other and more reliable passages indicate that she was fully developed at the time. The Mahābhārata also in one passage mentions 30 and 10 or 21 and 7 as the proper ages of the bridegroom and the bride! These, however, must be adjudged as exceptions proving the rule of the marriage of grown-up girls. The Buddhist texts also support this view.

As noted above, there was already a tendency in the Sūtra texts to lower the age of marriage for girls. While Manu prescribes that a man of thirty shall marry a maiden of twelve, or a man of twenty-four, a girl of eight, he at the same time lays down that a maiden, though marriageable, should rather stop in (the father's) house until death, than that he should ever give her to a man destitute of good qualities. On the whole we may reasonably conclude that while child-marriage was gradually coming into vogue, the older custom of marriage at a mature age was neither uncommon nor regarded with disapprobation. Further, it was considered extremely undesirable, if not a positive sin for the father, to let mature girls remain unmarried, and there is an almost unanimous agreement that in such cases the girl could find out her own husband, after a period of waiting which varied from three months to three years in the different Smṛitis. Later Smṛitis like Yājñavalkya insisted that girls should be married before the age of puberty. But this was merely a foretaste of what was going to happen, rather than any settled or even generally followed rule during the period under review, for Nārada, which is a later work, recommends marriage after puberty. On the whole the insistence on marriage of girls, and that at an early age, is a marked feature of the time and was probably mainly due to an anxiety to maintain their bodily purity.

It has been suggested by some that the rules in the Smṛitis about the marriage of girls at an early age applied only to the Brāhmaṇas and not to the other castes. This is supported by the fact that the heroines in Sanskrit dramas are almost always grown-up at the time of marriage, and the actual historical examples such as that of Rājyaśri, sister of Harsha-vardhana, also support this view. It is also pointed out that in a late work, Sāmkāra-prakāśa, it is expressly laid down that there is no prohibition against marrying a

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1. Anuvāsana parvan, 44. 14.
2. X. 94.
3. IX. 89.
4. XII. 27.
5. KHDS, II. 446.
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girl who has passed the age of puberty, for Kshatriyas and others. But such restrictions are not even hinted at in the earlier Smṛiti works, and the arguments cited merely prove that the injunction about child-marriage was not scrupulously followed in actual life.

The lowering of the marriageable age must have affected the general education and culture of women in an adverse way. Extreme emphasis was now laid on the physical chastity of woman and her unquestioned obedience to husband, to the detriment of other aspects of her life. The result was a gradual deterioration in her general status and position. But the final stage in this downward movement was not reached during the period under review. It was rather a transitional period, and we really find two entirely different pictures of women reflected in literary works. In one set of verses in the epics we find women described as fickle, quarrelsome, untruthful—in other words, a veritable pot of poison! She must, therefore, remain (we are told) under control all her life; in girlhood under the guardianship of her father, in youth under the domination of the husband, and in old age in the charge of her sons. In the other set of verses, woman is 'the glory of the home', the symbol of prosperity to the family, (the better) half of the husband, his friend, philosopher and guide, and therefore worthy of all attention and respect. As a mother, she is superior to ten fathers, superior to anything else on earth.

The same sort of contradiction appears in the Smṛiti works. Manu, for example, declares¹ that gods are pleased with (those households) where women are held in honour, and that a husband should be punished by the king if he cast off the wife, who is not guilty of any crime causing loss of caste.² At the same time, he lays down that the husband had absolute rights over the wife to the extent of inflicting corporal punishment³ and could discard her immediately she says anything disagreeable to him. It is also declared that "by a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house."⁴ A wife was to 'worship, as a god, her husband even though he might be destitute of virtue or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities',⁵ and is to remain chaste and faithful to him whether he is alive or dead; but a husband, after the funeral of his wife, may

1. III. 55-59.
2. VIII. 389.
3. VIII. 299.
4. V. 147.
5. V. 154.
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marry again.\(^1\) Besides, as already noted, Manu\(^2\) gives expression to some general sentiments about women which are most dishonourable and humiliating to the class as a whole, and to which it is difficult to find a parallel in a book held in respect by a large section of humanity.

There are, however, clear indications that during the first half of the period under review, at any rate, there were highly educated women, holding an honourable position in society and household.

Two classes of women students are mentioned: Brahmavādini or lifelong students of sacred texts, and Sadyodvāhā who prosecuted their studies till their marriage. Pāṇini\(^3\) refers to women students of Vedic Śākhās. Kātyāyana, in his Vārttika,\(^4\) refers to women teachers who were called Upādhyāyā or Upādhyāyī, as distinguished from Upādhyāyānīs, i.e. wives of teachers.) The necessity of coining a new term shows that the women teachers were large in number. Patañjali also refers to a special designation for the women scholars who made a special study of Mīmāṃsā philosophy.

The Buddhist and Jain texts also refer to women of the Brahmavādini class, i.e. those who remained unmarried to carry on their studies.) Most of the Buddhist nuns, whose songs have been preserved in the Therīgāthā, were maidens born in well-to-do families, who renounced the world for the sake of spiritual salvation. The Jain texts refer to Jayanti, daughter of the king of Kauśāmbī, who remained unmarried in order to devote herself to religion and philosophy. She carried on discussions with Mahāvīra himself on abstruse questions of philosophy, and eventually became a nun. The Mahābhārata has also portrayed an exalted picture of womanhood in Draupadi who is called Paṇḍitā (learned) and fearlessly argues with her husband on all topics, not excluding political ones. Her spirited behaviour on many a critical occasion shows a worldly woman at her best.

In addition to, or in place of, higher education, the women generally received training in fine arts like music, dancing and painting. But some of them went in for military training also. This is indirectly proved by the term Śāktīkī, a female spear-bearer,

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1. V. 168.
2. IX. 2-19.
3. IV. 1. 63.
4. On IV. 1, 48.
mentioned by Patañjali. But a more direct evidence is furnished by Megasthenes who refers to the Amazonian bodyguard in attendance on Chandragupta Maurya, when he went out to hunt. "Of the women" we are told, "some are in chariots, some on horses, and some even on elephants, and they are equipped with weapons of every kind, as if they were going on a campaign." The Bhārhut sculptures portray a woman riding a fully caparisoned horse and carrying a standard. The female bodyguard of the king is also mentioned in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra which directs that 'the king, on getting up from his bed, shall be received by troops of women armed with bows'.

Women are sometimes known to have carried on administrative work. According to Megasthenes the Pandaean nation was governed by females. This is not unlikely, as matriarchy prevailed in south India. The Sātavāhana queen Nāyanikā acted as regent during the minority of her son.

As against this bright picture of the high intellectual, moral and physical education of women depicted above/we find also steadily growing disabilities. Formerly the girls went through the Upanayana ceremony like the boys, but this gradually came to be merely formal.) Manu prescribes that in the case of women Upanayana should be performed without the recitation of sacred texts. In the following verse he lays down that the marriage ceremony was equal to the Upanayana in the case of women, "serving the husband being equivalent to the residence in (the house of the) teacher, and the household duties (the same) as the (daily) worship of the sacred fire." Yājñavalkya took the further and more logical step of prohibiting the Upanayana ceremony altogether for girls. This was the signal for the gradual "spiritual disfranchisement" of women. Minor religious rituals like Jātakarma, Nāmakarma, Chūḍākarana, etc. also came to be performed for them without the Vedic mantras. /The wife, who formerly performed Vedic sacrifices, was denied the right to do so and could not even recite the Vedic mantras. Thus was the woman reduced, at least

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1. On IV. 1, 15, 6.
3. KAT. p. 47.
5. II. 66.
7. Manu, IV. 205–6; IX. 18; XI. 38.
spiritually, to the status of the Sudra, and this is clearly reflected even in the Bhagavadgita.¹

In contrast to this, Buddhism and Jainism offered a more honourable career to women. No wonder a large number of them became nuns, and some of them became famous preachers.

The growing importance attached to physical chastity explains the gradual discouragement of widow remarriage, divorce, and levirate, and encouragement of the system of sati. The rules about remarriage in Kautilya’s Arthasastra closely follow those laid down in the Dharma-sutras.² They permit remarriage of a woman, whose husband is dead, has become an ascetic, or has gone abroad, after a period of waiting which varies according to circumstances. Both Manu³ and Yajnavalkya⁴ forbid the remarriage of widows,⁵ but Narada⁶ permits it, and following it, even later texts like Parāśara-Smṛiti and Agni-purāṇa lay down that a woman can remarry even during the lifetime of her husband if he is lost (i.e. unheard of), has become an ascetic, is impotent or is an outcaste. Such a remarried woman was called Punarbhū.⁷

As regards divorce or repudiation, we learn from Kautilya’s Arthasastra that ‘if a husband either is of bad character, or is long gone abroad, or has become a traitor to his king, or is likely to endanger the life of his wife, or has fallen from his caste, or has lost virility, he may be abandoned by his wife.’ Divorce on the ground of ill-feeling was also possible by mutual consent, but not at the will of one party alone. Kautilya, on the whole, places the husband and wife almost on an equal footing in this respect, but Manu places the wife in a decidedly inferior position.⁸ He gives a long list of ‘grounds’ on which one could supersede his wife by another,⁹ and then adds that a wife who, being superseded, in anger departs from her husband’s house, must either be instantly confined or cast off in the presence of the family.¹⁰ He also propounds the theory that the wife is not released from her marital obligations even if she is

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¹ IX. 32.
² Kat. p. 201.
³ V. 156-7.
⁴ I. 75.
⁵ But both of them sanction such marriages in certain cases (Manu, IX. 176; Yaj, I. 67).
⁶ XII. 45 ff.; 96ff.
⁷ Vas. XVII. 19-20.
⁸ IX. 80-82.
⁹ IX. 83.
sold or repudiated by the husband. A wife showing disrespect to a husband who is addicted to some evil passion, is a drunkard, or diseased, shall be deserted for three months (and be) deprived of her ornaments and furniture, though for the same, or much less heinous offence, she may be superseded by her husband. Indeed Manu’s injunctions regarding a wife are painful reading, and clearly show how orthodox Brahmanical view was deliberately aiming to relegate her to a position of inferiority.

Nārada is on the whole more considerate towards women. He lays down the general principle that, ‘when husband and wife leave one another from mutual dislike, it is a sin.’ He, however, recommends the expulsion of the wife not only on the grounds of wasteful expenditure, procuring abortion, adultery or attempt on the husband’s life, but also for less serious offences like ‘showing malice, making unkind speeches or eating before her husband.’ He asks the husband not to ‘show love to a barren woman, or to one who gives birth to female children only, or whose conduct is blamable, or who constantly contradicts him.’ But it is doubtful whether divorce is meant. On the other hand, Nārada says that “if a man leaves a wife who is obedient, pleasant-spoken, skilful, virtuous, and the mother of male issue, the king shall make him mindful of his duty by inflicting severe punishment on him.” Nārada further lays down that ‘when faultless maiden has been married to a man, who has a blemish unknown (before his marriage)’, she should not only be permitted to leave her husband and ‘repair to another’, but ‘enjoined to do so by her relations.’

The account of the births of Pāṇḍu, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the Pāṇḍavas, considered along with the injunctions in the Dharmashāstras, leaves no doubt that the system of levirate was in use, though gradually coming into disfavour. Manu, curiously enough, mentions it with approval and lays down detailed rules and regulations for its control in five verses but violently condemns it in

1. IX. 46.
2. IX. 78.
3. XII. 90.
4. XII. 90, 92.
5. XII. 93.
6. XII. 94.
7. XII. 95.
8. XII. 96.
9. IX. 59-63.
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the next five.\(^1\) Yājñavalkya, however, does not condemn it,\(^2\) and both Vishnū\(^3\) and Nārada\(^4\) permit it within certain limits.

The Mahābhārata records (probably in its late portions) a few cases of satī (widow burning). Mādri burns herself on the funeral pyre of her husband Pāṇḍu, and the bereaved wives of Krishṇa immolate themselves in Indraprastha after his death. The Ādiparvan\(^5\) has a verse recommending the practice, but the epic is strangely silent regarding the fate of the widows of Duryodhana and numerous other kings who died on the battlefield. (In view of the testimony of Greek writers regarding the prevalence of this practice in the Punjab, the possibility has to be conceded that the practice of satī was in vogue during this period. It is possible that the practice was confined to the warrior class, as Onesicritus says, and the other Indo-Germanic parallels suggest. It is held by some that the practice was encouraged by the examples of the Scythians who ruled in India during this period and among whom the custom of burning the wife of a chief along with the remains of her husband was quite common.)

In spite of the barbarous nature of the custom, it is interesting to note that sometimes it was not only an absolutely voluntary choice, but one that was made by the wife with eager delight. The testimony of the Greek writers leaves no doubt on the point. When the leader of an Indian contingent died in battle in Irān, in 316 B.C., both his wives were eager to immolate themselves on his funeral pyre. The Macedonian and Greek generals prevented the elder wife, who was with child, and gave permission to the younger. What followed may be described in the words of the Greek writer:

"The elder wife went away lamenting, with the band about her head rent, and tearing her hair, as if tidings of some great disaster had been brought her; and the other departed, exultant at her victory, to the pyre, crowned with fillets by the women who belonged to her, and decked out splendidly as for a wedding. She was escorted by her kinsfolk who chanted a song in praise of her virtue. When she came near to the pyre, she took off her adornments and distributed them to her familiars and friends, leaving a memorial of herself, as it were, to those who had loved her. Her

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1. IX. 64-68.
3. 15, 3.
4. XII. 30 ff.
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adornments consisted of a multitude of rings on her hands, set with precious gems of diverse colours, about her head golden stars not a few, variegated with different sorts of stones, and about her neck a multitude of necklaces, each a little larger than the one above it. In conclusion, she said farewell to her familiars and was helped by her brother onto the pyre, and there, to the admiration of the crowd which had gathered together for the spectacle, she ended her life in heroic fashion. Before the pyre was kindled, the whole army in battle array marched round it thrice. She meanwhile lay down beside her husband, and as the fire seized her no sound of weakness escaped her lips. The spectators were moved, some to pity and some to exuberant praise. But some of the Greeks present found fault with such customs as savage and inhumane.”

This vivid account recalls the description of similar scenes by eye-witnesses in modern age. It is, however, permissible to assume that, as in later days, every case of satī was not voluntary. Aristobulus learnt on inquiry that the widow sometimes became a satī of her own desire, and that those who refused to do so lived under general contempt.2 This undoubtedly implies that the public encouragement to the practice accelerated its growth. At the same time we must remember that the practice is not sanctioned either by the Dharma-sūtras or by the Smṛitis. Manu and Yājñavalkya are reticent about it, though Vishṇu seems to commend it in passages which are regarded by many as later interpolation. It is recommended only in the late Vaikhānasa Gṛihya-sūtra and later Smṛitis like those of Śaṅkha, Aṅgiras, Daksha, Parāśara and Vyāsa.

No discussion of the position of women would be complete without reference to a class of courtesans who enjoyed a social standing not accorded to them anywhere else in the world, save perhaps in Athens. The great prestige attached to this class of women appears vividly from the story of Amrāpāli in the Vinaya Texts of the Mūlasarvāstivādas.3 She was a daughter of Mahānāma, a rich citizen of Vaishāli. Many suitors, including princes, having sought her hand, her father brought the matter to the notice of the Lichchhavi gana and it was discussed by the Assembly. When the members saw Amrāpāli, they decided that she was a stri-ratna (jewel of a woman), and so, we are told, according to the convention already laid down, she was not to be married to anybody but was

1. Diodorus XIX 34, quoted in CHI, I. 415.
2. Aristobulus, Frag. 34.
to be enjoyed by the gāna. Amrapāli agreed to lead the life of a public woman, but asked for five privileges which were granted.

King Bimbisāra, 'engaged in conversation on good topics with his ministers,' asked them what sort of courtesan each of them had seen. Being told that Āmrapāli (or Ambapāli) was exceedingly charming and accomplished in all the sixty-four arts, Bimbisāra decided to visit her at Vaiśāli, even though the Lichchhavis were hostile. His son by her enjoyed a high position in court. The Pāli Vinaya Texts tell us that a merchant, after having described the charms of Ambapāli of Vaiśāli to king Bimbisāra, requested him 'to install a courtesan' in Rājagriha, and this was done.

Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra also reveals the same state of things. A prostitute, noted for her beauty, youth, and accomplishments, was to be appointed superintendent of prostitutes on a salary of 1,000 pañnas (per annum), together with a rival prostitute on half that salary. Detailed rules are laid down for regulating the profession, and two days' earning every month had to be paid to the State.

The prostitutes had to attend court and were regularly employed in the royal household on a big salary. They held the royal umbrella, golden pitcher and fan, and attended upon the king seated on litter, throne, or chariot. They were also employed in the storehouse, kitchen, bathroom, and the harem of the king.

As to the accomplishments of this class, Kauṭilya tells us that "those who teach prostitutes, female slaves and actresses, arts such as singing, dancing, acting, writing, painting, playing on the instruments like lyre, pipe and drum, reading the thoughts of others, manufacture of scents and garlands, shampooing, and the art of attracting and captivating the mind of others, shall be endowed with maintenance from the State."¹

When Gautama Buddha visited a locality in the neighbourhood of Vaiśāli, Ambapāli paid a visit to him with a number of magnificent vehicles. She sat down near him and, having heard his discourse, invited him and his companions to take their meal at her house the next day. The Buddha agreed, and refused the invitation of the Lichchhavis which almost immediately followed. "Ambapāli," said the Lichchhavis, "give up this meal to us for a hundred thousand." "My Lords," replied Ambapāli, "were you to offer all

¹ KAT. 155-56.
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Vaiśālī with its subject territory, I would not give up this meal." After the meal Buddha again gladdened the courtesan Ambapāli by his religious discourse, and she presented a park, named after her, to the Buddha.¹

It would appear from what has been said above that the courtesans as a class were not held in odium, and neither great kings nor renowned religious teachers looked down upon them. Some of them were highly accomplished and, in point of culture and standing, resembled the Hetairai of Athens.

V. SLAVES

Slave was a recognised institution of Indian society from the oldest Vedic times. The Śṛṅgīs not only distinguish between different classes of slaves but lay down various rules regarding their status.) According to Manu and Nārada, slaves could be acquired by birth in the master's house, by purchase, by gift, by inheritance, by maintenance during famine, by pledge, by release from a heavy debt, by capture in war, by gain in wager, by voluntary surrender of freedom, by apostacy from asceticism, by connexion with a female slave, and by several other processes. Slavery was also the judicial punishment for crime. In keeping with the orthodox view of the gradation of varṇas, Yājñavalkya and Nārada forbid slavery in the pratiloma order. The slaves, according to Nārada, are to perform impure work. Though the disabilities of the slaves according to the Śṛṅgī law are very great, they are not without personal rights. (A slave is not entitled to any property according to Manu and is not to be a judicial witness except in the last resort. According to Nārada a legal act done by a slave is void except when done with the master's permission. On the other hand, the master, according to Manu, is to bear without resentment the offence of his slave who is his "shadow". Manu also mentions slaves along with parents, wife, and children with whom a householder should not quarrel. Again, according to Nārada, a debt contracted by a slave for the benefit of a householder is binding upon him. Finally both Yājñavalkya and Nārada lay down liberal rules for the emancipation of slaves. Thus we learn that a slave who saves his master's life when in peril is forthwith released from slavery and becomes entitled to a son's share. Again, persons captured and sold by a robber as well as those enslaved by forcible means are to be emancipated by law. Other clauses lay down

¹ SBE, XVII, 105-8.
specific acts by which different classes of slaves can win their freedom. Even those slaves who are born in the master's house, those who are received as gifts and those who are obtained by inheritance can be released at the master's pleasure. Only an apostate from asceticism and one self-sold are absolutely disqualified for release from servitude.\(^1\)

According to Megasthenes "all the Indians are free and not one of them is a slave." He amplifies it by stating that "the Indians do not even use aliens as slaves and much less a countryman of their own." It would be a remarkable feature, indeed, of Chandra-gupta's times, if it were true. But there are so many references to the system of slavery in the Smṛitis and other Indian literature that it is difficult to accept Megasthenes's statement as true. He probably applied to the whole of India what was true of a particular region, or was misled by the humane treatment generally meted out to the slaves.

As Rhys Davids justly remarks: "We hear nothing of such later (western) developments of slavery as rendered the Greek mines, the Roman latifundia or the plantations of Christian slave-owners, scenes of misery and oppression. For the most part the slaves (in India) were household servants, and not badly treated, and their numbers seem to have been insignificant."\(^2\) Such mild treatment, which offered a striking contrast to the system of slavery with which Megasthenes was familiar, probably led him to believe that there were no slaves in India.\(^3\)

VI. DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

In spite of inevitable differences in different localities, we may form a general idea of the dress and ornaments from the literature, sculptural representation and the description of the Greeks.) According to Nearcatus, the Indians used two garments of cotton, 'an undergarment which reaches below the knee half-way down to the ankles, and an upper garment which they throw partly over their shoulders and partly twist in folds round their head.'\(^3\) The nearest approximation to this would be the dhoti (or sāri) and chādar used by the people of Bengal, Orissa, Madras and other parts of India.\(^4\) The upper garment was generally not used inside the house, a part of the lower one being wrapped round the upper part or thrown over

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1. Yāj, II. 182-183; Nārada, V. 26-43; Manu, IV. 180, 185; VIII. 70, 415-17.
2. Buddhist India, p. 55.
the shoulders.) When Draupadī was surprised in her private apartment and dragged rudely to the assembly hall by the Kau-
ravas, she is described as ekavastra (wearing one garment only). Similarly, the servant class probably made shift with a single (lower) garment. Draupadī, disguised as a servant in the palace of king Virāṭa, wore only one garment. Ladies of the upper strata of society normally wore coloured garments, as widows are described as clad in white. The public or the formal dress of the higher classes included a turban or headgear consisting of a longish piece of cloth wrapped round the head in a number of ways according to local custom. Poor people probably made shift with the upper garment wrapped round the head like a turban. Kings, of course, wore crowns.

Ascetics and anchorites were dressed in garments made of kuśa grass or rushes. What the texture of the Valkala—the favourite dress of a hermit—was, is uncertain, though it is popularly supposed to be made of the barks of trees.

Although cotton was the material generally used, cloths made of silk, linen and wool were also in great demand, especially among the women and the rich. Kauṭilya refers to an extensive textile industry all over India, and the Vinaya Texts refer to a complete weaving outfit. The cloth was fastened at the waist by a girdle, and a variety of girdles are mentioned in the Vinaya Texts, such as those made of many strings plaited together, those made like the head of a water-snake, those with tambourines or beads on them, or those with ornaments hanging from them. The same texts refer to the variety of ways in which undergarments were arranged. All these are corroborated by the sculptural representations.

The difference between the male and female dresses was much less marked than at present. Both used head-dress and ornaments, though gradually the women gave up the former, and the men, the latter. The sculptures of the period, especially those at Bhārhat and Sānchī, give interesting specimens of dress and ornaments. On rare occasions we find women putting on the lower garments in sakachchha fashion like the males or Mahārāṣṭra women of today, i.e. by passing one end of it between the legs and tucking it up.

1. KAT. 93-4.
2. Chv. V. 28.2.
3. Chv. V. 29.2.
behind at the waist. This practice appears to have been confined to the north-west in ancient times.

The sculptured female figures exhibit two striking peculiarities. They do not wear a veil and, more often than not, the upper part of the body is bare, revealing in full the bosom and the navel. The first is generally accepted as an evidence that the Purdah system was not in vogue, though some literary references seem to indicate that aristocratic ladies did use a veil when appearing in public. But many scholars refuse to believe that women actually appeared in public without covering the upper part of their body, as it offends against decency and is in conflict with literary descriptions, and they attribute the sculptures to the artistic convention of the age. But it must be remembered that notions about decency and indecency are more or less conventions that differ from age to age. There is abundant evidence that nudity, either of men or of women, was not viewed in the same light in ancient times as in the present. We know from the Vinaya Texts that the Buddhist nuns, together with courtesans, took their bath in a river without any clothing. We are also told that the Buddhist monks “when naked saluted one another, and received salutes; did service to one another, and received services; gave to one another and accepted; ate both hard food and soft; tasted; and drank.” It is true that the Buddha forbade these practices. But the very fact that they were prevalent to the extent indicated above proves that nudity was not regarded in those days as indecent, as in modern times. The scantiness of female dress in ancient paintings and sculptures may, therefore, be as much due to convention of art as a reflection of the actual state of things. The realistic description of the female bosom and navel in Classical Sanskrit literature also supports this view. It may be noted in this connection that no upper garment is worn by the women in the island of Bali, which still retains the Hindu culture it received from India.

Foreign rulers like the Greeks and Scythians introduced new fashions of dress. The Kushāpa kings are represented as wearing trousers and big overcoat, and this was imitated by the Indians. Women, too, began to wear blouses, jackets and frocks in imitation of the Greeks and Scythians, but the fashion did not become a gene-

1. This point will be discussed, with references, in the next volume.
2. Altekar, op. cit. 338-44.
3. Mv. VIII. 15. 11.
THE AGE OF IMPERIAL UNITY

r al one. The complete outfit for sewing described in Vinaya Texts\textsuperscript{1} indicated that stitched clothes were coming into fashion, although there is no explicit reference to it either in the Sūtras or in the epics.

Megasthenes observes that “in spite of the general simplicity of style the Indians love finery and ornament. Their robes are worked in gold and ornamented with precious stones, and they wear also flowered garments made of the finest muslin.”\textsuperscript{2} The ornaments which decorated the bodies of both men and women were also costly and of various types and design. Every part of the body from head to foot had its appropriate ornaments made of gold, silver, pearls, gems and precious stones. It would be tedious to describe them in detail, and one may form a clear notion of them from the numerous sculptures and the actual specimens excavated from ancient sites. We may get an idea of the ornaments in common use, even by the men, from the fact, mentioned in Vinaya Texts,\textsuperscript{3} that at first even monks “used to wear ear-rings, ear-drops, strings of beads for the throat, girdles of beads, bangles, necklaces, bracelets and rings”. Nearchus says that ear-rings of ivory were only worn by very wealthy people. The only ornaments referred to as worn by women alone were waist-bands and anklets.

Nearchus tells us that Indians “wear shoes made of white leather, and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are variegated and made of great thickness to make the wearer seem so much the taller.”\textsuperscript{4} The variety of shoes is also referred to in the Vinaya Texts\textsuperscript{5} such as shoes with one, two, three or even more linings; shoes adorned with skins of lion, tiger, panther, antelope, otter, cat, squirrel and owl; boots pointed with horns of rams and goats, ornamented with scorpions' tails, sewn round with peacock feathers; boots, shoes and slippers of all hues such as blue, red, yellow, brown, black and orange. Sometimes the shoes were ornamented with gold, silver, pearls, beryls, crystal, copper, glass, tin, lead or bronze. Poorer people used wooden-shoes, shoes made of leaves of palmyra and date-palm, or of various kinds of grass. Shoes were also made of wool.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Chv. V. 11. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{2} McCrindle, op. cit. p. 70.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Chv. V. 2. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{4} McCrindle, op. cit., p. 220.
\item \textsuperscript{5} II. 14. ff.
\end{itemize}
SOCIAL CONDITION

We have elaborate references to toilette in the Vinaya Texts. Hair was besmeared with pomade or hair-oil of bees-wax, and then smoothed with a comb or a special instrument shaped like a snake's hood. Scents, perfumes, garlands and unguents were used, and faces were rubbed with ointment and painted. The body was also painted, and feet were rubbed with sandstone, gravel and seafoam. To keep long hair seems to have been the fashion. A Brāhmaṇa generally shaved his head, keeping a crest lock or two, while an anchorite kept matted hair. Women who had their husbands living parted their hair in the middle, the parting being coloured red with vermillion or other powder. Beards were either removed by razor (as in the case of a Brāhmaṇa) or allowed to grow long (as in the case of hermits). Sometimes they were kept on the chin like a goat's beard, or so cut that they had four corners. The beards were also dyed blue, red, purple or green according to individual taste. The hair on the belly was sometimes cut into figures, and some had whiskers. Nails were polished, or cut with nail-cutters, and tooth sticks were used.

Daily bathing was not a common practice in eastern India according to the Vinaya Texts, though special importance was attached to it in Avanti and the southern country. When bathing, people used to rub their bodies—thighs, arms, breast and back—against wooden pillars or walls. Chunam (lime) was also rubbed over the body by means of a wooden instrument in the shape of a hand or a string of beads. Special bathing pools or tanks are also referred to. They were floored or faced with brick, stone or wood, and had walls or steps of the same materials. To prevent water becoming stale, pipes were laid to drain it off. There were also arrangements for hot-bath rooms with chimney and fire-place, and roof covered with skins. The bathers put scented clay over their faces and took their bath seated on stools. There were cells to be used as cooling rooms after the steam bath.

1. According to Pātimokkha, Pāchittiya Dhamma V. 57, “Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall bathe at intervals of less than half a month, except on the proper occasions—that is a Pāchittiya”.
   (Proper occasions are 24 months of hot weather, sickness, journey, and when there has been wind and rain.)
3. Message was evidently very popular. Megasthenes says that the king was "rubbed with cylinders of wood" by 'four attendants' in the open court even when he was engaged in judicial work (McCrindle, op. cit., p. 72).
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VII. HOUSE AND FURNITURE

An account of the cities and big buildings has been given above.¹ The Vinaya Texts² give us an idea of the common dwelling houses, which were made of stone, brick or wood, and had roofing of five kinds—brick, stone, cement, straw and leaves. The walls and roof were plastered within and without. The sleeping rooms were white-washed, the floors were coloured black, and the walls red. They were decorated with paintings and engravings such as human figures, wreath-work and creeper work. Provision was made for windows with shutters and curtains, elaborate doors with key-holes, verandahs, covered terraces, inner verandahs and overhanging eaves, dwelling rooms, retiring-rooms, store rooms, closets, and wells with lids and covered by sheds with skin roofs. Hygienic arrangements were kept in view while constructing privies. The house had sometimes two or more storeys, and it was fashionable to have verandahs supported on pillars with capitals in the forms of heads of animals (like elephant).

The rooms were provided with ceiling cloth, movable screen, curtains that could be drawn aside, cupboards, and bone-hooks for hanging clothes. A long list of furniture is given in the Vinaya Texts. There was a large variety of chairs such as rectangular, cushioned, cane-bottomed, straw-bottomed, the one raised on a pedestal or with many legs, arm-chair and state chair, and sofas with or without arms. There were also different types of bedsteads with legs carved to represent animals' feet, and chairs of the same design. Some bedsteads had lofty supports with arrangements for rocking backwards and forwards, and the bed, comprising mattresses stuffed with cotton and pillows half the size of a man's body, was strewn over with flowers.) Bolsters stuffed with wool, cotton cloth, bark, grass or talipot leaves, and chairs and bedsteads covered with upholstered cushions to fit them were in use. (For poorer people there were mats made of grass and bedsteads made of laths of split bamboo.

For reclining their bodies people used lofty and large things such as large cushions; divans; coverlets with long fleece; counterpanes of many colours; woollen coverlets, white or marked with thick flowers; mattresses; cotton coverlets dyed with figures of

¹. See Ch. XX. A.
². The description that follows of the houses and furniture is based on Chullavagga. Sixth Khandhaka.
animals; rugs with long hair on one or both sides; carpets inwrought with gold or with silk; large woollen carpets with designs such as a nautch girl’s dance; couches covered with canopies or with crimson cushions at both ends. There were also rich elephant housings and horse-rugs or carriage-rugs. Sheep-skins, goat-skins, and deer-skins were used as coverlets, especially in Avanti and the southern country, and fine skins, such as those of lion, tiger, panther or antelope, were either used for reclining upon or cut into pieces and spread inside or outside the couches and chairs. We also hear of sun-shades, mosquito-curtains, filters for straining water, mosquito-fans, flower-stands, and fly-whisks (chāmara) made of tails of oxen and peacocks or of bark and grass.

Costly utensils were used such as bowls of various kinds made of beryl, crystal, gold, silver, copper, glass, tin, lead or bronze, and some of them were painted or set with jewels. Even circular supports of bowls were made of gold or silver.) As most of these utensils and articles of furniture are mentioned in the Vinaya Texts as being used by the monks till some of them were forbidden by the Buddha, we may presume that they were used by the middle class people.

VIII. FOOD AND DRINK

It appears from the epics that rice, barley and wheat were the chief foodgrains, rice being very popular. Rich people and the Kshatriyas ate rice mixed with flesh. An interesting verse in the Udyoga-parvan¹ says that the food of the rich consists of flesh, that of the middle class, of milk and its products, and that of the poor, of oil preparations.) Quite a large number of dainties, delicacies and sweetmeats were known. (Milk and its products formed part of the daily diet, and ghee was particularly valued as very substantial and nourishing.)

(The Vinaya Texts refer to many articles of food such as rice, beans, tila seeds, fresh honey, rice-milk, honey-lumps, congey, curries, salt, molasses, oil, pot-herbs, fruits, fish, meat and the five products of the cow, viz. milk, curds, ghee, buttermilk and butter)

In spite of the growing spirit of ahimśa (non-injury to animals) fostered by the Jains and Buddhists, and enforced by emperors like Aśoka, various kinds of fish and meat, not excluding beef, were extensively taken by the people. According to Kauṭilya the State

¹. Cr. Ed. 34. 37.

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maintained preserved forests for animals and birds and also a 
slaughter-house.

Among drinks in general use were grape-juice, honey, syrups 
made from various fruits (such as mango, jambu, plantain) and 
edible roots (water-lily) and the juice of fruits. Drinks were also 
made from various kinds of pot-herbs and flowers.

Various kinds of liquor were used, and Kauṭilya gives a detailed 
description of their manufacture, which was a State monopoly. The 
sale of liquor was regulated by the State, and Kauṭilya directs that 
it shall be sold to persons of well-known character only and in small 
quantities. But on festive occasions the people enjoyed to the full 
the unrestricted right of manufacture of liquor for four days. 
According to Manu the drinking of spirituous liquor is a mahāpātaka 
(mortal sin), meriting serious punishment, and one who sells it 
should be banished by the king. Megasthenes also says that the 
Indians do not drink wine except at sacrifices. But this seems to 
be an orthodox Brahmanical ideal which did not coincide with actual 
practice in life; for, even apart from the clear testimony of 
Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, there is enough evidence to show that the 
habit of drink was common, especially among Kshatriyas, the 
nobility and kings. Arjuna and Kṛishṇa are described as taking 
wine when exhausted, and the Yādavas were notorious addicts to 
wine. And yet there are passages in the Great Epic which, like 
Manu, condemn drinking and class it among the five most heinous 
sins. These contradictory passages can be explained only by sup-
posing that the teetotalling tendency gradually grew towards the 
close of the period under review, thanks mainly to the high moral 
ideals preached by the Brāhmaṇas, Buddhists and Jains. The 
Brāhmaṇas as a class seem to have been comparatively free from 
the evil.

The Vinaya Texts refer to the practice of taking food lying 
on decorated divans. According to Megasthenes, ‘a table, like a 
tripod, is set before each person. There is placed upon it a golden 
bowl, into which they first put rice boiled as one would boil barley, 
and then they add many dainties.’ He further observes that the 
Indians “eat always alone and have no fixed hours when meals are 
to be taken by all in common, but each one eats when he feels in-
clined”. This habit, strange to say, has persisted throughout the 
2,200 years that have elapsed since Megasthenes wrote, and he

1 IX. 225; 235-7.
rightly remarks that "the contrary custom would be better for the ends of social and civil life."\(^{1}\)

**IX. GENERAL LIFE**

On the whole, compared with the preceding period, social life has become richer in content and far more comprehensive in its outlook and range of activities.

In spite of pessimistic views on life in the religious literature, causing a strong tendency towards asceticism, common people had a liking for the enjoyment of the good things of life. The sculptures of the period show the vivacious side of life, full of bustle and activity and marked by a sense of humour. Literature also reflects this lighter side of life. Apart from singing, dancing, music and dramatic performances, entertainments were provided by buffoons, mimic players, rope-dancers, jugglers, and wandering bards or heralds (chāranas). Gardening and the art of making garlands by various combinations of flowers provided amusement to many. Various kinds of games, both indoor and outdoor, are mentioned. The former include dice, trapball, guessing other people's thoughts, etc. Among the latter may be noted hunting, chariot-races, archery matches, wrestling, boxing, shooting marbles with the fingers, and ploughing with mimic ploughs. Festive assemblies known as utsava, samāja and vihāra provided not only entertainment but also dainty dishes and intoxicating drinks, and the kings often arranged such celebrations for the amusement of the people. Apart from such assemblies, delicacies like meat were sometimes freely provided. According to the Mahābhārata, a king called Rantideva killed every day two thousand cattle and two thousand kine in order to dole out meat to the people. When Aśoka tells us in his R.E. I, that many hundreds of thousands of animals were every day slaughtered in his kitchen for curry) we can easily infer that a similar practice was followed by the Maurya Emperors. Gambling and drinking wine formed the besetting sins in the life of the people, and the evils of the former are clearly depicted in the Mahābhārata.

Aśoka refers in his edicts\(^{2}\) to some general features of life. Kings, we are told, for a long time past, used to go out on pleasure tours, in course of which there were the chase and other similar diversions. Aśoka also mentions\(^{3}\) that the people, especially women,

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1. McCrindle, op. cit. p. 70.
2. R.E. VIII.
3. R.E. IX.
performed various rites on occasions of sickness, marriage and birth of children. These no doubt refer to the various religious saṃskāras mentioned in the Sūtra literature and referred to before. Aśoka condemns them as useless and trivial, and recommends in their place, the practice of Dhamma, which was really a code of morality as defined above. But there is no doubt that even before the religious propaganda of Aśoka, the people were marked by a high sense of morality. Megasthenes observes: “Truth and virtue they hold alike in esteem. Hence they accord no special privileges to the old unless they possess superior wisdom.” The ideal of truthfulness permeates the whole literature of the period, and both the epics preserve many classical examples of unswerving adherence to truth, even at the cost of life.) It need not surprise us, therefore, when we are told that “they seldom go to law. They have no suits about pledges or deposits, nor do they require either seals or witnesses, but make their deposits and confide in each other.”

Fully in keeping with this high ideal are the humane laws of warfare referred to above.

The Greeks were struck by the fact “that Indians do not rear monuments to the dead, but consider the virtues which men have displayed in life and the songs in which their praises are sung sufficient to preserve their memory after death.” This is corroborated by the absence of sepulchral monuments of ancient times. Megasthenes has correctly described in the following passage the spiritual outlook of Indians, which was sufficiently prominent to strike even a casual foreign observer.

“Death is with them a very frequent subject of discourse. They regard this life as, so to speak, the time when the child within the womb becomes mature, and death as a birth into a real and happy life for the votaries of philosophy. On this account they undergo much discipline as a preparation for death. They consider nothing that befalls men to be either good or bad, to suppose otherwise being a dreamlike illusion.”

This indicates the real spirit which animated and sustained Indian civilization. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that

2. See pp. 82-83.
4. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 100.
the common man in ancient India was averse to worldly enjoyments and material welfare. The need to maintain a balance in life was fully recognised, and dharma, artha, and kāma (religion or spirituality, wealth and happiness) were regarded as the three ends in life to be simultaneously pursued without giving undue prominence to any of them. This principle is clearly enunciated in the Arthasastra of Kautilya and it is emphasised that any one of these ends, if pursued to excess to the detriment of the other two, “hurts not only the other two but also itself.” This threefold end in life, to which a fourth, moksha (emancipation), was added later, has been the ideal of life in India throughout ancient times, but, as often happens, in actual practice one or the other has sometimes gained prominence according to individual inclinations or special circumstances of the time. Kautilya, for example, insists that artha (wealth) was the chief of the three, as the other two, dharma (religion) and kāma (enjoyment), depend upon it for fulfilment. In religious texts, on the other hand, the main stress is laid upon dharma, to the exclusion of the other two. Nevertheless, the harmony of the three pursuits of life may be regarded as the ideal which formed the background of social life in ancient India.

CHAPTER XXII

EDUCATION

The Dharma-sūtras carry on the Vedic traditions and practices of education and codify them into a regular system. Education had its own rituals and ceremonies to emphasize its religious aim and character as an aid to self-fulfilment and the educating of personality. Education was treated as a matter of growth, a process of life, which was controlled in its totality. The very tenor of life was changed for the pupil who had to leave the home of his parents to live in a new home, the home of his spiritual parent, the guru or teacher.

1. PUPILS AND TEACHERS

The first educational ceremony was Vidyārmbha, to be performed by the pupil at the age of 5, by learning the alphabets and offering worship to the appropriate deities. According to Kauṭilya, the pupil, at Vidyārmbha, was also introduced to writing (lipi) and numbers or arithmetic (saṁkhyā).

Next followed the ceremony of Upanayana, marking the turning point in the pupil’s life. Manu describes it as spiritual birth, Brahma-janma, where the mother is Sāvitrī and father the Āchārya.¹

The essential features of this ceremony have been described above,² but the texts of the period add elaborate details about the life of strict discipline led by the pupil in his teacher’s house, as a Brahmachārī.

Normally, the pupil was admitted by the teacher without payment of any fee to him. According to Manu³ a student should not pay any fees to his teacher before he finishes his education. A teacher teaching for fees is condemned as an Upapātakin. Usanas⁴ brands him as a Vṛttika.

Admission to study depended solely upon the pupil’s fitness for it. Studious pupils worked night and day. Some who could not

1. II. 146, 148.
3. II. 245.
4. IV. 24.
get oil for their lamps would burn dried cow-dung and read in its light in an isolated corner. But there were also indifferent pupils who found study too irksome and difficult, and deserted; or could not stand the strict discipline of the teacher; or would be dismissed by the teacher for an offence; or would leave studentship prematurely for a life of ease and be branded as a Khaṭvārūḍha, i.e. as one who started sleeping on a cot when he should be sleeping on the ground.¹

Sometimes, a pupil would change teachers and schools too often and earn the uncomplimentary epithet of Tīrthakāka, i.e. fickle as a crow that does not stop long at a place of pilgrimage. Other similar terms of opprobrium applied to erring pupils are: (1) Kumārī-Dākshāḥ, those who entered as pupils of Dāksha for the sake of the girls living with him; (2) Bhikshā-Māṇava, a pupil entering upon study for appropriating the proceeds of begging; (3) Odana-Pāñinīyāḥ, those who seek the study of Pāñini for the advantage of getting free food like boiled rice; (4) Ghṛita-Rauḍhiyāḥ, the Rauḍhiyas seeking after ghee; and (5) Kambala-chārāyaṇīyāḥ, those hankering after blankets.²

A famous teacher is called Yaujanaśatika, i.e. one whom students would seek from a distance of hundreds of miles.³

Manu mentions two classes of teachers: (1) Upādhyāya who took to teaching as a profession for his livelihood and taught only a portion of the Veda or Vedāṅga,⁴ and (2) Ṛchārya who taught the Veda with its Kalpasūtras and Upanishads⁵ without charging fees. The pupil after completing his education was to give him such presents as he could afford—field, gold, cow, horse, umbrella, shoes, grain, vegetables or clothes.⁶ The paid teacher and the paying pupil were condemned as unworthy of invitation to an important social ceremony like Śrāddha.⁷ Besides the ordinary teachers, Manu mentions educational experts⁸ who were proficient in pedagogy.

The ancient educational system evolved its own appropriate methods of study. Kauṭilya enumerates the following steps of Vedic study: (1) Śuṣrūṣā (eagerness to listen to the words of the teacher

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¹ Patañjali on II. 4. 32, and III. 1. 26(2); I. 4. 26, 28; II. 1. 26.
² Patañjali on II. 1. 41, and I. 1. 73(6); Kāśikā on VI. 2. 69.
³ Patañjali on V. 1. 74(2).
⁴ II. 141.
⁵ II. 140.
⁶ III. 156.
⁷ IV. 102.

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as they fall from his lips), (2) śravaṇam (grasping by the ear the lessons of the teacher), (3) grahaṇam (apprehension of the teacher’s words), (4) dhāraṇam (retention), (5-6) utāṃśa (discussion), (7) vijñāna (full knowledge of the meaning conveyed by the teacher’s words or lessons), and (8) tattvābhivivesha (comprehension of the underlying truths of the teacher’s lessons). A stray verse puts the position in a nutshell thus: “The student learns a fourth from his āchārya, a fourth by his own intelligence by himself, a fourth from his fellow-pupils, and the remaining fourth in course of time by experience.”

2. ART OF WRITING

The art of writing was now fully developed. The oldest alphabet, known as Brāhmī, is employed in the majority of the records of Aśoka, and from it have been derived the various scripts used today all over India. The Aramaic script was introduced into the Punjāb by its Achaemenian conquerors. From it was derived the Kharoṣṭhī alphabet, written from right to left. It was confined to north-western India, and was thence carried to Central Asia, but it went out of use after the third or fourth century A.D.

The knowledge of writing might have been expected to introduce a great change in the system of education, but this does not appear to have been the case. There is abundant evidence to show that the teaching continued to be mainly oral, and the study of manuscripts was positively condemned. Certain passages in the Buddhist canonical literature indicate that, although the art of writing was in vogue, the sacred books were not written but committed to memory, even though the monks realized the danger that a portion of the canon might thus altogether be lost. Similar notions prevailed among the Brāhmaṇas and the followers of other religious sects. It is difficult to explain this attitude. It has been suggested that the art of “writing was introduced into India at a late period in the intellectual development of its people—so late that, before they knew of it, they had already brought to perfection another and a very excellent method (i.e. learning by heart) of handing down literary productions.”¹ In other words, being accustomed to preserve massive literature by stupendous feats of memory, they would not realize the use or necessity of writing it down. The

¹. Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, pp. 112-13.
advantage of the latter course is, however, so obvious that the explanation cannot be regarded as very satisfactory. Another argument advanced is that even when the Indians came to know of writing, they had not the necessary materials for writing lengthy records.

Both these assumptions are based on the view that the art of writing was introduced into India, from western Asia in about the ninth century B.C. But the correctness of this view, which was once generally held, can no longer be regarded as beyond dispute. Even if it were true, it would indeed be very strange that materials like birch bark, for writing lengthy records, were not thought of during the next three or four hundred years, or that although these were known, people could not realize the obvious utility of books even as a supplementary aid to oral teaching. In the case of the Brāhmaṇas, the growing desire to withhold the sacred mantras from the people and retain teaching as an exclusive privilege for themselves might act as an incentive to oral teaching to the exclusion of books. But the same motive could not possibly operate in the case of the heterodox sects like the Buddhists. When we remember the vast mass of literature, even in the fourth or fifth century B.C., and the extensive use of writing for administrative purposes in the time of Aśoka, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that books were much more extensively in use than is now commonly believed, or was admitted by priestly writers and monks. They emphasized, perhaps rightly, the rōle of the teacher in an educational system which sought not merely to impart knowledge to, but also to develop the personality of, the pupil, and hence insisted that the teacher, rather than the books, should be the main source of instruction.

3. SUBJECTS OF STUDY

It appears from the Manu-smṛiti that the subjects of study in those days comprised, besides the entire Vedic literature, Dharma-śāstras or Smṛitis;2 Itihāsa and Purāṇa;3 Vaikhānasa-sūtra for recluses;4 heretical Śāstras;5 Economics and allied subjects,6 Ānvik-shiki (Dialectics), and Daṇḍanīti or Politics.7 The last two, with the Vedic study (Trayī) and Vārtā (economics, etc.), are referred to as the four important subjects of study in the Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra.

2. II. 10; III. 232.
3. III. 232.
4. VI. 21.
5. XII. 95.
6. IX. 329 ff.
7. VII. 43.
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The education of the prince followed other lines. In addition to the four important subjects mentioned by Kauṭilya, he had to receive military training relating to the operation of the different elements of the army such as elephants, horses, chariots and weapons of war (praharaṇa). He had also to study history or Itihāsa which included (1) Purāṇa, (2) Itivṛtta (history), (3) Ākhyāyikā (tales), (4) Udāharaṇa (illustrative stories), (5) Dharmashastra and (6) Arthaśāstra.

The Buddhist text Milinda-pañha also gives a long list of the subjects of study for a Brāhmaṇa, which comprised the following: the four Vedas, Itihāsas, Purāṇas, lexicography, prosody, phonology, verses, grammar, etymology, astronomy, astrology, and the six Vedāngas; knowledge of auspicious marks (on the body); interpretation of omens, dreams, and signs; prognostications from comets, thunder, junction of planets, fall of meteors, earthquakes, conflagration and signs in the heaven and earth; study of the eclipses of the sun and moon, of arithmetic, of casuistry; interpretation of the omens to be drawn from dogs, deer and rats, and mixtures of liquids and the sounds and cries of birds. The Kshatriyas had to acquire knowledge of elephants, horses, chariots, bows, rapiers, the art of war, documents and currency, while the Vaiśyas and Śūdras had to learn husbandry, merchandising and the care of cattle. Elsewhere, king Milinda is said to have a knowledge of 19 arts and sciences, viz. Śrutī (Vedas) and Smṛti; Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeshika systems of philosophy; arithmetic; music; medicine; archery; Purāṇas; Itihāsa; astronomy; magic; causation; spells; the art of war; poetry; and currency.

The Mahābhārata gives some interesting information about education. It contains the singular injunction that persons of all the four castes should listen to discourses on Vedas or to Vedic recitations (śrāvayet chaturo varṇān). An interesting fact is that

1. “After investiture with the sacred thread, he shall study the triple Vedas, the science of Ānvikāśikā under teachers of acknowledged authority (śisṭa), the science of vārtā under government superintendents, and the science of dandaṇī under theoretical and practical politicians (vaktyprayoktybhyaḥ)” KAT. p. 11.
2. Mudda, which is translated in SBE (XXXV, 247) as “law of property”, probably means a knowledge of coins or currency.
4. SBE (XXXV, p. 6) has ‘four Vedas’. But as there is already a reference to śrutī the reading dhanur-veda in the Edition of R. D. Vadekar (p. 4) is to be preferred.
5. I. 9.
6. XII. 327, 49.
Brāhmaṇa teachers gave instruction not only in all academic subjects, including politics, but also in non-academic ones like archery, the science of war in general, and other arts and crafts. This was so probably because they were credited with occult knowledge of charms, spells and incantations, which turned, as though by a miracle, the ordinary arrow into a weapon of the most devastating type. Not only astrology and medicine but agriculture was also taught by the Brāhmaṇas. Among the subjects of study, in addition to the Vedāṅgaś, were the training of elephants and horses, the driving of a chariot, engineering, etc.

A glimpse of industrial education is given by Nārada who explains the rules relating to apprenticeship and admission to an industrial school. The young man must first secure the consent of his guardian before he is apprenticed to his master. He will then settle with him the period of apprenticeship. He is to live with his master, whose home is his workshop, and is to be treated and instructed by the master as his son. He is not to be exploited and employed on work not connected with his chosen craft. He cannot leave his master before the stipulated period of apprenticeship even if he has completed his training, the gains from which are to go to the master. An apprentice deserting a master, not lacking in character or as a teacher, deserves corporal punishment and confinement. At the end of his pupilage, the apprentice must reward his master as best as he can, or may accept service under terms settled. It was this efficient industrial training which gave ancient India the palm in handicrafts, feeding her rich export trade for centuries from Pliny to Tavernier. The Chatuḥśashṭi-Kalās, the traditional 64 arts and crafts in ancient India, were also the products of this industrial system and training.

We may conclude this section by a reference to the story of medical education given in Buddhist canonical texts. The story centres round the early education of Jivaka, who was the physician-in-ordinary to the Magadhan emperor Bimbisāra, and was also deputed by the emperor as physician-in-attendance on Buddha, as the best medical expert of the times. He was of obscure origin and the son of a courtesan of Rājagriha, a foundling thrown on a dust-heap from which he was rescued by Bimbisāra’s son, prince Abhaya, who brought him up till he repaired to Taxila to learn an art as a

1. V. 18-21.
source of livelihood without depending upon the uncertainties of royal patronage."

He studied medicine at Taxila under a "world-renowned physician" for the prescribed period of 7 years. But before he was given the licence to practise medicine, he had to undergo a sort of practical examination prescribed by his teacher, who directed: "Take this spade and seek round about Takkasilā a yojana on every side, and whatever plant you see which is not medicinal, bring it to me." After a good deal of botanical investigation, Jivaka could not discover any plant that was devoid of medicinal properties. The teacher was satisfied and gave him a little money with leave to go home and practise as a physician. His money sufficed for his journey up to Sāketa where he was forced to earn. His first earning came from his successful treatment of a rich Sesṭhi's wife who had a chronic disease of the head which no physician could cure. Jivaka had one pasata (handful) of ghee boiled up with various drugs and had it administered to the patient through the nose. She was at once cured and gave Jivaka the princely fee of 16,000 Kahāpanas, together with a present of a coach, horses and 2 servants.¹ These earnings Jivaka tendered to his patron, prince Abhaya, as a return for bringing him up.

Next, he treated emperor Bimbisāra himself and cured him of a fistula. His third important case and call came from Banaras, where a merchant's son had a strangulation of the intestines, caused by a gymnastic feat. It was a surgical case. He "cut through the skin of the belly, drew the twisted intestines out and showed them to his wife;" then "disentangling the twisted intestines, he put them back into their right position, stitched the skin together, and anointed the wound with a salve." Very soon the patient was cured, and his father paid the surgeon a fee of 16,000 Kahāpanas. King Pradyota of Ujjayinī was his next important patient. He was suffering from jaundice, and asked Bimbisāra for the loan of the services of his physician. Jivaka cured this royal patient by medicated ghee and was rewarded with costly gifts of textiles. Once he cured the Buddha of constipation by making him smell three medicated lotuses, bathe in warm water, and live on liquid food for some days.

¹. Chu. V. 27. 4. Many other similar stories, with minute details of treatment, are given in the first section of the Chivaravastu of the Vinaya Texts of the Mūla-sarvāstivādas (Gilgit Manuscripts III. 2, pp. 1-52).
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The texts speak of medicines prepared from roots, leaves, fruits, gums (e.g. Hingu) and salts, from which were also made astringent decoctions; chunam as a remedy against itches and boils; dried cow-dung and some kinds of clay against skin-diseases; eye-ointments; medicated oils; and the like. They also testify to progress in surgery. We read of a lancet operation to cut off proud flesh; of compresses, bandages and oils for the treatment of wounds; of a fistula cured by lancing and treated by ointment; and of the use of a clyster.¹

4. ĀŚRAMAS OR HERMITAGES

The Mahābhārata tells of numerous hermitages where pupils from distant and different parts of the country gathered for instruction around far-famed teachers. A full-fledged Āśrama is described as consisting of several departments which are enumerated as follows:—

(1) Agni-sthāna, the common hall for prayer and worship of Agni; (2) Brahma-sthāna, college of divinity, the department of Vedic study; (3) Vishvū-sthāna, taken to mean the department for the study of Rāja-nīti, Artha-nīti and Vārttā; (4) Mahendra-sthāna, the Military School; (5) Vivasvata-sthāna, department of astronomy; (6) Soma-sthāna, department of botany; (7) Garuḍa-sthāna, dealing with transport and conveyances; and (8) Kārttikeya-sthāna, for study of military organization, methods for forming patrols, battalions, and armies.

A most famous Āśrama or hermitage of the time was Naimisha, located in a forest named after it. Its principal was Śaunaka, called a Kulapati as teacher of 10,000 pupils. He performed a twelve years’ sacrifice which attracted a vast concourse of learned men, who carried on constant discussions of religious, philosophical and scientific topics.

Another such hermitage was that of Rishi Kanva, on the Mālinī, a tributary of the Sarayu, a centre around which grew up numerous other hermitages representing a wide variety of subjects and academic interests. In that assemblage or federation of hermitages were to be found specialists in different branches of knowledge, including physical sciences and arts, such as the art of constructing sacrificial

¹ Mahāvagga, VI. 22.
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altars of different dimensions and shapes (on the basis of a knowledge of solid geometry); knowledge of the properties of matter (Dravya-guṇa), of physical processes and their results; and zoologists who had special knowledge of monkeys and birds.

Ayodhyā figures as a noted seat of learning in the Rāmāyaṇa. The Rāmāyaṇa tells us of its unique institution called Mekhalinām Mahā-saṅgha, a federation of the Saṅghas or Brotherhoods of Brahmacārīs, who approached the king with their grievances and views on public questions. Students are also mentioned as residents of Āśramas and Āvasathas, which were like the licensed lodging-houses recognized by modern universities. The Āśramas were situated outside the city, whose citizens flocked thither to hear the learned discourses and discussions held there chiefly by the Lokāyatas, notorious for their zeal for debate and casuistry. There were also Puranic schools of Sūtas and Māgadhas at Ayodhyā, which were crowded by the bards and chroniclers of the country, of whom the chief in those days was Ārya Chitraratha. Ayodhyā had also its ladies’ clubs called Vadhū-Saṅghas, dramatic societies called Nāṭaka-Saṅghas, which organized festivities called Utsavas and Samājas at the suburban parks, with the main programme consisting of acting and dancing. The Rāmāyaṇa also refers to educational institutions conducted by private citizens in the city which offered lectures and lessons attended by various bodies of students. These citizens included the Sūtas and Māgadhas, king’s officers, artists and craftsmen of all kinds, and merchants who had travelled widely.

The biggest Āśrama of the times was that of Bharadvāja at Prayāga, which accommodated prince Bharata and all his royal retinue in its stables for elephants and horses (chatuh-sālās), mansions (harmyas), palaces (prāsādas) and royal guest-house (rājavesma), provided with beds, seats, coverlets, carpets, stores of food and vehicles.

5. BUDDHIST VIHĀRA

Interesting information about the educational system is also furnished by typical Buddhist canonical texts as well as the Jātakas. Buddhist texts knew of two classes of teachers, Upādhyāya and Āchārya, but rank the former higher, unlike the Brahmanical texts. Buddhaghosha, commenting on Mahāvagga, V. 4, 2, states that the Upādhyāya was to be of 10 years’ and Āchārya of 6 years’ standing as a monk. The former took charge of the pupil’s study
of sacred texts and doctrines, and the latter of his life and conduct, like the modern tutor, and was aptly called Karmāchārya.

The duties of teacher and pupil follow the same lines in Buddhist and Brahmanical systems. The main difference between them lies in the character of the educational institution. In the Brahmanical system, it was the Guru-kula or hermitage, based upon individual relationship between the teacher and the pupil. This individual treatment of the pupil limited the number of pupils whom a teacher could admit and instruct by himself. In the Buddhist system, education was imparted in the Vihāra or monastery, giving scope to a collective life and spirit of brotherhood and democracy among the many resident monks, who came under a common discipline and instruction. The Buddhist Vihāra was built up as a self-sufficient colony, growing its own food by agriculture and dairy-farming in its own grounds, which came into its possession as gifts from its supporters. Thus there was need of more external organisation and machinery in the Buddhist system. The Brahmanical Āśrama or hermitage, on the other hand, was a home that hardly called for any organization to deal with the problems created by large numbers and a congregational life. It has, however, to be noted that even the collective monastic life in a Buddhist Vihāra gave scope for an individual life of study and meditation, provided for in the cell assigned to a monk, and also in the particular group to which he was assigned, under the personal direction of his tutor or upādhyāya. What, however, was absent from the monastery was the domestic touch of the Brahmanical system of education.

Monks were graded for study in the monastery. Their instruction comprised "giving of recitation, holding examination, making exhortation, and explaining Dhamma."1 There was also specialisation in different branches of Buddhist canon. The different classes of monks were lodged in separate hostels lest their mixing up should cause disturbance to their different studies.2

6. EDUCATION IN THE JĀTAKAS

The Jātakas are full of stories giving interesting glimpses of ancient Indian education. A story full of significant details is given as follows in Jātaka No. 252:

"Once on a time, Brahmadatta, king of Banaras, had a son named prince Brahmadatta. Now kings of former times, though there

might be a famous teacher living in their own city, often used to send their sons to foreign countries afar off to complete their education, so that by this means they might learn to quell their pride and highmindedness, and endure heat or cold, and be made acquainted with the ways of the world. So did this king. Calling his boy, then sixteen years old, he gave him a pair of one-soled sandals, a sun-shade of leaves and a thousand pieces of money, with these words: 'My son, get you to Takkasilā, and study there.'

“The boy obeyed. He bade his parents farewell, and in due course arrived at Takkasilā. There he enquired for the teacher’s dwelling, and reached it after the teacher had finished his lecture and was pacing up and down at his front door. When the lad set eyes upon the teacher, he loosed his shoes, closed his sunshade, and with a respectful greeting stood still where he was. The teacher saw that he was weary, and welcomed the new-comer. The lad ate and rested a little. Then he returned to the teacher and stood respectfully by him. After a few preliminary inquiries about his home and parentage the teacher asked: ‘Have you brought the teacher’s fee? or do you wish to attend on me in return for teaching you?’ ‘I have brought a fee with me,’ said the prince, and laid at the teacher’s feet his purse of a thousand pieces. The resident pupils attend on their teacher by day and at night they learn of him; but they who bring a fee are treated like eldest sons in his house, and thus they learn. And this teacher, like the rest, gave schooling to the prince every light and auspicious day.’ Thus the young prince was taught.”

This and other Jātaka stories show that Taxila was then a prominent centre of learning and education, to which flocked scholars from distant parts of India. The richer students paid in advance the entire fee for the course of education which, in the case of medical education, extended even up to 7 years. The amount of the fee was fixed at 1,000 pieces. The majority of the students were, however, poor and rendered service to their teachers in lieu of fees. They “attended on their teacher by day” and received instruction from him at night. Sometimes the expenses of a poor school were paid by a philanthropic public. Thus there is a case of a school of 500 Brāhmaṇa boys at Banaras whose charitable “folks used to give day by day commons of food to poor lads, and had them taught free” by their teacher who was of “world-wide fame.”

2. I. 239.
neighbourhood to meals,¹ and such invitations, coming by turns, would work like a permanent provision of food for the schools. There were also available State scholarships for supporting students for study at a distant place like Taxila.² Sometimes, students might accompany princes as their companions to receive education at their expense. The sons of the royal chaplains at the court of Banaras³ and of Rājagriha⁴ thus accompanied their respective princes to Taxila.

There were day-scholars along with resident pupils in the schools of those days. Mention has been made of prince Juṅha of Banaras keeping house for himself as a student of Taxila. Some of these day-scholars might be married and regular householders. The Jātakas mention cases of some whose studies were hindered by their wives, one of whom always feigned sickness when her husband was about to go to school.⁵

The Jātakas tell of the standard number (500) for a school and of the different castes and ranks of students making up that number—Brāhmaṇa and Kshatriya, princes from distant kingdoms, sons of magnates or magnificos, some of whom were Brāhmaṇas, sons of merchants and tailors and even fishermen; and also of a teacher who admitted to his instruction all castes equally—"fishermen and the like."⁶ Chaṇḍālas, however, were not admitted to study.⁷

Studies were chosen freely and not according to caste. We read of Brāhmaṇa students learning divination at Taxila, but settling down as hunters in the forests of Banaras,⁸ studying magic charms,⁹ archery,¹⁰ science,¹¹ the three Vedas and 18 accomplishments or crafts.¹² Princes at school had to share a common, simple, democratic life of equality with their poorer comrades. The food of the boys at school was very simple. Rice-gruel was served for breakfast by the maid of the teacher's house,¹³ while at invitations they were given a meal of sugar-cane, molasses, curd and milk.¹⁴

¹. I. 317; III. 171.
₂. V. 127.
₃. V. 263.
₄. III. 238 and V. 247.
₅. I. 463; I. 300–302.
₆. III. 171.
₇. See above, p. 538.
₈. II. 200.
₉. II. 99.
₁⁰. III. 219.
₁¹. III. 18.
₁². II. 87; III. 115, 122.
₁³. I. 318.
₁⁴. I. 448.
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There were both public schools and community schools. We read of schools confined only to Brāhmaṇa students\(^1\) or to Brāhmaṇa and Kshatriya pupils\(^2\) or only to princes, “to the number of 101.”\(^3\)

The Head Master of a school was helped in his work by a staff of assistant masters who might be also his pupils.\(^4\)

A school kept a cock to serve as a clock or alarm-bell to rouse students early from their bed.\(^5\) It had also tittiri birds trained to recite Vedic *mantras* and help the boys to remember them. Thus birds were tamed as aids to study!\(^6\)

Taxila, as a centre of education, attracted students from far and near, even scholars from distant Greece if we are to believe in the story of Apollonius of Tyana. According to the Jātakas, the students came to Taxila to complete their education in the three Vedas on the one hand, and in the 18 Sippas or crafts on the other. Taxila thus offered the highest education in humanities and the sciences, arts and crafts. It had special schools of law, medicine and military science. It also offered courses of study in elephant-lore,\(^7\) hunting,\(^8\) animals’ cries,\(^9\) archery\(^10\) and the like. There is an interesting story of a Brāhmaṇa boy named Jotipāla, a native of Banaras, whose king sent him at his expense to Taxila for education in archery. When he finished his education and was returning home, his teacher presented him with his own sword, a bow and arrow, a coat of mail and a diamond, and asked him to take his place as the head of a school of 500 pupils, to be trained up by him, as he was himself old and about to retire.\(^11\)

The Jātakas tell of Banaras as another centre of learning. It was to some extent built up by the graduates of Taxila who set up there as teachers.\(^12\) Banaras also produced its own teachers of world-wide fame with their schools of 500.\(^13\) The son of a Brāhmaṇa magnate worth 80 crores was educated at Banaras,\(^14\) which was evidently good enough for his education. Banaras was noted for its school of music under an expert who was “the chief of his kind in all India.”\(^15\)

GENERAL REFERENCES

2. R. K. Mookerji—Ancient Indian Education.

1. I. 317, 412, etc.
2. III. 158.
3. V. 457.
4. II. 100; V. 457.
5. I. 436.
7. *Hatthi-Sutta*, II. 47.
8. II. 200.
9. III. 415.
10. III. 219, etc.
11. V. 127.
12. Nos. 130, 185, etc.
14. IV. 237.
15. No. 243.
CHAPTER XXIII

ECONOMIC CONDITION

The period under review witnessed an all-round development of agriculture, industry and trade. This was due partly to private enterprise, and partly to State-control and State-management. This latter aspect is delineated in Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra and forms a special feature of the economic system of the period.

1. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the mainstay of a large section of the people. Rural economy had its centre in the grāma or village, a collection of grihas (houses) and kulas (families) numbering from 30 to 1,000. It was enclosed by a wall or stockade provided with gates. Beyond this enclosure lay the arable land of the village, the grāma-kshetra, which was protected by fences and field-watchmen against pests like birds and beasts. This land was distributed among individual holdings separated by ditches dug for co-operative irrigation. Usually these holdings were small enough to be cultivated by their owners and families, with the help of hired labour, if necessary. The landless labourer, hiring himself out for work, ranked below the slave. The sorry spectacle of sturdy peasants leaving at home their own empty barns and toiling as hirelings on the estates of the royal capitalist is deplored as a symptom of social decadence.

Large holdings were not unknown. We read of estates of 1,000 karīsas (probably acres) and more, farmed by Brāhmaṇas, and of one large enough to require for its cultivation as many as 500 ploughs and a host of hired labourers to ply these ploughs with their oxen.

Beyond the arable land of the village lay its pastures, which were common for the grazing of its cattle, and also those belonging to the State, under a common herder called Gopālaka, whose duty was to pen the flocks at night or to return them to their owners by counting heads. Besides pastures, villages had their suburban groves like the Veluvana of king Bimbisāra at Rājgrīha, Añjana-vana of Sāketa, or the Jetavana of Śrāvasti. Kauṭilya’s scheme of village-planning had also a place for these sylvan retreats for purposes of religious study and practices.
Kauṭilya gives a very graphic and realistic view of the village of those days. The land of the village was made up of the following parts: (1) *Kṛṣṭa* (cultivated), (2) *Akrīṣṭa* (uncultivated wastes or fallow land), (3) *Sthala* (high and dry ground), (4) *Kedara* (fields sown with crops), (5) *Ārāma* (grove), (6) *Shāṇḍa* (plantations of fruits like plantains), (7) *Mūla-vāpa* (fields for growing roots like ginger, turmeric and the like), (8) *Vāṇa* (sugarcane plantations), (9) *Vana* (forest for supply of firewood and other needs), (10) *Vīṭa* (grazing ground for the village cattle), and (11) *Pathi* (area covered by roads).

Besides these, the village proper as a human settlement must be marked by the following features or fixtures: (1) *Vāstu* (area covered by houses), (2) *Chaitya* (sacred trees), (3) *Devgriha* (temples), (4) *Setubandha* (embankments), (5) *Śmaśāna* (cremation grounds), (6) *Sattra* (alms-house), (7) *Prapā* (storage of drinking water), (8) *Pūnyasthāna* (sacred spots), and (9) halls for public amusements such as music, dancing, theatrical performances (*Prakshā*) and public dinners (*Pravahaṇa*).

Among the crops, vegetables and fruits grown in those days are mentioned the following: Rice of different varieties; *Kodrava*, coarse grain; *Tila*, sesameum; *Priyangu*, pepper and saffron; Pulses, like *Mudga*, *Māsha*, and *Masūra*; *Kuluttha*, *Yava*, *Godhuma* (wheat), *Kalāya*, *Atasi* (linseed); *Sarshapa* (mustard); vegetables called *Śaka* and *Mūla*; fruits such as plantains, pumpkins, gourds and grapes (*Mrīdvīka*); and sugarcane (*Ikshu*).

Agriculture depended upon/cattle comprising cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, asses, camels, pigs and dogs. The State maintained cattle-, stud-, and dairy-farms, and employed on their staffs the following workers: (1) *Gopālaka*, the cowherd, (2) *Pinḍaraka* in charge of the buffaloes, (3) *Dohaka* or milker, and (4) the *Manthaka* or churner, assisted by a body of hunters (*Lubdhakas*) and keepers of hunting hounds (*Śvagāninḥ*) to keep the pastures clear of wild animals and beasts of prey. The cattle-farms reared calves, steers, draught oxen, stud-bulls and buffaloes. Wild cattle were also tamed. There was also the Government poultry farm.

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1. KA, Book II. Ch. 35; III. 10.
2. KA, Bk. II, Ch. 24.
3. V. 2.
4. II. 34; 29.
5. V. 2.
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The importance of cattle-breeding, which occasionally meant also cattle-lifting, is stressed in the *Mahābhārata*. It is possible, however, that in very early times, before the extensive pursuit of agriculture and the development of trade, the masses of people as such were employed as ranchmen who tended cattle. In the epic they have become partly cattle-raisers and partly farmers, and the occupation of ranchmen seems to have fallen into the hands of the aborigines or barbarians who could not understand Aryan speech. In the *Mahābhārata* Duryodhana went to see his herd of cattle in Dvaitavana and marked them by signs, and then held sports, heard the singing, and watched the dancing of the cowherds. In the *Virāṭa-parvan* the king of the Matsya country goes out into the country to enjoy a royal picnic on the occasion of 'cattle branding', when the ears of the cattle are marked for the year. Here, however, the barbarians are shown merely as cow-boys who are in charge of the royal cattle. It is on this occasion that the Kurus lift the cattle of the Matsyas. Such cattle-lifting was fairly common. The *Mahābhārata* tells us that these cow-boys and herdsmen were paid in kind (in the shape of cows or their milk) for tending the herd, according to the number of cattle tended by each. The breeding and tending of cattle almost developed into a science in the epic days. Sahadeva, who takes service under king Virāṭa as a *tantipāla*, describes how, under his fostering care, cows multiply in a short time and are free from disease.

The village administration employed a paid staff of workers, *Grāma-bhrītakas*, among whom are included (1) *Kuṭṭaka* (carpenter), (2) *Karmāra* or *Ayaskāra* (blacksmith), (3) potter, (4) the inevitable *Nāpita* (barber), (5) washerman, (6) *Medaka* (digger of earth), (7) *Rajjuvartaka* (rope-maker), (8) *Anikastha* (trainer of elephants), and (9) *Aśvadamaka* (trainer of horses). The purely administrative staff included (1) the *Adhyaksha* (superintendent), (2) *Saṃkhyaśaka* (accountant), (3) *Gopa* and (4) *Sthānika*, together with (5) the medical officer (*Chikitsaka*), and (6) postman or courier (*Jāṅghakārika*).

The village had its own police force recruited from the following classes of people: (1) *Vāgurikas* (Trappers), (2) *Šabarās* (Bhilis),

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3. XII. 60, 25.
5. II. 1; V. 2.
6. V. 8.
7. II. 1.
(3) Pulindaś (Kiratās), (4) Chaṇḍālas and (5) Araṇyacharasya (foresters).¹

The State levied on agriculture a variety of impositions such as (1) tithe on raw produce, (2) forced labour, (3) special levy on produce for State granaries against emergencies like war or famine, (4) occasional contributions to the king, like ‘milk-money’ e.g. at the birth of his heir. Hindu law fixes the State’s share of agricultural produce at one-sixth down to one-twelfth. Āsoka reduced this share (bhāga) to one-eighth at the village Lumbini, as the birthplace of the Buddha.

Kauṭiliya describes the taxes on agriculture as comprising (1) Bhāga, State’s share of produce; (2) Bāli, an undefined cess over and above Bhāga; (3) Kara, a tax on property levied periodically; (4) Vīvita, a levy on pastures; (5) Rajju, the cess payable for survey and settlement; and (6) Chorarajju, police cess or chowkidari tax.²

The village ended in the uncleared jungles from which were derived its supply of firewood and litter. They were the haunts of wild animals and brigands preying on the caravan traffic passing through them.

Kauṭiliya’s scheme contemplates different kinds of forests to be cultivated for their economic uses. There would be (1) a reserved forest for royal hunt, which was rendered safe by stocking it with wild animals like tiger, bison and elephant, with their teeth and claws cut off; (2) ordinary forests as the abode of all animals; (3) plantations of forests producing timber, bamboo or bark; creepers like cane; fibres like hemp; roping material like Muñja; leaves for writing, such as palm-leaf; flowers as material for dyeing, such as Kśīruka, Kusumbha, or Kuṅkuma; medicinal herbs, roots, and flowers. The State also took charge of the forests of the country producing these materials. There were model Government agricultural farms, where were collected the seeds of various crops to be grown. Government also maintained flower-, fruit-, and vegetable-gardens, and raised commerce crops like cotton (Kārpāsa) and jute (Kṣauma). Forests were also grown for the breeding of elephants so necessary for economic and military purposes, under a special conservator of forests called Nāgavanādhyaśkṣa.³

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¹ II. 1.
² Ghoshal, Revenue System, pp. 34, 36, 41-2, 53.
³ II. 2.
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The forests also yielded other valuable animal products such as hides, skins, sinews, bones, teeth, horns, hoofs, and tails of such creatures as leopard, tiger, lion, elephant, buffalo, yak, crocodile, tortoise, snake and birds.

Out of the forest products were also manufactured articles like plough, pestle, mortar, implements, weapons and carts, by qualified artisans in the forest factories (Dravyavanakarmāntāḥ).

2. TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Remarkable progress in trade and industry is noticeable during this period. A large number of arts, crafts and occupations are not only referred to in literature and epigraphic records, but also represented in the sculptures. The Jātakas are always referring to the standard number of 18 important handicrafts such as those of wood-workers, the smiths, leatherers, painters, workers in stone, ivory-working, weaving, confectionery, jewellery, work in precious stones, pottery, making of bow and arrow, and the like. The mining industry had grown very important, and Megasthenes states that gold, silver, copper and iron were extracted in large quantities, and articles of utility and ornament as well as implements and accoutrements of war were made of them. The carpenter was much in evidence for constructing carts of different kinds, called yāna, ratha and śakaṭa; furniture; the woodwork of buildings; and sea-going ships.

The lower crafts (hīnā-sippas) were, as already indicated, those of hunters and trappers, fishermen, butchers and tanners, whose work was tainted by destruction of life; snake-charmers, dancers, musicians, rush-weavers and the like—the usual occupations of aboriginal folks.

There was localisation of industries. We come across mention of villages of potters, woodwrights, or ironsmiths producing articles like razors, axes, ploughshares, goads, and needles; of trappers supplying game, skins, ivory and the like. The same localisation was seen in towns where different handicrafts were settled along their own streets or in their own areas. Thus we have mention of ivory-workers’ street (vīthi), the dyers’ street, the vessas’ street or the weavers’ locality (ṭhāna).

Markets for perishable foods were located outside the towns at their gates. We read of a market for fish at a gate of Śrāvastī, of greengroceries at the four gates of Uttara-Paṇḍhala, and of venison...
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at the cross-roads outside Banaras; of four nigamas or market-towns located at the four suburbs of the city of Mithilā and called Yava-majjhako, an example of which is figured on a sculpture at Bhārhut.

With the towns were located workshops and bazaars. We read of Āpāṇa or shop, stocking for sale goods like carriages or arrows, and of Antarāpāṇa or stores. We read of bazaars for sale of textiles, groceries, oils, grain, greengroceries, perfumes, flowers, works of gold and jewellery and of taverns for sale of liquor. Trade in strong drinks, poisons, flesh, daggers and slaves was disapproved for people who care for morals. (It appears from the Jātaka stories that the prices were left to be settled by haggling, competition and custom. The State did not control prices except for its own purchases. It had its own valuer who had a difficult task in buying at the cheapest rates and declining bribes offered by tradesmen to secure higher rates, while he might still fail to please the king who would grant him a niggardly bonus for all his pains!)¹

✓ Barter prevailed along with money economy. A vagrant buys a meal from a forester with his gold pin. A dog is bought for a cloak or coin. But money used to indicate prices and measure the values of “fees, pensions, fines, loans, hoarded treasure, and income.”

Buddhist texts use the term Kahāpana (= Kārshāpana) for a coin. They know of its varieties called Nikkha and Suvanna of gold, and bronze and copper pieces called Kāṁsa, Pāda, Māsaka and Kākanikā. Their values varied with time and place. For instance, we find it stated in the Vinaya² that “at that time (of Bimbisāra or Ajātaśatru), at Rājagriha, 5 Māsakas were equivalent to 1 Pāda.”

¹ Loans were given on security of gold like a ring or debtor’s personal guarantee. We read of one’s wife or children being pledged or sold for debt, of IOU’s or schedules of debt.

✓ Loans carried interest called Vṛiddhi. Money-lending is approved as an honest calling along with tillage, harvesting and trade.

Wealth or treasure was stored up in a variety of ways; under the ground or river bank in brazen jars, or as deposit with friends, with its particulars recorded on gold or copper plates. In palaces, it was hoarded in a niche above the doorway. Money was lent for

2. III. 45.

600
interest on promissory notes to be renewed every year.¹ (Debtors were protected by law which disallowed (1) compound interest, (2) interest above customary rate, (3) interest equal to the amount of the principal, (4) personal service in lieu of interest, and (5) exorbitant interest agreed to under coercion. The usual rate of interest was 15% per annum. Higher rates were given for unsecured loans.²)

Both trade and industry were highly organised. The term Śreṇī, which frequently occurs in the literature and inscriptions of this period, is defined as a corporation of people belonging to the same or different castes but following the same trade or industry. It thus corresponds to the guilds of mediaeval Europe. The Jātakas refer to eighteen guilds which, though a conventional number, show the extensive character of the organisation. There are scattered references in literary texts to such organizations of various branches of trade and industry which, together, considerably exceed the number 18. It would appear that almost every important art or craft in a locality formed a guild-organisation. The craftsmen, who were mostly hereditary and settled in a well-defined region, organised themselves under a Jetṭhaka or Pamukha, an officer who was something like an alderman or a president. The guild possessed both executive and judicial authority,³ and had for this purpose a body of executive officers who were held in high respect in court and were entitled to arbitrate between its members.

According to Buddhist canonical texts, the sanction of the guild was necessary for the ordination of the wife of any of its members. Many passages in Kauṭilya’s Arthashastra indicate the great wealth and importance of the guilds, for which separate quarters are reserved in an ideal planning of a town. The guilds worked as banks and received permanent deposits, undertaking to devote the annual interest for specific charities. Some of the guilds also maintained a regular army, and it is included among the various classes of troops which the king might call upon to serve under him. Different guilds also federated under a common President, called Bhaṇḍāgārika, to check their internal disunion.

There were also merchant-guilds under their chiefs called Setṭhis. One such chief was Anāthapiṇḍika, who was the Mahā-

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¹ Manu-smṛiti, IX. 333, X. 115, VIII, 154-55.
² Ibid., VIII. 140-153. This will be more fully discussed in the next volume.
³ See above, p. 313.
setṭhi, the president of a commercial federation, with numerous Anuseṭṭhis under him.\(^1\)

Caravan traffic, with the special dangers and difficulties to which it was exposed, called for a similar co-operative organisation. Different merchants, with their carts loaded with their goods and their men, made up a company under a common captain called Satthavāha, who gave them directions as to halts, watering, routes, fording and danger-spots. There was also another common officer called Thala-niyyāmaka or land-pilot who conducted the caravans safely against the dangers and difficulties of travel from “drought, famine, wild beasts, robbers, and demons”.

The texts also tell of partnerships which were permanent, temporary or occasional. We read of traders of Banaras combining in work and play; of concerted action in freights between dealers; of merchants chartering a common vessel.

\(\checkmark\) Trade was both foreign and inland, sea-borne and river-borne, export and import. We read of prince Mahājanaka sailing from Champā to Suvarṇabhūmi; of a whole village of defaulting woodwrights escaping at night in a ship down the Gaṅgā from Banaras out to the sea; of passengers safely brought by ships from the sea by river up to Banaras; of traders coasting round India from Bharukachchha on the west to Suvarṇabhūmi in the east, and touching on the way at a port in Ceylon; of a newly arrived ship laden with cargo which was bought up at the landing place by a hundred waiting and competing merchants; and of ships large enough to carry 500 and 700 passengers. The eastern sea-borne trade was extended as far as China, and led to an extensive colonization, as will be described in Chapter XXV.

The history of Indian trade with the West will be dealt with in the next chapter. As will be noted there, the earlier centuries of the Christian era witnessed the growth of a brisk foreign trade between India and the West, with the Roman Empire as its chief customer. There was a great demand in the West for Indian manufactories and articles of luxury, such as precious stones and pearls, scents, spices and perfumes, silks and muslin. Roman dames, decked in seven folds of Indian muslin, paraded the streets and became such a menace to the city’s morals that the Senate intervened and laid an embargo upon the import of that fine stuff from India.

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1. For guilds cf. CLAI, Ch. I. The Smṛti rules on the subject will be discussed in the next volume.
ECONOMIC CONDITION

According to Pliny, India in those early centuries was annually draining the Roman Empire of its gold valued at fifty million sesterces and established a favourable trade balance in the foreign markets. Traces of this profitable sea-trade are left in hoards of Roman coins found at several places close to the south Indian coast on which also grew up several port towns. Kāveripattanam, the capital of the Chola Kingdom at the mouth of the Kāveri, was frequented by Yavana (Ionian) merchants, as stated in Tamil works.

One of these Yavana merchants has given a very interesting account of the inland and foreign trade of India in his book called the "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea". The name of the author is unknown, but he was an Egyptian Greek and a merchant in active trade who personally made the voyage to India in the second half of the first century A.D. He has given a detailed account of his voyage noting the names of the harbours and the articles of import and export in connection with each of them. The first harbour of importance was Barygaza, a Greek corruption of ancient Bhīrukachchha, the modern Broach, at the mouth of the Narmadā river. Merchandise from Ujjayinī and other remote places in the north, as far as Kāshmir and the Hindu Kush mountains, were brought here for export to foreign countries. Beyond Barygaza were many inland market-towns such as Pratishṭhāna (Paithān)2 and Tagars (Ter), and many harbours such as Sopārā and Kalyāṇa on the Bombay coast which are still well known. Further south were 'Naura and Tyndis', the first markets of Damirica, and then Muziris and Nelcynda; all these were on the Malabar coast, between Cannanore and Cochin.3 The last two are Greek renderings of Muchiripattanam and Nilakaṇṭha, mentioned in literature and inscriptions of south India. Muziris, we are told, "abounds in ships sent there with cargoes from Arabia and by the Greeks."

Passing round Cape Comorin, the Greek merchant came across many harbours on the eastern coast, of which two alone can be located with some certainty, viz. Masalia near Masulipatam, and Gangé at the mouth of the Gaṅgā. Indians loaded ships with merchandise from these harbours and sent them to Arabian and African harbours. A colony of Indians also settled in the island of Socotra for purposes of trade.

1. Edited by Schoff, with notes and identification of places named in the text.
2. See above, pp. 192, 201.
3. See Map.
THE AGE OF IMPERIAL UNITY

The chief articles of export from India were spices, perfumes, medicinal herbs, pigments, pearls, precious stones like diamond, sapphire, turquoise and lapis lazuli, iron, steel, copper, sandalwood, animal skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn, muslin, indigo, ivory, porcelain and tortoise-shell. The principal imports were cloth, linens, perfumes, medicinal herbs, glass vessels, silver, gold, tin, lead, pigments, precious stones and coral.)

The development of trade and industry is reflected in the general economic condition of the people. We have abundant references to very rich merchants—millionaires of those days—both in literature and inscriptions. One of them Anāthapiṇḍika, is said to have purchased the Jetavana park for Buddha by covering the whole surface of it with gold coins.¹ Another defrayed the entire cost of construction of the great Chaitya cave at Kārlē. Many others made costly gifts to different religious sects. The wealth of the middle classes appears clearly from their dress, ornaments, houses and furniture described above.² There is no reference to extreme poverty or paupers as a class. On the whole people lived happily in peace and prosperity.

³According to Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra there was considerable State-control in both trade and industry. The State had a monopoly of industries which depended upon risky, costly and pioneering enterprise. Mines were nationalised as the main source of the State's revenue. There were mines of gold, silver, diamond, gems, precious stones, copper, lead (śīsa), tin (trapu), iron (tīkṣha or ayas), and bitumen (śīlājatu). The State explored the ocean mines to obtain their precious products like Muktā (pearl), Šukti (mother of pearl), Saṅkha (conch-shell) and Pravāla (coral). The State also worked the oil-fields (yielding rasa like mercury). It also engaged in extracting minerals from ores. It had a monopoly in the manufacture of salt for which it granted licences to private lessees of salt-fields. It had its own cotton, oil, and sugar factories and controlled the manufacture of wines and liquors and their sale. The armament industry as well as the building of boats and ships was a government monopoly. Coining was a monopoly of government whose officers under the Mint Master called Lakshanādhyaṇkṣha received from the public bullion to be struck into coins on payment of seigniorage charges.)

1. This scene is illustrated in a Bhārhat sculpture.
2. See pp. 571 ff.
3. The statements that follow are based on Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, Book II.
ECONOMIC CONDITION

Prisons had factories worked by penal labour. The State spinning house turned out yarns of cotton, silk, wool and jute, and manufactured clothing of all kinds, mail-armour (varma), ropes, blankets (āstaraṇa) and curtains (prāvaraṇa). It employed helpless and purdah women who were given orders through its women-staff for spinning yarn.

✓ The State controlled trade and prices. Goods were not to be sold where they were produced, at field or factory, but only at the appointed market where the dealer had to declare their particulars as to quantity, quality and price, which were examined and registered in the official books. A trader had to get a licence, and a foreign trader, a passport in addition. The Superintendent of Commerce fixed the wholesale prices of goods as they were entered in the customs house, and the retail prices with a margin of profit. Smuggling or adulteration of goods was severely punished. Speculation and cornering to influence prices were not allowed. Strikes of workmen to raise wages were declared illegal. The State protected the public, customers and consumers against unauthorised prices and fraudulent transactions and had to employ for the purpose an army of spies and market-inspectors.

The State also controlled weights and measures. The official standard was fixed a little lower than the public so as to yield some revenue amounting to a vyāji of 5 per cent.

✓ Trade was taxed all along its way by export and import duties, octroi and excise. Its progress through the country was punctuated by halts, enforced for payment of taxes at different stages. The foreign merchants were mulcted of their profits on the frontier by transit duties (vartāṇi) and tolls (śulka), and by octroi at the gates of cities, which were carefully guarded by officers in charge of the customs houses, provided even with a place for detention of merchants found guilty of evading the law.

But if trade was thus taxed, it had its compensation in the security granted to it. It was guarded all along its way. Losses in transit were made good by government through its agents concerned; the village head-man was held liable for the loss suffered in the village; beyond the village, the Vivitādhyaksha, beyond his jurisdiction, the general rural police, the chora-rajjuka, and, farther on, was the Simā-svāmi, the warden of the marches, similarly liable.

Trade had to be protected in those days against gangs of professional dacoits at large called chora-gaṇas, the turbulent Mlechchha
tribes such as the Kirātas and the wild forest-folks (Āṭavikas), who were all out to prey upon trade and for plunder.

3. TRADE-ROUTES AND TRANSPORT

Inland trade was carried on by carts and caravans, as we have seen. Its principal routes are indicated by the old Pāli texts. The caravan of the merchant-prince Anāthapiṇḍika, going south-east from Śrāvasti to Rājagriha, passed along the foot of the hills up to Kuśinārā, between which and its end at Rājagriha there lay 12 halts including one at Vaiśāli, with only a single crossing of a river—Gaṅgā at Patna—as will appear from the itinerary of the Buddha. Another route led from Śrāvasti south-west to Paithān with six intermediate halts and frequent crossings of rivers. A third route led westward to Sind, the home of horses and asses, and to Sauvīra and its ports, with its capital called Roruva or Roruka.

We read of caravans going overland towards east and west and across deserts, requiring days to cross (the deserts of Rājputāna), steering in the coolness of nights by the stars, under their guide.

Lastly, there was the old Grand Trunk Road leading from Rājagriha through Banaras, Sāketa and Śrāvasti towards Taxila and the frontiers, linking India with central and western Asia.

As regards trade-routes of later times, there is the interesting evidence of Megasthenes testifying to the Royal Road leading from the North-West Frontier up to Pāṭaliputra with a length of 10,000 stades (= about 1,156 miles). Apart from these arterial routes, the whole country was connected by a network of roads, some of which at any rate had milestones to indicate distances. Amenities were provided for travellers in the shape of shady trees, rest-houses and wells on the roadside. The establishment of the Maurya Empire brought the different parts into closer contact, and the same language was understood all over the great subcontinent. According to Kauṭilya, ‘Passes’ were necessary for crossing the boundary, where toll, carriage-cess and transit duties were collected. Permission was also necessary to ford or cross rivers, “lest traitors may cross them (and escape).”

As means of conveyance we hear of litter, sedan chair, horse-carriage, and carts drawn by two cows with a bull between them or two bulls with a cow between them. The very rich rode on

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1. Strabo, XV. 1, 11.
elephants, and the animals used by the ordinary people were camels, horses and asses.

According to Nearchus,¹ the conveyance which ranked next in honour to elephants, used by the king and the wealthy, was the chariot and four; the camel ranked third, while to be drawn by a single horse was considered no distinction at all. The ass was used by the common people for riding. Ships and boats, both large and small, were used for navigation, and rivers were crossed by either boats or rafts of wood or basket work. The State maintained boats for hire and took steps to destroy pirate ships.)

4. COINAGE²

One of the most remarkable features of the period is the introduction of a regular coinage in business transactions. The old system of barter had not altogether passed away,) as noted above,³ (but gradually coins came into use and became the chief currency.)

Herodotus tells us that the Achaemenian emperors received 360 talents in gold dust as annual tribute from their Indian province. This shows that even in the sixth century B.C. the dust or ingots of gold and other metals, calculated by weight, served the purpose of the higher currency. It is not long, however, before we find the transition from this stage to that of the coin proper, viz. a piece of metal of recognized weight and fineness guaranteed by the stamp of authority, for we have extant specimens of Indian coins—ingots of silver marked with three dots or bent bars of silver with some symbols—which probably go back to the sixth century B.C., if not earlier still. They were replaced by “rectangular or circular flat pieces cut from a hammered sheet of metal and clipped to the proper weight.” From the fact that one or more devices or symbols were marked on these coins by punches, they are called punch-marked coins. Some cast coins with devices are, however, also known. Many thousands of punch-marked coins have come to light in different parts of India.

The most ancient coinage of India was based on the system of weight as given in Manu.⁴ Its unit was the rati or gunja-berry, weighing approximately 1.83 grains or .118 grammes. The standard gold coin was the suvarṇa of 80 ratis of which no actual specimens

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¹ McCrindle, Megasthenes, p. 222.
² Raper, Indian Coins; C. J. Brown, The Coins of India.
³ See p. 600.
⁴ VIII. 152 ff.
are known, but numerous specimens of silver purāṇa or dharaṇa of 32 ratis and of the copper Kārshāpaṇa of 80 ratis, as well as their various multiples and sub-divisions, have been discovered all over India. These coins were issued by rulers, merchants, and corporations who stamped on them a symbol of their authority guaranteeing the correct weight and purity of the metal.\(^1\) There is a large variety of these signs or symbols, more than three hundred in number, and sometimes several of them are found on one or both sides of the coins.

\(^{\checkmark}\) The Indian system of coinage was influenced by the foreigners who established their rule in India. The most important of these were the Bactrian Greeks who issued a fine series of coins with the name and portrait of the ruler engraved on them. Some of these portraits and other symbols—mostly figures of deities—show a standard of artistic excellence which has never been approached in Indian mints.\(^{\checkmark}\) The Graeco-Bactrian coins and the large influx of Roman coins profoundly influenced those of the Śakas, Parthians, and Kushānas, and through them, the coins of the later Indian rulers which became gradually more and more abundant. Not only the form, character and the standard weight of the Indian coins were changed, but even foreign names like dīnāra (denarius) and dramma (drachma) were applied to them. The fashion of issuing a circular coinage bearing the superscription of the ruler in whose name they were issued was derived from the West though, except in the case of the Guptas, it never seems to have taken root. Hence/although we do not possess any coins bearing the name of the Nanda and Maurya Emperors, far less powerful kings, even local rulers and small tribal states, of later periods, issued coins with their names. We presume that only the punch-marked coins, with symbols and devices but no royal names, served as the currency up to the end of the Mauryan period. They were probably in use even in later times./\(^{\checkmark}\) It is not unlikely that along with them cowrie-shells also served as currency for smaller transactions. They must have been used as currency from very early times and we can trace their use down to the eighteenth century A.D.

5. INFLUENCE OF CANON LAW UPON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

\(^{\checkmark}\) In conclusion some reference should be made to the effect of the canonical view of life on the economic condition of the age. The

\(^1\) See Ch. XXIV.
ECONOMIC CONDITION

Śrīti rules relating to the occupations of castes have an important bearing upon the problems of production. The Śrīti law in general looked upon agriculture as well as industry and trade with high disfavour. The extreme view on this point is illustrated by the epithets pramṛita (‘what causes many deaths’) and satyānṛita (‘mixture of truth and falsehood’) applied by Manu to agriculture and trade respectively.) It is also reflected in Brāhaspati’s description of wealth acquired by agriculture, trade and crafts as occupying an intermediate grade between wealth earned by Vedic learning, valour, ascetic practices and so forth and that obtained by dice, gambling, robbery and the like. With this may be compared Manu’s rule which included the practice of handicrafts, pecuniary transactions, trading in cows, horses and carriages as well as agriculture among the causes leading to the destruction of families.\(^1\) (The general attitude of the Śrītis is reflected in the fact that while allowing Brāhmaṇas to live in times of distress by a Vaiśya’s occupation, they expressly prohibit him from following various specified branches of industry and trade.\(^2\) According to the general Śrīti law, again, the worker in many branches of trade and industry was liable to serious social, religious and even legal disabilities.\(^3\) The list of such forbidden or despised occupations comprises agriculture, pasturage and various kinds of industry and trade.) It is characteristic of Manu’s attitude that he declares trade to be the best of occupations open to a Vaiśya, while he condemns agriculture as involving injury to the earth and the beings living therein.\(^4\) (The attitude of the Buddhist and Jain canonical law was hardly less unfavourable to economic progress than that of the Śrītis. By the fundamental rules of Buddhist monastic discipline, comprised in the prātimoksha, monks were forbidden to cultivate land. The Jain canonical law forbade laymen to live by agriculture and agricultural operations as

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3. Manu, VIII. 102 (Brāhmaṇas who tend cattle or are traders or mechanics or usurers to be treated as law-court like Śūdras); XI. 70 (traders unworthy to receive gifts); IV. 84 (gifts not to be received from oil-manufacturers); IV. 210, 214–16, 218–20 (food given by carpenter, usurer, tailor, blacksmith, goldsmith, basket-maker, leather-cutter, washerman, dyer, dealer in weapons and artisans in general not to be eaten by a śāṅaka). For similar lists of despised occupations, cf. Manu, III. 152f, XI. 64; Yāj, I. 161–165, III. 234, 240; Brī, p. 373 vv. 4f
well as a large number of trades and industries.\textsuperscript{1} Above all it must be remembered that unlike the canonical law of the Brähmanas, that of the Buddhists and the Jains habitually exalted the houseless state of life above that of the householder.\textsuperscript{2}

Although, as noted above, these rules were often violated in practice, their general tendency is sufficiently obvious. The Brahmanical as well as Buddhist and Jain sacred law, by placing agriculture as well as a number of basic industries and trades under a ban, could not but retard the application of capital and enterprise to their development. Again, the Smritis, by confining the productive occupations to the Vaiśyas, could not but restrict the free movement of labour and capital. On the other hand it must be admitted that apart from the reference to ethnic groups following particular occupations, the Smritis do not support the restriction of separate crafts and trades to different sub-castes. On the contrary, we find in Manu and his successors a growing recognition of the Śūdra's right to productive occupation.\textsuperscript{3}

GENERAL REFERENCES

*Kautiliya Arthasastra.*

\textsuperscript{1} SBE. III. 33 (rule in prātimoksha); Uvāsagadasāño I, 51, expanded in Haribhadra's *Yogaśāstra* III. 98 f. (fifteen ways of earning livelihood forbidden to a layman include those concerned with making and selling charcoal and plants, making, selling or driving carts, hoeing and ploughing fields, digging wells, draining lakes, rivers and tanks for preparation of agricultural land, crushing by machinery, trafficking in ivory, lac, juice and so forth).

\textsuperscript{2} Gaut, III. 3; Baudh, II. 6. 21 f; Vas, VIII, 14-17; Manu, III. 77-78, VI. 89-90 (house-holder's life is highest, according to Gaut. and Baudh. the only āśrama).

\textsuperscript{3} Śūdras unable to live by personal service to practise handicrafts (Manu, X. 99-100), and in addition, trade (Yāj, I. 120). Śūdras normally to live by practising as artisans, rearing cattle and carrying on trade (Mārk, Pur, XXVIII. 7-8). Occupations of Śūdras are agriculture, pasturage, carrying loads, trade, painting, dancing, singing and playing musical instruments (Devala quoted by Viṭ. on Yāj, I. 120).
CHAPTER XXIV

INDIA AND THE WESTERN WORLD

I. INTERCOURSE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE WESTERN COUNTRIES

1. The Pre-Achaemenid Period

The remarkable discoveries at Mohenjo-daro in Sind have unmistakably shown that there was intercourse between this region and western Asia in the third millennium before Christ. As has been noted above, Mohenjo-daro was probably a great port carrying on trade by sea with Ur and Kish, and perhaps also with Egypt. It has also been indicated that there was intercourse by land between the Sindhu Valley and western and central Asia.¹

Whether the intercourse between India and the West continued unbroken since the epoch of the Sindhu Valley civilization down to the historical period for which we have positive evidence, it is difficult to say. But evidences, both philological and archaeological, exist to prove such connection at a later period. Indeed, on the strength of these evidences it was generally held, even before the discovery of Mohenjo-daro, that there were trade relations between India and the western world from times immemorial. It is not necessary to discuss such evidences at length, but they may be briefly stated.²

According to the Jewish chronicles, during the reign of Solomon (c. 800 B.C.) a navy equipped by Hiram, king of Tyre, made a triennial voyage to the East, bringing back with it "gold and silver, ivory, apes, peacocks and great plenty of Almug trees and precious stones." The port at which they shipped these goods is named Ophir. Many scholars have proposed to locate this port in India and looked for its equivalent in such place-names as Abhira or Suppâra. For ‘Ophir’ also appears as Sophara in the Septuagint,

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1. Cf. Vol. I, Ch. IX.
2. The evidences are not always very definite or convincing and naturally there are wide differences of opinion among the scholars. For a good summary, Cf. Rawlinson, Intercourse between India and the Western World, pp. 10 ff; Kennedy in JRAS, 1898, pp. 250 ff. Kennedy seeks to prove that the sea-trade between India and the West flourished from the seventh century B.C. but did not exist earlier. He has discussed in detail the various evidences on which such an early trade was presumed by older writers.
and Sophir is a term applied in Coptic to southern India. It is, of course, also possible to recall other well-known Indian names such as Sauvira, which corresponds to the name Sophara. But such phonetic resemblance cannot be regarded as conclusive evidence of identity, and some scholars are inclined to locate the famous port on the Arabian coast. But apart from this location, it has been urged that the names of most of the articles of commerce are derived from Indian originals. "Thus 'ivory' is in the Hebrew text shen habbin, 'elephant's teeth', a literal translation of the Sanskrit ibha-danta. The 'almug' is in Sanskrit and Tamil valgu, and the Greek santalon (sandal) is obviously derived from Sanskrit chandana. The word used for 'ape' is not the ordinary Hebrew one, but koph, most probably the Sanskrit kapi. 'Peacocks' are thuki-im, the Tamil tokei." The use of these Indian names for merchandise raises a strong presumption in favour of their Indian origin. Similarly, the word Sindhu, found in the library of Assurbanipal, is used in the sense of Indian cotton, and the Hebrew karpas is obviously derived from the Sanskrit karpasa. It is possible to add to the list of such loan-words.

On the Indian side, we have allusions to sea-voyages even in the Rigveda, but these are vague and uncertain. Of greater importance are the references in Buddhist literature of distant sea-voyages, in which sailors going far into the sea made use of shore-sighting birds. One Jātaka makes a particular reference to a trading-voyage to the kingdom of Bāveru, and scholars have recognised it as the Indian form of Babylon. This story undoubtedly preserves an interesting reminiscence of Indian trade with Babylon, but as the date of its composition is not known with certainty, we can hardly use it as evidence for commerce with Babylon in the very early ages.

As regards archaeological evidence, reference may be made to the figures of apes, Indian elephants and Bactrian camels on the obelisk of Shalmaneser III (860 B.C.). Next in point of time is the presence of logs of Indian teak found in the Temple of the Moon at Mugheir (the Ur of the Chaldees) and in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, both belonging to the sixth century B.C. On the basis of these evidences we may certainly push back the beginning of inter-

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2. JRAS, 1899, p. 432.
course between India and western Asia to a date at least as early as the ninth century B.C.

The most important archaeological evidence is furnished by the Boghaz Kōi inscriptions of the fourteenth century B.C. These records contain the names of deities, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra and the heavenly twins, the Nāsatyas,—names well known in Vedic mythology. Numerals and other words which appear to be Aryan in origin have also been identified. It is noticeable that the words do not exhibit the changes which distinguish Iranian from Indian forms. The words, therefore, must date back to a period when the Aryan-speaking people were not yet distinguished as Iranians and Indians. If we accept this view, we find here remarkable evidence of very close contact between India and western Asia before the fourteenth century B.C.

But we must admit that, beyond indicating in a very general way the existence of trade relations, and to some extent cultural contacts, between India and the Western countries, the available evidence does not throw much light on the precise nature and extent of international relationship. It is possible, however, to give some indication of the trade-routes through which merchandise passed between India and the West.

From remote antiquity India had trade relations with western countries both by land and sea. The overland route ran through the Khyber Pass and across the Hindu Kush to Balkh, to which converged all the principal highways from Central Asia and China on the east and the Mediterranean and Black Sea ports on the west. One of the western routes went down the Oxus across the Caspian, and then along the Kur and Phasis to the Black Sea ports. The other passed through (or near) Herāt, the northern border of the Karmanian desert, and the Caspian Gates to Antioch by way of Ctesiphon and Hecatompylos. Reference is also made to two other routes, via Kandahār, one joining the above-mentioned route at Herāt and the other proceeding through Persepolis and Susa.

Sea-going vessels generally kept close to the coast and made the long voyage along the shores of India, Baluchistān, Persia and

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1. JRAS, 1909, pp. 1094–1109; CAH. II. 13.
2. These have been described in Vol. I, p. 92.
3. W. W. Tarn, Hellenistic Civilisation, p. 211. The Caspian Sea and the Aral were joined by one or more salt water connections (ibid. 210).
4. These routes are described both by Pliny and Strabo. (McCrimble, Ancient India, pp. 98, 99, 100, 110).
Arabia, through the Red Sea, to its head near Suez. From this point merchandise was carried by land to Egypt on the west and to famous ports like Tyre and Sidon on the north. The same ship or set of traders, however, did not always go all the way from the beginning to the end of these routes, for the goods often changed hands at important towns and harbours. Sometimes the ships from India made the coastal voyage only up to the head of the Persian Gulf, and then proceeded along the Euphrates until they touched the overland route as will be noted below.

Relations between India and the western world, before the Achaemenid rule in Persia, were mainly commercial. No political relationship is known, stories like the invasion of India by Semiramis being hardly credible. Some amount of cultural influence is a natural effect of commercial intercourse, but this seems to have been very meagre. Names of Indian articles found a place in the languages of the West, as already noted above. Some common folktales current in India and the West might have been the result of such intercourse. But the Babylonian origin of the story of the flood in Satapatha Brāhmaṇa or the influence of Chaldaean astronomy and Babylonian weights and measures upon India is more problematic. The theory that India owes its alphabet to Semitic sources has also considerably lost its importance after the discovery of the picture-writing in Mohenjo-daro. On the whole, while it is unreasonable to deny the possibility or even great probability of such reciprocal influence, it would be unwise to accept superficial resemblance and partial analogy as evidence of such influence.

2. The Achaemenid Period

The rise of the Achaemenids in Persia definitely broke the barriers that shut off India, at least politically, from the rest of the world. By a series of conquests within a quarter of a century (549-525 B.C.) they created a vast empire that embraced nearly the whole of Irān, Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia and the ancient kingdom of Egypt. It was not long before the Persian suzerainty was extended to the Sindhu valley and probably some territory to the east of that river. ¹

The common subjection to the great empire must have brought India into closer contact with the western world. A Greek mercenary, Scylax, was sent by Darius to explore the Sindhu, and an

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¹ Cf. Ch. III, Section I; also IHQ, XXV. 153.
Indian contingent formed part of the Persian army which led the memorable expedition against Greece. These are the earliest positive evidences we possess of the close contact between Indians and the Greeks to any considerable extent. It is reasonable to infer that in spite of the failure of that expedition India and Greece came directly into each other's view, and this intimacy was not altogether lost in subsequent times. This is partly borne out by the account of India left by Herodotus (born in 484 B.C.), the first reliable Greek account of India that has so far come down to us. Another Greek, Ctesias, wrote an account of India, but though he lived for twenty years (418-398 B.C.) as royal physician in the Persian court and had thus ample opportunity of gathering information about India, the portions of his book, which have survived in quotations and abridgments of later writers, are full of marvellous stories and contain little of historical value. An Indian philosopher is said to have visited Socrates some time before 400 B.C.1

3. India and Greece

The next important stage in the contact between India and the West was inaugurated by the invasion of Alexander the Great. The large number of Greeks and Indians who formed the retinue of Alexander must have given a unique opportunity to both for a proper understanding of one another, and even the short-lived Greek rule in India must have contributed to the same end. Even when the Indian dominions were lost by Alexander's successors, India had a close touch with the western world through the Seleucid kingdom which reached its border.

The first three Mauryan Emperors had intimate connection with the Greek kingdoms of the west. Even if we leave aside the story of Chandragupta's marriage with a daughter of Seleucus, which is at best very doubtful, we have other evidences to prove that India and the western world came to a much closer relation than before. In the first place we know that first Megasthenes and then Daïmacus lived in the Mauryan court as ambassadors of the Seleucid king, and Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, sent an envoy named Dionysius to the same court. All three wrote valuable accounts of India, though they are now mostly lost; and it is highly probable that there were other Greek envoys. That the Mauryan kings also sent similar ambassadors admits of little doubt. The anecdote concerning Bindusâra that he had requested Antiochus Soter, successor

1. IAL. X. 58.
of Seleucus, to send him some figs and sweet wine and also a Sophist, may not be regarded as credible, but even such a story presupposes cordial relations between the two courts. But the best evidence of this is furnished by the thirteenth Rock Edict of Aśoka in which five Greek rulers are specifically named, and it is claimed that on account of the activities of Aśoka's missionaries his dhamma or the Law of Piety was followed in their dominions. The names of these rulers—Antiochus (of Syria), Antigonus Gonatas (of Macedonia), Alexander (of Epirus or Corinth), Ptolemy (of Egypt) and Magas (of Cyrene)—show that India had at this time intimate intercourse with the western world. The fact, stated by Megasthenes, that there was a special department in the city of Pāṭaliputra (and probably in other big cities) to look after foreigners indicates an influx of them into India about this time. Diodorus also refers to the admiration of a king of Palibothra (probably a Mauryan king) for the Greeks.

4. India and Egypt

Some interesting evidence is available regarding the growing intimacy between India and Egypt. Athenaeus tells us that in the processions of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) were to be seen Indian women, Indian hunting dogs and Indian cows, among other strange sights; also Indian spices carried on camels. The same authority tells us that Ptolemy Philopator's yacht had a saloon lined with Indian stone.¹

It is difficult to judge of Aśoka's claim that his dhamma was followed by the peoples of the kingdoms mentioned by him. Greece knew nothing about Buddhism previous to the rise of Alexandria in the Christian era. Buddha is first mentioned by Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-218). Centuries later Alberuni observed that 'in former times, Khorāsān, Persia, Irāq, Mosul and the country up to the frontier of Syria was Buddhistic'.² That Indian culture spread to these regions during this period can hardly be doubted, but its extent cannot be estimated till more positive evidence is available.

The foundation of the kingdom of Parthia shut off India from any direct political contact with the Greek world of the West. Antiochus the Great of Syria, who made a final but unsuccessful effort to re-assert his authority over the eastern provinces about

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1. Rawlinson, op. cit. 93-4.
2. Sachau, Alberuni's India, p. 21.
206 B.C., was the last Greek ruler of the West to maintain any
direct contact with India. The Parthian, and its successor-state the
Sassanid, empire served for more than eight hundred years as a
buffer-state between India on the one hand, and the kingdoms of
the West, including the mighty Roman empire, on the other.¹

Several other circumstances, such as the inroads of the Scythians
and the Yueh-chis into Bactria, and the growing anarchy in Syria
considerably curtailed the facilities of the land-route and naturally
increased the popularity and importance of the sea-route between
India and the western world.

The all-sea route was not, however, much in vogue in the earlier
days. The more important route, followed in the third century B.C.,
was by sea to the Persian Gulf and then up the Tigris to Seleucia,
where it joined the overland route from India and other eastern
countries. From Seleucia the old road, east of the Tigris, crossed
the river at Jeizireh or Libba, and proceeded to Nisibis and Edessa,
whence one road led to Damascus and Tyre, and the other, crossing
the Euphrates at Zeugma, which superseded Thapsacus, led to
Antioch. There was also a new Seleucid road from Seleucia, up
the Euphrates, to Antioch. From Antioch a great through route
ran by Tarsus and Apamea in Phrygia to the sea at Ephesus.²

As this land route ran through the territory of the Seleucids,
the Ptolemies of Egypt were naturally eager to develop the all-sea
route to India, particularly after they had lost possession of Syria
and the supremacy in the Aegean, at the beginning of the second
century B.C.

Egypt, unlike other parts of the Hellenistic world, was directly
accessible by sea, and the maritime intercourse between India and
Egypt was facilitated by two important acts of Alexander, viz. the
destruction of Tyre and the foundation of Alexandria, the famous
port on the Mediterranean.

At first Egyptian ports were not much favoured by Indian
mariners owing to the serious difficulties of the journey through
trackless desert, between the Nile and the Red Sea. The merchants
preferred the alternative route through Petra, to be described later.

¹ It is difficult to say how far the establishment of the Parthian and the Sassanid
kingdoms affected the trade between India and the Western countries. Cun-
ingham held the view ‘that the strong Sassanian government from A.D. 230
to 450 formed a very effectual barrier to intercourse between Rome and N.-W.
India’ (JASB. LVIII. p. 149).
² Tarn, op. cit. 211-12.
THE AGE OF IMPERIAL UNITY

The famous town of Petra was the converging ground of trade routes from all parts of Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and the Levantine ports. From these last, Indian goods travelled to Egypt by land, and to other western countries by sea.¹

Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) built a port at Berenice on the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea and connected it with the trading section of Coptos, on the Nile, by a desert-road, 258 miles long, furnished with convenient bases. Goods were carried along this road to Coptos, and then floated downstream to Alexandria. The desert road was furnished with watering places and the journey from Berenice to Coptos took about eleven or twelve days. In 274 B.C. Philadelphus built a new port at Myos Hormos. It was 180 miles north of Berenice and the journey to Coptos took about a week. Being also a much safer harbour than Berenice, it soon cast the latter into shade and became the most important centre for Indian trade.²

It is probable that in the early days a large part of the Indian trade with Egypt was indirect. Merchantmen, before the first century A.D., kept close to the shore and dared not sail direct from the mouth of the Red Sea straight across the ocean to the Indian coast. Consequently Indian and western merchants met half way, probably at Muza or Aden, two ports at the mouth of the Red Sea, and transhipped one another's goods. Most likely, the Arabs were the principal intermediaries of this trade. Agatharcides (second century B.C.), speaking of the great riches of Arabia Felix (i.e. Aden), says that they were partly due to the Indian traders who came in great numbers from Potana (Patala), founded by Alexander on the Sindhu.³ The same information is conveyed in the following passage of the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea which refers to Arabia Eudaemôn or Aden:—"It was called Eudaemôn, because in the early days of the city when the voyage was not yet made from India to Egypt, and when they did not dare to sail from Egypt to the ports across this ocean, but all came together at this place, it received the cargoes from both countries, just as Alexandria now receives the things brought both from abroad and from Egypt. But not long before our own time Charibael destroyed the place."⁴

2. Ibid, 6, 101, Rawlinson, op. cit. 91.
3. Rawlinson, op. cit. 94.
4. Schoff's Transl. p. 32.
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We would not, however, be justified in assuming that direct voyages between India and Egypt were altogether unknown. As early as the sixth century B.C. Scylax of Caryanda, being deputed by Darius to explore the Sindhu, sailed down this river to the Indian Ocean and ultimately reached Egypt. Strabo's statement that 'in the time of the Ptolemies scarcely any one would venture on this voyage and commerce with the Indies' implies that at least some did it. The famous explorer Eudoxus twice made the voyage to India in the latter part of the second century B.C. His story, known from the writings of Poseidonius, and preserved in Strabo's book, shows that he owed the idea of this voyage to a ship-wrecked Indian who had set out from India but lost his course and drifted for months till the companions had perished, one by one, of hunger. He was found in the ship by the coast-guards alone and half-dead, off the entrance to the Red Sea, and brought to Alexandria. These incidents prove that direct voyages up to the end of the second century B.C. were not unknown, though extremely rare. But the next century saw a great change in this respect.

The Ptolemies secured the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb by refounding Deine on the straits as the southern Berenice, and their ships sailed direct to India. "By 78 B.C. the general of Thebaid had become also general of the Red Sea and the 'Indian Sea', a new name which points to regular connection with India. Indian traders on their side began to come direct to the Somali ports, and Indians appeared in Egypt; one, Sophon, travelled over the caravan route to Coptos", and this visit is recorded in an inscription found in the ruins of a shrine at Redesiye on the route between Edfu, on the Nile, and Berenice. The existence of an Indian colony at Memphis has been presumed by the discovery of Indian figures.

The close of the century witnessed still further development in this direct trade relation between India and Egypt. Strabo, who lived in the reign of Augustus, himself visited the port of Myos Hormos and found that about one hundred and twenty ships sailed from that port to India (probably in a single season). A few bold sailors, we are told, even reached the mouth of the Ganges. On the other hand we hear of Indians, sailing for the purpose of

1. McCrindle, op. cit. p. 98.
2. Ibid, 97.
3. Tarn, op. cit. 216; Rawlinson, op. cit. 99; JRAS, 1904, p. 402.
4. Anc. Ind. 9.
commerce, being driven by storms into Germany. This was a striking change in comparison with the state of things a century earlier.

5. India and the Roman Empire

The active part taken by Indians in trading with the western countries, in the first century A.D. and earlier, is proved by certain statements in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. In the first place, the author of this work refers to the island of Dioscorida (Socotra) as inhabited by foreigners, 'a mixture of Arabs and Indians and Greeks who have emigrated to carry on trade there.' Secondly, he states that large vessels are regularly sent from Barygaza (Broach on the Bombay coast) to the market-town of Persia called Ommana.

There are also some grounds for the belief that the Hindus had active trade intercourse with Madagascar and also settled there, as in Socotra. The Indonesian language, mixed with Sanskrit vocabulary, was current in Madagascar. The ancient name of this island was Malay, and her people have a tradition that their ancestors came from Mangalore.

Thus there is ample evidence to show that there was a large volume of sea-borne trade between India and the western countries, as far as Africa, before the beginning of the Christian era.

The policy of the Roman Empire during the first two centuries of the Christian era was to encourage direct sea-trade with India, and diminish as far as possible the overland trade through the hostile land of Parthia. An expedition was sent by Augustus in 25 B.C. to secure the command of the sea-route to India, and Aden was soon after occupied by a colony of Egyptians and Greeks.

As already noted above, the direct sea-voyage was a long and tedious one, as the sailors had to keep close to the coast. This state of things was changed by the great discovery which Hippalus made about A.D. 45. He noted the 'existence of the monsoon winds, blowing regularly across the Indian Ocean,' which would enable the ships to sail right across the Indian Ocean. With the help of

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1. These Indians were presented by the king of the Suevi to Q. Metellus Celer, the Pro-Consul in Gaul (Anc. Ind. 110). Metellus became Consul in 60 B.C. Some scholars discredit the story. Cf. Sastri, *Foreign Notice of South India*, p. 6, f.n. 10.

2. This is the general view (cf. Rawlinson, op. cit. 109); but Kennedy maintains that 'the monsoons must have been known from the earliest times to all who sailed along the African and Arabian coast and that the normal trade-route from the Persian Gulf to India can never have been along the inhospitable shores of Gedrosia' (JRAS, 1898, pp. 272-3). The direct voyage across the sea is described
these monsoon winds, a ship, starting from Okelis, the port at the mouth of the Red Sea, would reach Muziris (Cranganore on the Malabar coast) or other south Indian ports in forty days or even less. Thus in less than three months' time Indian goods could reach Alexandria, the great emporium of the western world.

Apart from shortening the duration of the journey, the direct voyage across the sea reduced the danger from pirates. The result was a great increase in maritime trade. Whereas before Hippalus's discovery hardly twenty ships a year made the voyage, after it, on an average, a ship a day left the ports of Egypt for the East. The whole of the western coast of India was well known to the sailors of these ships.¹

In addition to Hippalus's discovery, two other circumstances favoured the growth of trade between India and the western countries. The first and foremost was the foundation of the Roman Empire, which gave peace, facilitated communications and secured the trade routes. Secondly, as already noted above,² articles of luxury from India were in great demand in Rome. The result was an unprecedented increase in the volume of trade. We learn from a Chinese notice of the Roman province of Syria in A.D. 125 that the gain from trade with India and Parthia was ten to one. As has already been mentioned, Pliny estimated that nearly fifty million sesterces (half a million sterling) flowed every year from Rome to India to pay for the balance of trade.³ That this statement is no mere rhetoric is proved by the actual discovery of a very large number of Roman coins in India. An idea of how large this number is may be formed from the following account of the discovery of Roman coins belonging to the period from Augustus to Nero alone (31 B.C. to A.D. 68).

'In northern India some denarii of Augustus and Tiberius were found in the Hazara district of the Punjab, and the smallness of their number is due to the melting and re-striking of these coins by the Kushānas.

'In southern India, we have in actual number 612 gold coins and 1,187 silver, besides hoards discovered, which are severally

¹ in detail by Pliny (McCridle, op. cit., 111) and in the Periplus (Schoff's Transl. 45).
³ See p. 602.
4 Rawlinson, op. cit. 103.
described as follows:

'Of gold coins "a quantity amounting to five cooly-loads"; and of silver coins, (1) "a great many in a pot," (2) "about 599 in an earthen pot," (3) "a find of 163," (4) 'some,' (5) "some thousands" enough to fill "five or six Madras measures," i.e. perhaps a dozen quart measures; also (6) of metal not stated, "a pot-full." These coins are the product of fifty-five separate discoveries mostly in the Coimbatore and Madura districts.'

After a minute analysis of these and other coins Sewell, who has made a detailed study of these coins,¹ arrives at the following conclusions:—

1. There was hardly any commerce between Rome and India during the Consulate.

2. With Augustus began an interchange which, enabling the Romans to obtain oriental luxuries during the early days of the empire, culminated about the time of Nero, who died in A.D. 68.

3. From this time onward trade declined till the date of Caracalla (A.D. 217).

4. From the date of Caracalla it almost entirely ceased.

5. It revived again, though slightly, under the Byzantine emperors.

And as regards the object of the trade:—

(a) Under the early emperors there was a great demand for pepper, spices, fine muslins, perfumes, unguents, pearls and precious stones, especially the beryl.

(b) In the declining period between Nero and Caracalla, there was little or no demand for mere luxuries, and the activity of merchants was directed towards cotton and industrial products.

(c) Under the Byzantine emperors the trade was mostly with Travancore and the south-west coast, commerce with the interior and the Deccan having declined.

Dr. Sewell also concludes from the discovery of a very large number of Roman copper coins in different parts of Madura, including a class minted locally, that in all probability Roman merchants continued to reside in Madura and also in other parts of

¹. JRAS. 1904, p. 591 ff.
southern India either permanently or temporarily. 1 The Peutingerian tables, which appear to have been copied from fresco paintings in Rome executed in the second century A.D., place near Muziris a temple of Augustus, but no traces of this are known to survive, and it is impossible to say to which emperor it was dedicated. Dr. Caldwell considered that these geographical tables or maps were prepared at a date somewhat earlier than Ptolemy.

The evidence of coins is fully supported by the south Indian literature of the Šaṅgam age which may be placed in the early centuries of the Christian era. Reference is thus made to ‘Yavanas of graceless harsh speech’ who possessed many precious utensils and a large quantity of diamonds. Mention is also made of seaport towns like Māmallapuram, Puhār and Korkai. Many foreign merchants lived in these towns and reference is made to the “activities of busy customs officials and those engaged in loading and unloading vessels in the harbour.” Poetical description is also given of the ships in the harbours, the flags waving on their masts being compared to huge elephants chafing at their posts. 2

We must therefore conclude that there was a large volume of trade between India and Rome during the first century A.D. As to the condition of trade in subsequent periods, it is difficult to accept the findings of Sewell as they are rejected by other authorities and are based merely on negative evidence, for, besides these coins, mostly discovered in south India, others are also known, 3 and a large number must have been lost or still lie hidden underground. Further, the coins in southern India are merely evidence of maritime trade, and we must remember that there was also a large volume of overland commerce which, in spite of the rise of the Parthian and Sassanid kingdoms, continued as an important factor for several centuries. That the trade between India and the western countries flourished even in the fourth century A.D. is proved by the fact that “silk worth in Aurelian time its weight in gold, and a luxury of the rich and noble, was in the reign of Julian sold at

1. Hultsch also thinks that there was a Roman settlement and mint at Madura (JRAS, 1904, p. 403).
2. NHIP VI, 225-28; cf. also p. 603 above.
3. Cunningham observes: “Roman gold coins are plentiful down to the time of Severus and Caracalla (A.D. 217). They then disappear until the time of Justin (528 A.D.), Marcian (A.D. 450), Leo (A.D. 474) and Anastasius (A.D. 491-518).” JASB, LVIII, 1889, p. 149. Reference may be made to the discovery of two Roman coins from Bilaspur (C.P.) and two from Vizagapatam districts. Of the former one is of Commodus (A.D. 189-90) and the other an imitation of a coin of Macrinus (A.D. 236-38) (JNSI. V. 171).
a price which brought it within every man’s reach.”

The famous emporia of Palmyra and Petra had now become the chief centres of Indian trade. Palmyra was reached by land from Vologesia on the Euphrates to which Indian goods were brought by sea. Similarly, goods were carried by land to Petra from the Red Sea through its two ports on the Arabian coast, viz. Aelana (ancient Ezion Geber) and Leuke Kome. At first Petra was the chief centre of distribution of goods to the Mediterranean ports of Ghaza and Rhinokolura. These consisted, among others, of fine muslins, pearls, beryls, precious stones, incense and drugs. When Petra was destroyed in A.D. 105, Palmyra gained commercial pre-eminence. After it was sacked by Aurelian in A.D. 273, Indian trade was diverted to Batne, near the Euphrates, and a day’s journey from Edessa. About the same time or somewhat later, Alexandria, too, fell into decay and the Indian trade of the West passed into the hands of the Arabs. Adulé, a petty village on the African coast, developed into the principal port of Ethiopia and became a great centre of commerce. Even when Roman trade with the East revived under Constantine, Roman vessels proceeded only up to Adulé, beyond which the trade was carried on by the Indians and the Arabs. The trade between India and the western world continued in this way, and it was in a flourishing condition even so late as the sixth century A.D.

It would appear from what has been said above that active commerce between India and the Roman empire, through Palmyra and Alexandria, flourished till the third century A.D. We cannot therefore agree with Sewell that its decline commenced after the reign of Nero or that it ceased altogether after A.D. 217. Priaulx argued “that it was during the reigns of Severus, his son Caracalla, and the pseudo-Antonines, that Alexandria and Palmyra were most prosperous, and that Roman intercourse was at its height.” Sewell rejects this view, but it was fully endorsed by V. A. Smith. Priaulx further remarks, in support of his contention, that during this period “Roman literature gave more of its attention to Indian matters, and did not, as of old, confine itself to quotations from the historians of Alexander or the narratives of the Seleucid ambassadors, but drew its information from other independent sources.”

2. Ibid. pp. 230 ff, 244.
3. Ibid. 132.
4. JASB. LVIII (1889), 158.
The correctness of this observation will be demonstrated later, and the position of Priaulx is further strengthened by the accounts of Indian embassies to Rome.

It has already been noted above that one or more Indian states sent embassies to Augustus. We also hear of other Indian embassies to Rome during the first four centuries of the Christian era. There are specific references to Indian embassies visiting Trajan (A.D. 98-117), Hadrian (117-138), Antoninus Pius (138-161), Helio- gabalus (218-222), Aurelian (270-275), Constantine (323-353) and Julian (361-363).1 Two more Indian embassies were probably sent to Justinian in A.D. 530 and 552.

One important result of the development of this commercial and political intercourse was that an increasingly large number, both of Indians and Roman subjects, visited each other's country.2 Alexandria, according to all accounts, was the great meeting ground between the East and the West, and must have been visited by a large number of Indians, mostly traders.3 Dio Chrysostom (c. A.D. 117) refers to Indians as forming part of the settled population of Alexandria and notes that they came by way of trade. A grave-stone with wheel and trisula (trident) attests the presence of Indians in Alexandria.4 It is interesting to note that some Brāhmaṇas who visited Alexandria in A.D. 470 were the guests of Consul Severus.5 By means of this personal contact both India and the Roman world gained a more correct and intimate knowledge of each other.

6. India in Western Literature

The great increase in the West's intercourse with India is reflected in its literature. Mention has already been made of Strabo, an Asiatic Greek who lived in the reign of Augustus. But Strabo derived much of his information from Eratosthenes (240-196 B.C.),

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1. For the political embassies to Rome, cf. Anc. Ind. pp. 212-3; Priaulx, The Indian Embassies to Rome; Warmington, The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 35-7, 77, 95, 99, 103, 124, 137-9. Orosius (A.D. 420) says that one of the embassies from India "reached Caesar (Augustus) at Tarraco in Hither Spain, having thus traversed the world from end to end." (Anc. Ind. p. 213). Priaulx thinks that there was only one Indian embassy to Augustus (op. cit.).
2. Priaulx (op. cit.) refers to a large number of such visits and incidental notices of India by Western writers down to the sixth century A.D.
3. The presence of Indians in Alexandria is noted both by Dio Chrysostom (c. A.D. 117) and Ptolemy (Anc. Ind. p. 177; JRAS. 1904, p. 611). For the visit of Egyptians to India, cf. JRAS. 1904, p. 402.
4. Tarm, op. cit. 218.
5. Priaulx, op. cit. 189.

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the learned President of the Alexandria Library, and considered his account of India as superior even to that of Megasthenes. Eratosthenes on his part relied mostly on the data supplied by Patrocles, an officer who held an important command over the eastern provinces of the Syrian empire under Seleucus Nicator and Antiochus I. Strabo's account was thus largely based on older writers, and adds little that was true of his own times. The same thing is also true of the Indika of Arrian written about 150 B.C. Far different was, however, the work of Pliny. His Natural History, completed in A.D. 77, not only contains a fairly detailed account of the voyage from Egypt to India, but also a very interesting list of Indian animals, minerals, plants and drugs.

About the same time was published the Periplus of the Erythraen Sea, to which a detailed reference has been made above. Next comes Ptolemy, the great Alexandrine geographer (c. A.D. 150), who wrote on the basis, mainly, of information collected by Marinus of Tyre. He showed greater knowledge of the Asiatic coast than his predecessors, but his object was not to describe the localities, but to determine their latitude and longitude. His view of the configuration of India was unfortunately very faulty, and his calculation is therefore often wrong. But, in spite of these drawbacks, his book contains much valuable geographical data.

There were a few other writers of less repute who have left some interesting account of India. Dio Chrysostom (c. A.D. 117), who has already been mentioned, states that the poetry of Homer had been translated into the Indian languages. This, however, merely refers to the general resemblances between the Odyssey and the Indian epics.

A Greek farce composed in the second century A.D. is contained in a unique papyrus discovered at Oxyrhynchus. It contains the story of a Greek lady named Chrition, shipwrecked on the Kanarese coast, and the people of the locality actually use Kanarese dialect in the drama.¹ Aelian, who flourished about the middle of the second century, noticed a number of Indian animals in his famous zoological work.

The western literature of the third century A.D. shows a more comprehensive knowledge of India. The account of Clement of

¹ For a detailed account cf. JRAS. 1904, pp. 399 ff. Some scholars, however, deny that there are Kanarese words (Barnett in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, Vol. XII, 1926, pp. 13-15). For other views cf. N. Sastri, Foreign Notices of South India, p. 6, fn. 10.
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Alexandria, who died about A.D. 220, contains a fairly accurate account of the Brahmanical doctrine of transmigration and the Buddhist worship of stūpas. Bardesanis, the Babylonian, who lived in the third century A.D., also possessed an intimate knowledge of India. His work on the Indian Gymnosophists is lost, but the few quotations that can still be traced contain interesting information of both Brāhmaṇas and Buddhists. Among other writers may be mentioned Archelaos of Carrah (A.D. 278), St. Jerome (A.D. 340), Philostratus (c. A.D. 180-250) and Dion Cassius (c. A.D. 155-230). The first two refer to Buddha and give the traditional account of his birth.¹

Different views have been held about the legendary history of Apollonius of Tyana by Philostratus. Rawlinson calls Apollonius a 'prince of imposters' and regards Apollonius's account as purely fictitious.² But Priaulx thinks it may be a genuine account, in its main parts, though containing mistakes here and there.

Like literature, the Greek and Roman art also reflects a knowledge of India. Callistatus describes the statue of a drunken and reeling Hindu.³ An ivory statuette, discovered amid the ruins of Pompeii, is a typical product of ancient Indian art and belongs probably to the first century A.D. or a somewhat earlier date.⁴ In a silver dish at Lampscus India is represented as a woman.⁵

II. EFFECT OF THE INTERCOURSE⁶

It may be regarded as almost a universal law that two countries which come into contact in course of trade or conquest borrow ideas from each other. Neither India nor western countries, even including Greece, can be regarded as an exception to this rule. It would be as much ridiculous to suggest that India was altogether impervious to the influence of the West, as to hold 'that Indian civilization was a bye-product of the Macedonian or Achaemenian Invasion'.

1. Influence of the West on India

It is, however, very difficult to estimate even the probable effect of the intercourse between India and the western countries,

¹ For an account of the writers named cf. Anc. Ind. pp. 184-5.
³ Priaulx, op. cit., 136-7.
⁴ ABIA, 193, p. 1.
⁵ JUPHS, XVI, Part II, p. 3.
⁶ Cf. Smith, JASB, LVIII (1889), p 107 ff; Rawlinson, JBBRAS, XXIII. 217 ff; and the authorities referred to in these articles.
as described above. But some of its aspects can be broadly stated. Reference has already been made to the probable influence of Babylonia and Chaldaea. The contact with the Achaemenids led to more definite results. There can hardly be any doubt that Mauryan India was affected by Persian ideas, and this can be particularly traced in the system of administration, the introduction of a number of Iranian and Greek words and of the Aramaean script and its derivative the Kharoshṭhī, and in court etiquette and manners.

More doubtful is the influence upon art and religion, of which too much has been made by some scholars. The Graeco-Roman influence is more obvious. Indian art and coinage bear strong marks of Hellenistic influence. Indian astronomy was also considerably influenced by western systems. This is freely admitted in the following passage in the Gārgī Samhitā: “The Yavanas are indeed barbarians, but astronomy originated with them and for this they must be venerated as gods”. Of the five Siddhāntas (Indian astronomical works) Romaka Siddhānta and Pauliśa Siddhānta (named after Paul of Alexandria, c. A.D. 378) are evidently of western origin. More doubtful is the claim that ‘Indian medical science shows distinct traces of western influence’, for although Vogel finds in the works of Charaka strong traces of a knowledge of Hippocrates, his view is not shared by all. The Greek influence on Indian drama is also a very debatable point. Little reliance can be placed on the statements of some classical writers that Homer's epic and the Greek tragedies were known in India, and the view of V.A. Smith that Kālidāsa could read not only Menander but Terence is now hardly credited by any scholar.

It is difficult to estimate the influence of western religion on India. There is no doubt that a large number of deities worshipped in Greece, Rome and western Asia were known in India, for we find their names and portraits on the coins of the Indo-Greek and Kushāṇa kings. But there is little to show that they influenced Indian religion in any way. The date of the introduction of Christianity in India is a disputed point. The legend that the Apostle Thomas visited the court of an Indian ruler (usually identified with the Indo-Parthian king Gondopheres, mentioned above) cannot be traced earlier than the third century A.D. But it may be admitted that Christian missionaries visited India, and small Christian communities were established there before the end of the

1. See p. 130.
second century A.D.\textsuperscript{1} The Christian Church was firmly established in south India during the two succeeding centuries, and we have references to it in the Romance History of Alexander of the Pseudo-Kallisthenes (fifth century A.D.). But there is no evidence that Christianity exercised any influence on Indian religion. A great deal was at one time made of the parallelism between the Krishṇa legend and the Gospel story, and of the supposed resemblances between the Gospels and the Bhagavadgītā. But the discovery of the Heliodorus pillar at Besnagar has proved the existence of the Krishṇa cult long before Christ, and no one would now seriously contend that early Vaishṇava doctrines and legends were influenced in any way by Christianity. In view of the prevalence of the Brahmanical religion in western Asia before, and at the time of, the rise of Christianity, its striking resemblances, if any, to Vaishnavism should rather be ascribed to the influence of the latter. It is not necessary to discuss other views based on similarly vague data.

2. \textit{Influence of India on the West}

We may now consider the influence of India on the West. We need not attach great importance to the introduction of oriental luxury in food, clothing and ornaments as evidenced by the great demand for spices, aromatic articles, fine fabrics and precious gems, which were regularly exported from India; nor need we emphasise such isolated elements as the use of elephants in wars by Hellenistic rulers and by Hannibal, which must undoubtedly be traced to Indian influence. These are comparatively minor matters; of far greater importance is the influence exerted in the domains of literature, science, philosophy and religion which was more abiding in character.

In view of the great influence exerted by Indian science and literature upon western countries in the subsequent periods as will be described in the next volume, it is legitimate to assume that such influence must have already been at work during the period under review, but it is not possible to give any precise account. It is held by many scholars that Greek physicians had a knowledge of

\textsuperscript{1} According to the story of St. Thomas, Christianity was preached in India as early as the first century A.D. But it is difficult to believe the story (\textit{EHR}, p. 231 ff). Eusebius (third cent. A.D.) says that Pantaenus (second cent. A.D.), who went to India to preach Christianity, found that the Gospel had already been introduced there and some Indians had embraced Christianity (\textit{Anc. Ind.} pp. 214-5).
Indian medical science. According to Parsi tradition, the Sassanid king Shapur I (A.D. 241-272) "caused to be included among the holy books secular works on medicine, astronomy and metaphysics found in India, Greece and other countries."\(^1\) It is said also that king Shapur had an Indian medical man resident in Susa. The doctor not only treated the patients but also taught medical science. After his death his pupils provided the whole of Iran with professionals in medicine.\(^2\)

It has been claimed that Indian philosophy exercised a certain influence upon Greek philosophy.\(^3\) Clement of Alexandria even went so far as to say that the Greeks 'stole their philosophy from barbarians.' Sir William Jones was the first to point out the analogies between the Sāṅkhya system and the Pythagorean philosophy, and many eminent scholars hold that the latter was derived from the former. These may, however, be mere coincidences. As Pythagoras lived in the latter half of the sixth century B.C., doubts have been expressed about the accuracy of this view on the ground that there was hardly any intercourse between India and Greece at this period.\(^4\) It must be remembered, however, that the establishment of the Achaemenian empire, which touched the borders of India and Greece, made Persia an admirable centre for such contact. A fact recently brought to light definitely proves that, even long before the invasion of Alexander, there was cultural contact between India and Greece. Rawlinson has drawn our attention, for what it is worth, to a statement of Eusebius which runs as follows:\(^5\) "Aristoxenus, the musician, tells the following story about the Indians. One of these men met Socrates at Athens and asked him what was the scope of his philosophy. 'An enquiry into human phenomenon', replied Socrates. At this the Indian burst out laughing. 'How can a man enquire into human phenomena', he exclaimed, 'when he is ignorant of divine ones'?

Aristoxenus was a pupil of Aristotle and lived in 330 B.C. He might therefore have heard of the interview between Socrates and the Indian philosopher, from some of their contemporaries. The dialogue is highly characteristic of the difference in the Indian and

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1. CAH, XIX, 112.
2. PIHC, V, 248.
5. IAL, X, p. 53.
Greek attitude of mind. But whatever we might think of it, the anecdote quoted by Aristothenes leaves no doubt that even in the fifth century B.C. Indian philosophers travelled in the West and learnt Greek language and philosophy sufficiently well to be able to hold discourses with eminent philosophers like Socrates.

We have no reason to believe that there was any material improvement furthering the prospects of such contact during the interval between the foundation of the Achaemenid empire and the Indian invasion of Alexander the Great. There is thus no inherent impossibility that either in Greece, or somewhere in Persian empire, if not in India, Pythagoras could have come into contact with the Indians and derived his main philosophical ideas from them. As Schroeder\(^1\) has pointed out, not one or two chance ideas, but almost all the doctrines ascribed to Pythagoras, both religio-philosophical and mathematical, were current in India. As the most important of them appear in Pythagoras without connection or explanatory background, whilst in India they are rendered comprehensible by the intellectual life of the times, Schroeder definitely pronounces India to be the birth-place of the ideas. The same view was emphatically asserted by Colebrooke\(^2\) and is shared by Garbe.\(^3\) The last-named scholar has further pointed out the numerous coincidences between Indian and Greek philosophy. He has referred to the most striking resemblance between the doctrine of the One in the Upanishads and the philosophy of the Eleatics, and between the theory of Thales, the father of Greek philosophy, that everything sprung from water, and the Vedic idea of the primeval water out of which the universe was evolved. He has also traced fundamental ideas of the Sāṅkhya philosophy among the Greek physiologers such as Anaximander, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus and Epicurus.

Whether the doctrines of these Greek thinkers were derived from Indian philosophy, or were independently evolved, cannot, of course, be definitely decided. But the possibility of contact between the two, as noted above, and the Greek tradition that the greater part of these Greek philosophers visited oriental countries for studying philosophy, render the first alternative at least highly probable. Some scholars

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do not uphold this view. Lassen, for example, denies Indian influence upon Greek philosophy in the pre-Christian period. He, however, adopts it for Christian Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism,¹ and there is a general consensus of opinion in support of this view. Barthelemy Saint-Hilaire² has traced the ideas of the Sāṅkhya philosophy in Plato and believes the analogies to be too numerous to be explained away as mere coincidences. Professor Weber has traced the influence of the Indian conception of vāch upon the idea of the Logos, which appears in Neo-Platonism and passed from there into the Gospel of St. John.³ Garbe has pointed out that the conception of the Logos did not first appear in Neo-Platonism, but may be traced through Philo and the Stoics ultimately to Heraclitus. This corroborates the view, noted above, of Heraclitus's indebtedness to Indian philosophical views.

That the interest in Indian philosophy continued in western countries for many centuries is proved beyond doubt by many positive evidences. Reference may be made in this connection to Scythianus, a Saracen, born in Palestine, who traded with India. During his visits to India Scythianus acquired a knowledge of Indian philosophy and settled afterwards in Alexandria.⁴ There is no doubt that Alexandria was a great international centre, where not only commercial products but philosophical and scientific ideas were exchanged between the East and the West.

The influence of Indian religion in the western countries cannot also be doubted. Reference has been made above to the spread of Buddhism in western Asia, Africa and Europe as early as the days of Aśoka. The existence of Buddhism on the Persian borderland is demonstrated by the ruins of a Buddhist monastery in the terminal marshes of the Helmund in Seistān. That Buddhism had a strong hold in Parthia is shown by many references in the Chinese annals. As will be noticed later, even a Parthian prince abdicated the throne and became a Buddhist monk in the second century A.D. Alberuni has definitely stated that in former times Khorāsān, Persia, Irāq, Mosul and the country up to the frontier of Syria was Buddhistic.

There are unmistakable traces of Buddhist influences on the Manichaean religion, which was preached in the third century A.D.

1. Indische Alterthumskunde III. 379.
3. Indische Studien. IX.
4. Anc. Ind., p. 185, f.n. 1.
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A Manichaean treatise written in the form of a Buddhist Sūtra speaks of its founder Maṇi as the Tathāgata, and mentions Buddha and the Bodhisattva. Curious parallels are also noticeable between Buddhism and Orphism.

We have also very interesting evidence that the Brahmanical religion prevailed in western Asia. According to the Syrian writer Zenob there was an Indian colony in the canton of Taron on the Upper Euphrates, to the west of Lake Van, as early as the second century B.C. ¹ The Indians built there two temples containing images of gods about 18 and 22 ft. high. When, about A.D. 304, St. Gregory came to destroy these temples, he was strongly opposed by the Indians. But he defeated them and smashed the images, thus anticipating the iconoclastic zeal of Mahmūd of Ghaznī.

The facts stated above leave no doubt that, when Christianity arose, Indian culture and religion was already an important factor in the region of its early activity. The similarities which undoubtedly exist between the two may not therefore be mere coincidences. Thus resemblances between the internal arrangements of the Christian church and a Buddhist Chaitya Hall, the rigorous asceticism pursued by some early Christian sects such as Thebaid monasticism, metempsychosis, relic-worship and the use of the rosary, might all have been borrowed by Christianity from Indian religious ideas. There is hardly any doubt that the Gnostics were profoundly influenced by Indian ideas. It is also a well-known fact that several religious leaders in the West took the name of Buddha,² and that Gautama Buddha, under the title of St. Josaphat, is still recognised as a Christian saint.

We may conclude this brief sketch with the observation that the facts definitely known are few, and hence the picture drawn is necessarily vague and incomplete. But one thing is certain. India did not, as many fondly believe, lead an isolated life, but maintained a close and intimate contact with the great civilizations of the West through trade and commerce. This led to cultural, and occasionally even political, relations, which began in hoary antiquity and continued right up to the middle of the first millennium of the Christian era and perhaps even later still.

1. JRAS. 1904, p. 309.
CHAPTER XXV

COLONIAL AND CULTURAL EXPANSION

A. CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINA

As we have seen in the last chapter, India’s contact with the western world was mainly inspired by trade and commerce, though it brought in its train some cultural influence on either side. Far different, however, was the case with the countries in the north, east and south-east. Although original intercourse might have been inspired by commercial enterprise, it was soon overshadowed by missionary activity leading to a more or less complete cultural conquest over extensive regions. Besides, the Indians set up colonies and established political influence in many of these countries, which brought into existence what may properly be called Greater India.

China is the only country in this region which can boast of an ancient civilization. Broadly speaking, there were three routes in ancient times which connected India with China. The first was the great overland route which ran across Afghānistān over the passes of the Hindu Kush to Bactria and thence, through Central Asia to the western border of China. The second, also an overland route, passed from eastern India through upper Burma to the south-western provinces of China. The third, an all-sea route, passed along the coasts of Indo-China and the islands of the East Indies. The cultural and colonial expansion of India proceeded along these three routes.

I. Afghānistān

The territory between the Sindhu and the Hindu Kush mountains may be regarded culturally as a part of India during almost the whole of the Hindu period. The reference in the Rgveda to the rivers Kubhā (with its tributary the Suvāstu), the Krumu and the Gomati, which have been identified respectively with the Kābul, the Swāt, the Kurram and the Gomal rivers, and the tribes like the Alinas, Bhalānases and the Pakthas who played a prominent part in the battle of the ten kings1 leaves no doubt that the Indo-Aryans in the Pūnjāb were intimately associated with Afghānistān. Their

progress towards the east gradually lessened the bond between the two countries. But the eastern regions of Afghānistān were always regarded politically as parts of India, and the rest of the territory remained Indian in culture and predominantly within the political orbit of India, although subjected, like the Punjāb, to the influence of the Persians, the Greeks, the Parthians, the Scythians and the Kushāṇas. The Mauryas exercised effective rule over the whole of Afghānistān and Baluchistān, and both Buddhism and Brahmānism had a strong influence over the whole area until the advent of Islam. Most of the dynasties that ruled in Afghānistān and Baluchistān came under the influence of Indian culture, which had taken deep root in the soil. Their coins and inscriptions, works of art, religion and literature are Indian in character and, so far as recorded evidence goes, we can hardly distinguish eastern Afghānistān and Baluchistān from India from either a political or cultural point of view. Even in the second century A.D. Ptolemy included this region in India. We learn from Isidor of Charax (first century A.D.) that Arachosia (Kandahār region) was called "White India" by the Parthians. How strong this conviction has been throughout the ages is proved by an old saying quoted by Abul Fazl that Kābul and Kandahār were the twin gates of India. The great French scholar James Darmesteter inferred from the Iranian scriptures that 'Hindu civilization prevailed in those parts (Kābul and Seistan), which in fact, in the two centuries before and after Christ, were known as White India, and remained more Indian than Iranian till the Musulman conquest.'

II. Central Asia

The territory beyond the Hindu Kush mountains was also profoundly influenced by Indian culture. The Mauryan Empire, which included a part of these territories, and the missionary zeal of Asoka must have contributed directly to this end. The Greeks, the Śakas, the Yueh-chi and the Parthians, who ruled later in this region, adopted Indian religion and used Indian scripts and language. As these peoples extended their rule over parts of India, the peoples beyond the Hindu Kush came into more intimate contact with Indian culture.

We have evidence to show that Buddhism, and along with it Indian culture, was spread among the Parthians, the Yueh-chi, the Sogdians and various other peoples of Central Asia before the begin-


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ning of the Christian era. Even the Sassanians of the third century A.D. regarded Bactriana as virtually an Indian country and the Oxus, a river of Buddhists and the Brāhmaṇas. The Greek writers always cite Bactriana with India and state that thousands of Brāhmaṇas and Samanas (Buddhist monks) reside there. The recent explorations in Chinese Turkestan have revealed the existence of a large number of flourishing cities with rich sanctuaries, and introduced us to a new world of Indian culture which calls for a more detailed study.

In order to understand properly the expansion of Indian culture in this region, we must have a clear idea of the different routes between India and China passing through Central Asia. The main route proceeded along the valley of the Kābul river and reached the Hindu Kush mountains through Purushapura (Peshāwar), Nagarāhāra (Jalālābād), Bāmiyān and other cities. Beyond the Hindu Kush lay Bāhlika (Bactriana, modern Balkh). From this region three well-known roads led to the Tārim basin. The one, which was mostly used by the ancient caravans, “ascended the Qizil Su or Surkh Ab to the Pāmir-like valley of the Alai and thence crossed the saddle above Irkeshtam to the head-waters of the river of Kāshgar and thus down to the oasis itself”. Another, and more northern, route crossed both the Oxus and the Jaxartes and, passing by Tashkend and Lake Issiq Köl, debouched through the passes of the Tien Shan mountains to Uch Turfān or Aqsu to the northwest of the Tārim basin. The third, and the southernmost, route went at first almost due east from Balkh, via Badakhshān and Wakhān, and then crossed either by the Wakhjir Pass or other passes over the Pāmirs, into Sariqol, south of Muztāgh Āta. From Tāsh Qurghān, the ancient capital of this region, different tracks through very confined gorges led down to the utterly barren foothills on the sides of the Tārim basin and so on to the oases of Kāshgar and Yarkand on its western border. There was also a much shorter and direct, but difficult, road from Kāshmir, along Gilgit and the Yasin valleys, and through the Darkot and Baroghil Passes, to the last-mentioned route in the Wakhān valley.

The Tārim basin, to which all the three routes led, is popularly known as Chinese Turkestan, and corresponds to the modern province of Sinkiang. This region lies immediately to the west of China, and was for long under her political control both in ancient and modern times. It is almost entirely surrounded by mountains.
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To the north is the mighty Tien Shan, and to the west the Pámir mountains. In the south the snowy Kun-lun range separates it from the plateau of Tibet. To the east the Nan Shan range, the marshes of Lop-Nor and the border of the Gobi desert separate it from China proper.

Although this region is about 900 miles long from east to west, and about 330 miles from north to south at its widest part, it is almost entirely occupied by the "huge central desert of bare sand-dunes which is popularly known as the Taklamakan. Its borders to the west, north and east are marked by the belts of vegetation accompanying the Tiznaf, the Yarkand and the Tārim rivers". To the south of the desert lies a string of oases, mostly small, fed by the streams descending from the Kun-lun. Only one of these rivers, the Khotan, succeeds in making its way through the desert during a few summer months. For the rest, they are lost in the sands of the desert at a greater or less distance. It may be observed, however, that this distance has been systematically reduced in course of ages, for modern explorations have proved the existence of cultivated grounds further north than the corresponding 'terminal oases' of the present day.

On account of the lack of rain or snow-fall, cultivation was only possible by canal irrigation and was confined to a comparatively very small area between the desert and the mountain ranges encircling it. The ground capable of settled life was thus confined to strings of oases of which only a few could sustain even a moderately small community. To this may be added the extremes of climate, the sands rising to boiling point in summer, and every drop of water being frozen in winter. No wonder that the Tārim basin could never be the permanent home of a large population. But this very evil was a blessing in disguise, for it kept the region comparatively free from the depredations of the great migrating tribes of Wusun, Šakas, Yueh-chi, Hūnas, Turks and Mongols, to whom the big open grazing grounds on the northern slopes of the Tien Shan held far greater attraction than the narrowly circumscribed life of a cultivator in the Tārim basin. Though ready to make occasional raids, they could never think of making this region their permanent or even temporary home.

It was mainly for this reason that this inhospitable region attained an importance quite out of proportion to its resources. For more than two thousand years it served as the great highway of
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commercial, cultural and political intercourse between China on the one hand and India and western Asia on the other. It was subsequently a meeting ground of diverse peoples and cultures, such as Indians, Persians, Turks, Chinese, Tibetans, Buddhists, Jews, Christians and Manichaeans. Two roads passing along its northern and southern fringes led from the west of China. Kāshgar, on the western border, may be regarded as the starting point of both these routes which met on the Chinese frontier in the east at a place called Yu-men-kuan or the Jade Gate, not far from the hills of Tunhwang which contain the caves of the thousand Buddhas.

A few sites on both the roads from Kāshgar to China have been explored by various parties in recent times. The antiquities and archaeological remains discovered in course of these explorations have revealed almost a new world. They include ruined cities with hundreds of sanctuaries, images, wall-paintings, etc. and clearly demonstrate that Indians settled in large numbers in various localities all over this region and introduced their art, religion, language, script and system of political administration. It is almost certain that they also set up small kingdoms, some of which flourished for a fairly long period. It is not possible to write a continuous or connected history of the Indian settlements in this region, but we may give a brief account of some of the localities which can be definitely included within the zone of Indian culture and colonisation.

Along the southern route there were Indian colonies at Shule or Šailadesa (Kāshgar), So-Khīu or Chokkuka (Yarkand), Khotamna (Khotān), and also at Domoko, Niya, Dandān-Oilik, Endere, Loulan, Rawak and Miran; and along the northern route at Po-lu-kia or Bharuka (Aqsu district, near Uch-Turfān), Kuchi (modern Kucha), Yen-ki (or Yen-chi) or Agni-ḍesa (modern Qara Shahr), and Turfān, in addition to various other localities. Future exploration would no doubt considerably add to this number.

Buddhism was the prevailing religion in all these localities. This is proved not only by the discovery of images and the remains of Buddhist stūpas, shrines and vihāras built after Indian models, but also by a large number of Buddhist texts, written in Sanskrit and Prakrit as well as in local languages of Central Asia, and in Indian scripts, both Brāhma and Kharoshṭhi. Large numbers of secular documents have also been discovered. These are written in Indian languages and scripts on wooden tablets, leather, paper and
silk. The wooden tablets were used for short communications of an official character, such as instructions to the local officials by the Mahanuava Maharaya (Mahanubhāva Mahārāja or the high-souled great king) or information of a personal or official nature issued by one official to another. We find therein reference to law-suits, inventories, list of provisions or presents, arrangements of guards, appointments, transport of arms, etc. Some of them contain the names of ruling princes, officials and their relations. The documents on leather and paper are similar in character. A short text on a silk strip contains fragments of a letter or order. Another document on silk contains nine inscriptions in Prakrit containing a prayer for the health of an individual and his family. It is interesting to note that some of the phrases used in the prayers are almost identical with those found in the Indian inscriptions of the Kushāṇa period. It may be added that many documents in non-Indian languages were written in Indian script, and tables containing complete alphabets of the Brāhmī script have been found in Central Asia.

Most of the documents are in the form of letters with the names of the addressees written on the covering tablet. Many of the persons who wrote them, or to whom they were sent, bear names which are either purely Indian such as Bhima, Baṅgusena, Nandasena, Shamasena, Śitaka, Upajiva, etc. or else look like Indian adaptations such as Aṅgacha, Kushanasena, etc. Some of the official designations are also Indian, for example, chara (spy), dutiya or dūta (envoy). Stein has pointed out how the style of writing in these records follows closely the instructions given in the Kāshmirian manual Lekhaprakāśa.

These documents were probably written during the first four centuries of the Christian era. The use of Indian language, style and script for purposes of administration, as far as the Lop-Nor region to the extreme east of the Tāirim basin, at the very threshold of China, shows the extent of the political influence of Indian colonists.

Khotān seems to be a particularly important centre of Indian colonisation. A Kharoshthī inscription refers to the Khotanese king Mahārāja Rājātirāja deva Vijīta-Simha. About forty coins were found here bearing Chinese legends on the obverse and Indian Prakrit ones in Kharoshṭhi characters on the reverse. Like the documents mentioned above, these also indicate that the language and scripts used by the local administration were Indian.
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The archaeological evidence certainly lends some colour to the tradition that Khotān was colonised by Indians and ruled by Indian chiefs. This tradition, with a long list of Indian kings, is preserved in Tibetan literature. Sen Konow has critically examined the different versions of this tradition and his provisional conclusions may be summarised as follows:¹

‘Kustana, the son of Āśoka, is said to have founded the royal dynasty at Khotān. But Kustana’s son Ye-u-la, who is said to have founded the capital of the kingdom, is most probably identical with the king Yū-lin mentioned in the Chinese chronicles as ruling over Khotān about the middle of the first century A.D.

‘Ye-u-la was succeeded by his son Vijita-Saṁbhava, with whom begins a long series of Khotān kings whose names all begin with Vijita.² If there is any truth in the Chinese statement that Wei-chi or Vijita was the family name of the kings, it is of interest to note that this ‘Vijita’ dynasty, according to Tibetan tradition, begins where the Han annals place the foundation of the national Khotān kingdom.

‘Buddhism was introduced into Khotān in the fifth year of Vijita-Saṁbhava. Eleven kings followed, and then came Vijita-Dharma who was a powerful ruler and constantly engaged in war. Later, he became a Buddhist and retired to Kāshgar. We know from Chinese sources that Kāshgar had formerly developed great power, but that it became dependent on Khotān during A.D. 220-264. It is then probable that this was the time of the powerful king Vijita-Dharma.

‘Vijita-Dharma was followed on the throne by his son Vijita-Simha, and the latter by his son Vijita-Kīrti. Vijita-Kīrti is said to have carried war into India and to have overthrown Sāketa, together with king Kanika (or the king of Kanika) and the Guzan king. Guzan here evidently stands for Kushāṇa.’

So much for the Tibetan version. According to the other Buddhist traditions, the colonisation of Khotān is connected with the well-known story of Kuṇāla, son of Āśoka and viceroy of Taxila, who, disgusted with the machinations of his step-mother, left the country, went to Khotān and set himself up there as king.³

¹ Sten Konow in JRAS. 1914, pp. 344 ff.
² Sten Konow at first took this word to be Vījaya (ibid), but later (IHQ. XVI. 259) definitely held that the dynastic title was Vījita and not Vījaya.
³ A slightly different account is given by Huien Tsang who also adds other traditions. RTB, II. 309.