OPINIONS AND REVIEWS

I.—Political History of Ancient India

From the Accession Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty

Published by the Calcutta University

Opinions on the earlier editions and on Part I:

The Hindusthan Review.—It is learned and luminous and is a scientific treatise based on the results of research into the records and materials of ancient Indian history, of which it is a sound and an accurate digest, interestingly put together. It is about the best text-book of the subject it deals with.

Dr. L. D. Barnett. London.—The author treats his materials with a certain degree of originality, but at the same time he preserves throughout a well-balanced judgment and never sacrifices critical caution to the passion for novel theories. This interesting book .......shews judgment, ingenuity, and learning. And not the least of the author's merits is that he can write plain English.

Dr. F. W. Thomas.—I have profited by a closer acquaintance with your Political History and other writings, which are really models of sound judgment combined with full knowledge.

Professor Hultzsch, Halle, Germany.—Your valuable work ........is the outcome of extensive researches and throws much light on darkest and most debated periods of Indian history. You have succeeded in building up an intelligible account from the stray and imperfect materials which are available to the historian of those times.

Professor Jolly, Wurzburg, Germany.—Your splendid volume ........What an enormous mass of evidence has been collected and discussed in this work, an important feature of which is the quotation of the original texts along with their translation which makes it easy to control the conclusions arrived at. The ancient geography, not less than the ancient history of India, has been greatly furthered by your researches and much new light has been thrown on some of the most vexed problems of Indian Archaeology and Chronology.
The indices are very copious and the study of your work is greatly facilitated by them.

Professor Pelliot, Paris.—Le nom de L'auteur est garan du serieux du travail.

Professor Jarl Charpentier Upsala, Sweden.—Professor Ray Chaudhury belongs to a set of young Hindu scholars who, combining the traditional education of a Pandit with a thorough training in English, German or French Universities, have lately been carrying on deep and fruitful researches in the various domains of Indian lore ............ Even the student, who on essential points does differ widely from the opinions expressed by Professor Ray Chaudhury, must willingly recognize his high merits as a scholar.

Professor A. Schepotieff, Ufa, Russia.—For our study of the history of the Ancient Age your Political History of Ancient India is of very great importance (trans. from original).

C. E. A. W. Oldham (J. R. A. S. 1928, July)—Part I of Professor Ray Chaudhuri’s work deals with the period from Parikṣit to Bimbisāra. The author seeks to show, as he tells us in his preface, “that chronological relation of the national transactions before 600 B.C. is not impossible.” He has laid under contribution the usual authorities, the Vedic, Puranic, Buddhist, and Jaina texts—though he does not appear to place much reliance upon the last-named (cf. pp. 6 and 72). A vast mass of records has been collated, and the evidence marshalled in a very concise and able, and in some respects original, manner. The opposite quotations from the original texts are useful. Professor Ray Chaudhuri regards Parikṣit I and Parikṣit II, as they are named by the late Mr. Pargiter in his Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, as being probably one and the same king, and as identifiable with the Vedic Parikṣit. By “the great Janaka” he refers to the Janaka of the later Vedic texts, whose court is said to have been throned with Brāhmaṇas, and not to the traditional first king Janaka, the eponymous founder of the Janaka-varṇa, or to Janaka Śiradhvaja, the reputed father of Śītā. Synchronizing Gūnākhya Šāṅkhāyana with Āśvalāyana and the Buddha, he inclines, it seems, to place Parikṣit in the ninth, and the “great Janaka” in the seventh century B.C. though he wisely avoids coming to any positive conclusion as to these debatable dates, and points out that if the evidence of the Purāṇas were accepted we would have to place them some five centuries earlier. If it could be established that Parikṣit came into power at the beginning of the ninth century, or the end of the tenth, this would help to corroborate the approximate chronology suggested by Mr. Pargiter, having regard also to the synchronism between Śenājit Bārhadratha and Adhīśimakṛṣṇa. But until more convincing evidence is discovered
most scholars will probably agree in the verdict of Vincent Smith that nothing approaching exact chronology is yet available for periods anterior to about 650 B.C.

Much of the matter in Part II will perhaps be familiar to students of Indian history; but it has been arranged in a fresh and scholarly manner, while several important suggestions have been made on different questions. One or two of these may be cited as examples. On pp. 72-73 reasons are set forth for accepting the Ceylon tradition that Śiṃunāga was later than Bimbisāra. The view recorded by Mahāmahopadhyāya (sic) H. P. Śaśtri that the ultimate dismemberment of the Mauryan empire was due to a reaction promoted by the Brāhmanas, is vigorously controverted. Whatever other cause may have operated, and Professor Ray Chaudhuri undoubtedly lays his finger on more than one such, Brāhmanical influences cannot be ignored. The arguments used for holding that Demetrius,1 rather than Menander, was the Yavana invader of the Madhyadeśa in the time of Puṣyamitra and that Simuka, the founder of the Sātavāhana dynasty, must be placed in the first century B.C., deserve careful consideration.

Since Hoernle made his well-known suggestions as to the identity of Devagupta, mentioned in two inscriptions of Harsavardhana, several writers have attempted to frame the history of the later Guptas of Eastern Mālava and Bihār and the Maukharis of Kanauj. The period presents many difficulties, which are not likely to be solved until some further evidence reveals itself. Having regard to the conditions of the times and the bitter enmity of the Mukharis, who were then very powerful, it seems unlikely that the Sushhitavarman mentioned in the Apsand (sic) inscription of Ādityasena as having been defeated by Mahāsenagupta of E. Mālava, could have been the king of Kāmarūpa, as the author states. Fleet's suggestion that he was the Maukhari king of that name,2 whom we know to have been contemporaneous with Mahāsenagupta, seems more probable.

Not the least valuable part of the contents of this volume are the numerous comments on the geographical information supplied in the records quoted; and it is a matter of regret that of the five maps entered in the table of Contents (p. xvi), only one, viz., that of "Bhāratavarsha" appears in the volume before us. As regards this map we are not told what specific period, if any, it refers to. In any case, the positions assigned to the Nisādas, S. Kosala, Kamboja, and the Rikṣa mountains seem to call for some explanation. On the

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1 For the latest reading of the Hāthīgumphā inscription reference to the Yavana king, see JBORS., XIII, 228.

2 No Maukhari king of that name is known (H. C. R. C.).
other hand, the geographical information given in the text is extensive, and often suggestive, and it indicates that much attention has been devoted to this important auxiliary to ancient Indian historical research. The indexes, both bibliographical and general, have been very well prepared.

Professor A. Barriedale Keith, Edinburgh.—I have read through the work and find it to contain much that is valuable. The author has arrived at clearly cut opinions on many of the chief difficulties in the history of early India; he has formulated them effectively, and as a result, even when they do not comment themselves as final solutions, they will serve to promote the discussion and to facilitate further fruitful research. He observes a due sense of proportion and is well read in the literature. The work accordingly may justly be deemed a most valuable contribution to the subject-matter of which it treats.

Professor Wilh Geiger, Munchen-Newbiberg, Germany.—I highly appreciate Mr. Ray Chaudhuri's work as a most happy combination of sound scientific method and enormous knowledge of both Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical literature. The work is written in lucid style in spite of its intricate subject and affords a mass of valuable evidence, throwing much light on the whole period of Indian History dealt in it. I see with special pleasure and satisfaction that we now are enabled by the author's penetrating researches to start in Indian chronology from the 9th instead of the 6th or 5th century B.C.

Professor Jackson, Columbia University, New York.—I can see the scholarly research which you have put into the volume, and am glad to have such a work future reference in my historical studies.

Professor Louis de la Vallee Poussin, Brussels, Belgium.—I believe that the book is well designed and has the twofold merit of collecting a vast amount (and in some chapters, an exhaustive one) of references, and of giving a clear and reasonable exposition of the main line of this history. I agree with the author on several controverted points of chronology.

Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids.—Dr. Chaudhuri has made debtors of us all.

S. M. Edwards (The Indian Antiquary, July 1927, p. 140).—Professor Ray Chaudhuri's book forms a solid contribution to the discussion of the various problems implicit in the early history of India.

Professor E. J. Rapson, Cambridge.—My best thanks for the kind present of a copy of the "Political History of Ancient India," which I am very glad to possess and which I shall find most useful for reference.
Professor Sten Konow, Norway.—The book is a very useful contribution.

Dr. V. S. Sukthankar.—I have to refer to it very often, both for corroboration of historical facts of the epic and for geographical information and the excellent maps included in the volume. It has been always a matter of great gratification to me that you have adopted my views with reference to the Sātavāhanas and at last given them, in a standard history of India the appellation by which they call themselves rather than accept the doubtful description of them given by the late Purānas.

Professor Nilkanta Sastri.—Your excellent Ancient History of India. I have been using it on every conceivable occasion.

Sitaram Kohli, Lahore.—I have immensely liked your book "Political History of Ancient India."

C. S. Srinivasachari, South India.—Our author rightly holds the balance between the views of Pargiter which would give excessive value to Kshatriya tradition whose date allowed of manipulation to serve dynastic ends and the value of Vedic tradition whose two strong points are its priority of date and freedom from textual corruption.

W. Charles de Silva, Colombo.—I have the greatest pleasure to express my high appreciation of your very valuable and learned article (Part I of the Political History).

Professor E. Washburn Hopkins.—It is a fine augury for Indian scholarship when native scholars of the first rank take seriously in hand the great problem of untangling the web of Indian history. To this work your book is a valuable contribution.

Professor H. Jacobi, Bonn.—Very suggestive and contains some important details.

Professor F. Otto Schrader.—I have read the book with increasing interest and do not hesitate to say that it contains a great many details which will be found useful by later historians. The portion I enjoyed most is that on the sixteen Mahājanapadas.

II. The Early History of the Vaishnava Sect

Published by the Calcutta University

Professor E. Washburn Hopkins, Yale University, America.—Your book has given me great satisfaction. . . . . I am particularly pleased to see an incisive study of this kind in the realm of religious history. . . . . Believe me, in the hope of further contributions of this character from your able pen.

Professor A. Berriedale Keith, Edinburgh University.—While I do not concur in your view as to the original character of Kṛṣṇa,