for the sun; rise up, awakening glad voices. Listen to our prayer, O giver of all good; increase our progeny."⁸⁰

The god of the sun was invoked under the names Surya and Savitar (Savitri), *i. e.* "the impeller." The first name seems to belong specially to the rising, the second to the sinking, sun. "Already," the hymn tells us, "the beams raise up Surya, so that all see him. With the night, the stars retire like thieves before Surya, the all-seeing. His beams shine clear over the nations, like glowing flames. Before gods and men thou risest up, Surya. With thy glance thou lookest over the nations, wanderest through heaven, the broad clouds, measuring the day and the night. Thy chariot, bright Surya, far-seeing one with the gleaming hair, seven yellow horses draw. Looking on thee after the darkness, we invoke thee, the highest light. Banish the pain and fear of my heart; pale fear we give to the thrushes and parrots. The sun of Aditi has arisen with all his victorious power;⁸¹ he bows down the enemy before me."⁸² A hymn says to Savitar: "I summon Savitar to help, who calls all gods and men to their place, when he returns to the dark heaven. He goes on the ascending path, and on the sinking one; shining from far, he removes transgression. The god ascends the great gold-adorned chariot, armed with the golden goad. The yellow horses with the white feet bring on the light, drawing the golden yoke. With golden hands Savitar advances between heaven and earth. Golden-handed, Renewer, rich one, come to us; beat off from us the Rakshasas; come, thou who art invoked every night on thine old firm paths through the air, which are free from dust; protect us to-day also."⁸³ In an evening song to Savitar we find: "With the swift horses which Savitar unyokes, he brings even the course of the swift one to a stand: the weaving woman rolls up her web; the workman stops in the middle of his work; where men dwell, the glimmer of the house fire is spread here and there; the mother puts the best piece before the son; he who has gone abroad for gain returns, and every wanderer yearns for home; the bird seeks the nest, the herd the stall. From the sky, from the water, and the earth, Savitar caused gifts to come to us, to bless the suppliant as well as thy friend, the minstrel, whose words sound far."⁸⁴ A third god of light, who seems to stand in some relation to the sun, especially the setting sun, is Pushan, *i. e.* "the nourisher." He pastures the cows of the sky, the bright clouds, and leads them back into the stall; he never loses one; he is the protector and increaser of cattle; he weaves a garment

⁷⁹ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 193 ff.

⁸⁰ "Rigveda," 1, 49; 1, 92; 1, 2, 5; 1, 113, 19 in Benfey's rendering, "Orient," 1, 404; 2, 257; 3, 155. The three skilful Ribhus, who are frequently mentioned in the Rigveda, are assistants of the spirits of light. They assist the gods to liberate the cows, which the spirits of the night have fastened in the rock-stable, *i. e.* the bright clouds.

⁸¹ The spirits of light are called sons of Aditi, *i. e.* of the Eternal, Unlimited, Infinite; seven or eight sons are ascribed to her; Hillebrandt, "Die Göttin Aditi." Originally Aditi meant, in mythology, merely the non-ending, the imperishable, in opposition to the perishable world, and the gods are called the sons of immortality because they cannot die. Darmesteter, "Haurvatat," p. 83.

⁸² "Rigveda," 1, 50, according to Sonne's translation in Kuhn, "Z. V. Spr." 12, 267 ff.; cf. Benfey's rendering, "Orient," 1, 405.

⁸³ "Rigveda," 1, 35, according to Roth's translation; cf. Benfey, "Orient," 1, 53.

⁸⁴ "Rigveda," 2, 38, according to Roth's translation, "Z. D. M. G." 1870, 306 ff.

for the sheep; he protects the horses; he is also lord and keeper of the path of heaven and earth; he protects and guides the wanderers in their paths; he brings the bride to the bridegroom, and leads the souls of the dead into the other world.⁸⁵

Above the spirits of fire, of the first streaks of light, of the dawn, and the sun, are those gods of the clear sky, with which we have already made acquaintance, as belonging partly to the undivided possessions of the Indo-Europeans, and partly to the undivided possessions of the Aryas in Iran and on the Indus. Though still enthroned in the highest light and the highest sky, these spirits are nevertheless, in the minds of the Aryas, expelled from the central position in their religious conceptions and worship, by a form which, though it did not spring up in the land of the Indus, first attained this pre-eminent position among the Aryas there. With the tribes of Iran, the god of the clear sky, the god of light, is Mitra, the victorious champion against darkness and demons. It is he who has overcome Veretra, the prince of the evil ones, the demon of darkness; as a warrior-god, he is for the Iranians the god of battles, the giver of victory. The nature of the land of the Panjab was calculated to give a special development and peculiar traits to the ancient conception of the struggle of the god of light against the demon of darkness. There the pastures were parched in the height of summer, the fields burnt, the springs and streams dried up, until at length, long awaited and desired, the storms bring the rain. Phenomena of so violent a nature as the tropical storms were unknown to the Aryas before they entered this region. The deluge of water in storm and tempest, the return of the clear sky and sunlight after the dense blackness of the storm, could not be without influence on the existing conceptions of the struggle with the spirits. In the heavy black clouds which came before the storm, the Aryas saw the dark spirits, Vritra and Ahi, who would change the light of the sky into night, quench the sun, and carry off the water of the sky. The tempest which preceded the outbreak of the storm, the lightning which parted the heavy clouds, and caused the rain to stream down, the returning light of the sun in the sky, these must be the beneficent saving acts of a victorious god, who rendered vain the object of the demons, wrested from them the waters they had carried off, rekindled the light of the sun, sent the waters on the earth, caused streams and rivers to flow with renewed vigour, and gave fresh life to the withered pastures and parched fields. These conceptions underlie the mighty form into which the struggle of the demons grew up among the Aryas on the Indus, the god of storm and tempest – Indra. The army of the winds fights at his side, just as the wild army surrounds the storm-god of the Germans. Indra is a warrior, who bears the spear; heaven and earth tremble at the sound of his spear. This sound is the thunder, his good spear is the lightning; with this he smites the black clouds, the black bodies of the demons which have sucked up the water of the sky; with it he rekindles the sun.⁸⁶ With it he milks the cows, *i. e.* the clouds; shatters the towers of the demons, *i. e.* the tempests which gather round the mountain top; and hurls back the demons when they would ascend heaven.⁸⁷ "I will sing of the victories of Indra, which the god with the spear carried off," so we read in the hymns of the Veda. "On the mountain he smote Ahi; he poured out the waters, and let the river flow from the mountains; like calves to cows, so do the waters hasten to the sea. Like a bull, Indra dashed upon the sacrifice, and drank thrice of the prepared drink, then he smote the first-born of the evil one. When thou, Indra, didst smite them, thou didst overcome the craft of the guileful: thou didst beget the sun, the day, and the dawn. With a mighty cast Indra smote the dark Vritra, so that he broke his shoulders; like a tree felled with an axe Ahi sank to the earth. The waters now run over the corpse of Ahi, and the enemy of Indra sleeps there in the long darkness."⁸⁸ "Thou hast opened the cave of Vritra rich in cattle; the fetters of the streams thou hast burnt asunder."⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 171 ff. Kaegi, "Rigveda," 2, 43.

⁸⁶ Kuhn, "Herabkunft des Feuers," s. 66.

⁸⁷ "Rigveda," 1, 51, 5; 2, 12, 12.

⁸⁸ "Rigveda," 1, 32, according to Roth's translation; cf. Benfey, "Orient," 1, 46.

⁸⁹ "Rigveda," 1, 11; 1, 121.

On a golden chariot, drawn by horses, yellow or ruddy, cream-coloured or chestnut, Indra approaches;⁹⁰ his skilful driver is Vayu, *i. e.* "the blowing," the spirit of the morning wind,⁹¹ which, hastening before the morning glow, frees the nocturnal sky from dark clouds. Indra is followed by Rudra, *i. e.* the terrible, the spirit of the mighty wind, the destroying, but also beneficent storm, and the whistling winds, the swift, strong Maruts, who fight with Indra against the demons. These are twenty-seven, or thirty-six in number, the sons of Rudra. Their chariots are drawn by dappled horses; they wear golden helmets, and greaves, and spears on their shoulders. They dwell in the mountains, open the path for the sun, break down the branches of the trees like wild elephants, and when Indra has overpowered Vritra, they tear him to pieces. To Indra, as to Mitra, horses were sacrificed, and bulls also, and the libation of soma was offered.⁹² Indra is the deity addressed in the greater part of the poems of the Rigveda. Himself a king, hero, and conqueror, he is invoked by minstrels to give victory to their princes. They entreat him "to harness the shrill-neighing, peacock-tailed pair of cream-coloured horses;" to come into the ranks of the warriors, like a wild, terrible lion from the mountains; to approach with sharp spear and knotty club; to give the hosts of the enemy to the vultures for food. The warriors are urged to follow Indra's victorious chariot, to vie with Indra: he who does not flinch in the battle will fight before them; he will strike back the arrows of the enemies. Indra destroys the towers and fortresses of the enemies; he casts down twenty kings; he smites the opponents by fifties and sixties of thousands.⁹³ The prayer has already been mentioned in which Indra is invoked to give the Aryas victory against the Dasyus. "Lead us, O Indra," we read in an invocation of the Samaveda; "let the troop of the Maruts go before the overpowering, victorious arms of the god. Raise up the weapons, O wealthy god; raise up the souls of our warriors; strengthen the vigour of the strong; let the cry of victory rise from the chariots. Be with us, Indra, when the banners wave; let our arrows be victorious; give our warriors the supremacy; protect us, ye gods, in the battle. Fear, seize the hearts of our enemies, and take possession of their limbs."⁹⁴

The old Arian conception of Mitra as the highest god of light, may still be recognised in the Rigveda; the hymns declare that his stature transcends the sky, and his glory spreads beyond the earth. He sustains heaven and earth; with never-closing eyes he looks down on all creatures. He whom Mitra, the mighty helper, protects, no evil will touch, from far or from near; he will not be conquered or slain. A mighty, strong, and wise king, Mitra summons men to activity.⁹⁵ Driven back by the predominance of Indra, the functions of Mitra in the Rigveda are found amalgamated with those of Varuna, but even in this amalgamation the nature of light is completely victorious. In the conception of the Arians light is not only the power that awakens and gives health and prosperity, it is also the pure and the good, not merely in the natural, but also in the moral sense, the true, the honourable, just and faithful. Thus Mitra, removed from immediate conflict with the evil spirits, is combined with Varuna, the god of the highest heaven, and the life-giving water which springs from the heaven; and becomes the guardian of truth, fidelity, justice, and the duties of men to the gods. The sun is the eye of Mitra and Varuna; they have placed him in the sky; at their command the sky is bright; they send down the rain. Even the gods cannot withstand their will. They are the guardians of the world; they look down on men as on herds of cattle.⁹⁶ The light sees all, illuminates all: hence Mitra and Varuna know what takes place on earth; the most secret thing escapes them not. They are angry, terrible deities; they punish those

⁹⁰ Indra is derived by Benfey from *syand*, "to flow," "to drop," in which case we shall have to refer it to the rain-bringing power of the god. Others have proposed a derivation from *idh*, *indh*, "to kindle;" others from *indra*, "blue." In any case, Andra, the corresponding name in the Rigveda, must not be left out of consideration.

⁹¹ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 144.

⁹² Roth, "Zwei Lieder des Rigveda, Z. D. M. G.," 1870, 301 ff. Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 147 ff.

⁹³ "Rigveda," 4, 30; "Samaveda," Benfey, 1, 3, 2, 1. 1, 4, 1, 1.

⁹⁴ "Samaveda," Benfey, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁵ "Rigveda," 3, 59, in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 69.

⁹⁶ "Rigveda," 1, 115, 1 in Benfey; "Orient," 3, 157; "Rigveda," 6, 51, 2; 7, 61, 1; 7, 63, 4; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 157.

who do not honour the gods; they avenge falsehood and sin. But to those who serve them, they forgive their transgressions. Varuna, whose special duty it is to punish the offences of men, is entreated in the hymns, with the greatest earnestness, to pardon transgression and sin. In the conception of the hymns of the Rigveda, he is the highest lord of heaven and earth. In the waters of heaven he dwells in a golden coat of mail, in his spacious golden house with a thousand doors. He has shown to the sun his path; he has excavated their beds for the rivers, and causes them to flow into the sea; his breath sounds with invigorating force through the breezes. He knows the way of the winds, and the flight of birds, and the course of ships on the sea. He knows all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Even he who would fly further than the sky extends is not beyond his power. He numbers the glances of the eyes of men; where two men sit together and converse, king Varuna is a third among them.⁹⁷ He knows the truth and falsehood of men; he knows their thoughts, and watches them as a herdsman his herd. His coils, threefold and sevenfold, embrace them who speak lies. "May he remain unscathed by them who speak truth," is the prayer of the invocations. "Was it for an old sin, Varuna," we read in a prayer, "that thou wishest to destroy thy friend, who praises thee? Absolve us from the sins of our fathers, and from those which we committed with our own bodies. Release Vasishtha, O king, like a thief who has feasted on stolen oxen; release him like a calf from the rope. It was not our own doing that led us astray, O Varuna, it was necessity (or temptation), an intoxicating draught, passion, dice, thoughtlessness. The old is there to mislead the young; even sleep brings unrighteousness. Through want of strength, thou strong and bright god, have I gone wrong: have mercy, almighty, have mercy. I go along trembling, like a cloud driven before the wind; let not us guilty ones reap the fruit of our sin. Let me not yet enter into the house of clay, king Varuna. Protect, O wise god, him who praises thee. Whenever we men, O Varuna, commit an offence before the heavenly host, whenever we break the law through thoughtlessness, have mercy, almighty, have mercy."⁹⁸

The chief offering which the Aryas made to the spirits of the sky, was of ancient origin; even before they entered the land of the Indus, at the time when they were one nation with their fellow-tribesmen of Iran – this libation had been established. It was a drink-offering, the juice of a mountain plant, the soma, or haoma of the Irans, which they offered. The expressed sap of this plant, which is the *asclepias acida* of our botanists, mixed with milk, narcotic and intoxicating, was to the Arya the strongest, most exhilarating liquor, a drink fit for their gods. According to the Rigveda, a tamed falcon brought the soma from the summit of the sky, or from the tops of the mountains, where Varuna had placed it. The drink of the soma inspires the songs of the poet, heals the sick, prolongs life, and makes the poor believe themselves rich. The rites of preparing the soma were already widely developed when the songs of the Rigveda over the offering were composed. The sacrificial vessels were washed out with kuça-grass, and with "the sacred word," *i. e.* with traditional forms of words. The plants of the soma – according to the rubrics of later times, they are to be collected by moonlight on the hills,⁹⁹ – were crushed between stones. In the Veda we are told that the suppliants "squeeze the soma with stones." The liquor thus obtained was then strained through a sieve, with songs and incantations. The sieve appears to have been made out of the hairs of a ram's tail, and the juice is pressed through it with the ten sisters, *i. e.* with the fingers; "it rushes to the milk as fiercely as the bull to the cow." The sound of the drops of the golden fluid falling into the metal vessels is the roaring of the bulls, the neighing of the horses of Indra, "the hymn of praise, which the song of the minstrel accompanies."¹⁰⁰ The drink thus prepared was then placed in the sacrificial vessel, on outspread, delicate grass, over which was laid a cloth. Then the Aṅvins, Vayu, the Maruts, Indra were invoked to descend, to place themselves at the sacrificial cloth, and drink the draught prepared for them. According to the faith of

⁹⁷ "Atharvaveda," 4, 16, according to M. Müller's translation "Essays," 1, 40, 41. Cf. Roth, "Atharvaveda," 8. 19.

⁹⁸ "Rigveda," 7, 86, 89, according to Müller's rendering, "Essays," 1, 38, 39; cf. Muir's translation, *loc. cit.* 5, 63 ff. [who reads "like an inflated skin" for "like a cloud," etc.]

⁹⁹ Windischmann, "Abh. der Münch. Akademie," 1847, s. 129.

¹⁰⁰ "Samaveda," 1, 6, 2, 2; "Rigveda," 1, 2, 2; 1, 5, 5, and elsewhere.

the Aryas, Indra fights on the side of the tribe whose soma offering he has drunk, and gives the victory to them. The invocations to Indra, to the Maruts, and the Aṅvins, who were considered mightiest and most influential in inviting and bringing down the gods to the sacrifice, are preserved in the Rigveda.

It would be futile to attempt to distinguish in detail the exuberant abundance of conceptions and pictures which the young and vigorous fancy of the Indians has embodied in the songs of the Veda. One poetical idea presses on another; scarcely a single image is retained for any length of time, so that we not unfrequently receive the impression of a restless variety, of uncertain effort, of flux and confusion. On the other hand, it is impossible to deny that in these poems there is a freshness and vigour of thought, a wide sympathy and moral earnestness. Beside the most lively conceptions of the phenomena of the heavens, the formation of clouds and storms; besides deep delight in nature, and a sensuous view of natural life, we find attempts to form a comprehensive, exhaustive idea of the nature of God, the beginnings of reflection and abstraction. If this contrast proves that the poems of the Veda were divided in their origin by intervals of time, we can hardly be wrong if we look upon the *naïve*, coarse and sensuous conceptions as the older, and the attempts at combination and abstraction as of later origin. Yet the basis of that conception of moral purity, of the just avenging power of the high deities of light, Mitra and Varuna, cannot be regarded as of later date, since it occurs also in the Mitra of the Iranians. We can hardly find a more *naïve* conception than the view expressed in the poems of the Veda that the sacrifice not only gives food and drink to the hungry deities, but also gives them the power to fulfil their duties. The offering of soma strengthens Indra in the battles which he has to fight against the evil spirits; it invigorates him for the struggle against the enemies of the tribe whose offering he drinks. The god requires strength for the contest; and this, according to the peculiar view of the Indians, is increased by the offering of soma made to him. And not only does the offering give strength, it inspires the god for battle. Just as men sought courage in drinking, so does Indra drink courage from the sacrificial goblet. If Indra is to give wealth and blessing, if he is to fight victoriously his ever-recurring struggle against Vritra and Ahi, to win the fructifying moisture, and contend in the ranks of the tribe, the "honey-sweet" soma must be prepared for him without ceasing, he must be invoked to harness his horses, and place himself at the meal of the sacrifice, and exhilarate himself with the drink prepared for him; in his exhilaration, victory over the demons is certain; he will fight invincibly before the ranks of his friends. His enemies, we are told of Indra, he overcomes in the inspiration of the soma. "Drink, Indra, of the soma like a wise man, delighting thyself in the mead; it is good for exhilaration. Come down, Indra, who art truly a bull, and drink thyself full; drink the most inspiring of drinks. The intoxicating drink of the rich gives bulls."¹⁰¹ By the side of conceptions such as this, the invocation praises the lofty power, the sublime nature of the gods, in moving images, which attempt, to the utmost degree, to glorify the power of the god to whom they are addressed. They elevate him and his power above the other gods, and concentrate the divine action in the deity to whom the prayer or thanksgiving is made, at the expense of his divine compeers. The object was to win by prayer and sacrifice the grace of the deity who was invoked. In this manner Agni, Surya, Indra, Mitra, and Varuna are celebrated as the highest deities. Of Indra we are told that none of the gods is like him; that none can contend with him; that before him, the thunderer, all worlds tremble. He is the lord of all; the king of the firm land and flowing water; his power has set up the ancient hills, and causes the streams to flow; he sustains the earth, the nourisher of all; he has created the sky, the sun, the dawn; he has fixed the lights of the sky; should he desire to take up both worlds – the heaven and earth – it would be but a handful for him. Who of the seers of old has seen the limits of his power?¹⁰² As we have observed, the form of the mighty storm-god which grew up in the land of the Indus, had driven back the ancient forms of Mitra and Varuna, and thus the minstrels found a strong tendency to unite in the mighty warrior, the thunderer, the sum total of divine power. But Mitra and

¹⁰¹ "Samaveda," Benfey, 1, 4, 1, 1; 5, 2, 4, 1, 15, and elsewhere.

¹⁰² Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 98, ff.

Varuna were not forgotten; and as the warlike life fell into the back-ground, and the impulse to seize the unity of the divine nature became stronger, these ancient forms were in their turn more easily idealized, and framed into a higher ethical conception than was possible with the peculiarly warlike nature of Indra. In the songs of praise addressed to Varuna, which have been quoted, it is impossible not to see the effort to concentrate in him as the highest god the highest divine power.

If in the conception of the gods in the Veda we find besides sensuous views important ethical elements, and traits transcending sense, we also find in the worship of the Aryas, in the relation of man to the gods, a certain simplicity coexisting with sharply defined ethical perception. Men pray to the gods for protection against the evil spirits, for the preservation and increase of the herd, for help in sickness, and long life, for victory in battle. It is allowed that sacrifices are offered in order to obtain treasures and wealth. Indra is to "give gift for gift;" he is to send wealth "so that one may wade therein to the knee." From this the god will obtain his advantage in turn; if Indra gives horses, chariots and bulls, sacrifices will be offered without ceasing.¹⁰³ Like flies round a jar of honey, we are told in another place, do the suppliants sit round the bowl of the offering; as a man sets his foot in the chariot, so does the host of minstrels longing for treasure place their confidence in Indra.¹⁰⁴ In a hymn, the minstrel says to Indra: "If I were the lord of cattle, master of such wealth as thou art, Indra, then would I assist the minstrel; I would not leave him in need."¹⁰⁵ But, on the other hand, it is emphatically stated that Indra rejects the wicked, as a man spurns a toadstool with his foot;¹⁰⁶ that no evil is concealed from Mitra and Varuna. It is left to Indra to give to the sacrificer whatever he considers best and most valuable; he is entreated to instruct the sacrificer, to give him wisdom, as a father to his child.¹⁰⁷ Stress is laid on the fact that sacrifice can remove a multitude of sins, and purify him who offers it, and we saw how earnestly Varuna was invoked to forgive the guilt that had been incurred.

The *naïve* conception that the god drank vigour and courage out of the sacrificial bowl is developed among the Aryas in a very peculiar manner. From this fact they derived the idea that the sacrifice gave power to the gods generally to increase their strength; that the gods "grew" by prayer and sacrifice. Thus we read: "The suppliants, extolling Indra by their songs of praise, have strengthened him, to slay Ahi. Increase, O hero Indra, in thy body, praised with piety, and impelled by our prayers. The hymns whet thy great strength, thy courage, thy power, thy glorious thunder-club."¹⁰⁸ As it is men who offer sacrifice to the gods, this conception gives mankind a certain power over the deities; it lies with them to strengthen the gods by sacrifice and gifts; they can compel the gods to be helpful to them, if only they understand how to invoke them rightly. The holy words, *i. e.* the invocations, are, in the conception of the Veda, "a voyage which leads to heaven." Hence those who are acquainted with the correct mode of prayer and offering become magicians, who are in a position to exercise force over the gods. The idea that man has power to compel the gods is very *naïve*, childlike, and childish; in its most elementary form it lies at the root of fetishism. In other nations also great weight is laid on the correct mode of offering sacrifices, as the essential condition of winning the grace of the gods; but the conception that a hearing must attend a sacrifice and prayer correctly made is far more strongly present in the Indians, than in any other civilised people. Yet the hymns of the Veda are far above fetishism, which attempts to exercise direct external compulsion upon the gods. The Indian faith is rather that this effect is obtained not merely by the custom of sacrifice, but by the intensity of invocation, by the power of meditation, by elevation of spirit, by the passionate force of

¹⁰³ "Samaveda," Benfey, 1, 3, 2, 4.

¹⁰⁴ "Samaveda," 2, 8, 2, 6.

¹⁰⁵ "Samaveda," 1, 4, 1, 2; 2, 9, 2, 9.

¹⁰⁶ "Samaveda," 1, 6, 2, 1.

¹⁰⁷ "Rigveda," 1, 32; "Samaveda," 1, 3, 2, 4.

¹⁰⁸ "Rigveda," 5, 31, 10; 1, 63, 2; 2, 20, 8; 1, 54, 8.

prayer, which will not leave the god till he has given his blessing. It is inward, not outward compulsion that they would exercise. Developed in a peculiar direction, this mode of conception is of deep and decisive importance for the religious and civic views of the Indians.

The power ascribed to the sacrificial prayers of bringing down the gods from heaven; the eager desire of every man to invite the gods effectually to his own sacrifice, in order that he may scorn the sacrifice of his enemy; the notion that it was possible by the correct and pleasing invocation to disturb the sacrifice of the enemy and make it inoperative, had their natural effect. The singers of these prayers, who knew the strongest forms of invocation, or could "weave" them – the priests – early obtained a position of importance. It has been already remarked what rich presents they boast to have received from the princes. The minstrel Kakshivat tells us that king Svanaya had presented him with one hundred bars of gold, ten chariots with four horses each, a hundred bulls and a thousand cows.¹⁰⁹ Other songs advise the princes to place before them a pious suppliant at the sacrifice, and to reward him liberally. These suppliants or priests were called *purohita*, *i. e.* "men placed before." "He dwells happily in his house," we are told; "to him the earth brings fruit at all times; to that king all families willingly give way, who is preceded by the suppliant; that king is protected by the gods, who liberally rewards the suppliant who seeks food."¹¹⁰ The invocations which have drawn down the gods and have obtained an answer to the prayer of the sacrificer, are repeatedly used, and handed down by the minstrel to his descendants. This explains the fact that even in the Veda we find these families of minstrels; that some of the hymns are said to spring from the ancestors of these races, while others are mentioned as the new compositions of members of these families; that the supposed ancestors are considered the first and oldest minstrels and suppliants, and have already become mythical and half-divine forms, of whom some kindled the first sacrificial fire, and offered the first sacrifice with Manu, the progenitor of the Aryas.

The hymns of the Veda make frequent mention of the dead. They are invited to the sacrificial meal; they are said to sit at the fire; to eat and drink the gifts set before them on the grass. Those who have attained "life," are entreated to protect the invocations of their descendants, to ward off the evil spirits, to give wealth to their descendants. We know from a later period that daily libations were offered "to the fathers," and special gifts were given at the new moon; that a banquet of the dead was kept. In Iran also similar honours were given to the spirits of the dead. Yama, who first experienced death, who ascended from the depths of the earth to the summit of heaven, has discovered the path for mortals (p. 31). He dwells with Varuna in the third heaven, the heaven of light. To him, in this heaven of light, come the heroes who are slain in battle, the pious who are distinguished by sacrifices and knowledge, who have trodden the path of virtue, who have observed justice and have been liberal, *i. e.* all those who have lived a holy and pure life, and have thus purified their own bodies. In this body of light they walk in the heaven of Yama. According to the Mahabharata, the heroes and saints of ancient days shine in heaven in a light of their own (chapter viii.). In the heaven of Yama is milk, butter, honey, and soma, the drink of the gods, in large vats.¹¹¹ Here the weak no longer pay tribute to the strong;¹¹² here those whom death has separated are again united; here they live with Yama in feasting and rejoicing. The souls of the wicked, on the other hand, fall into darkness.¹¹³ According to an old commentary on the Rigveda, the heaven of Yama is in the South-east, one thousand days journey on horse from the earth.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ "Rigveda," 1, 126, 2, 3.

¹¹⁰ "Rigveda," 4, 50, 8, 9. Roth, "Z. D. M. G.," 1, 77. Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 951.

¹¹¹ M. Müller, "Z. D. M. G.," 9, 16. These bright bodies of the fathers led to the idea that the souls of the fathers had adorned the heaven with stars, and that they were these stars. "Rigveda," 10, 68, 11.

¹¹² "Atharvaveda," 3, 29, 3; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 310.

¹¹³ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 308, 309, 311. In the later portion of the Rigveda, 10, 15, the old conception of the fathers is already changed. Three classes of fathers are distinguished, and burning and non-burning are mentioned side by side.

¹¹⁴ "Aitareya-Brahmana," 2, 17; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 322.

The Aryas buried their dead, a custom which was also observed in old time among the Arians of Iran. A form of words, to be spoken at the burial, which is preserved among the more recent hymns of the Veda, shows that even at this period burial was practised. The bow was taken from the hand of the dead; a sacrifice was offered, in which the widow of the dead and the wives of the family took part, and during the ceremony a stone was set up as a symbol between the dead and the living. "Get thee gone, death, on thy way," – such is this form of words – "which lies apart from the way of the gods. Thou seest, thou canst hear what I say to thee; injure not the children nor the men. I set this wall of separation (the stone) for those that live, that no one may hasten to that goal; they must cover death with this rock, and live a hundred autumns. He comes to a length of years, free from the weakness of age. The women here, who are wives not widows, glad in their husbands, advance with sacrificial fat and butter, and without tears; cheerful, and beautifully adorned, they climb the steps of the altar. Exalt thyself, O woman, to the world of life. The breath of him, by whom thou art sitting, is gone; the marriage with him who once took thy hand, and desired thee, is completed. I take the bow out of the hand of the dead – the symbol of honour, of courage, of lordship. We here and thou there, we would with force and vigour drive back every enemy and every onset. Approach to mother earth; she opens to receive thee kindly; may she protect thee henceforth from destruction. Open, O earth; be not too narrow for him; cover him like the mother who folds her son in her garment. Henceforth thou hast thy house and thy prosperity here; may Yama procure thee an abode there."¹¹⁵

The Arians in Iran gave up the burial of their corpses, and exposed them on the mountains; the Arians on the Indus burnt them. For some time burial and cremation went on side by side in the valley of the Indus. "May the fathers," we are told in an invocation, "have joy in our offering whether they have undergone cremation or not."¹¹⁶ In other prayers Agni is entreated to do no harm to the dead, to make the body ripe, to carry the "unborn" part into heaven where the righteous keep festival with the gods; where Yama says: "I will give this home to the man who comes hither if he is mine."¹¹⁷ "Warm, O Agni," so we are told in one of these prayers, "warm with thy glance and thy glow the immortal part of him; bear it gently away to the world of the righteous. Let him rejoin the fathers, for he drew near to thee with the libation of sacrifice. May the Maruts carry thee upwards and bedew thee with rain. May the wise Pushan (p. 47) lead thee hence, the shepherd of the world, who never lost one of his flock. Pushan alone knows all those spaces; he will lead us on a secure path. He will carefully go before as a lamp, a complete hero, a giver of rich blessing. Enter, therefore, on the old path on which our fathers have gone. Thou shalt see Varuna and Yama, the two kings, the drinkers of libations. Go to the fathers; there abide with Yama in the highest heaven, even as thou well deservest. On the right path escape the two hounds – the brood of Sarama – of the four eyes. Then proceed onward to the wise fathers who take delight in happy union with Yama. Thou wilt find a home among the fathers; prosper among the people of Yama. Surround him, Yama, with thy protection against the hounds who watch for thee, the guardians of thy path, and give him health and painless life. With wide nostrils, eager for men, with blood-brown hair, Yama's two messengers go round among men. O that they may again grant us the pleasant breath of life to-day, and that we may see the sun!"¹¹⁸ In other invocations of the Rigveda the object of the prayer is "to reach to the imperishable, unchangeable world, where is eternal light and splendour; to become immortal, where king Vaivasvata (Yama) dwells, where is the sanctuary of heaven, where the great waters flow, where is ambrosia (*amrita*) and peacefulness, joy and delight, where wishes and desires are fulfilled."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ "Rigveda," 10, 18; according to Roth's rendering, "Z. D. M. G.," 8, 468 ff.

¹¹⁶ "Rigveda," 10, 15, 14; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 297.

¹¹⁷ "Atharvaveda," 18, 2, 37; in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 294.

¹¹⁸ M. Müller, "Die Todtenbestattung der Brahmanen," s. 14 ff.

¹¹⁹ "Rigveda," 9, 113, 7 ff.

CHAPTER III. THE CONQUEST OF THE LAND OF THE GANGES

The life of the Aryas in the Panjab was manly and warlike. From the songs of the Rigveda we saw how familiar they were with the bow and the chariot, how frequent were the feuds between the princes, and the prayers offered to the gods for victory. Such a life could, no doubt, increase the pleasure in martial achievements, and lead to further enterprises, even if the plains and pastures of the Panjab had not been too narrow for the inhabitants. We remember the prayer in which the war-god was invoked to grant the Arian tribes room against the black-skins (p. 8). As a fact the Aryas extended their settlements to the East beyond the Sarasvati; and as on the lower Indus the broad deserts checked any progress towards the region of the Yamuna and the Ganges, the advance from the Sarasvati to the Yamuna must have taken place in the North along the spurs of the Himalayas.

From the hymns of the Rigveda we can ascertain that the Arian tribes pressed on each other, and that the tribes settled in the East were pushed forward in that direction by tribes in the West. Ten tribes of the Panjab, who appear to have occupied the region of the Iravati,¹²⁰— the Bharatas, Matsyas, Anus, and Druhyus, are specially mentioned among them — united for a campaign against king Sudas, the son of Divodasa, the descendant of Pijavana, who ruled over the Tritsus on the Sarasvati. On the side of the united tribes was the priest Viçvamitra of the race of the Kuçikas; on the side of the Tritsus the family of Vasishtha.¹²¹ The Bharatas, Matsyas, Anus, and Druhyus, must have crossed the Vipaça and the Çatadru in order to attack the Tritsus. The Rigveda mentions a prayer addressed by Viçvamitra to these two streams. "Forth from the slopes of the mountains; full of desire, like horses loosed in the course, like bright-coloured cows to their calves, Vipaça and Çatadru hasten with their waves. Impelled by Indra, seeking an outlet to the sea, ye roll onward like warriors in chariots of war: in united course with swelling waves ye roll into each other, ye clear ones. Listen joyfully to my pleasant speech, for a moment. O abounding in waters, halt on your steps to the sea. With strong earnestness, crying for help, I entreat you, I, the son of Kuçika. Listen to the minstrel, ye sisters; he has come from far with horse and chariot. Incline yourselves, that ye may be crossed; your waves, ye streams, must not reach the axles. When the Bharatas have crossed you, the mounted host, goaded by Indra, then run on in your renewed course." After the two rivers were crossed a battle took place. Viçvamitra uttered the prayer for the Bharatas: "Indra, approach us with manifold choice help; great hero, be friendly. May he who hates us fall at our feet; may he whom we hate, be deserted by the breath of life. As the tree falls beneath the axe, as a man breaks asunder a husk, as a boiling kettle throws off the foam, so deal thou, O Indra, with them. These sons of Bharata, O Indra, know the battle. They spur their horses; they carry the strong bow like an eternal enemy, looking round in the battle."¹²²

In spite of the prayer of Viçvamitra the Bharatas and their confederates were defeated; Sudas was even able to invade their land, to capture and plunder several places. The song of victory of the Tritsus, which a minstrel of Sudas may have composed after their success, runs thus: "Two hundred cows, two chariots with women, allotted as booty to Sudas, I step round with praises, as the priests step

¹²⁰ This follows from the fact that the army of the confederates had to cross the Vipaça and Çatadru in order to reach the Tritsus.

¹²¹ In the Rigveda king Sudas is at once a son of Divodasa and a scion of the house of the Pijavanas, possibly because Pijavana was the father or some ancestor of Divodasa. In the Samaveda (2, 5, 1, 5) Divodasa is called the noble. In the book of Manu (7, 41; 8, 110) Sudasa is the son of Pijavana. In the genealogy of the kings of the Koçalas, by whom the Tritsus were destroyed, the Vishnu-Purana mentions in the fiftieth generation after Ikshvaku, the founder of the race, a king Sudasa, the son of Sarvakama, grandson of Rituparna. So also the Harivaṅça, and in the Vishnu-Purana (ed. Wilson, p. 381) Vasishtha is the priest of king Sudas as well as of Nimi, the son of Ikshvaku. On the other hand the Vishnu-Purana (p. 454, 455) is aware of a second Sudas, the grandson of Divodasa, in the race of the moon. Viçvamitra is himself called a Bharata; we shall see below that the Mahabharata connects Viçvamitra with the genealogy of the kings of the Bharata. Cp. Roth, "Zur Literatur," S. 142 ff. [On the names of Indian rivers, see Muir, *loc. cit.* 2, 345 ff.]

¹²² Cf. Muir, *loc. cit.* 12, 339, where the hymn is translated.

round the place of sacrifice. To Sudas Indra gave the flourishing race of his enemies, the vain boasters among men. Even with poor men Indra has done marvellous deeds; by the weak he has struck down the lion-like. With a needle Indra has broken spears; all kinds of good things he has given to Sudas. Ten kings, holding themselves invincible in battle, could not strive against Sudas, Indra, and Varuna; the song of them who brought food-offerings was effectual. Where men meet with raised banner in the battle-field, where evil of every kind happens, where all creatures are afraid, there have ye, Indra and Varuna, spoken (words of) courage above us, as we looked upwards. The Tritsus in whose ranks Indra entered went onward like downward streaming water: their enemies, like hucksters when dealing, leave all their goods to Sudas. As Sudas laid low twenty-one enemies in glorious strife, as the sacrificer strews holy grass on the place of sacrifice, so did Indra the hero pour out the winds. Sixty hundred of the mounted Anus and Druhyus perished; sixty and six heroes fell before the righteous Sudas. These are the heroic deeds, all of which Indra has done. Without delay, Indra destroyed all the fortresses of the enemy, and divided the goods of the Anus in battle to the Tritsus. The four horses of Sudas, the coursers worthy of praise, richly adorned, stamping the ground, will bring race against race to glory. Ye strong Maruts, be gracious to him as to his father Divodasa, preserve to him the house of Pijavana, and let the power of the righteous king continue uninjured." In another song of the Rigveda the glory of this victory of king Sudas is especially ascribed to Vasishtha and his sons "in white robes with the knot on the right side" (p. 29). They were seen surrounded in the battle of the ten kings, then Indra heard Vasishtha's song of praise, and the Bharatas were broken like the staffs of the ox-driver. The Vasishthas had brought the mighty Indra from far by their soma-offering, by the power of their prayer; then had Indra given glory to the Tritsus, and their tribes had extended.¹²³

The extension of the Aryas in the rich plains of the Yamuna and the Ganges must in the first place have followed the course of the former river towards the south, and then reached over the land between the two rivers, until the immigrants arrived further and further to the east on the banks of the Ganges. We have no historical information about the facts of these migrations and conquests, of the occupation of the valleys of the Yamuna, the upper and middle Ganges; we can only ascertain that the valley of the Yamuna, and the doab of the two rivers were first occupied and most thickly colonised. It is not till we come lower down the course of the Ganges, that we find a large number of the old population in a position of subjection to the Arian settlers. Lastly, as we learn from the Indian Epos, the Aryas had not merely to contend against the old population at the time of their settlement; nor did they merely press upon one another, while those who came last sought to push forward the early immigrants, as we concluded to be the case from the hymns quoted from the Rigveda; they also engaged in conflicts among themselves for the possession of the best land between the Yamuna and the Ganges. In these struggles the tribes of the immigrants became amalgamated into large communities or nations, and the successful leaders found themselves at the head of important states. The conquest and colonisation of such large regions, the limitation and arrangement of the new states founded in them, could only be accomplished in a long space of time. According to the Epos and the Puranas, *i. e.* the very late and untrustworthy collections of Indian legends and traditions, it was after a great war among the Aryas in the doab of the Yamuna and Ganges, in which the family of Pandu obtained the crown of the Bharatas on the upper Ganges, that the commotion ceased, and the newly founded states enjoyed a state of peace. In the Rigveda, the Bharatas are to the west of the Vipaça, in the Epos we find them dwelling on the upper Ganges; on the Yamuna are settled the nations of the Matsyas, and the Yadavas; between the upper Yamuna and the Ganges are the Panchalas, *i. e.* the five tribes; eastward of the Bharatas on the Sarayu, down to the Ganges, are the Koçalas. Still further to the east and north of the Ganges are the Videhas; on the Ganges itself are the Kaçis and the Angas, and to the south of the Ganges the Magadhas.

¹²³ Roth, "Zur Literatur," S. 87, 91 ff. [Rigveda, 3, 33; 7, 83. Muir, *loc. cit.* 322, 323.]

Are we in a position to fix even approximately the period at which the settlement of the Aryas in the valley of the Ganges took place, and the struggles connected with this movement came to an end? The law-book of the Indians tells us that the world has gone through four ages; the age of perfection, *Kritayuga*; the age of the three fires of sacrifice, *i. e.* of the complete observance of all sacred duties, *Tritayuga*; the age of doubt, *Dvaparayuga*, in which the knowledge of divine things became obscured; and lastly the age of sin, the present age of the world, *Kaliyuga*. Between the end of one period and the beginning of the next there came in each case a period of dimness and twilight. If this period is reckoned in, the first age lasted 4800 divine years, or 1,728,000 human years; the life of men in this age reached 400 years. The second age lasted 3600 divine years, or 1,296,000 human years, and life reached 300 years. The third age lasted 2400 divine years, or 864,000 human years, and men only lived to the age of 200 years. The present age will last 1200 divine years, or 432,000 human years, and men will never live beyond the age of 100 years.¹²⁴ This scheme is obviously an invention intended to represent the decline of the better world and the increase of evil, in proportion to the distance from the divine origin. In the matter of numbers the Indians are always inclined to reckon with large figures, and nothing is gained by setting forth the calculations in greater detail. From the Rigveda it is clear that the year of the Indians contained 360 days in twelve months of 30 days. In order to bring this year into accordance with the natural time, a month of thirty days was inserted in each fifth year as a thirteenth month although the actual excess in five years only amounted to 26¼ days. Twelve of these cycles of five years were then united into a period of 60 years, *i. e.* 12 x 5, and both the smaller and the larger periods were called *Yuga*.¹²⁵ On this analogy the world-periods were formed. By multiplying the age of sin by ten we get the whole duration of the world; the perfect age is four times as long as the age of sin.¹²⁶ A year with the gods is as long as a day with men; hence a divine year contains 360 years of men, and the world-period, *i. e.* the great world-year, is completed in 12 cycles each of 1000 divine years, *i. e.* 360,000 human years. In the first age, the age of perfection, Yama and Manu walked and lived on earth with their half-divine companions (p. 30); in the age of the three fires of sacrifice, *i. e.* of the strict fulfilment of sacred duties, lived Pururavas, who kindled the triple sacrificial fire,¹²⁷ and the great sacrificers or minstrels, the seven or ten Rishis (p. 29 n. 2); the period of darkness and doubt was the age of the great heroes. With the priests who invented this system of ages the period of the great heroes was naturally placed lower than that of the great sacrificers and saints. The historical value attaching to this scheme lies in the fact that the Epos places the great war of the Pandus and Kurus in the period of transition between the age of doubt and the age of evil, in the twilight of the Kaliyuga, and the Puranas in consequence make the beginning of the reign of the first Pandu over the Bharatas after the great war, the accession of Parikshit, coincide with the commencement of the Kaliyuga.¹²⁸ Now according to the date of the Puranas the Kaliyuga begins in the year 3102 B.C. On this calculation the great movement towards the east and in the east came to an end about this time.

That the Indians once contented themselves with smaller numbers in fixing the ages than those which we find in the book of the law and the Puranas, we may conclude from the statements of the Greek Megasthenes, who drew up his account at the court of Chandragupta (Sandrakottos) of Magadha at the end of the fourth century B.C. This author tells us that in ancient times the Indians were nomads, clothed in the skins of animals, and eating raw flesh, till Dionysus came to them and

¹²⁴ Manu, 1, 67 ff. [Muir, 1, 43 ff.]

¹²⁵ Weber, "Jyotisham, Abh. d. Berl. Akad." 1862, s. 23 ff. and below.

¹²⁶ With similar exaggeration "Duty" tells king Parikshit at the close of the Mahabharata that her four feet measured 20 yodhanas in the first age, 16 in the second, 12 in the third, whereas now in the Kaliyuga they only measure four yodhanas. The whole narrative is intended to point out that in the Kaliyuga even Çudras could become kings. The Vishnu-Purana (ed. Wilson, p. 467) calls the first Nanda who ascended the throne of Magadha in 403 B.C. the son of a Çudra woman.

¹²⁷ "Bhagavata-Purana," 9, 14.

¹²⁸ Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, 600.

taught them the tillage of the field, the care of vines, and the worship of the gods. On leaving India he made Spatembas king, who reigned 52 years; after him his son Budyas reigned for 20 years, who was in turn succeeded by his son Kradeuas, and so the sceptre descended from father to son; but if a king died without children the Indians selected the best man to be king. From Dionysus to Sandrakottos the Indians calculated 153 kings, and 6402 years. In this period the line had been broken three times; the second interruption lasted 300 years, the third 120 years.¹²⁹ What particular rite among the Indians caused the Greeks to represent Dionysus as visiting India and to make him the founder of Indian civilisation, will become clear further on. Putting this aside, the account of Megasthenes of the triple break in the series of kings shows that the system of the four ages was in vogue among the Indians even at that time. If Megasthenes speaks of a single line of Indian kings ruling over the whole of India from the very beginning, the reason is obviously that he transfers to the past the condition in which India was at the time when he abode on the Ganges. Chandragupta did what had never been done before; he united under his dominion all the regions of India from the Panjab to the mouth of the Ganges, from the Himalayas to the Vindhya. But the close of this series of kings at which Sandrakottos is himself placed shows us plainly that the royal line of Megasthenes is no other than the royal line of Magadha. The Puranas of the Indians also carry back the line of Magadha to the ancient heroes, and through them to the progenitors of the nation. Spatembas, with whom the series of Indian kings commences in Megasthenes, may be the Manu Svayambhuva whom the cosmogonic systems of the priests had meanwhile placed before Manu Vaivasvata, the son of Vivasvat. Budyas the successor of Spatembas may have been the Budha of the Indians who is with them the father of Pururavas, the kindler of the triple fire of sacrifice: and Pururavas himself may be concealed under the Kradeuas of the manuscripts, which is possibly Prareuas, the Grecised form of the Indian name. However this may be, the statements of Megasthenes present us with far smaller and more intelligible numbers for the periods of Indian history than those obtained from Manu's book of the law and the Puranas.¹³⁰

The year in which Chandragupta conquered Palibothra, and so ascended the throne of Magadha, can be fixed with accuracy from the accounts of western writers. It was the year 315 B.C. As 6042 years are supposed to elapse between Spatembas and the accession of Sandrakottos, Spatembas must have begun to reign over the Indians in the year 6717 B.C. But this date it is impossible to maintain. In the first place it is impossible that 153 reigns should have filled up a space of 6400 years. This would allow each king a reign of 42 years, or of about 38 years if we deduct 600 years for the three interruptions in the series. Moreover, the Indian lists of kings, at any rate as we now find them in the Epos and in the Puranas, present a smaller total of kings than 153, whether they come down to Chandragupta himself, or to his age. From Chandragupta to Brihadratha, the supposed founder of the race, the lists of the kings of Magadha give 53 kings according to the lesser total and 64 according to the larger. If to these lists we add the rulers who unite the kings of Magadha to the family of Kuru, and those who carry back the family of Kuru to Manu, we are still able to add no more than 28 or 38 kings according as we take the shorter or longer lists. Hence in these lists, instead of 153 kings, we get at most only 100, as reigning before Chandragupta. The list given in the Vishnu Purana for the kings of the Koçalas is somewhat longer; it enumerates 116 kings from Manu to Prasenajit, whose reign fills the interval between 600 and 550 B.C. If we add 10 or 14 reigns for the period between Prasenajit and the accession of Chandragupta, the longest of the lists preserved by the Indians would still only present 130 reigns before the time of Chandragupta.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Arrian, "Ind." 7, 8, 9. Plin. 6, 21, 4. Solin. 52, 5. As to the numbers, Bunsen, "Ægypt." 5, 156; Von Gutschmid, "Beiträge," s. 64. The duration of the first interruption is lost; but it was less than the second, for Arrian says that the second continued as much as 300 years. Perhaps the number of the first and third interruptions taken together are as long as the second. Diodorus (2, 38, 39) allots the 52 years to Dionysus, which Arrian gives to Spatembas.

¹³⁰ That the Kalpa — *i. e.* the great world-period — was a current conception in the third century B.C. is proved by the inscriptions of Açoka at Girnar. Lassen, *loc. cit.* 22, 238.

¹³¹ Not more than nine names can be given to the dynasty of the Nandas, which reigned for 88 years before Chandragupta;

It is not clear from the account of Megasthenes, or at any rate from the excerpts which have come down to us, what was the extent of the period which elapsed between the last interruption in the list of kings and Sandrakottos. Hence we are not in a position to ascertain the duration of the fourth age, or Kaliyuga, as it was fixed among the Indians in his time; we must therefore have recourse to other proofs in order to discover whether the year given in the Puranas, 3102 B.C., may be taken for the commencement of a new period, *i. e.* the post-epic, or historic, in the valley of the Ganges. The fixed point from which we must start is the year of the accession of Sandrakottos, a date rendered certain by the accounts of the Greeks. In the period before this date, the lists of the Brahmans taken together with the lists of Buddhists carry back the series of the kings of Magadha, which was the most important kingdom on the Ganges long before Sandrakottos, with tolerable certainty as far as the year 803 B.C., *i. e.* to the beginning of the sway of the dynasty of the Pradyotas over Magadha.¹³²

Can we ascend beyond this point? According to the Puranas, the race of the Barhadhrathas had ruled over Magadha before the Pradyotas, from Somapi to Ripunjaya, the last of the family, and their sway had continued 1000 years. Of this family the Vayu-Purana enumerates 21 kings, and the Matsya-Purana 32 kings. This domination of a thousand years is obviously a round, cyclic sum: and both in the Vayu-Purana and the Matsya-Purana the total of the reigns given for the several rulers of this dynasty falls below the sum of 1000 years. If we take 25 years, the highest possible average for each reign, 21 reigns or 525 years will only bring us to the year 1328 B.C. (803 + 525). At this date, then, the Barhadhrathas may have begun to reign over Magadha. If, on the other hand, we keep 32 as the number of these kings, and an average of only 15 years is allotted to the several reigns – an average usually correct in long lists of reigns in the East – we arrive at 1283 B.C. as the date of the beginning of the reign of the Barhadhrathas (803 + 480). To this date, or near it, we come, if we test the lists of kings supplied by the Puranas for the series of the kings of the Koçalas and the Bharatas in the land of the Ganges. The time at which Prasenajit was king of the Koçalas can be fixed at the first half of the sixth century B.C. (see below). Before him the Vishnu-Purana gives a series of 23 kings down to the close of the great war. Twenty-three reigns, allowing an average of 25 years for each, carry us 575 years beyond the commencement of Prasenajit, *i. e.* up to 1175 B.C. (600 + 575). In the list of the rulers of Hastinapura, for which throne the great war was waged, Çatanika appears as the twenty-fourth successor of Parikshit, to whom, as we found, this throne fell, after the conclusion of the great war. As Çatanika died about the year 600 B.C. (cf. Book VI. chap. i.), 24 reigns of 25 years before him would bring us to the year 1200 B.C. as the beginning of the year of Parikshit. The statement of the Puranas that he ascended the throne in the year 3102 B.C. and that the Kaliyuga began with that year cannot therefore be maintained. And this date is contradicted not only by the results of an examination of the lists of the kings of Magadha, of the Koçalas and Bharatas, but also by a statement in the Vishnu-Purana. This tells us that, from the beginning of the Kaliyuga to the date when the first Nanda ascended the throne of Magadha, a period of 1015 years elapsed.¹³³ The accession of this king we can place with tolerable certainty in the year 403 B.C.; and thus, even on the evidence of the Vishnu-Purana, the Kaliyuga began in the year 1418 B.C., and Parikshit ascended the throne of the Bharatas in that year. It is not impossible, therefore, that the 32 reigns which the Matsya-Purana gives to the Barhadhrathas may have filled up the time from the year 1418 to the year 803 B.C. (615 years).¹³⁴ Before the first Barhadhrathas, Sahadeva, Jarasandha, and Brihadhratha are said to have reigned over Magadha. Hence the foundation of the kingdom of Magadha would

seventeen for the dynasty of the Çaiçunagas, even if Kalaçoka's sons are all counted as independent regents; and five for the Pradyotas. For the Barhadhrathas the Vayu and Vishnu-Puranas give 21 kings after Sahadeva, the Bhagavata-Purana 20, the Matsya-Purana 32. Hence, taking the highest figures, the united dynasties number 64 reigns. To these are to be added the seven names which connect Brihadhratha with Kuru, and the 31 or 21 names given in the longer and shorter lists of the Mahabharata between Kuru and Manu.

¹³² Von Gutschmid, "Beiträge," s. 76 ff. See below.

¹³³ P. 484, ed. Wilson.

¹³⁴ Von Gutschmid, *loc. cit.* s. 85 ff.

have to be placed, at the earliest, in the year 1480 B.C., and not earlier; but rather, if we follow the comparison of the parallel reigns as above, a century later. If the great movement towards the east and in the east was brought to an end at the accession of Parikshit and the commencement of the Kaliyuga in the year 1418 B.C., and thus in the course of the fifteenth or fourteenth century the foundation could be laid for the kingdom of Magadha, *i. e.* for a great civic community far to the east, the migration into the regions of the Yamuna and the upper Ganges must have commenced at the least about the year 1500 B.C. We have already referred to the fact that the colonisation of such extensive districts, the foundation and fortification of large kingdoms in them, which was moreover rendered still more difficult by severe contests among the immigrants, could not have been the work of a few decades of years.

If the immigration of the Aryas into the land of the Ganges took place about 1500 B.C. we should have a point whereby to fix the time at which the hymns of the Veda were composed, for in them, as has been already remarked, the Ganges is rarely mentioned. The great number of the hymns must therefore have received the form in which they were retained and handed down by the families of minstrels before the year 1500 B.C. The period of migration brought with it more serious and earnest tasks than had occupied the Aryas in the Panjab. The struggles against the old population, the wars of the newly-established states with one another, claimed the whole power of the emigrants. Hence the duties of the sacrificial songs or of hymns of thanksgiving were thrown into the background by the imperative necessities of the moment. Men were contented with the invocations of the gods which lived in the memory of the minstrel-families, and had been brought from the ancient home. The minstrels also, who led the emigrant princes and tribes, naturally gave their attention to songs of war and victory – songs of which the fragment preserved from the wars of the Bharatas against the Tritsus is an example (p. 67). When at length the period of emigration, of settlement, and struggle was over, with the advent of more peaceful times, the excitement of the moment gave place to reflection and to the remembrance of the great deeds of the ancestors. The inspired flights, the pressure of immediate feeling which had prompted the songs before the battle and after the victory, were followed by a more peaceful and narrative tone. Hence grew up a series of songs of the marvels and deeds of the heroes who had conquered the land in the Yamuna and Ganges, and had founded states and cities there. As the heroes and events thus celebrated passed into the background, as the intervening periods became wider, the greater was the tendency of this mass of song to gather round a few great names and incidents. The less prominent forms and struggles disappeared, and in the centuries which followed the strain of settlement and establishment an artificial culture of this warlike minstrelsy united the whole recollections of the heroic times into the narrative of the great war, the Mahabharata.

If we could present to ourselves this Epos of the Indians in the form which it may have assumed two or three centuries after the close of the great migrations and struggles, *i. e.* about the eleventh century B.C., it would still be a valuable source of historical knowledge. We could not indeed have taken the occurrences described in it as historical facts, without criticism, but we should have possessed a tradition of which the outline would have been approximately correct, and a description of manners historically true for the period when the poems arose and were thrown into shape – though untrue for the period depicted in the poem – after deducting what was due to the idealism of the poet. Unfortunately, repeated revisions and alterations have almost effaced the original lines; each new stage of civilisation attained by the Indians has eagerly sought to infuse its ideas and conceptions into the national tradition; older and later elements lie side by side often without any attempt at reconciliation, sometimes in direct opposition. The original warlike character of the poetry is forced into the background by the priestly point of view of a later age. In the poems in their present form there is none of that freshness of feeling and impression which is so vividly expressed in the prayers of the priests of the Bharatas, and the songs of the Tritsus; there is no immediate recollection at work. The effort to comprise all the stories and legends of the nation into a whole, to bring forward in these poems, as in a pattern and mirror of virtue, every lesson of religion and morals, and unite

them into one great body of doctrine, has swelled the Indian Epos into a heavy and enormous mass, an encyclopædia, in which it is not possible without great labour to discover the connecting links of the narrative in the endless chaos of interpolations and episodes, the varying accounts of one and the same event. The Epos has thus become a tangle in which we cannot discover the original threads. It received its present form in the last centuries B.C.¹³⁵

In the poem of the great war once waged by the kings of the Aryas on the Yamuna and the upper Ganges the Tritsus are no longer found on the Sarasvati or the Yamuna. The enemies at this period are the Matsyas and the Bharatas, the former on the Yamuna, the latter further to the east on the upper Ganges. The Tritsus have been forced further to the east, and have become lost among the Koçalas, who are situated on the Sarayu, or have taken that name; at any rate, the name of Sudas appears in the genealogical table of the rulers of the Koçalas, and in the Ramayana, as in other traditions, Vasishtha, who (or whose family) then gained victory by his prayers for Sudas, is the wisest priest among the Koçalas.¹³⁶ Hence we may conclude that at a later time the Bharatas were more fortunate in their advance to the east. The struggle for their country and throne is the central point in the poem. According to the Mahabharata the rulers of the Bharatas spring from Manu. With Ila, the daughter of Manu, Budha the son of the moon, begot the 'pious' Pururavas, *i. e.* the far-famed. Pururavas is succeeded by Ayus, Nahusha, and Yayati. From Yayati's elder sons, Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, spring the Anus, the Drahyus, and the Yadavas,¹³⁷ of whom we already have the two first as confederates of the Bharatas.¹³⁸ Yayati was followed on the throne by his youngest son Puru. Dushyanta, one of the successors of Puru, married Çakuntala, the daughter of the priest Viçvamitra. To him she bore Bharata, who reduced all nations, and was lord of the whole earth. After Bharata, Bhumanyu, Suhotra, Ajamidha, and Samvarana, occupied the throne of Hastinapura, the chief city of the kingdom on the upper Ganges.¹³⁹ In Samvarana's reign the kingdom was attacked by droughts, famine, and pestilence; and the king of the Panchalas advanced with a mighty host, and conquered Samvarana in the battle, who fled with his wife Tapati, his children and dependants, to the west, and took up his abode in a forest hut in the neighbourhood of the Indus. There the Bharatas lived for a long time, protected by the impenetrable country. Afterwards Samvarana reconquered the glorious city which he had previously inhabited, and Tapati bore him Kuru, whom the nation chose to be king. Kuru was succeeded on the throne of Hastinapura by Viduratha, Anaçvan, Parikshit, Pratiçravas, Pratipa and Çantanu.

¹³⁵ That the main portions of the Epos in their present form cannot be older, is clear from the views of the worship of Vishnu and Çiva which prevail in the poem. These forms of worship first obtained currency in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. (see below). It is also clear from the identification of Vishnu and Krishna, of Rama and Vishnu; the deeply felt Brahmanic anti-Buddhist tendencies, seen in such a marked manner in the Ramayana; the form of philosophic speculation, and the application of astrology, which are characteristic of the Epos in its present state; and finally from the mention of the Yavanas as the allies of the Kurus, and Dattamira, *i. e.* Demetrius, the king of the Yavanas. This king reigned in Bactria in the first half of the second century B.C. (Lassen, *loc. cit.* 1, 557). Another king of the Yavanas who is mentioned is Bhagadatta, *i. e.* apparently, Apollodotus, the founder of the Græco-Indian kingdom in the second half of the first century B.C. (Von Gutschmid, "Beiträge," s. 75). We are led to the same result by the descriptions of Indian buildings, of paved roads and lofty temples, which were first built by the Brahmans in opposition to the stupas of the Buddhists. Lassen places the important pieces of the Mahabharata, in their present form, between Kalaçoka and Chandragupta, *i. e.* between 425-315 B.C. (*loc. cit.* 12, 589 ff.) Benfey places them in the third century B.C., A. Weber in the first century. The Mahabharata, which according to the statement found in the poem (1, 81) originally had only 8,800 double-verses, now numbers 100,000: A. Weber, "Acad. Vorlesungen," s. 176. The old form of the Mahabharata is much anterior to the fifth century B.C.: certain passages of the present poem are much later: A. Weber, "Indische Skizzen," s. 37, 38. When Dion Chrysostom remarks (2, 253, ed. Reiske) that the Homeric poems were sung by the Indians in their own language – the sorrows of Priam, the lamentation of Hecuba and Andromache, the bravery of Achilles and Hector – Lassen is undoubtedly right in referring this statement to the Mahabharata, and putting Dhritarashtra in the place of Priam, Gandhari and Draupadi in the place of Andromache and Hecuba, Arjuna and Suyodhana or Karna in the place of Achilles and Hector ("Alterth." 22, 409). It is doubtful whether the remark of Chrysostom is taken from Megasthenes. That the Ramayana is later in style than the Mahabharata will become clear below.

¹³⁶ "Vishnu-Purana," ed. Wilson, p. 380, *seqq.*

¹³⁷ Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, Anhang xviii. n. 4.

¹³⁸ In the Rigveda we find: "If you, Indra and Agni, are among the Druhyus, Anus or Purus, come forth."

¹³⁹ Lassen, *loc. cit.* 1, xxii. n. 15.

The names which the poem places at the head of the genealogical tree of the rulers of the Bharatas are taken from the Veda. Yayati, like Pururavas, is commended in the Rigveda as a sacrificer. The name of Yayati's son, Puru, is borrowed from a name which in the Veda designates the Bharatas, who in these poems are variously called Purus and Bharatas.¹⁴⁰ The tribes of the Anus, and the Druhyus, whom the Rigveda presented to us as confederates of the Bharatas, are in the Epos united with them by their ancestors. We have become acquainted with Viçvamitra as a priest and minstrel of the Bharatas, when they crossed the Vipaça against the Tritsus. In the Epos a descendant of Puru begets Bharata, *i. e.* the second eponymous hero of the tribe, with the daughter of Viçvamitra. In order to glorify the position of this priest, and secure his blessing for the royal race of the Puru-Bharatas, he becomes, in the Epos, by his daughter, the progenitor of king Bharata, to whom at the same time is ascribed the dominion over the whole earth. Thus far, it is obvious, the Epos goes to work upon the names of the tribes, and changes them into the names of heroes or kings. Apart from any poetical exaggeration, the wide dominion of the mythical king Bharata is, no doubt, an anticipation of the predominance to which the Bharatas attained at a later time on the upper Ganges. At any rate, according to the Epos, Samvarana, the descendant of Bharata, was compelled to return once more to the Indus, and there take up his abode for a long time. The statement that it is the Panchalas who conquer Samvarana is no doubt an invention based on the attitude of the Panchalas towards the Bharatas in the great war (p. 88). With Kuru, the successor of Samvarana, it is obvious that a new dynasty begins to reign over the Bharatas. This is obviously the first dynasty, whose achievements were widely felt, to which the Epic poetry could attach itself. Owing to his justice, Kuru is chosen by the nation of the Bharatas to be their king; this, of itself, is evidence of a new beginning. But Kuru is also said to be of divine origin, like Pururavas, the progenitor of his supposed ancestors. Pururavas is the child of the son of the moon and the daughter of Manu; Kuru is the child of Samvarana and the sister of Manu, the daughter of the god of light. Manu was the son of Vivasvat (p. 30); Tapati, the mother of Kuru, is the daughter of Vivasvat.¹⁴¹ The name Kurukshetra, *i. e.* land or kingdom of Kuru, which adheres to the region between the Drishadvati and the Yamuna, is evidence that the Bharatas, under the guidance of the kings descended from Kuru, first conquered this region and settled in it. When they had been there long enough to give to the country as a lasting name a title derived from their kings, they extended their settlements from the Yamuna further to the north-east. Here, on the upper Ganges, Hastinapura became the abode of their kings of the stock of Kuru, whose name now passed over to the people, so that the Bharatas, who, in the Veda, are called Purus and Bharatas, are now called Kurus after their royal family. With the Bharatas, or soon after them, other Arian tribes advance to the Yamuna; here we meet in the Epos the tribes which, according to the Rigveda, once fought with the Bharatas against the Tritsus, the Matsyas, and the Yadavas, the latter lower down on the Yamuna. Hence we may conclude with tolerable certainty that the Bharatas, under the guidance of the Kurus, succeeded in driving further to the east the tribes which had previously emigrated in that direction – the Tritsus (*i. e.* the Koçalas), Angas, Videhas, and Magadhas (as they were afterwards called), and that it was the family of the Kurus who established the first extensive dominion among the Indians on the upper Ganges. It is the struggles of the tribes, who once in part united with the Bharatas, and followed them into the valley of Yamuna, against the kingdom of the Kurus which are described in the Mahabharata.

Çantanu, the descendant of Kuru, had a son Bhishma, so we are told in this poem. When Çantanu was old he wished to marry a young wife, Satyavati; but her parents refused their consent, because the sons of their daughter could not inherit the throne. Then Bhishma vowed never to marry, and to give up his claim to the throne. Satyavati became the wife of Çantanu, and bore him two

¹⁴⁰ "Rigveda," 1, 31, 4; 1, 31, 17; 7, 18, 13.

¹⁴¹ According to the Brahmanic recension of the poem which we now possess, Samvarana is able to obtain the daughter of the god only by the mediation of a sacred priest. The king therefore bethinks him of Vasishtha, who ascends to the god of light and obtains his daughter for the king. Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, Anhang xxvi.

sons. The oldest of these Bhishma placed, after Çantanu's death, on the throne, and, when he fell in war, he placed the younger son, Vijitravirya, to whom he married two daughters of the king of the Kaçis, a people situated on the Ganges (in the neighbourhood of Varanasi or Benares). But the king died without children. Anxious that the race of Kuru should not die out, Satyavati bade the wise priest Vyasa, the son of her love, whom she had borne before her marriage with Çantanu, raise up children to the two widows of Vijitravirya. When the first widow saw the holy man approach by the light of the lamp, with knots in his hair, with flashing eyes, and bushy brows, she trembled and closed her eyes. The second widow became pale with fear; and so it befell that the son of the first, Dhritarashtra, was born blind, and the son of the second, Pandu, was a pale man. Bhishma took both under his care. He married Dhritarashtra to Gandhari, the daughter of the king of the Gandharas, on the Indus; for Pandu he chose the daughter of a prince of the Bodshas, Kunti; and with gold and precious stones, Bhishma also purchased for him a second wife, Madri, the sister of the prince of the Madras. As Dhritarashtra was blind, Bhishma made Pandu king of Hastinapura, and he became a mighty warrior; under him the kingdom was as powerful as under Bharata. But he loved hunting even more than war. He went with his wives to the Himalayas in order to hunt, and there he died at an early age. The blind Dhritarashtra now reigned over the Bharatas. His wife Gandhari had first borne him Duryodhana and then ninety-nine sons; but on the same day on which Duryodhana saw the light Kunti had borne Yudhishtira to Pandu, and after him Arjuna and Bhima. Madri bore twins to Pandu, Nakula and Sahadeva. With these five sons Kunti returned to Hastinapura after Pandu's death. Dhritarashtra received them into the palace, and they became strong and brave, and showed their power and skill in arms at a great tournament, which Dhritarashtra caused to be held at Hastinapura. The martial skill exhibited in this tournament by the sons of Pandu, and a victory which they obtained against the Panchalas, who had defeated Duryodhana, induced Dhritarashtra to fix on Yudhishtira as his successor. But Duryodhana would not allow the throne to be taken from him. At his instigation Dhritarashtra removed the sons of Pandu from Hastinapura to Varanavata at the confluence of the Yamuna and the Ganges. Even here Duryodhana's hatred pursued them; he caused their house to be set on fire, so that they with difficulty escaped from the flames. They fled into the wilderness. As they wandered up and down, they heard that Drupada, the king of the Panchalas, against whom they had fought for Dhritarashtra, had made proclamation, that whosoever could bend his great bow and hit the mark, should win his daughter. In vain did all kings and heroes try their strength on this bow, till Arjuna came. He strung the bow, hit the mark, and so won the king's daughter to wife – whom he shared with his four brothers. When the Kurus discovered that the sons of Pandu were alive and had become the sons-in-law of the king of the Panchalas, they were afraid, and in order to avoid a war between the Panchalas and Bharatas, Dhritarashtra divided his kingdom with the sons of Pandu. As Dhritarashtra's royal abode was at Hastinapura, on the Ganges, the sons of Pandu founded the city of Indraprastha in their portion of the kingdom (it lay to the south-west of Hastinapura on the Yamuna), conquered the surrounding people, and amassed great wealth in their new city, so that Yudhishtira offered the great royal sacrifice. This aroused the envy and anxiety of Duryodhana. He caused the sons of Pandu to be invited to Hastinapura to a game of dice. As Çakuni, the brother of his mother Gandhari, was very skilful in throwing the dice and always won, Duryodhana hoped to be able to gain back his kingdom from Yudhishtira. The sons of Pandu came. Yudhishtira lost his kingdom and his goods, his slaves, himself, and finally he lost Draupadi. Duryodhana bade the latter, as a slave, sweep the room; and when she refused, Dushana, one of his brothers, dragged her by her long black hair. Then the blind Dhritarashtra came, and said that his sons had done wrong; the Pandus should return into their kingdom and forget what had happened on this day. When they returned home, Duryodhana induced his father to allow a second game of dice against the Pandus, as he and his brothers were not allowed to take up arms against them; the defeated party was to go into banishment for twelve years. This was done, and Çakuni, who again threw the dice for Duryodhana, was once more victorious. For twelve years the Pandus wandered

with Draupadi into the desert, and lived by the chase. In the thirteenth they went in disguise to Virata the king of the Matsyas, and became his servants. Yudishthira was his instructor in the game of dice; Arjuna, clothed as a eunuch, taught dancing and music in the women's apartment; Bhima was cook; Nakula and Sahadeva were overseers of the horses and cattle; Draupadi was the queen's maid. When Duryodhana invaded the land of the Matsyas and lifted their cattle, Arjuna recovered the booty, and in reward, when the Pandus had made themselves known, he received the king's daughter as a wife for his son Abhimanyu. On the day after the marriage a consultation was held how the Pandus could recover their sovereignty, as the time of exile was now over. An embassy was sent to Hastinapura to demand the part of the kingdom possessed by the Pandus. Through Duryodhana's efforts the request was refused. The Pandus and Kurus prepared for war.

The armies met in the plain of Kurukshetra, in the ancient territory of the Kuru-Bharatas, between the Drishadvati and the Yamuna. The Bharatas were led by the aged Bhishma, Çantanu's eldest son, with whom was associated his grand-nephew Duryodhana, the oldest son of Dhritarashtra and the bitter foe of his cousins. With the Bharatas were the Çurasenas, whom we afterwards find on the Yamuna, the Madras, the Koçalas, the Videhas and the Angas – who were situated on the eastern affluents of the Ganges, and the northern bank of the river. The Pandus were supported by the Matsyas, the king of the Panchalas, Drupada, with his young son Çikhandin, and his people, the Kaçis from the Ganges, and Krishna, a hero of the Yadavas, with a part of his people; the remainder fought for the Kurus. In front of the army of the Pandus were seen the five brothers on their chariots of war, from which waved their standards. Before the banner of Yudishthira, who stood upon his chariot, slim of shape, in garments of yellow and gold, with a nose like the flower of Prachandala, the two drums sounded; beside him was the long-armed Bhima, holding in his hand his iron club adorned with gold, with dark glance and knitted brows. The third was the bearer of the great bow, Arjuna, with an ape on his banner, the steadfast hero of men, who revered the men of old, the destroyer of the troops of the enemy, who banished the fears of the fearful. Last were seen Nakula who fought with the sword, and Sahadeva. Opposite them Bhishma's banner waved from his chariot on a golden palm-stem; it displayed five silver stars. When the armies approached each other Bhishma cried with a voice of thunder to his warriors: "To-day the gates of heaven are opened for the brave; go ye the way which your fathers and ancestors have gone to heaven, by falling gloriously. Would ye rather end life on a sick-bed in pain? Only in the field may the Kshatriya (warrior) fall." Then he seized the great gold-adorned shell and blew for onset. As the sea surges to and fro in a storm when driven by roaring winds, the armies dashed upon each other; from afar the ravens screamed and the wolves howled, announcing a great slaughter, and heaps of carcasses. The heroes fight against the hostile heroes; rarely do they spring down from their chariots, and scatter the "heads of the foot soldiers like seed." The princes mutually cover each other with clouds of arrows; they shoot down the hostile charioteers, so that the horses rage uncontrolled hither and thither in the battle; if the elephants are driven against the chariots in order to overthrow them, the riders shoot them like "peacocks from trees," or they seize the great swords and hew off their trunks, at the root, close by the tusks, so that "the harnessed elephants" raise a great roar. In their turn they tear the warriors from their chariots; they press on irresistibly through the ranks of the warriors, like streams "leaping from rock to rock;" they check the advance of the enemy "as rocks beat back the waves of the sea." Covered with arrows they drop blood, till, deeply wounded in the head and neck, they fall to the ground, or turn raging on their own army. When the heroes have shot forth their arrows, their bows broken, the missiles driven through their coats of mail, so that the warriors "blossom like rose-trees," they leap down from their chariots, seize their great painted shields of hide, raise aloft their war-clubs and rush like buffalo-bulls upon each other. At one time in attack, at another in defence, they circle round each other, and spy out a moment to give a deadly blow. If the shields are destroyed and the clubs broken, they rush like "maddened tigers" to wrestle and fight hand to hand, till one sinks to earth pouring out blood, like a tree of which the root has been hewn through.

Thus, for nine days, the contest went on between the two armies. The army of the Kurus had the advantage; no one ventured to meet the aged Bhishma. Then Krishna, the driver of Arjuna, advised him to mount the chariot of Çikhandin, the young son of Drupada, the prince of the Panchalas, on the following morning and to put on his armour. The aged Bhishma would not fight against Çikhandin; he held it beneath him to fight against children. When he saw Arjuna approach him with the ensigns of Çikhandin, and in his armour, he cried out, "Attack me as you will, I will not fight with you." Then Arjuna laid the smooth arrows of reed, furnished with feathers from the heron and points of iron, on the string of the bow, and covered Bhishma with arrows as a cloud in summer pours its rain on the mountain. The invincible old man looked up with astonishment, and cried: "Like a row of swarming bees, arrow hisses after arrow through the air. As the lightning of Indra travels to earth, so do these arrows fly. They are not the arrows of Çikhandin. Like thunder-bolts shattering all they pierce through my mail and shield into my limbs. Like poisonous snakes darting their tongues in anger, their arrows bite me and drink my heart's blood. They are not the arrows of Çikhandin; they are Yama's messengers (p. 63); they bring the death I have long desired; they are the arrows of Arjuna." Head foremost, streaming with blood, Bhishma fell from the chariot. Delighted at this victory, Arjuna cried aloud with a clear lion's cry, and the army of the Pandus shouted for joy and blew their shells. Duryodhana's warriors were seized with panic; their tower and defence was gone. Drona, whom the sons of Pandu had once instructed in the use of arms, now led the army of the Kurus; and a second time they gained the advantage. Bhima sought in vain to overcome Drona; then the brother of Draupadi attacked him, and at Krishna's advice, Yudishthira and Bhima called to Drona that his son Açvatthaman had fallen. Deceived by this craft, Drona allowed his arms to drop, and Draupadi's brother smote off his head. After his fall, the Kurus were led by Karna, the prince of the Angas. He passed as the son of a waggoner; his real father, the sun-god Surya, appeared to him in the night, and warned him against Arjuna; he would meet his death. Glory was sweet to the living, when parents, children, and friends surrounded him with pride, and kings celebrated his courage; but what was honour and glory to the withered man who had become ashes? – it was only the flowers and the chaplets placed on his corpse to adorn it. Karna answered: He had no friend, no wife nor child; he feared not death, and would gladly sacrifice his body in the battle; but Arjuna would not conquer him. On the next morning he prudently besought Çalya, the prince of the Madyas, to guide his horses, since Krishna, the best of charioteers, guided the horses of Arjuna. At the instance of Duryodhana, Çalya undertook to do this, but his heart was angered at the degrading thought that he was guiding the horses of a waggoner, and he guided them so that while Karna was fighting against Arjuna, and had wounded him with his arrows, the chariot sank in a marsh. As Karna sprang down in order to draw the chariot out, Arjuna, at Krishna's instigation, shot a deadly arrow into the hero's back. Then one hero of the Kurus fell after the other. On the eighteenth day of the struggle, Duryodhana and Bhima met. As two raging elephants goad each other for the possession of a female elephant, so did these princes meet with their battle-clubs, whirling round sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, each seeking the unprotected part of his opponent, and brandishing his club in the air. Duryodhana has the advantage. He has retired before a stroke of Bhima's club, which has thus spent itself on the ground; seeing the unprotected state of his opponent, he has dealt him a mighty blow on the breast. Then, on Krishna's advice, Bhima dealt a blow at Duryodhana's thigh, broke the bone, and the two fell to the earth. The army of the Pandus shouted for joy, but Duryodhana spoke with his dying voice: "We have always fought honourably, and, therefore, the honour remains with us. You have won by craft and dishonour, and dishonour attends your victory. In honourable fight you would never have conquered us. In the garments of Çikhandin, Arjuna slew Bhishma when defenceless. To Drona ye cried in subtlety that his son was dead, and slew him as he dropped his arms. Karna, Arjuna slew by a shameful blow from behind; by dishonour Bhima brings me to the ground, for it is said, 'In battle with the club it is dishonourable to strike below the navel.'" Red with rage, Bhima stepped up to the king-lion who lay outstretched, with his club beside him, beat in his skull with his foot, and said: "We

have not laid fire to burn our enemies, nor cheated them in the game, nor outraged their wives; by the strength of our arms alone we destroy our enemies." On the evening of the eighteenth day of the battle, all the brothers of Duryodhana, all the princes who fought for the Kurus, and all the warriors of the Kurus were dead. The victors blew their shells, called Yudishthira to the king, and obtained as booty numberless treasures in gold and silver, in precious stones, in cloths, skins, and slave-women. Then all is sunk in deep slumber. But three warriors of the army of the Kurus have escaped into the forest; Açvatthaman, the son of the slain Drona, Kritavarman and Kripa. Sorrow for his father made rest impossible for Açvatthaman; on the branches of the fig-tree under which he lay he saw a troop of crows asleep; an owl softly flew up and slew one crow after the other. Açvatthaman set out with his companions and penetrated into the camp of the Pandus. First he slays the brother of Draupadi who had killed his father; then he throws fire into the camp, and slays the five sons of Draupadi, and all the Matsyas and Panchalas. Then he hastens to the place where Duryodhana lies. "Thou art still living," he says to Duryodhana; "listen, then, to a word which will be pleasing to thine ear: all the Panchalas, all the Matsyas, all the sons of Draupadi are dead." Only the four brothers, the sons of Pandu, Krishna and his charioteer, escaped this nocturnal massacre.

Then the dead were buried on the field of Kurukshetra: the sons of Pandu knelt before Dhritarashtra, and Vyasa reconciled the old king with the sons of his step-brother; but Gandhari cursed Krishna, who by his devices had brought her sons to death. Then the Pandus made their entrance into Hastinapura, and Yudishthira was consecrated king under the guidance of Krishna. He treated the old king as a son treats his father, but the latter could not forget the death of Duryodhana and his other sons: he went with Gandhari into the jungles on the Ganges, and with her he perished, when the jungle was set on fire. At Vyasa's command Yudishthira offered a sacrifice of horses, and then obtained the dominion over the whole earth. Following the course of the sacrificial horse (chap. VIII.) Arjuna conquered for him the Magadhas on the south bank of the Ganges, the Chedis, the Nishadas, the Saindhavas, *i. e.* the inhabitants of the Indus, and the Gandharas, beyond the Indus.¹⁴² Afterwards all the conquered kings presented themselves at this sacrifice of the horse in Hastinapura, and acknowledged Yudishthira as their lord. He sat on the throne of Hastinapura for 36 years, and then heard that the curse which Gandhari had pronounced upon Krishna was fulfilled. At a great festival of the Yadavas the reproach was made against Açvatthaman that he had basely slain the heroes in their sleep, after the great battle. Then there arose a strife among the princes of the Yadavas. They seized their weapons and mutually slaughtered each other. Distressed at the loss of his people Krishna retired into the wilderness, and there he was slain by the arrow of a hunter who took him for an antelope. The death of the hero to whom he owed his victory filled Yudishthira and his brothers with deep sorrow. On Vyasa's advice they determined to withdraw with Draupadi into the forest. All her sons had fallen in the great battle; but the wife of one (Abhimanyu), who was the daughter of the king of the Matsyas, had borne a son, Parikshit, after the death of her husband. When he had been consecrated at Hastinapura, the sons of Pandu went on a pilgrimage to the east, to the Himalayas, and beyond this to the holy mountain, Meru. Draupadi was the first to succumb, then Nakula and Sahadeva; last of all Arjuna and Bhima fell exhausted. Yudishthira climbed on, till Indra met him with his chariot, and carried him with his body to the imperishable world, the heaven of the heroes; there he would again behold his brothers and his wife, when their souls had been freed from the earthly impurity still adhering to them. For Bhima had trusted too much to his bodily power, and had eaten too much. Arjuna had loved battle too well, and had been too harsh against his enemies; Sahadeva was too proud of his wisdom, Nakula of his beauty; and Draupadi had loved Arjuna too dearly. But Parikshit reigned in Hastinapura 60 years. He died from the bite of a snake. Hence his son, Janamejaya, caused all the snakes to be burned in one great fire of sacrifice. On this occasion he asked Vyasa how the strife had arisen in old times between the Kurus and the Pandus, for Vyasa had

¹⁴² Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12 656, n. and 12 850.

been a witness: "I would hear from thee, Brahman, the story of the fortunes of the Kurus and Pandus." So the king concludes. Then Vyasa bids Vaiçampayana repeat the great poem which he had taught him. Janamejaya was succeeded by Çatanika, Açvamedhadatta, Asimakrishna, and Nichakra, in his sway over the Bharatas, Nichakra changed the place of residence from Hastinapura to Kauçambi lower down the Ganges. And after Nichakra 24 kings of the race of Pandu reigned over the Bharatas.

No words are needed to point out the absurdity and recent origin of an arrangement which not only ascribes to Vyasa the reconciliation of the last Kurus with the Pandus, but also makes him the father of the progenitors of the two hostile houses of Dhritarashtra and Pandu, and the author of the great poem. The name Vyasa means collector, arranger; and if the arranger of the poem is also the father of the ancestors of the contending tribes, this expression can only mean, that poetry has invented the whole legend. But a more minute examination limits this interpretation to a *naïve* confession on the part of poetry, that she and not tradition has transferred the origin of the Pandus to the race of the Kurus, and has represented the progenitors of the hostile races as brothers.

We can do no more than make hypotheses about the original contents of the poem on the great war. Against the Kurus, who, at the head of the Bharatas, maintained their supremacy on the upper course of the Yamuna and the Ganges, there rises in rebellion a younger race, the Pandus, who have risen into note among the Panchalas. The sons of Pandu receive in marriage the daughter of the king of the Panchalas, who are situated to the south of the Bharatas on the confluence of the Yamuna and the Ganges; and they are aided by the king of the Matsyas. It is Krishna, a hero of the Yadavas, to whom the Pandus owe their success in council and action. The Epos represents the Pandus as growing up in their childhood in the forest, and afterwards again making their home in the wilderness; they receive half of the kingdom of the Bharatas, and then lose it; and in their half they found Indraprastha to the west of Hastinapura on the Yamuna. From this we may conclude that the supremacy of the Bharatas established by the Kurus was resisted by the Panchalas and Matsyas and a part of the Yadavas – the Yadavas fight in the Epos partly for the Kurus and partly against them – and that a family among these nations, apparently a family of the Panchalas, succeeded in combining this resistance and establishing another kingdom, with Indraprastha as a centre, beside the kingdom of Hastinapura, from which they finally conquered the Bharatas. This struggle of the Panchalas and Matsyas against the Bharatas is the nucleus of the Epos. A tradition may lie at the base of the statement in the poems, that the nations of the East, the Madras, Koçalas, Videhas and Angas (in north-western Bengal), fight beside the Kurus against the Panchalas and Matsyas: at any rate it would be to the interest of the previous settlers on the Ganges to repel the advance of later immigrants. On the other hand, the Kaçis, in the region of the later Benares, may have fought against the Bharatas. However this may be, the race of the Kurus disappeared in a great war, and kings of the race of Pandu ascended the throne of Hastinapura. If, as we have assumed, the Bharatas had previously forced the Tritsus from the Sarasvati to the Yamuna, and from the Yamuna to the upper Ganges, and from the upper Ganges further east to the Sarayu, they were now, in turn, not indeed expelled, but over-mastered, by the tribes which had followed them and settled on the Yamuna. The metropolis of the kingdom which arose out of these struggles was Hastinapura, the chief city of the Bharatas; under the rule of the race of Pandu it comprised the Bharatas and the Panchalas; in the old ritual of consecration we find the formula: "This is your king, ye Kurus, ye Panchalas."¹⁴³

The original poem no doubt took the part of the Kurus against the Pandus, of the Bharatas against the Panchalas. In some passages of the old poem, which have remained intact, Duryodhana, *i. e.* Bad-fighter, is called Suyodhana, *i. e.* Good-fighter. It is not by their bravery but by their cunning that the Pandus were victorious. The words of the dying Duryodhana: "The Pandus have fought with subtlety and shame, and by shame have obtained the victory," are an invention made from this point of view. The vengeance which follows close after the victory of the Pandus, the massacre of their army

¹⁴³ A. Weber, "Ind. Literaturgesch." s. 1262.

in the following night, through which the life of the dying Duryodhana is prolonged; the fulfilment of the curse which the mother of Duryodhana pronounces upon Krishna and the Yadavas – at a later time the tribes of the Yadavas disappeared, at any rate in these regions – all enable us to detect the original form and object of the poem. It was the lament over the fall of the famous race of the Kurus, which had founded the oldest kingdom in India, over the death of Bhishma and his hundred sons, and the narration of the vengeance which overtook the crime of Krishna and the Pandus.

In any case certain traits which reappear in the Epic poetry of the Greeks and the Germans – the contest with the bow for Draupadi, the death of the young hero of half-divine descent by an arrow shot in secret, the fall of an ancient hero with his hundred sons, the destruction even of the victors in the great battle – are evidence that old Indo-Germanic conceptions must have formed the basis of the original poem. Even in the form in which we now have them they remind us of the grand, mighty, rude style of the oldest Epic poetry. In other respects also traits of antiquity are not wanting – the marriage of five brothers with one wife, the hazard of goods, kingdom, wife, and even personal liberty, on a single throw of the dice, which is an outcome of the passionate nature already known to us through the songs of the Vedas. In the songs of the conquests and struggles on the Yamuna and Ganges, sung by the minstrels to the princes and nobles of these new states, these elements became amalgamated with the praises of the deeds achieved by their ancestors at their first foundation. This is proved by the tone of the poem, which penetrates even the description of the great war. It was only before princes who made war and battle their noblest occupation, before assemblies of a warlike nobility, and in the spirit of such circles, that songs could be recited, telling of the contests in all knightly accomplishments – the wooing of the king's daughter by the bow, the choice of a husband by the princess, who gives her hand to the noblest knight. Only there could such lively and detailed descriptions of single contests and battles be given, and the laws of knightly honour and warfare be extolled with such enthusiasm. These must have penetrated deeply into the minds of the hearers, when the decision in the great battle could be brought about by a breach of these laws, and the destruction of the Yadavas accounted for by a quarrel arising out of a question of this kind. Even the law-book which bears the name of Manu places great value on the laws of honourable contest.¹⁴⁴ Hence we may with certainty assume that the songs of the princes who conquered the land on the Yamuna and the Ganges, were sung at the courts of their descendants, at the time when the latter, surrounded by an armed nobility, ruled on the Ganges. There, after the tumult of the first period of the settlement had subsided, these songs of the marvels and achievements of ancient heroes, coloured with mythical conceptions, were united into a great poem, the original Epos of the great war, and in this the living heroic song came to an end. In the German Epos, the Nibelungen, we find a foundation of mythical elements, together with historical reminiscences of the wars of Dietrich of Bern, overgrown by the conflicts and destruction of the Burgundians.

At a much later time the Epos of the great war passed from the tradition of the minstrels into the hands of the priests, by whom it was recorded and revised from a priestly point of view. Descendants of the Pandus who had overthrown the ancient famous race of the Kurus, and had gained in their place the kingdom of Hastinapura, are said to have remained on the throne for 30 generations in that city, and afterwards at Kauçambi. From other sources we can establish the fact, that at least in the sixth century B.C. the sovereignty among the Kuru-Panchalas belonged to kings who traced their descent from Pandu; and even in the fourth century we have mention of families of Nakula, and Sahadeva, and among the Eastern Bharatas, of descendants of Yudhishtira and Arjuna.¹⁴⁵ Hence the rulers of the tribe of Pandu must have thought it of much importance not to appear as evil-doers and rebels, and to invent some justification of their attack on the Kurus, and the throne of Hastinapura. In this way they would appear both to the Panchalas and the Bharatas as legitimate princes sprung from noble

¹⁴⁴ Manu, 7, 90, 93. Yajnavalkya, 1, 323-325.

¹⁴⁵ Panini in M. Müller, "Hist. of anc. Sanskrit Literature," p. 44, n. 2.

ancestors, and would share wherever possible in the ancient glory of the kings of the Bharatas, who were sprung from the race of Kuru. This end it was attempted to gain by revision and interpolation; and the views of the priests, which were of later origin, have no doubt supported the subsequent justification of the usurpation of the race of the Pandus. The priestly order might think it desirable to win the favour of the Pandu-kings of Kauçambi. Of this they were secure if they united the ancestors of the race with the family of the Kurus, while at the same time they brought the kings of the Bharatas and Panchalas into connection with priestly views of life by representing their ancestors as patterns of piety, virtue, and respect for priests. In the old poem, Bhishma, the descendant of Kuru on the throne of the Bharatas, perished, at an advanced age, with his son Suyodhana, and his ninety-nine brothers, in stout conflict against the Pandus, who were at the head of the Panchalas; but his fall was due to the craft of the latter. On the other hand, the revision maintains that king Çantanu was the last legitimate Kuru; that his son Bhishma renounced the throne, marriage, and children; that Çantanu's younger son died childless; and represents the Dhritarashtras and the Pandus as his illegitimate descendants. Thus the Pandus are brought into the race of Kuru, and the claims of the descendants of Dhritarashtra and Pandu are placed on an equality. It was an old custom among the Indians, not wholly removed by the law-book of the priests, even in the later form of the regulation, that if a father remained without a son his brother or some other relation might raise up a son to him by his wife or widow.¹⁴⁶ According to the poem, the wife of Çantanu charged her nearest relation, her natural son, to raise up children to the two childless widows of her son born in marriage. Agreeably to the tendency of the revision, this son is a very sacred and wise person; and thus it is proved that it was within the power of the priests to summon into life the most famous royal families. But great as the freedom of the revision is, it does not venture to deny the right of birth of the Kurus. Dhritarashtra is the older, Pandu is the younger, of the two sons. In order to clear the younger brother, Dhritarashtra is afflicted with blindness, because his mother could not endure the sight of the great Brahman. Even the son of Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, is allowed to have the right of birth; it is only maintained that Yudhishtira, Pandu's elder son, was born on the same day. That this insertion of the Pandus into the race of the Kurus in the Epic poem was completed in the fourth century B.C. we can prove.¹⁴⁷ The revision then represents Dhritarashtra as voluntarily surrendering half his kingdom to the sons of Pandu, and this is a great help towards their legitimacy. When the Pandus are resolved on war, Krishna removes Yudhishtira's scruples by asserting "that even in times gone by it has not always been the eldest son who has sat on the throne of Hastinapura." These traits are all tolerably transparent. How weak the position of the Pandus was in the legend, how little could be told of their ancestors and of Pandu himself, is shown in the poem by the fact that the want of ancestors can only be supplemented by inserting the family in the race of the Kurus, and that no definite achievement of Pandu is mentioned. He is allowed to die early, and his sons grow up in the forest. So transparent is the veil thrown over the fact that an unknown family rose to be the leaders of the Panchalas. The insertion of Dhritarashtra is caused by the insertion of Pandu. The Indian poetry of the later period is not troubled by the fact that Bhishma, Çantanu's eldest son, renounces the throne in order to allow a blind nephew to reign in his place; that even as a great-uncle he is the mightiest hero of the Kurus, and can only be slain on the battle-field by treachery.

Thus, rightly or wrongly, the Pandus were brought into the family of the Kurus. But why should the elder branch make way for the younger? To explain this circumstance, the blind king, the honourable Dhritarashtra, *i. e.* "firmly holding to the kingdom," must first fix on Yudhishtira as his successor, to the exclusion of his own sons, and then, even in his own lifetime, divide the kingdom with Yudhishtira. Hence the Pandus could advance claims, and the more fiercely Duryodhana opposed the surrender of his legitimate right, the more does he lose ground from a moral standard against the Pandus. His persecutions and villainies provide the revision with the means to bring the Pandus

¹⁴⁶ Manu, 9, 59.

¹⁴⁷ M. Müller, *loc. cit.*

repeatedly into banishment, and into the forest, from which in the old poem they had been brought to stand at the head of the Panchalas. It is Duryodhana who causes the house of Pandu to be set on fire, who by false play wins Draupadi from Yudhishtira, and treats her despitefully, and takes from him the half of the kingdom. On the other hand, the sons of the Pandus, so far as the lines of the old poem allow, are changed into persecuted innocents, patterns of piety, virtue, and obedience to the Brahmans. It is naturally the form of Yudhishtira which undergoes the main change from these points of view, since he twice succumbs to the passion for the game. By these interpolations his brother Bhima is fortunately put in a position to answer the reproach of the dying Duryodhana – that the Pandus had conquered by treachery and shame – by asserting that they had not laid fire for their enemies as he had, or cheated them in the game, or outraged their women.

The revision carries the justification and legitimisation of the Pandus even beyond the destruction of Duryodhana and the Kurus. Owing to his blindness the king Dhritarashtra could not be brought into the battle and slain there. Where the old poem represents the mother of the slain Kurus as cursing Krishna, the revision interpolates a reconciliation between the aged Dhritarashtra and the destroyers of his race, a reconciliation naturally accomplished through the instrumentality of a Brahman. Hence Yudhishtira is allowed to ascend the throne of Hastinapura with the consent of the legitimate king, and reign in his name. Lastly, in order to remove every stain from the Pandus, they are represented as renouncing the world, and dying on a pious pilgrimage to the divine mountain.

A second revision of the poem – which, as will become clear below, cannot, in any case, have been made before the seventh century B.C. – represents the Pandus as becoming the sons of gods, and thus makes still easier the task of their justification. It was not by Pandu that Kunti became the mother of Yudhishtira, Arjuna, and Bhima, but the first and most just of all rulers she bore to the very god of justice. Hence his claim to the throne and his righteous life were established from the first. The second brother, the great warrior Arjuna, owed his birth to Indra; the third, Bhima, to the strong wind-god, Vayu; the twin-sons of Madri are then naturally the children of the twins in heaven, the two Aṅgins. More serious is the change of Krishna, *i. e.* the black, into the god Vishnu, assumed in a third revision, which was completed in the course of the fourth century B.C. (Book VI. chap. viii.). Krishna, after whom the city of Krishnapura on the Yamuna is said to have been named,¹⁴⁸ belongs to the tribe of the Yadavas, who were settled on the Yamuna, in the district of Mathura. He is the son of the cow-herd Nanda and his wife Yaçoda; he is himself a cow-herd, drives off herds of cows, carries away the clothes of the daughters of the herdsmen while they are bathing, and engages in many other exploits of a similar kind. He rebels against the king of Mathura, and slays him. His crafty and treacherous plans then bring the heroes of the Kurus to destruction; at length, with his whole nation, he succumbs to the curse hurled against him by the mother of Duryodhana. Out of this form of the ancient poem the later revision has made an incarnation of Vishnu, the beneficent, sustaining god. The child of Vasudeva and Devaki, who bears all the marks of Vishnu, is no other than Vishnu, who permits himself to be born from Devaki; he is changed with the child of Yaçoda, which was born in the same night. But these new points of view are not thoroughly carried out; the Mahabharata is not consistent about the origin of Krishna or his divine nature. At one time he is a human warrior, at another the highest of the gods, and the original position both of Krishna and the Pandus is still perceptible.¹⁴⁹

The second great Epic of the Indians – the Ramayana – is essentially distinguished from the poems of the great war. Here also a legend, or ancient ballads, may have formed the basis; here, too, it is clear that a later redaction has changed the hero of the poem into an incarnation of a god. But the legend is already changed into the fairy tale, of which the scene is principally the Deccan, the banks of the Godavari, the island of Lanka (Ceylon) where the Aryas first arrived about the year 500 B.C.

¹⁴⁸ "Vishnu-Purana," ed. Wilson, p. 440. Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, 68 ff.

¹⁴⁹ In Panini Krishna is called a god, but also a hero. M. Müller, "Hist. of anc. Sanskrit Lit." p. 45 n.

The cast of the poem as a whole is essentially different from that of the Mahabharata. The old legend may have related the story of a prince who wins his wife by his power to string the great bow of her father, and who, when banished from the banks of the Sarayu, contends in the Himavat, or in the south of the Ganges, against the giants dwelling there. These giants carried off his wife from the forest hut, and he is only able to regain her after severe struggles. Rama, the banished prince, is supposed to be a son of a king of the Koçalas (the Tritsus of the Rigveda), who had taken up their abode on the Sarayu. Daçaratha, the father of Rama, had apparently reigned a long time before the great war; he was descended from Ikshvaku, the son of Manu. According to the Vishnu-Purana, Daçaratha is the sixtieth king of this family, the eleventh after Sudas, who repelled the attack of the Bharatas.¹⁵⁰ In their battle the Tritsus were aided by the priest Vasishtha, to whom in the poem of Rama the same place is allotted which in the Mahabharata is first allotted to Viçvamitra and then to Vyasa. Without regard to the ancient poems and their strongly-marked traits of great battles and mighty contests, the priests entirely transformed the legend of Rama from their point of view into the form in which it now lies before us; and this took place at a period of Indian life, when the warlike impulse had long given way to peaceful institutions, and the requirements of the priests had driven out the military code of honour and martial glory – a time when the weaker sides of the Aryan disposition, submission and sacrifice, had won the victory over the hard and masculine qualities of activity and self-assertion. The Ramayana gives expression to the feeling of calm subjection, virtuous renunciation, passionless performance of duties, patient obedience, unbroken reticence. Throughout, prominence is given to the system of priestly asceticism, of the eremite's life in the forest, of voluntary suicide. Here we can scarcely find any echoes of that desire of honour, that jealousy, that lust of battle, and eagerness for revenge, which occur unmistakably in the Mahabharata; nothing remains of the knightly pride which scorns to give a blow forbidden by the rules of the battle. The hero of the Ramayana is a hero of virtue, not of the battle. He commends without ceasing renunciation and the fulfilment of duties; he abandons throne and kingdom; he gives up his right out of obedience to his father, and respect for a promise made by him; his wife leads him against his will into the desert, because she also knows her duties. Respect, devotion, and sacrifice in the relation of children to their parents, of younger brothers to the elder, of the wife to her husband, of subjects to their lords, are described with great poetical beauty and power, but often with the weakest sentimentality. The mission of the hero in his banishment is the defence of the settlements of holy penitents against the giants. But his battles are no merely human struggle; he not only strings the bow of Çiva, he breaks it, so that it sounds like the fall of a mountain or like Indra's thunder. He fights with the bow of Indra and the arrows of Brahman, and at length even with the chariot of Indra against the giants. These battles are no less legendary than are his confederates' against the giants of Lanka, the vulture Jatayu, the apes and bears, which build him a bridge into that island. These are all described with an exaggeration and monstrous unreality into which Indian poetry only strayed after traversing many stages. We do indeed once hear, even in the Ramayana, of heroes "who never turned in the battle, and fell struck in front." Even here, in isolated passages, the old manly independence breaks forth, which, conscious of its strength, beats down injustice instead of enduring it, and makes a path for itself, but only in order to place in a still clearer light a quick compliance, a patient fulfilment of duties, and thus allow to the latter a greater advantage.

¹⁵⁰ On the form of the Rama legend in the Daçaratha-Jataka, cf. A. Weber, "Abh. Berl Akad." 1870. The Vishnu-Purana enumerates 33 kings of the Koçalas from Daçaratha to Brihadbala, who falls in the great battle on the side of the Kurus. Including these this Purana makes 60 kings between Manu and Daçaratha. For the same interval the Ramayana has only 34 names, of which some, like Yagati, Nahusha, Bharata, are taken from the genealogical table of the kings of the Bharata, others, like Pritha and Triçanku, belong to the Veda. We have already seen that the series of the Bharata kings give about ten generations between the time when they gained the upper hand on the Yamuna and upper Ganges, *i. e.* the time of Kuru and Duryodhana. The Koçalas forced eastward by the Bharatas would thus have existed on the Sarayu from 23 generations before Kuru. Wilson, "Vishnu-Purana," p. 386.

At this day Epic poetry lives in India in full force, just as it left the hands of the priests. At the close of the Mahabharata we are told: "What the Brahman is to the rest of mankind, the cow to all quadrupeds, the ocean to the pool, such is the Mahabharata in comparison with all other histories." To the readers and hearers of the Mahabharata and Ramayana the best rewards in this life and the next are promised: wealth, forgiveness of sins, entrance into heaven. At all festivals and fairs, at the marriages of the wealthy, episodes from one of the two poems are recited to the eager crowd of assembled hearers; the audience accompany the acts and sufferings of the heroes with cries of joy or signs of sorrow, with laughter or tears. In the village, the Brahman, sitting beneath a fig-tree, recites the great poems, in the order of the events no doubt, to the community. The interest of the audience never flags. If the piece recited touches on happy incidents – on victory, triumph, happy return home, the marriage or consecration of the heroes, the village is adorned with crowns as at a festival. The Indians live with the forms of their Epos; they know the fortunes of these heroes, and look on them as a pattern or a warning. The priests have fully realised their intention of setting before the nation in these poems a mirror of manners and virtue.

CHAPTER IV. THE FORMATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE ORDERS

The Aryas had now advanced far beyond the borders of their ancient territory; from the land of the Panjab they had conquered and occupied the valley of the Ganges. The plundering raids and feuds which had occupied the tribes on the Indus had passed away, and in their place came the migration, conquest, settlement, the conflict for the conquered districts, and a warlike life of considerable duration. It was only when attempted in large masses that attack or defence could be successful. By this means the tribes grew up into larger communities; the small unions of tribes became nations, which divided the land of the Ganges among them. The tribal princes were changed into leaders of great armies. The serious and important nature of the tasks imposed upon them by the conquest and the settlement, by the need of security against the ancient inhabitants or the pressure of their own countrymen, placed in the hands of these princes a military dictatorship; so that in the new districts which were won and maintained under their guidance, the princes had a much greater weight, and a far wider power, than the heads of the tribes on the Indus, surrounded by the warriors of their nations, had ever ventured to exercise. Thus arose a number of monarchies in the conquered land. Beside the Matsyas on the western bank of the Yamuna, and the Çurasenas, who lay to the south in the cities of Mathura and Krishnapura (in the place of the Yadavas), stood the kingdom of the Bharatas and Panchalas on the upper course of the Yamuna and Ganges. These nations were governed by the dynasty of Pandu, at first from Hastinapura on the upper Ganges, and afterwards, apparently after the accession of the eighth successor of Parikshit, from Kauçambi, which lies on the lower Yamuna, about 30 miles above the confluence of the Yamuna and the Ganges.¹⁵¹ Further to the east, and to the north of the Ganges, the Koçalas were situated on the Sarayu; the seat of their kingdom was Ayodhya. Still further to the east were the Videhas, whose rulers resided at Mithila (Tirhat). On the Ganges, below the confluence with the Yamuna, were the kings of the Kaçis at Varanasi (Benares), and farther to the east still, the kings of the Angas at Champa, also on the Ganges. To the south of the river the Magadhas had won a large district; their kings resided at Rajagriha (king's house) on the Sumagadhi.¹⁵² Thus in the east there was a complex of tolerably extensive states, under a monarchy which owed its origin to military leadership in the war, and its permanence to the success of the settlement; a state of things forming a complete contrast to the old life of the tribes of the Aryas in the land of the Panjab.

Such a powerful, extensive, and complete alteration of the forms of the civic community, combined with the new conditions of life rendered necessary on the Ganges, must have exercised a deeply-felt influence on the Aryas. The conquest, establishment, and arrangement of extensive dominions had created the monarchy, but at the same time a warlike nobility had sprung up beside the princes in these contests. The land of the Ganges had been won by the sword and divided among the victors. No doubt those who had achieved most in the battles, and stood nearest to the princes, received the best reward in land and slaves, in captives or dependants among the old population. In this way a number of families with larger possessions became distinguished from the mass of the population. In these the delight in arms and war became hereditary; the feeling of the father passed to his son along with his booty, his horses, and his weapons. He could apply himself to the chase, or to the exercise of arms; he was raised above all care for his maintenance, or the necessity of work. He possessed land and slaves to tend his herds or till his fields. From the later position of this order, we might assume that a nobility practised in the use of arms, the Rajnyas, *i. e.* the princely, the Kshatriyas, *i. e.* the wealthy or powerful, surrounded the princes in the Ganges in greater numbers

¹⁵¹ Cunningham, "Survey," 1. 301 ff.

¹⁵² Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 168 n.

and with greater importance than the warriors of pre-eminent position, who in the land of the Indus had aided the tribal princes in battle, in council, and in giving judgment.

The battles for the possession of the new territory were over, and the mutual pressure of the Arian tribes had come to an end. War was no longer a constant occupation, or carried on for existence; it was only at a distance, on the borders of the new states, that battles took place, either to check the incursions of the old inhabitants from the mountains or to extend the territory already possessed. Hence the majority of the settlers preferred to till their lands in peace, and left it to those for whom booty or glory had a charm, to follow their kings in beating back the enemy at the borders, or making an attack on foreign tribes and countries. Those who had to work the soil with their own hands gladly gave up the precedence to this military nobility; the king might fight out his wars with their help, if under such protection the herds could pasture in peace, or the fields be tilled without interruption. It was time enough for the peasants to take arms when the nobles who surrounded the princes were no longer able to keep off the attacks of the enemy. No doubt the Kshatriyas formed a still more favourable estimate of themselves and their position. Busied with their arms, their horses, or the chase, they became proud, and despised the work of the peasant, paying little respect to that laborious occupation in comparison with their own free and adventurous life.

Owing to their close relation to the king, to their weapons, and their possessions, the Kshatriyas took the first place in the new states on the Ganges. This they maintained beyond a doubt for centuries in the kingdom of the Bharatas, among the Matsyas and Çurasenas, the Koçalas, Kaçis, Videhas, Magadhas. In the royal houses and the families of the Kshatriyas the achievements of the forefathers continued to live; they preserved the recollection of the wars of conquest, the struggles for the possession of the lands, which they now held. At their festivals and banquets the minstrels sang to them the songs of the ancient heroes, their ancestors, their mighty deeds, their sufferings and death; they extolled the delight in battle and the martial spirit, the knightly temper and mode of combat, and thus at length arose the poem of the great war. If our assumption, that the conquest of the land on the Ganges may have been completed about the year 1400 B.C., is tenable, we might ascribe to the two following centuries the rise of the Kshatriyas, the establishment of their prominent position in the newly-conquered territory, and to the next century the composition of the songs of the great war in their oldest form.

In the development of other nations the periods of wide expansion, the rise of the military element, and protracted war, usually repress the influence and importance of the priesthood, but among the emigrant Aryas this could not have been the case. We have already seen that among them the contest of sacrifices preceded the contest of arms. The victory fell to the side whose sacrificial bowl Indra had drained. As the correct offering and correct invocation compelled the gods to come down and fight for the nation whose sacrifice they received, the priests were naturally most indispensable in the time of war. The singers of the sacrificial hymns which caused the gods to come down were identical among the Indians with the priests, and were in fact the priests in the stricter sense. With them, minstrel and priest had one name – Brahmana, *i. e.* one who prays. The hymns of the Vedas showed us how the princes were commanded to set before them at the sacrifice a holy minstrel to offer prayer, and to be liberal to him. The minstrels who accompanied the emigrant tribes to the Yamuna and Ganges had, in those turbulent times, to sing songs of war and victory, as well as to offer prayers at sacrifice, and afterwards to compose the poems on the deeds of the heroes. If the result was that no more new invocations were composed in the period of heroic song, the minstrels nevertheless preserved the old invocations which they had brought with them from the land of the Indus very faithfully. They had imported the ancient worship of their native deities into the new land; they had to preserve the old faith and the old rites at a distance from their ancient home, to offer sacrifice in the old fashion, and thus to win and retain the favour of the gods for the emigrants in their new abode. In the families which claimed to spring from Atri and Agastya, from Bhrigu and Gautama, from Kaçyapa and Vasishtha, one generation handed down by tradition to another the

prayers which they had preserved as effectual, and which had been composed, or were thought to have been composed, by these celebrated minstrels, the rites which were considered requisite for the efficacy of the sacrifice, for winning the favour and help of heaven. It is obvious that these families did not consist exclusively of the actual descendants of the supposed tribal ancestor. In ancient times the family is the only form, as yet known, of community and instruction. As the prayers pleasing to the gods and the form of sacrifice could only be learnt from a minstrel and priest, those who had this object in view must seek for admittance into a priestly family, and must be adopted as disciples by a priest in the place of sons.¹⁵³ Such admittance was naturally most sought after in the case of that race which bore the most famous name, which was supposed to spring from the most celebrated sacrificer of early times, and claimed to possess his songs. Among the "sons of Vasishtha," who, according to the hymn of the Veda (p. 67), sacrificed for the Tritsus, in the race of the Kuçikas to which Viçvamitra belonged, and the other priestly races mentioned in the Veda, we must consider that we have just as much disciples claiming to be descended, or being actually descended, from these supposed ancestors, as relations connected by blood. The importance of these families who preserved the ancient customs and prayers, and worshipped the ancient gods, must have risen in the new territory in proportion to the length of the period between the emigration from the Indus and the present. In different districts the kings regarded the sacrifice and supplication of different races as the most pleasing to the gods. Among the Koçalas, according to the Ramayana and the Puranas, Vasishtha was the priest of the kings; among the Bharatas, the Kuçikas; among the Videhas and Angas, the Gautamas.¹⁵⁴ The amalgamation of the various tribes into larger nations had the effect of bringing the priestly families into combination and union, and thus they had the opportunity of exchanging the knowledge of their possession of hymns and ritual. This union taught them to regard themselves as a peculiar order. Princes and nations are always inclined to recognise the merit of those who know how to win for them the favour of the gods, good fortune and health by prayer and sacrifice.

The ancient population of the new states on the Ganges was not entirely extirpated, expelled, or enslaved. Life and freedom were allowed to those who submitted and conformed to the law of the conqueror; they might pass their lives as servants on the farms of the Aryas.¹⁵⁵ But though this remnant of the population was spared, the whole body of the immigrants looked down on them with the pride of conquerors – of superiority in arms, blood, and character – and in contrast to them they called themselves Vaiçyas, *i. e.* tribesmen, comrades – in other words, those who belong to the community or body of rulers.¹⁵⁶ Whether the Vaiçya belonged to the order of the nobles, the minstrels and priests, or peasants, was a matter of indifference; he regarded the old inhabitants as an inferior species of mankind. In the land of the Ganges down to the lower course of the river this class of inhabitants bears the common name of Çudras, and as this word is unknown to Sanskrit we must assume that it was the original name of the ancient population of the Ganges, just as the tribes of the Vindhya bear to this day the common name of Gondas. In the new states on the Ganges, therefore, the population was separated into two sharply-divided masses. How could the conquerors mix with the conquered? – how could their pride stoop to any union with the despised servants? And even if they had been willing to unite, would not the language and character of the immigrants be lost and destroyed in this mixture with tribes of rude customs and manners? As the conquered territory became more extensive, and the old inhabitants more numerous – for many were spared by the numerically weaker immigrants and continued to live among them as slaves or free out-door servants, while others hung upon the borders of the conquered regions – the more pressing was the danger that the noble blood and superior character of the immigrants, and the worship of the ancient gods, might be lost in mingling with this

¹⁵³ Lassen, "Ind. Alterth." 12, 168.

¹⁵⁴ Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 671, 951.

¹⁵⁵ Manu, 1. 91.

¹⁵⁶ Lassen, *loc. cit.* 12, 966 n.

mass of servants. This danger co-operated with the natural pride of the conqueror, and his feeling of superiority, to place a strongly-marked separation between the Çudras and the Aryas.

In every nation which has gone beyond the primitive stages of life, wealth and occupation form the basis of a division into more or less fixed forms, more or less close orders. The states on the Ganges were no exception. Here, beside the Kshatriyas, beside the minstrels and priests, or Brahmans, stood the bulk of the immigrant Aryas, whose land required the personal labour of the owner, to whom the name Vaiçya, at first common to all, gradually passed as a special name. Below these three orders were the Çudras. The name given by the Indians to their orders, *varna*, *i. e.* colour, proves that the difference between the light skin of the immigrants and the dark colour of the native population was of considerable influence, and if a doubt were raised whether or not another population is concealed in the fourth order or Çudras, it would be removed by the close union of the three orders against the fourth, the uncompromising exclusion of the latter in all matters of religion, and the fact that the law of East Iran (the Avesta) as well as that of the Ganges, recognises warriors, priests, and peasants, but no fourth order. The sharp distinction between the Aryas and Çudras may subsequently have had an influence on the orders of the Aryas, so as to mark the divisions more strongly; resting on such a foundation, the division of orders might strike deeper roots on the Ganges than elsewhere.

The higher and more favoured strata of society will seldom be free from the desire to bequeath to posterity the advantages they possess; and this feeling makes itself felt with greater force in earlier stages of civilisation than in later. As the possessions and occupation of the father descend to the son who grows up in them, the favoured orders are inclined to maintain this natural relation, and elevate it into a legal rule; they believe that the qualification for their special calling depends on birth in it, or better blood, and make it so to depend. In the states on the Ganges these tendencies must have been the more strongly marked, as in this case the Aryas saw beneath them, in the Çudras, a class of men less capable and less cultivated than themselves; to descend to this class and mingle with it, seemed to them as disgraceful as it was dangerous to the maintenance of their empire over these men. Here it was more natural than elsewhere to pursue this analogy further – to regard even the classes of their own tribe, according to their more or less honourable occupation, as separate circles, as races having different characters and higher or lower gifts, and to transform these distinctions of occupation and social position into rigid castes. Thus the Kshatriyas, in the full consciousness of their aristocratic life, proud of their brave deeds and noble feeling, must have rendered difficult or impossible all approach to their occupation and order; they regarded the minstrels and the priests, and the Vaiçyas, as classes of inferior birth. When the minstrels had sung the praises of the ancient heroic age in the poem of the marvels of the heroes, in the Epos in its earliest form, and so arrived at more peaceful times in which everything no longer depended on the sword, a feeling of their importance and dignity must have grown up among the priests. Without them, without the accurate knowledge of the old songs and customs of sacrifice, as given by Manu and Pururavas, – without precise acquaintance with the prayers in which efficacy rested, efficient sacrifices could not be offered. We have already remarked that the amalgamation of the emigrant tribes, and the formation of the new kingdoms, brought the priests, who had hitherto belonged to the separate tribes, into closer connection and combination, and made them into a separate order. At the same time, their importance as preserving the old rites and the old faith tended to increase. The community thus arising between the priestly families led of necessity to an interchange of forms of prayer and invocations, of songs, and poems, and customs of sacrifice, the exclusive possession of which had hitherto belonged to each of these families or schools. Thus in each of the new states the priestly families attained a larger collection of songs, and a ritual which was the natural product of the liturgies of the various families, the observances regarded by one or other of these as traditional and indispensable. The traditional prayers and songs of praise were regarded as magical spells, of which even the gods could not escape the power. This exchange and combination of spells and rubrics of sacrifice no doubt made the ritual more complicated. The strictly-preserved and now extended possession of these prayers, invocations, and customs, which were known to the priests,

separated that order from the Kshatriyas, and the Vaiçyas; they stood in opposition to the other orders, as the exclusive possessors of the knowledge of the customs of sacrifice, and efficient invocations. It was only among the members of this order that the correct observances and invocations were known; how could the Kshatriya or the Vaiçya avoid errors in his offering or invocation, such as would remove their efficacy and change them into their opposite? The constant increase of the prayers and forms accompanying every step in the sacrifice occupied more priests: the *Hotar* offered the invitation to the god to come down and receive the sacrifice; the *Udgatar* accompanied the preparation of the offering with the solemn forms and prayers; the *Adhvaryu* performed the actual rite.

Thus an equality of knowledge, advantage, and interests united the priests against the Kshatriyas, Vaiçyas, and Çudras. By the consciousness that they were in possession of the means to win the favour of the gods for the king, the nobles, and the people, the pious feeling aroused among them was greatly assisted towards gaining the recognition of the other orders. Like the Kshatriyas, they must have scorned to descend to the occupations of the Vaiçyas; they must have felt that only the priest born a priest could perform the priestly service, or offer pleasing sacrifice to the gods. They must have maintained that birth alone in the order could confer the capacity for so important and lofty a calling as theirs. If nobles and priests debarred the Vaiçyas from entrance into their order, their occupations, and modes of life, they must have been no less careful to maintain the advantages of their birth against the Çudras.

If the separation of the orders was the result of a natural progress, if the effort of the favoured classes to close their circles was essentially promoted by the common contrast of the immigrants to the remnant of the old population, the natural conditions in which the Aryas were placed on the Ganges were not without an influence on the maintenance of the separation when once introduced. In the land of the Indus the Aryas had not learned to endure such a climate and such heat as they found on the Ganges. The atmosphere began by degrees to undermine the active and vigorous feeling of the Aryas, to lead them to a life of greater calm and rest, which inclined them to retain the conditions and circumstances once introduced.

The orders attain complete exclusiveness and become castes when not only the change from one to another is forbidden, but when even marriage between the members of different orders is either impossible, or if allowed entails the loss of order, and other disadvantages. We do not exactly know to what extent the mutual exclusiveness of the Kshatriyas, the Brahmans, and the Vaiçyas was carried; we only know that these distinctions existed, and that marriages between the orders took place at the time when the priests succeeded in wresting the first place on the throne and in the state from the Kshatriyas, who had maintained it for centuries.

The priests would never have succeeded in raising themselves above the Kshatriyas and repressing the ancient pre-eminence of the armed nobility so closely connected with the kings, who belonged to their order, and were their born chiefs, had they not succeeded in convincing the people on the Ganges, that the effectual sacrifice was the most important and all-decisive act; that the position in which men stood to the gods was a matter far transcending all other relations. They must have transformed the old religious conceptions by a new doctrine, and by means of this transformation given to themselves a special position, with a peculiar sanction from above. This rise of the priesthood, and their elevation to the first order, is the decisive point in the development of the Arians in India. It was a revolution of Indian life, of the Indian state, of Indian history, of which the effects still continue. It has been observed that the peculiar relations of the tribes on the Ganges, and the nature of the land, tended to fix more strongly there than elsewhere the separation between the orders. But that this division is the sharpest known in history; that the orders became castes, sub-divided in turn into a number of hereditary under-castes; that this unnatural social system has continued in spite of the severest attacks and most violent shocks, and still does continue in unbroken force – this is due to a development of the religious views supplied by the priests, and to the position of the priesthood which was founded on this transformation. The victory over the Kshatriyas was the first step on this

path. It was won by means of a new conception of the idea of God, and a scheme of the origin of the world, and the stages of created beings established thereon. On this foundation it was that the priests obtained the highest position.

When the priestly families on the Ganges passed beyond the borders of their several states in their contact with each other, they perceived the extent of the whole treasure of sacrificial song and forms of prayer, which the races had brought over in separate portions from the Indus. The confusing multitude of deities and their attributes, which now forced themselves upon the priests, led to the attempt to discover some unity in the mass. The astonishing abundance of conceptions and the number of the supreme deities in the old prayers were essentially due, as has already been pointed out, to the fact that the Indians desired to render to every god whom they invoked the proper and the highest honour. With this object the number of attributes was increased, and the god in question endowed to a greater or less degree with the power and peculiarities of other deities; and in order to win the favour of the deity to whom the sacrifice was offered, men were inclined to praise him as the highest and mightiest of all gods. This inclination was supported by the circumstance that the quick and lively fancy of the Indians never fixed the outlines of their deities or separated them as individuals, and further, by the blind impulse already noticed, to concentrate the power of the gods in one highest god, and seize the unity of the divine nature. Thus we saw that Indra and Agni, Mitra and Varuna, were in turns extolled as the highest deity. The task now before the priests was to understand the meaning of these old prayers, to grasp the point of agreement in these various invocations, the unity in these wide attributes, ascribed sometimes to one god and sometimes to another. This gave a strong impulse to the reflective mind of the Brahmans, and no sooner did the Indians begin to meditate than their fancy became powerful. The form of Indra, and the conception lying at the base of his divinity – the struggle against the black spirits of darkness – faded away in the land of the Ganges. In that region tempests do not come on with the same violence as in the Panjab; the hot season is followed by the rainy season and the inundation without any convulsions of the atmosphere. Again, as the life of war fell into the background, the position of Indra as a god of war and victory became less prominent. Least of all could the priests in a time of peace recognise the god of their order in the god of war, and in any case the national, warlike, heroic character of Indra could offer few points of contact with priestly meditation. If in consequence of the new circumstances and relations of life, Indra passed into the background – the old gods of light, the common possession of the Aryas in Iran and India, Mitra, Aryaman, Varuna, beside and above whom Indra had risen, were again allowed to come into prominence. The effort to grasp the unity of the divine power seemed to find a satisfactory basis in the form of Varuna, who from his lofty watch-tower beholds all things, is present everywhere, and sits throned in unapproachable light on the waters of heaven, and in the ethical conceptions embodied in the nature of this deity. The Brahmans struck out another path: they set aside altogether Aditi, *i. e.* the imperishable, who in the old poems of the Veda is the mother of the gods of light, *i. e.* of "the immortal" (p. 45, *n.* 2), and in other poems is extolled as the heaven and the firmament, as procreation and birth, as well as other attempts to conceive this unity. The effort to grasp the unity of the divine Being, the attempt to comprehend its nature, took quite another direction – highly significant and important for the character and development of the Indians.

The soma was offered most frequently to Indra, the Aṅvins, and the Maruts, and by it they are strengthened and nourished. The drink which gave strength to men and intoxicated them nourished and inspired the gods also in the faith of the Indians; it gave them strength, and thus won for men the blessing of the gods. To the Indians it appeared that a potency so effectual must itself be divine – a deity. Hence the soma itself is invoked as a god, and by consistently following out the conception, the Indians see in it the nourisher and even the creator of the gods. "The soma streams forth," we are told in some songs of the Rigveda, "the creator of heaven and the creator of earth, of Agni and of the sun, the creator of Indra and of thoughts." The soma-plants are now the "udders of the sky;" the

god is pressed for the gods, and he is offered as drink, who in his liquor contains the universe.¹⁵⁷ The sacrificial drink which nourishes the gods, or the spirit of it, is thus exalted to be the most bountiful giver of blessings, the bravest warrior, the conqueror of darkness, the slayer of Vritra, the lord of created things, and even to be the supreme power over the gods, the creator of the sun, the creator and father of Indra and the gods;¹⁵⁸ and so the highest power could be ascribed with greater justice to the correct invocations, the efficacious prayers which, according to the ancient faith of the Indians, compelled the gods to come down to the sacrificial meal, and hear the prayers of men. If man could induce or compel the gods to obey the will of men, the means by which this operation was attained must of itself be obviously of a divine and supernatural character. Only a divine power can exercise force over the mighty gods. We saw above how the spirit of fire, which carried the offerings to the sky, was to the Indian the mediator between earth and heaven. But the gifts were accompanied by prayers, and these, according to the idealistic tendencies of the Indians and the opinion of their priests, were the most efficacious part of the sacrifice; in them was contained the elevation of the mind to heaven; and therefore to the Indian the priest was one who offered prayer; and the songs of the Veda lay the greatest weight on "the holy word," *i. e.* on the prayer, which with them "was the chariot which leads to heaven." Thus a second spirit was placed beside Agni, the bearer of gifts, and this spirit carried prayer into heaven, and was the means by which the priests influenced the gods, the power which compelled the gods to listen to them. This spirit is the personification of the cultus, the power of meditation. It lives in the acts of worship, in the prayers; it is the spirit which in these prayers is the constraining power upon the gods. In the faith of the Indians the gods grow by invocations and prayers; this spirit, therefore, gives them vigour and strength, and as he is able to compel the gods, he must himself be a mighty god.

This spirit of prayer is a creation of the priestly families, a reflected expression of that power and compulsion which from all antiquity the Indians believed could be exercised upon spirits, and which they attribute to the power of meditation. The name of this deity no less than his abstract nature is a proof of his later origin. He is called Brahmanaspati, *i. e.* lord of prayer. "Brahmanaspati," we are told in the Vedas, "pronounces the potent form of prayer, where Indra, Varuna, Mitra, and the gods have made their dwellings."¹⁵⁹ The lord of prayer, the leader of songs, the creator of the songs by which the gods grow, and who gives them power, the "bright, gold-coloured," has in reality done the deeds of Indra. "He has cleft the clouds with his lightning, opened the rich hollow of the mountains (the hidden streams), driven the cows from the mountains, poured forth streams of water, chased away the darkness with his rays, has brought into being the dawn, the clear sky, and fire."¹⁶⁰ Thus did the priests transfer the achievements of the old god of storm and battle to their new god, their own especial protector, whom they now make the possessor of all divine attributes, and the father of gods. As this spirit was concealed, and lived in the acts of sacrifice, in the priests who offered it, in their prayers and meditations, and, on the other hand, had a power over the gods, guiding them and compelling them, Brahmanaspati, the spirit of the cultus, the mysterious force, the magic power of the rite, became with the priests the Holy, an impersonal essence, which at last was looked on by the priests as "Brahman."¹⁶¹ It was not with the lightning, but with the Brahman, *i. e.* with the power of the Holy, that Indra burst asunder the cave of Vritra.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ "Samaveda," 1, 6, 1, 4, 5, in Benfey's translation.

¹⁵⁸ Muir, "Sanskrit Texts," 5, 266 ff.

¹⁵⁹ "Rigveda," 1, 40, 5, in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 272 ff.

¹⁶⁰ "Rigveda," 10, 68, 8 ff. Roth, "Z. D. M. G." 1. 75.

¹⁶¹ *Brahmán*, from the root *barh*, connected with the root *vardh* (to become, to grow), means to raise, to elevate. The masc. *brahmán* means "he who elevates, makes to increase;" the neuter *bráhma*n means first, "growth," the "creative power," and then, "the elevating and elevated mood," the prayer and sacred form of words, the creative, reproducing power. A. Weber, "Ind. Studien," 2, 303; 9, 305.

¹⁶² Roth, *loc. cit.* 1. 73.

In Brahmanaspati the priests found a special god for their order and vocation; they were also at the same time carried beyond the circle of the ancient gods, whose forms had sprung up on a basis of natural powers; they had arrived at a transcendental deity emanating from the mysterious secret of their worship. It was a step further on the same path to resolve Brahmanaspati into Brahman, the Sacred Being. Nevertheless, even in the latest poems of the Veda, Brahman still coincides with Brahmanaspati, with the power of meditation and prayer.¹⁶³ But by degrees, in the eager desire to detach the unity of the divine power from the plurality of divine shapes, and find the one in the other, Brahman is elevated far above this signification; it becomes the ideal union of all that is sacred and divine, and is elevated into the highest divine power. If the Holy nourishes, leads, and constrains the gods, it is mightier than the gods, the mightiest deity, and therefore the most divine. If the Holy constrains the gods, and at the same time gives them power, in it alone the special power of the gods can rest, in so far as it is in them: the greater the portion they have in it, the mightier are they. The self-concentrated Holy is the mightiest power, the essence of all gods, the deity itself. Thus the oneness of nature in the gods, their unity and the connection between them, was discovered. Yet, this Holy, or Brahman, was not in heaven only, but also existed on earth; it lived in the holy acts and in those who performed them; in the ritual and prayer, in meditation and heaven-ward elevation of spirit, in the priests. Thus there stood upon the earth a holy and an unholy world in opposition to each other; the world of the priests and of the laity, the holy order of the priests and the unholy orders of the Kshatriyas, Vaiçyas, and Çudras.

It was the power of meditation and prayer, of the holy word, which with the priests had shaped itself into the divine power, the essence of the divine, and had thus driven out the more ancient gods. From another side this change was aided by ideas which the nature of the land of the Ganges forced upon the Aryas. It was not merely that the climate compelled them to rest, and thus won, for the priests more especially, leisure for contemplation, reflection, and minute investigation – all tendencies natural to the Aryas. Little care for his maintenance was required from the man who went into the forest to pursue his thoughts and dreams. There, instead of the hot sun which ripened the sugar-cane and shone on the fields of rice, was cool shade under the vast bananas and fig-trees; in the fruits growing wild in the forest, he found sufficient food. The gods invoked in the land of the Indus had been the spirits of light, of the clear sky, of the winds, the helpful force of fire, the rain-giving power of the storm-god. It was the bright, friendly, beneficial phenomena and gifts of the heavens and nature which were honoured in Indra and Mitra, in Varuna, Surya, and Agni. On the Ganges the Aryas found themselves surrounded by a far more vigorous natural life. They were in the midst of magnificent forms of landscape, the loftiest mountains, the mightiest rivers; around them was a vegetation unwearied in the luxuriance of its ceaseless growth, throwing up gigantic leaves and stems, and creepers immeasurable. They saw on every side a bright-coloured and marvellous animal world; glittering birds, hissing serpents, the colossal shapes of the elephant and rhinoceros. The multifarious forms of their gods had impelled them to seek for a single source, a point of unity among them, and the same impulse was roused by the wealth, variety, and bewildering abundance of this natural life, which in quick alternation of blossom and decay, went on creating without rest, under shapes the most various. The more variegated the pictures formed by this rich nature in the lively fancy of the Indians, the more confusing this change and multitude, the stronger was the effort required of the mind in order to grasp the unity, the single source, of all this mighty stream of life. To the old gods the phenomena and operations of a wholly different region and climate had been ascribed, but here life was far more varied and luxuriant; here there was no contest of fruitful land with desert, of the spirits of drought with the god of the storm. On the contrary, the inundations of the Ganges displayed a fixed and regular revolution, and in every kind of growth and decay there was a constant unalterable order. Who, then, was the author and lord of these mighty pulses of life, and this order, which seemed to

¹⁶³ Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 382.

exist of themselves? What was the element of existence and continuance in this alternation of growth and decay? When once men had come to regard the wonderful life of the Ganges as a whole picture, as one, that life was naturally ascribed to some one comprehensive form of deity, to one great god. The meditation of the priests finally brought them to the result that the dust, earth, and ashes, into which men, animals, and plants fell and disappeared could be neither the cause and seat of their own life, nor of the general life. Behind the material and the phenomenon, which could be grasped and seen by the senses, must lie the dim and secret source of existence; behind the external side must be another, inward, immaterial, and invisible. Thus not man only, but all nature, fell into two parts, body and soul. As behind the body of men, so also behind the perishable outward side of nature, there seemed to live a great soul, penetrating through all phenomena, the source and fountain of their being. The priests discovered that behind all the changing phenomena there must exist a single breath, a soul, Atman – it is also called Mahanatma, Paramatman, *i. e.* "the great soul"¹⁶⁴– and this must be the creative, sustaining, divine power, the source and seat of the life which we behold at one time rising in gladness, at another sinking in exhaustion.

This world-soul was amalgamated with Brahman and denoted by that name. In and behind the prayers and sacred acts an invisible spirit had been discovered, which gave them their power and efficacy, and this holy spirit ruled over the deities, inasmuch as it compelled them to listen to the prayers of men. Behind, above, and in the gods, the nature of the Holy was all-powerful; and it was the divine, the highest form of deity. The same spirit must be sought for behind the great and various phenomena of the life of nature. There must be the same spirit ruling in both spheres, a spirit which existed at once in heaven and on earth, which gave force to the prayers of the Brahmins, and summoned into life the phenomena of nature, and caused the latter to move in definite cycles, which was also the highest god and the lord of the gods. Thus the sacred spirit ruling over the gods became extended into a world-soul, penetrating through all the phenomena of nature, inspiring and sustaining life.

From prayer and meditation, which are mightier than the power of the gods, from this inward concentration, which, according to the faith of the Indians, reaches even unto heaven, the priests arrived at the idea of a deity which no longer rested on any basis in the phenomena of nature, but was ultimately regarded as the Holy in the general sense of the word. To them this Holy was the soul of the world, and the creator of it, or rather, not so much the creator as the cause and basis. From it the world emanated as the stream from the spring. The Brahman, the 'That' (*tat*), does not stand to the world in the contrast of genus and species; it has developed into the world. In the latest hymns of the Veda we read: "Let us set forth the births of the gods in songs of praise and thanksgiving. Brahmanaspati blew forth these births like a smith. In the first age of the gods being sprang out of not-being. There was neither being nor not-being, neither air nor heaven overhead, neither death nor immortality, no division of day or night, darkness existed, and this universe was indistinguishable waters. But the 'That' (from which was nothing different, and nothing was above it), breathed without respiration, but self-supported. Then rose desire (*kama*) in it; this was the germ which by their wisdom the wise discovered in their hearts as the link uniting not-being and being; this was the original creative seed. Who knows, who can declare, whence has sprung this creation? – the gods are subsequent to this, who then knows whence it arose?"¹⁶⁵ We see how, in spite of consistency, Brahman is retained beside the purely spiritual potency, the fructifying water of heaven beside not-being, as the material in existence from the first.

From the point of view which the priests gained by this conception of Brahman, a new idea of the world lay open to them. Behind and above the gods stood an invisible, pure, and holy spirit, which was at once the germ and source of the whole world, the life of nature's life; in Brahman the world

¹⁶⁴ So in Manu, *e. g.* 6. 65. *Atman* means "breathing;" *paramatman* "the highest breathing."

¹⁶⁵ "Rigveda," 10, 72, 1-3; 10, 129, 1-6, in Muir, *loc. cit.* 5, 48 ff. 356.

and all that was in it had their origin; there was no difference between the nature of Brahman and the world. Brahman was the efficient and material cause of the world, but while Brahman streamed forth into the world and became at every step further removed from itself, its products became less clear and pure, less like the perfection of its nature. Beginning from a spiritual being, suprasensual, transcendental, and yet existing in the world, the Indians ended in discovering a theory of creation, according to which all creatures proceeded from this highest being in such a manner, that the most spiritual forms were the nearest to him, while the most material, sensual, and rude were the most remote. There was a graduated scale of beings from Brahman down to the stones, and from these again to the holy and pure, the only true and real, self-existent, eternal being of this world-soul. In the first instance the gods had sprung from Brahman. From Brahman the impersonal world-soul, the self-existent Holy, a personal Brahman, first streamed forth, who was the highest deity. The personal Brahman was followed by the origin of the old gods. After the gods the spirits of the air are said to have flowed from Brahman, and after them the holy and pure men, the castes in their order, according as they are nearer to the sanctity of Brahman or more remote. Men were succeeded by the beasts according to their various kinds, by trees, plants, herbs, stones, and the lifeless matter.

In this way all created things emanated from Brahman, and to each class and kind a definite occupation was appointed, to perform which was the duty of the class in the universal system. Thus the life of all creatures was defined, and their vocation assigned to them in such a manner that they must fulfil it even in subsequent births.¹⁶⁶ The orders of priests, Kshatriyas, Vaiçyas, and Çudras, were a part in the divine order of the world; the distinction between them, the nature and relative position of each, emanated from Brahman. They are, therefore, distinct steps in the development of Brahman, and, for this reason, distinct occupations are apportioned to them. Thus there now stood, side by side, among the Indians, four classes or varieties of men, separated by God, and each provided by him with a different function. Henceforth no change was possible for one class into another, no mixture of one with another could be endured. The limits drawn by God were not to be broken through. The Brahmans are nearest to Brahman; in them the essence of Brahman, the holy spirit, the power of sanctification, lives in greater force than in the rest; they emanated from Brahman before the others; they are the first-born order. In one of the latest songs of the Rigveda, the Purusha-suktas, we are told of the world-spirit: "The Brahman was his mouth, the Rajnaya (Kshatriya) his arm, the Vaiçya his thigh, the Çudra his foot." This is a parable: the Brahman was his mouth, because the Brahmans are in possession of the prayers and holy hymns; whether the arm or the mouth, strength or speech, was preferable, is a question which remains unanswered. More distinctly and with special insistence that the mouth of Brahman is the best part of him, the law book of the priests tells us: Brahman first allowed the Brahmans to proceed from his mouth; then the Kshatriyas from his arms; next the Vaiçyas from his thigh; and lastly, the Çudras from his foot.¹⁶⁷ The duties fixed by Brahman for the Brahmans were sacrifice, the study and teaching of the Veda, to give justice and receive it. The duty of the Kshatriyas is to protect the people; of the Vaiçyas to tend the herds, till the fields, and carry on trade; the Çudras were only pledged to serve the three other orders.¹⁶⁸ It is a duty for the Kshatriyas and Vaiçyas to be reverent, submissive, and liberal to the Brahmans or first-born caste. The vocation of man is to adapt himself to the existing order of the world, to fulfil the particular mission assigned to him at birth. Any rebellion against the order of the castes is a rebellion against the divine order of the world.

This new view of the world, at which, beginning from the conception of the Holy and the world-soul, the meditation of the priests had arrived, was at variance with the old faith. The new idea of God and the doctrine of the world-soul, in its abstract and speculative form, could have but little influence

¹⁶⁶ Manu, 1, 28, 29.

¹⁶⁷ "Rigveda," 10, 90; Manu, 1, 31 and in the Puranas; Muir, "Sanskrit Texts," 5, 371. A. Weber, "Ind. Studien," 9, 7.

¹⁶⁸ Manu, 1, 88-91, and in many other places.

on the kings, the nobles, the peasants, and the people. As a fact, it shattered almost too violently the belief of the Aryas in the ancient gods. With the people Indra continued to be the highest god, and still, as before, the spirits of light, of the wind, of fire were invoked. But even without the new doctrine the forms of the ancient gods were fainter in the minds of the nobles and people, partly in consequence of the change in climate and country, and partly because the old impulses which had given the first place in heaven to the gods of battle no longer moved the heart so strongly, when the Aryas lived in larger states and under more peaceful relations. The atmosphere of the valley of the Ganges also required a more passive life, and the ideas of the people, no less than the fancy of the priests, must have received from the gigantic forms of the landscape, and the rich and marvellous animal world of the new region, a direction and elevation quite different from that felt in the land of the Indus. More especially, the reasons noticed above – the contrast between the Aryas on the one hand and the Çudras on the other – facilitated the reception of the doctrine maintained by the priests of the division of castes. The pious feeling which penetrated the Indians would, moreover, have found it difficult to resist the conviction that the first place must invariably belong to the relation to the gods. Hence ready credence was given to the priests when they spoke of their order as the first-born and nearest to the gods.

It was not in the sphere of religion or worship, but in ethics, that the doctrine of the priests attained to a thorough practical influence on the state and life of the Indians, and this complete victory was due to the consequences which the priests derived from it for the life of the soul after death. We are acquainted with the ancient ideas cherished by the Aryas in the Panjab on the future of the soul after death; the spirits of the brave and pious passed into the bright heaven of Yama, where they lived in happiness and joy on soma, milk, and honey; those who had done evil passed into thickest darkness. Yama allowed or refused entrance into his heaven; his two hounds kept watch (p. 64). The descendants duly sprinkled water for the spirits of their ancestors, and their families brought libations at the new moon, when the souls of the fathers came in troops and enjoyed food and drink. In the oldest Brahmanas, Yama holds a formal judgment on the souls. The actions of the dead were weighed in a balance; the good deeds allowed the scale to rise; the evil deeds were threatened with definite punishments and torments in the place of darkness. The body of light which the pious souls are said to have received in heaven, required, according to this new conception, a less amount of food, or no food at all. But the deeper change rests in the fact that the heaven of Yama, the son of the deity of light, can now no longer be the reward of those who have lived a purer life, and approached to the sanctity and perfection of Brahman. They had raised themselves in the scale of existence, and must therefore return into the bosom of the pure being from which they had emanated. The souls which have attained to complete purity pass after death into Brahman. Thus the heaven of Yama was rendered unnecessary, and was, in fact, set aside. The sinner who has not lived according to the vocation which he received at birth, has neither offered sacrifice nor purified himself, must be severely punished, and it is Yama – now transformed from a judge of the dead into a prince of darkness, and having his abode in hell – who imposes on sinners the torments which they must endure after death for their guilt. The fancy of the Indians depicted, in great detail, according to the various torments, the place of darkness, the hell, situated deep below the earth. As among the Egyptians, and all nations living in a hot climate, so in the hell of the Indians fierce heat is the chief means of punishment. In one place is the region of darkness, and the place of tears, the forest where the leaves are swords. In another the souls are torn by owls and ravens; in another their heads are struck every day by the guardians of hell with great hammers. In another and yet worse hell they are broiled in pans; here they have to eat hot coals; there they walk on burning sand and glowing iron; in another place hot copper is poured into their necks.¹⁶⁹ For the kings and warriors, on the other hand, the

¹⁶⁹ In Manu, 4, 88-90 (cf. 12, 75, 76) eight hells are mentioned and described, in each of which the torments grow worse as the offences are more serious. The Buddhists retain these eight hot hells, and add eight cold; Burnouf, "Introduction à l'histoire du

heaven of Indra takes the place of the heaven of Yama; and into this the brave warriors enter. In the Epos, Indra laments that "none of the beloved guests come, who dedicate their lives to the battle, and find death without an averted countenance." We have already seen how Indra meets Yudhishtira in order to conduct him into the heaven of the heroes, the imperishable world, where he will see his brothers and his wife, when they are freed from the earthly impurity still clinging to them.

The torments provided in hell for the sinners could not satisfy the system which the priests had established in the doctrine of the world-soul. In this the holy and pure being had allowed the world to emanate from itself; the further this world was removed from its origin and source, the more melancholy and gloomy it became. If the gods, the holy and pious men in the past, and the heaven of light of Indra, were nearest to the purity of Brahman, the pure nature of this being became seriously adulterated in the lower stages of removal. In the present world, purity and impurity, virtue and passion, wisdom and folly, were at least in equipoise. The worlds of animals, plants, and dead matter were obviously still further removed from the pure Brahman. If, according to this view, the world was an adulterated, broken, impure Brahman, it received, along with this corruption, the duty of regaining its original purity. All beings had received their origin from Brahman, and to him all must return. From this point of view, and the requirement that every being must work out its way to perfection, in order to be adapted to its perfect origin, the priests arrived at the idea that every creature must go through all the gradations of being as they emanated from Brahman, before it could attain to rest. The Çudra must become a Vaiçya, the Vaiçya a Kshatriya, the Kshatriya a Brahman, and the Brahman a wholly sinless and sacred man, a pure spirit, before he can pass into Brahman. From the necessity that every one should work up to Brahman, arose the monstrous doctrine of regenerations. The Çudra who had lived a virtuous life, was, it was thought, by the power of this virtue and the practice of it, changed in his nature, and born anew in the higher existence of a Vaiçya; the Kshatriya became a Brahman, and so on.¹⁷⁰ In this manner the pure and holy life, according as it was freed from all sensuality and corporeality, from the whole material world, succeeded in winning a return to supersensual and incorporeal Brahman. Conversely, the impure, spotted, and sinful were born again in a lower order, and in the worst shape according to the measure of the offence – sometimes they did not even become men at all, but animals – in order to struggle back again through unutterable torments, and innumerable regenerations, to their former condition, and finally to Brahman. Thus a wide field was opened to the fancy of the Indians, on which it soon erected a complete system of regenerations; and into this the theory of hell was adopted. The man who had committed grievous sins, sinks after death into hell, and for long periods is tortured in the various departments there, that thus, after expiation of his sins, he may begin again the scale of migration from the lowest and worst form of existence. One who was guilty of less serious offences was born again according to their measure as a Çudra or an elephant, a lion or a tiger, a bird or a dancer.¹⁷¹ One who had committed acts of cruelty was re-born as a beast of prey.¹⁷² One who had attempted the murder of a Brahman was punished in hell one hundred or a thousand years, according to the progress of the attempt, and then saw the light of the world in twenty-one births, each time proceeding from the body of some common animal. He who had shed the blood of a Brahman, was torn in hell by beasts of prey for so many years as the flowing blood had touched grains of sand; and if any one had slain a Brahman his soul was born again in the bodies of the animals held in greatest contempt on the Ganges, the dog and the goat.¹⁷³ If any one had stolen a cow he was born again as a crocodile, or a lizard; if corn, as a rat;¹⁷⁴ if

Bouddhisme," p. 320, 366, 367, 201. The Singhalese have increased the number to 136, the Siamese to 462. Koppen, "Relig. des Buddha," s. 244. Cf. A. Weber, in "Z. D. M. G." 9, 237.

¹⁷⁰ e. g. Manu, 9, 335.

¹⁷¹ Manu, 12, 43, 44.

¹⁷² Manu, 12, 59.

¹⁷³ Manu, 12, 55.

¹⁷⁴ Manu, 12, 62, 64.

fruits and roots, as an ape.¹⁷⁵ He who defiled his father's bed was to be born a hundred times as a herb, or a liana – the creepers embracing the trees;¹⁷⁶ the Brahman who is guilty of a fault in the sacrifice is born again for a hundred years as a crow or kite, and those who eat forbidden food will again see light as worms. He who reproaches a free man with being the son of a slave-woman, will himself be born five times from the body of a slave.¹⁷⁷ In this manner, partly fanciful, partly pedantic, the priests built up the system of regenerations. According to the law-book of the priests, inorganic matter, worms, insects, frogs, rats, crows, swine, dogs, and asses, were on the lowest stage in the scale of creation; above them came first, elephants, horses, lions, boars, the Çudras and the Mlechhas; *i. e.* the nations who did not speak Sanskrit. Above these were rogues, players, demons (Raksheras), Piçachas, *i. e.* blood-suckers, vampires; above these wrestlers and boxers, dancers, armour-smiths, drunkards, and Vaiçyas; above them the Kshatriyas and the kings, the men eminent in battle and speech, the genii of heaven, the Gandharvas and Apsarasas. Above these were the Brahmans, the pious penitents, the gods, the great saints, and finally, Brahman.

Thus the new system effaced the specific distinctions between plants and beasts, men and gods. Everywhere it saw nothing but spirits, which have to work their way in a similar manner from greater or less impurity to purity, from incompleteness to completeness and the original source of their existence. The souls, when they had once been created and had emanated from Brahman, found no rest or end till they had returned once more to this their starting-point; and this they were unable to do till they had been raised to the purity and sanctity of Brahman.

However indifferent the kings, nobles, and peasants may have been to this doctrine of the world-soul and Brahman, these new, severe, and terrible consequences, derived from it by the priests for the life after death, could not be without a deep impression. They operated with immense force on the spirit of the Indians. To endure the torments of hell in continuous heat, while even on earth the warmth of the climate was so hard to bear, was a terrible prospect. But even this appeared only as the lesser evil. Along with and after the torments of hell those who committed grievous sins had to expect a ceaseless regeneration in the bodies of men and animals until they had worked their way up to Brahman. At the same time the priests took care to impress upon the hearts of the people the fate which awaited those who did not follow their ordinances. They reminded them perpetually of "the casting of the soul into hell and hell-torments." The sinner was to think, "what migrations the soul would have to undergo owing to his sin; of the regeneration through ten thousand millions of mothers."¹⁷⁸ These endless terrors and torments now in prospect for the man who did not fulfil the vocation assigned to him by the creator at birth, or the prescripts of the priests, were only too well adapted to win respect for their requirements. Who would venture to trespass on the divine arrangement of the world, according to which the first place was secured on earth to the Brahman in preference to the wealthy armed noble, the peasant, and the miserable Çudra, who was only on a level with the higher order of animals? Who would not look up with reverence to the purer incarnation of the world-soul, the holier spirit, which dwelt in the Brahmans? Even though the theory of the world-soul remained unintelligible to the many, they understood that the Brahmans, who busied themselves with sacrifice, prayers, and sacred things, stood nearer to the deity than they did; they understood that if they misconducted themselves towards the sacred race or disregarded the vocation of birth, they must expect endless torments in hell, and endless regenerations in the most loathsome worms and insects, or in the despised class of the Çudras – "those animals in human form."

The priesthood cannot have succeeded in making good their claims to superiority over the Kshatriyas, their new doctrine and ethics, without long-continued struggles and contests. If the two

¹⁷⁵ Manu, 12, 67.

¹⁷⁶ Manu, 12, 58.

¹⁷⁷ Manu, 12, 59. Burnouf, "Introduction," p. 274. Bohlen has already observed that many of these regenerations are merely fanciful, "Indien," 24.

¹⁷⁸ Manu, 6, 61-63.

first centuries after the foundation of the states – the period between 1400 and 1200 B.C. – were occupied, as we assumed above, with the arrangement and consolidation of the new kingdom, the establishment of the position of the nobles, and the composition of songs of heroism and victory, we may assign to the next two centuries – from 1200 to 1000 B.C. – the sharper distinction of the Kshatriyas and Vaiçyas, the amalgamation of the families of minstrels and priests into an order; the rise of this order in the states on the Ganges as the preserver of the ancient faith and ancient mode of worship; the combination of the customs, formulæ, and invocations hitherto handed down separately in the separate states. If in the first period the immigrant Aryas separated themselves as a common race from the Çudras, in the next the three orders of the Aryas became distinguished. Only the man who was born a Kshatriya could partake in the honour of this order; only one who sprung from a family of priests could be allowed to assist in the holy acts of sacrifice; and he who was born a Vaiçya must continue to till the field.

At the beginning of the ensuing century —*i. e.* in the period from 1000 B.C. downwards – the priests, now in possession of all the ancient invocations and formulæ, may have begun their meditations with the comparison of the invocations, the attempt to find out the right meaning of them, and to grasp the unity of the divine nature. The hymns of the latest portion of the Vedas, which are obviously a product of these meditations, may perhaps have arisen in the first half of this period. From the mysterious secret of the worship, the spirit of prayer, and the idea of the mighty, ever-recurring stream of birth and decay in the land of the Ganges, the Brahmans arrived at the idea of Brahman, the world-soul, and from this deduced its consequences. We may with certainty presuppose a long and severe struggle of the nobles against the dominion of the priests – a struggle which went on for several generations. Even the Vaiçyas can hardly have submitted without resistance to all the requirements of the Brahmans. The impassable gulf between the orders, the exclusion of intermarriage, was only carried out, as we can show, with difficulty; and even the ethics of the new doctrine must have met with resistance.

We have already referred to the circumstances which rendered victory easier to the Brahmans, to the changed conditions of life, and the nature of the land of the Ganges. Another fact in their favour was that the new doctrines of the Brahmans did not attack the monarchy. This continued to remain in the order of the Kshatriyas, and no essential limitation of their powers was required by the new doctrine from the princes on the Ganges. It is true that it demanded recognition of the superiority of the Brahmans to the other orders, and acknowledgment of the special sanctity of the order even from the kings; it required reverence, respect, and liberality, towards the Brahmans; yet in all other respects the new system was calculated to increase rather than diminish the power of the kings. The rule of unconditional submission to the existing order must have strengthened considerably the authority of the kings, and assisted them in removing the limitations hitherto, without doubt, imposed upon them by the importance of the Kshatriyas; and we can hardly avoid the conclusion that the kingdom on the Ganges was first raised by the new doctrine to absolute power; on this foundation it became a despotism.

We may feel confident in assuming that the victory of the Brahmans in the land of the Ganges was completed about the time when the dynasty of the Pradyotas ascended the throne of Magadha, *i. e.* about the year 800 B.C.¹⁷⁹ The districts from the Sarasvati eastward as far as the upper Ganges

¹⁷⁹ In the sixth century B.C. the Brahmanic arrangement of the state was in full force in the cities on the Ganges, and carried out most strictly. Hence it must have obtained the upper hand about 800 B.C. at the latest. It was not only established by law about the year 600 B.C., but the doctrine of the Brahmans had already created scholastic and heterodox systems of philosophy. Before this system could become current, the idea of Brahman must have been discovered; the strong elements of resistance in the ancient life and faith must have been overcome. This would occupy a space of about two centuries, and may therefore have filled the period from 1000 to 800 B.C., as assumed in the text. Buddhism required a space of three centuries in order to become the recognised religion in the kingdom of Magadha. Before the idea of the world-soul could be discovered, the hymns of the Veda must have reached a certain point of combination and synopsis, and the confusing multitude of divine forms must have been sufficiently felt to call forth the opposite idea of unity. From the book of the law it is clear that the three Vedas were in existence before it was drawn up. It refers perpetually

are after that time a sacred land to the Indians. The country between the Sarasvati and the Drishadvati is called Brahmavarta, *i. e.* Brahma-land. Kurukshetra (between the Drishadvati and the Yamuna), the districts of the Bharatas and Panchalas, of the Matsyas and Çurasenas, *i. e.* the entire doab of the Yamuna and the Ganges, are comprised under the name Brahmashideça, *i. e.* the land of the holy sages. Here were situated the famous residences of the Kurus and Pandus, Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Kauçambi, and on the confluence of the Yamuna and Ganges, Pratishtana; here, finally, was the city of Krishna, Krishnapura, and the sacred Mathura on the Yamuna; and elsewhere also in this district we find consecrated places and shrines of pilgrimage. It is maintained that the bravest Kshatriyas and the holiest priests are to be found in this district; the customs and observances here are regarded as the best, and as giving the rule to the remainder. The law-book of the priests requires that every Arya shall learn the right walk in life from a Brahman born in Brahmashideça, and that, properly, all Aryas should live there.¹⁸⁰ It cannot have been any reminiscence of the great war which caused the priests to set such a value on these regions, and make these demands, nor even the fact that these districts were the first occupied by the emigrants from the Indus, so that here first in the new country were consecrated places set up for the worship of the immigrants, and the least intermixture took place with the ancient population. It is due rather to the fact that in these regions the civilisation and culture of the Indians were consolidated in an especial degree; here the priestly reform of the religion, if it did not receive the first impulse, yet acquired the victory and became supreme, owing perhaps to the support of the princes of the dynasty of Pandu, who reigned at Kauçambi. As these were the regions in which the priests first regulated the ancient customs of worship, morals, and justice according to the new doctrine, they could afterwards serve as a pattern for all the rest. If the Brahmans, soon after they had succeeded in carrying through their demands here, revised the Epos of the great war in the light of their new system, they could claim the thanks of the kings of the Bharatas for their support, they could show that the kings who in ancient times had won the dominion in these lands, the ancestors of the race then on the throne, had even in early times obediently followed the commands of the priests, and they could set up the conquerors in that struggle as patterns of the proper conduct of kings to Brahmans (p. 101).

to the triple Veda. The evidence of the Sutras proves that four Vedas existed at the time of the appearance of Buddha. If these were in existence in the sixth century the three which are acknowledged to be older must have existed as early as the seventh century B.C.

¹⁸⁰ Manu, 2, 6, 12, 18, 20.

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