CHAPTER VI.

The Epic Age of India.

2500 to 1300 B.C.

II. General Features:—It was an age of priestly supremacy and pedantry and unquestioning obedience on the part of the people. (Max Müller.) The Land of the Indus and the simple fervency of worshipping the natural phenomena were forgotten. The Mid-Land of North India was now the scene of general activity: Great importance was given to solemn rites and pompous ceremonies.

It was an age of keen rivalry—an age of proud self-assertion and fiery valour. There were wars between the Hindus and the Jains: between the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas; between the Kurus and the Pandavas; between the Aryans and the Non-Aryans; between the
Hindus and the Turks; between the Vasista and the Visvamitra Families.

It was an age of Light and Darkness, Peace and unrest, Progress and Decline, Prosperity and Adversity caused by two long and terrible famines. The States of Kosala, Kasi and Videha were seats of excellent learning, culture, religion, philosophy, morals and manners. While, Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Mathura, Magadh, Assam, Bengal, Central Province were the homes of tyrants and corrupt morals.

The Brahmins of the Age fought hard for their supremacy. But they did very little for the nation. If we exclude the Rishis, the rest would appear as a set of 'bookful block-heads,' busy with mere rites and rituals, legends and tales &c. On the other hand, we find the Kshatriyas supreme in every field. They shone in noble and original thoughts and golden deeds but never in 'barbaric pearls and gold.' Rama, Krishna Visvamitra, Ajatasatru of Kasi, the Janakas of Videha are too wellknown. The new school of True Wisdom in the Upanishads, was started by the Kshatriyas alone.

It was more-over an age of migration and mission-work, spread of Hindu influence and culture in the East and South.

II. Extent of the Hindu World—The Epic Age presents to us India in four different regions according to the nature and degree of Hindu civilisation and influence as prevalent there. These were: (1) The Septa-Sindhas or the Indus comprising Kashmir, Eastern Afghanistan (Gandhar) and the Panjab—now
extant into shade. (2) The Madhya-Desa (Mid-Land) comprising the Gangetic Heptarchy viz., Karukshetra (Carnal), Matsya (Jaipur), Panchala, Surasena, Kasi, Kosala and Videha (North Béhar). This was now regarded as the Home of the model Aryan civilisation. (3) The Vâgya Desa i.e. External Countries, so called because they lay outside the Mid-Land. These lands, though sporadically elevated by Aryan rulers, priests and missionaries, were yet generally notorious for their corrupt morals, manners, food &c. Even the Aryan offshoots who ruled there, did not fully accept the caste rules and follow Aryan ceremonials but adopted the local customs &c. So they were denounced as Aryan-Mlechchhas i.e. denationalised Aryans. These countries were Sindhu (Sind), Sauvira (Sophir=Ophir), Anarta (Cathiswar) Saustra (Gujrat), Magadh (South Béhar), Banga (Bengáli), Pundraka (Rajshahi and northern half of Dacca Division), Kâmarupa (Assam) Manipur, Nagaloka (Tipperar), Odra or Utkala (Orissa), Kalinga (Upper Madras), Chedi (Central Provinces), Bidarbhâ (Berar &c), Bhoja, Vidisa (Bhilan), Dravida, Andhra, Pandya, Kerala, Malayâ-Vara, Konkan, Cemanda (Goa), Mâheya (Mahe) Dasartha, Avanti &c, &c.

(4) The Native Deccan, containing Dravidian States. Besides, there were other tracts peopled by less civilised men ridiculed by the Brahmanas as Sattas, Bânaras (Ba = almost, and nara = man &c.)

Taking account of the Sacred Books alone the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Upanishads &c., some early scholars confined the Hindu activity of the Age
within the Gangetic Valley mainly. The other parts of India were being dimly known to them. The so-called revealed literature, being chiefly religious, only referred to countries incidentally. We cannot slight the Secular works viz. the Sanskrit Epics, Harivansa, the Purans &c, to ascertain the sphere of early Hindu domination. Century after century, the Hindus pushed on till 1400 B.C., when there sprang up numberless Hindu and other powerful States all over India. Yet, doubtless, there was a good deal of darkness, low morals, corrupt manners, nomadic living &c.

The Census of 1911 shows that even in these advanced days, there are about 71 p. c. "untouchables" in the Hindu Society. In former times, these were certain by nomadic hunters living on roots, fruits, worms, birds, beasts, reptiles &c. They have long learnt agriculture and peaceful course of life. Mere hunting life, in Indian plains, has now perhaps become as rare as Dodo in Madagascar.

Our Rishis were the pioneers of civilisation. They travelled much all over India, selected suitable sites for their hermitages on hill-tops, by tidal rivers or in some lovely and lively lap of Nature. There they lived with their families, cattle, pupils and army, spreading love and light on the natives around, teaching them better style, moral and manners. Agastya, Parasu-rama, Sarabhangna and other leading sages and their adherents had spread Hindu civilisation in South India long before 1400 B.C. The Aryans had not come to a land of mere barbarism and darkness.
The Dravidians before them, had a far advanced civilisation: Their "hundred cities", roads, forts, arms, armies, boats &c. are well proved by the Rig-Veda itself. A modern theory of several eminent Western philologists proves the same:—

"It does not appear that the Dravidian tongues of the Deccan had any radical connection with Sanskrit or any other language of the North. In ancient times, many civilised peoples of the West such as the Egyptians, the Arabians &c. traded with the Deccan by sea. Close intimacy with those civilised foreign peoples, is the root of the Dravidian tongue. On the one hand, the Aryans from the North, crossing the Himalayas, had spread the light of civilisation in North India; that is the origin of Sanskritic tongues in India. On the other hand, the Deccan was illumined by the light of civilisation brought by the rich and cultured merchants of the West. The Dravidian civilisation was anterior to the Aryan. The Deccan was civilised before Aryavarta (North India). That early light gave dignity and importance to Tamil and other Dravidian tongues of the South. Light came from Egypt to the Deccan. From that began the cultural excellence of the language and literature of the south. An analysis and examination of the Dravidian alphabets and phraseology also confirms that conclusion. The alphabets of the South want many letters and do not look well. So, they betray the imperfect skill of a primitive people. Hence the originality of the Dravidian tongue and its connection with the languages of Egypt, Arabia &c. is entitled to our best credit."
The proud Sanskrit-speaking Aryans of the Mid.
Land hated and ridiculed the still inimical and powerful
Dravidians of East and South India (R. V. V 29 10)
as a-urvātā (without ceremony), a-varā, "without a
good language" (Sayana). Commenting on it, Prof.
Wilson says, "Alluding possibly to the uncultivated
dialect of the barbarous tribes."

Hinduisation of the South began from the 22nd
century B. C. first. South gradually bowed to the
superior Aryan creed and culture. But the work went
on generally very slowly. The early adventurous and
exiled princes of the North, who founded new States
in East and South India, soon became rather Dravi-
dianised. So they were denounced as Vṛāyas, fallen
or denationalised. It is manifest from these that there
had been numerous States in India, owned by different
peoples, before 1400 B. C. The conquests of the Epic
Age as given in the Epics &c., are not "airy nothings
to which poetic fancy gave a local habitation and a
name." Nor are they interpolations of a much later
age. The population of East and South India was
mostly native. Bidarbhā (Berar and its adjoining parts
and Maharashtra alone could boast of a little Aryan
element. It was only in the 6th or 5th century B. C.
that Aryan settlers went to the South in large numbers.

Next, we must show the existence of the Kingdoms
of the Epic Age by reference to our ancient secular
lore.

1. Kuru-Kshetra.—A tract between the rivers Saras-
avati, now Sarsuti (lost in the Rajputana Desert) and
Drishadvati (Caggar) — The royal sage Kuru, born of the Lunar king Samvarana by his queen Tapati, performed many sacrifices on this field. Hence it was so called. [Mahab. Salya Bk. Chap. 53.] It is now called Cortal. Hastinapur, built by king Hasti, 4 generations upward, was the capital. It was perh. 65 miles to the north-west of Delhi and 40 miles down Hurdwar. (Tod’s Rajasthan Vol. I. Chap. IV). Two other cities were Indra-prastha, now Inder-pat, south of Delhi, near which is built the Purana Killa, and Thanesvar, Skr. Sthanaviswara (Mahab. Wood Book, Chap. 83). Hastinapur was cut away by the Ganges before 1200 B.C. It was some where near modern Thanesvar. Prithudaka, now Pehora, 14 miles from Thanesvar, was the capital of Prithu on the Sarasavati. The Caste System first began here.

2. Matsya.—Now Jaipur State in Rajputana. Virata was its king about 1400 B.C. Cunningham’s boundary:—North—Jhunjhun to Cot-Casim...70 miles. East—Jhunjhun to Ajmir......120 miles. South—Ajmir to Bana and confluence of Chambal...150 miles. West—Chambal confluence to Cot-Kasim...150 miles. Its capital was Virata-nagar, 41 miles north of Jaipur and 105 miles south-west of Delhi. The town was surrounded by hills abounding with ores of copper. The people were very brave. Yuan Chwang (7th century A.D.) had been to Virata-nagar, 2½ miles in circumference. He found the citizens very brave and spirited.

3. Panchala.—The Lunar King Haryasva had 5 sons—all expert in state-affairs. Their kingdom became
known as Panchála i.e. State of the Five. It was a long strip on both sides of the Ganges. The Northern part is now called Rohilkhand and the Southern part—Ethwa and other districts. Akichhhatra was its most ancient capital. Its king Sumada submitted to Rāma when the latter's Horse had reached his capital.

About 1400 B.C. Drupada, son to king Prishata, was the lord of Panchála. His former class-friend Drona a poor Brahmana, but a master of military science, once saw him and asked his assistance. Proud Drupada hatefully turned him away. Drona next became the military teacher to the Kuru and Pandava Princes of Hastinapur. The princes became very proficient. At the bidding of Drona, the Princes attacked Drupada, defeated him and brought him to Drona as captive. Drona took the Northern part and returned the Southern part to Drupada who built a new capital at Kampilla on the Ganges, the site of which is now between Budana and Farukhabad. Canouj, Skr. Kánya Kubja, was an important city of the Panchálas.

King Kusa, 9th generation downward from Pururavá of the Lunar dynasty, had 4 sons who built 4 towns after them: Kushámbha built Kausámbi now Kosam, 30 miles to the N. West of Allahabad. Hastinapur being eroded (1220—1200 B.C.), the Pádava capital was removed to Kausámbi. (Vishnu Purama. IV. 21.) Kusa-nábha built Mahodaya, also called Gádhipura, Kausa, Kusa-shala and Kánya-kubja. His Kanyás (daughters) were Kūjá, hump-backed: So, the city was called Kánya-kubja, modern Canouj. Amurta-rajá
built Dharmāranya not yet identified. Basu the Aeronaut (upari-chara) built Basumati, formerly Kasāgrapura, afterwards Giribrāja, Rajagriha, &c.—capital of Magadh.
Ram. i. 39.

Giribrāja was guarded by 5 hills. It was rich in cattle, well-watered, safe and beautified with edifices. (Mahābh. Court-Book) Giribrāja is now ‘Old Rajgir.’ Nepal formed a part of Panchāla of old.

4. Sura-sena.—lit. ‘Home of brave soldiers’! formerly comprised Muttra district, Bharatpur, Kāhiragoli, Dholpur, and the northern part of Gwalior State. The circumference of the kingdom was 833 miles, or some say, 1,000 miles. The State was noted for its very brave people, cotton and gold. We hear of Mathura from 1500 B.C. (Ram. 73 to 85 cantos Vishnu Purana. IV. 4. Varaha Purana. 157 to 161 Chapters.) Kansa was the tyrant of Muttra about 1400 B.C.

5. Kāsi.—Originally, the town, between the rivers Barani and Asī, was called Rishi Patana i.e. City of the Seers. ‘Afterwards king Kāsi or Kāśyapa of the Lunar dynasty founded a state about 600 miles in circumference.

Cunningham’s boundary :—North—R. Gomati, West Gomati to Allahabad: Ton to Bilhari South—Bilhari to Somhat East—R. Kārnāmāsa and Ganges.


Sl. 37.

6. Kosala—is mentioned in the Brahmana works. The Sata patha Brahmana (1. 4. 1) gives the river Gandaka as dividing Kosala and Videha. Its capital was Ayodhyá (Agharva Veda. II. 41. P. 742.)

Further reference:—Rám. VII. canto 114. Váyu Purana Ch. 88. Mahabh. Court Book Chap. 30. There was another Kosala in the Deccan (Mahabh. Court Book. Ch. 31.) prob. modern Gondawánd. Ancient lakshmansámati is now Lucknow. Srávasti, to the N. Oudh, was another important town. Its ruins are in Gonda.

Videha or Mithila; later Tribut, is modern Darbhánga and Mozaffarpur districts in North Bebar. It was another seat of the Solar kings. Title of the kings was Janaka. Its capital was Bajjayanta (acc. to Rámâyana), Mithilá nagari, or Janakapura. The Brahmana and Upanishada Works extol the glories of its kings. In learning and wisdom, Janaka ranked as a Brahmin.

Visála—another son of Ikshvákú, built Visalapuri, later Vaisáli on the east bank of Gandaka, now called Bisara or Besarah or Besar, 20 miles north of Patná. Benares to Vaisáli—153 miles. (Y. Chwang)

The other Half-Aryan States of low or mixed people.—

(i) North India—1. Káshmir (Mahab. Wood Book, Chap. 82, Sl. 90: said to have been under the Turks). Mahabh. Court Bk. 27 sl. Harivansa. Ch. 90-91.
2. Kekaya (Rām.)—capital Giribraja, now Girjak. By the side of Gandhara.

4. Madra, Sāiva, South Kuru, Trigarta (Jalandhar) Darada (Dardistan) Balhika (Balkh), Yavana (to the West of the Indus), Prasthala (Beluchistan).

5. Sindhu (Sindh) — Reference in R. V. i. 126, 1; The Brahmana Works: the Skr. Epics.

Sauvira = Sophir = Ophir. Occasionally called Sindhu —Sauvira (Mahabh.), also, Hari Vansa, Ch. 90 and 91.

Anarta (Cathiarwar), founded by Prince Anarta, son to Saryati, son to Manu. His capital was Kusa-sthali. Acc. to Vrishu Purana, some Dravidians under their leader Punya-jana had attacked and sacked Kusa-sthali. A new city was built near it, called Dwarkā. The peninsula afterwards became the home of the Lunar Yadava Princes. (Mahabh.)

6. Saurashtra (Good, Kingdom)—afterwards Latā, then Gujarāt. (Skr. Epics, Harivansa and the Puranas). Maru Desa (Mahabh.), Indian Desert comprising modern Marwar, Bik➔mir, Jasalmir &c.

7. Magadh (South Behar)—833 miles in circumference mentioned in the Rig-Vedic Altareya Aranyaka (II. i. i.) The people of Banga, Bagadh and Chera-pada are weak and accustomed to bad food &c. Then it was the Kingdom of Rishabha, a Daiya Aryan. The latter was defeated and killed and the Vārhad-ratha dynasty was established. Jayaśandha was the greatest monarch of India here in 1400 B. C. (Mahabh.) Ram. Oudh B. K.

8. Anga (East Behar): circumference 667 miles. Capital was Champā on a hill near the Ganges: now Pathar Phata, 50 miles from Mongyr and 24 miles from Bhagalpur. Mālinī, Lomapādapur, Karnapur were the other names of the Capital.

This Kingdom was founded by Prince Anga, 6th generation downward from Dhruva of Swayam-bhūva Manu's line. (Vishnu Puran)

Acc. to Mahabh. and Harivansa, Prince Anga son to Bali, founded it. In the 15th century B. C. Lomapada friend to Dasaratha, was its king. About 1400 B. C., Duryyodhana gave it to Karna.


10. Tamralipta: Its circumference was 250 to 300 miles (Y. Chwang). Capital was on the Sea. The state was rather a peninsula, on the West side of R. Hugli. Tamālikā was the port. Jaimini, in his Mahabhārata, says that the Peacock Dynasty was the oldest here. The first King was Mayurādhvaja, his queen was Kumud-vati. When the Horse of Yudhisthira had reached Tamralipta, Prince Tamra-dhvaja arrested it. A fierce fight ensued: the Pandavas being defeated, they made friends with him. The last king of the dynasty named Nih-sanka Narayana died childless.

A Chief, Kaha Bhamika by name and a fisherman by caste, next occupied the throne. His dynasty lasted some time. After them came a Kṣātya dynasty.

The Kṣatriya heroes of Tamralipta were all killed by the arrows of Parasurama—Mahabh. Drona Book, Chap. 70. In the days of Ramayana, Tamralipta was prob. a part of Kalinga. Tamralipta is repeatedly mentioned in the Mahabhārata. Its king was defeated by Bhima. In the War, its raja fought against the Pandavas. The kings here are called Mlecchhas i.e. corrupt in morals and manners. Jaimini calls Tomluk by the name of Ratnagiri. Mahavansa—Tamra-lipti. Megasthenes—Taluctoe. Ptolemy—Tomalites. Certainly these parts were mostly peopled by brave Dravidians.

Pundra-Vardhans, lit. nurse of Pod people, a fishermen class, was North Bengal. Its circumference
was 667 miles. The people were very brave. The Pod people still exist.

The deltas of the Ganges and Brahmaputra were called the Anupa Desa i.e., Low Lands, later Samatata. This included the entire Presidency Division, Faridpur, Basail, Noakhali, Tippera and Vikrampur. Dacca and Mymensingh then formed a part of Pundra Vardhana or Kamarupa.

II. Kama-rupa—appears to have been an ancient country with Prag-jyotishpuri as capital.

Acc. to Purans, about 1500 B.C. one Mahi-ranga was the first Aryan King here. 4 Kings of his dynasty followed him. Then we hear of tyrant Naraka about 1400 B.C. The Harivansa, Chap. 121, gives the following note on Naraka. In boyhood, he was brought up by Rajarshi Janaka of Videha. This heroic Brahm-min lad of 16, established his power over Kamarupa. His friend Vána, son to Bali, was ruler of the Upper Assam, with his capital at Sonitapur, now Tejpur. Vána was very wicked and tyrannical. Naraka also grew up so. Once Vasista went to see the goddess Kâmekhya. But Naraka did not allow him to enter the city. Nay the sage was moreover maltreated. Krishna attacked Kama-rupa, fought with Naraka and killed him. Naraka had 4 sons, Krishna set up the eldest Bhaga-datta on the throne and then returned to Dwarka. Bhagadatta was heroic and his kingdom extended to Indo-China to the east and to the Bay of Bengal to the south. Bhagadatta was followed by Bajra-datta, Dharma-pala, Raina-pala, Kâmapala,
Prithvi-pala, Suvásu and others successively on the throne.

Before the Imperial Sacrifice of Yudhisthira, Vasudeva, king of Pundra (North Bengal) became very powerful and formed a league with the Hunter-Chief Ekalavya, Jarasandha of Magadh, Naraka of Kamarupa and Vana of Sonitpur (Tejpur). When Naraka was killed, Vasudeva challenged Krishna. A great fight ensued in which the Pundra Chief was killed. The King of Kasi, another ally, then fought with Krishna but perished with his whole family. Kasi was burnt down. (Hari-Vamsa), Udvritta—Bhavishya Book, Chap. 19 to 21. Also, Matsya Purana Chap. 207


The Mahabharata gives us a short geography of Far East India. We have already spoken of the Anupa Dasa i.e. Netherlands. The eastern most parts were also called Patala i.e. Lower Province, as the lands here were almost on the sea-level, from which the later name of Samatata. Hill Tippera and the Hill Tracts about Chittagong were called Nāga-Loka. An arm of the Bay of Bengal then extended up to Sylhet and Cachar, Manipur was not far from the Bay. Arjuna
reached Manipur, going through the sea-coast. Many ascetics lived on the Mahendra hill of Manipur. The two houses of Manipur and Tippera had already been brought under Aryan influence. Arjuna married two princesses of those two houses. Few Princely Houses in India can vie with them in high antiquity. The Princes of Tippera are noted as patrons of learning.

The same Epic mentions the following hills, viz Sati, later Sri-punja from which Chera-punji; Khasa, Khasia; Jayanti, Jaintia; Naga, Nâgh Hills; Ganesa Giri is prob. Gora Hills.

(c) The Deccan. Professor Wilson thinks that the civilization of the South may possibly be extended even to ten centuries before Christ.

Dr. Caldwell says, "The Deccan had been civilized long before the Brahminic influence spread over the South.

The following, amongst others, were the States of the South before 1400 B.C.:—Mekhala, Utkala (Orissa), Kalinga (Upper Part of Madras Presidency), Kosala, Chedi (Central Province), Dasarna (a Vindhyan State) Malwa, Avanti, Vidarbha (Berar) Bhoja a part of Central India), Konkun, Andhra, Dravira, Kishkindhya (Beilary District), Pandya, Kerala, Mutsya, Kausika, Pundra, Chola, Risthika Mahishaka, Vidisa (Bhilsa), Janasthan, South India and Lanka, Dandaka, Haibaya &c.

1. Utkala (Orissa) is said to have been founded by Prince Utkala, a son of ila, daughter to Manu, about 2750 B.C. Manu (Chap. 10. Verse 44) and Baudhayana
call it a country of fallen Aryans. Ancient Orissa was sometimes separate and sometimes a part of Kalinga. Prince Odra, 13th generation downward from Yayati, the renowned Lunar King, occupied it and gave his name from which rose Odra Dea, now Orissa. Reference:—Kârûryan, Kishkindhya Book, Cant. 41; Mahâbh. Drona Book Chap. 4.

2. Kalinga (Upper Mâdras) said to have been founded by a son of Bali driven out by Indra and Vishnu from his kingdom on the Upper Indus, about 2800 B.C. Originally it was Orissa and a part of Bengal.


The Brahmaca Vyâvarta Purâna makes another early mention of Kalinga where, about 2700 B.C., a rich and powerful merchant named Biradha, was king. His son was Drunina and grandson, Samudhi. This Prince left by his wife and children for extreme liberality, wandered and came to the river Pushpa-bhadra where he met Suratha, great-grandson of Budha—the first king of the Lunar dynasty, who had left his capital Kolahagari, being defeated and ousted by Nandi. Both, as friends went to Pushkara, a sacred place, 7 miles from Ajmir where they met the sage Medhasa at whose instance
they worshipped the goddess Durgā and by her grace, regained their kingdoms after a year.

Kalinga once reached the R. Vaitarani of Orissa.


The circumference of this powerful state was 833 miles. Its ancient capital was Srikākula, corrupted into Chilkākula, 50 miles S. W. of Kalinga Paltan, now Raj Mahendri Cunningham).

In the Great War, the Kalinga king Srutāyu fought with his two sons against the Pandavas and the three were killed by Bhima.

Kosala perh. modern Gondowana : about 1000 miles in circumference. Its capital was Chandā (Cunningham) or Bairgath or Bhandaka. (J. R. A. S.)

From Kalinga to Kosala (Kiasalo) was 317 miles (Y. Chwang) Ref. Mahabh. Court Book. Chap. 31.

4. Chedi (Central Province) is mentioned in the Rig Veda VIII. 5. It was the kingdom of Tripura, a powerful Dāitya Aryan killed by Rudra (Siva) in the 29th century B. C. Ancient capital Traipuri is now Tevarī, 6 miles north west of Jhabalpur (Javāli-pattan) Sambhāla, the Tyrant of Chedi, was killed by Krishna.

5. Dāśāraṇa was a country under the Vindhyas.

6. Malwā is mentioned in the Rām. Kishkindhya Book, Canto 41, verse 10. In the Mahabh. Sanjaya describes to Dhritarāshtra both Malwa and Avanti. Capital Avanti was on R. Avanti (Sipāl). The circumference of the Kingdom was about 1000 miles.

7. Bidadhāna (Berar and its’ neighbourhood): an ancient civilised State. Capital was Kundina-nagar.
Lopamudra, wife of Agastya and a lady Rishi of several Rig-Vedic hymns, was a princess of this land (2nd century B.C.) Damayanti also was born here.

8. Bhoja, prob. a State of Central India. These Bhojas were an off-shoot of Yadu dynasty. The mother of the Pandava Princes was a Bhoja Princess.

9. Kerala. Ancient Kerala included Malabar, Canara, and Konkan. Tradition asserts that the great Brahmin hero Parasu-rama drove the pirates from the coast and colonised it with Aryans from the North (13th century B.C.)

The language of Mahārāstra is Aryan, not Dravidian.

10. Andhra is mentioned in the Ait. Brahmāna work, in the Mahābhārata and the Sutra works.

11. South India, and Langa were under Rāvans, a half-caste Aryan (1500 B.C.): Lanka, later Ceylon—Sinhala, was the ancient Tamra-Varna corrupted into Pali Tāmraparṇi, foreign Taprobane.

12. The Haibaya kingdom, with capital at Mahismati, now Choli Mahasvar, was on the Narmada near its mouths.

Most of these Southern States came into being after 2,000 B.C. So, the Brahmāna Works of the North knew very little of them. Some of those States were large, some small, very small, not larger than a modern district. Some were civilised; some half-civilised, while others barbarous. A considerable area was covered by jungles and forests peopled by wild men and beasts.

111. Religion.—Europe has been always behind India in intellectual and religious freedom. While the
history of Europe is marked by intolerance and abominable persecutions, India has been ever noted for full spiritual liberty. India has produced all varieties of religion such as rationalism, theism, atheism, materialism etc. Kapila’s rational religion was confined to the wise alone. It was established in the court of Janadeva of Videha (North Bebar). Jainism was gaining ground. The Rishis still worshiped the Supreme Being (Brahman) through the Great Powers of Nature. They were in general, averse to animal sacrifice. They would offer the Soma beer and various grains. While, the children of the Devas who had now become powerful kings in India, favoured animal sacrifice, gave great importance to sacrificial ceremonies, still worshipping the Vedic gods.

The Māhābhārata has a fine discourse on the point. “Once, about 1500 B.C., the Rishis and the Devas quarrelled and asked the powerful prince Vasu, a staunch Vishnuvite and a friend of Indra, “With what, either grains (Aśadhī) or animals (pasu), are sacrifices to be performed?” In reply, Vasu said, “By beast.” Hence the Seers cursed him, “You have shown partiality to the Devas, by not speaking according to the Sāstras. So, go down to India and live there &c.” This Prince Vasu son to Kṛiti-rāja, a Lunar king, was a great favourite of Indra at whose instance, he came to India and occupied the Chādi Kingdom. Indra gave him an air-car in which he could move with great skill. He was therefore called upari-śāra (aeronaut). His son Prince Vrihadratha founded his dynasty in Magadh about 1450 B.C.
TRIAL RELIGION.

True, gods were still worshipped and hymns uttered at sacrifices, but true veneration was shown to ceremonies. The Vedic Priests allowed no departure from sacrifices, acts, movements given in the Brähmana works. In place of simple and sincere worship, superstition gradually came in. Even penances were prescribed for mishaps. (Alitereya Brähmana, V and VII).

Various were the sacrifices, from simple to highly elaborate: Some lasted a year, some even 10 or 12 years. Sacrifices were followed by gifts of cattle, gold, garments, food & c., to the Brähmanas and the poor.

The animals as victims are mentioned in the Satapatha, I, 2, 3, 7, 8. Even Human Sacrifice, though very rare, did exist in the Epic Age.

Sacrifices were of over thousand kinds. Of them, 21 were chief viz., 7 Havîh Sacrifice, 7 Soma Sacrifice and 7 Pāka Sacrifice. (Gautama).

The 7 Havîh-Sacrifices were. 1. Setting up the sacred fire. 2. Daily oblation. 3. Full and New Moon Sacrifice. 4. Harvest Sacrifice. 5. Four monthly Sacrifice. 6. Animal Sacrifice. 7. An expiation for over-indulgence in Soma Beer.

It is needless to enter into the details of other ceremonies.

There is evidence to show that new gods also were coming into our pantheon. Arjuna (Indra) is mentioned in the Satapatha Brähmana. Rudra (Siva) is mentioned in the White Yajur Veda, Chap. XVI. The Kausitaki Brähmana and also the Satapatha Brähmana (II 6. 2. 9) give great importance to Isâns or Mahâdeva
(Siva). Supremacy of Vishnu among the gods, is found in the S. P. Bráhma, XIV. 1. 1. There was no worship of Krishna yet. He is mentioned simply as the son of Devaki and a pupil of Ghora Augirasa in Chha. Upa. III. 17. 6.

King Priyavrata of Bithoor had started the worship of the goddess Śaśikā. The worship of Durgā had been started by the sage Medhara at Pushkara, near Ajmir. Sacrifice to Dakṣa and Pārvati is found in S. P. Bráh. II. 4. 4. 6. Umbā Haimavati explained to Indra the nature of Brāhmaṇa, (Kena Upanishad). Victory of the gods over the Asuras (Ait. Bráh. VI. 15; S. P. Bráh. I. 2. 5.) The Mundakopaniṣad mentions Kali and other goddesses. Krishna had started the worship of Sarasvati, the goddess of Learning. Goddess Śri is invoked in Taittiriya Aranyaka. Professor E. B. Cowell holds that the hints of these goddesses are found in the Rig-Veda, itself. The worship of Sun was set up by Śāmbha at Mooltan.

In this Epic Age, we find mention of temples, idols and their worship. (i) The Pándavas prostrated themselves before the gods in the temple (Mahábhārata).

Atheism and Materialism also were in full force. Chārvāka was its great preacher and philosopher. This Chārvāka should be distinguished from another Chārvāka mentioned in the Mahábhārata.

Theists and Atheists all aimed at salvation and all held that True Wisdom alone can lead to that. Different thinkers show different ways to the attainment of that wisdom. We possess no regular work on early Atheism.
Mádhanacharya, in his *Śrava-Darsana-Saṁgraha* has given us a distorted sketch of the Atheistic tenets then current or known. The teachings of Chárváka were:—

1. Do not practise painful austerities for the fancied bliss of the next world.
2. Practise *ahimsā* i.e. entire harmlessness which is the highest religion.
3. Like the cowards, do not depend on divine grace and Fate: Not Luck, but Pluck.
4. Depend on yourself: Self-Reliance is true Bliss: Self-Reliance is salvation.
5. There is no God; there is no next world.
6. Do not believe the Vedas nor the Priests who are mere frauds and cheats.
7. Never do a thing without reason: No reason and no religion.
8. Matter is eternal and composed of four elements. He denies the fifth i.e. āyoma (Ether).
9. Only seeing (pratyakṣa = perception) is believing.

The Materialists were rather a sect of the Atheists. They were sensualists and sought enjoyment only in life, leaving at death "as many debts as possible." Probably they had a scientific scripture of Eroticism.

Jainism and Buddhism were of rather later origin. Atheism was very old. It came to India from the North. Some of the *A-suras* (lit. people without wine) were staunch Atheists. Atheism was an anti-Vedic creed. They were sound practical men, worshippers of Right Conduct,—of Duty, 'the stern daughter of the voice of God.' The atheists preached against the corruptions of the Vedic rites &c., such as drinking, immoral practices, slaughter of animals, suicide as a sacrifice, Human Sacrifice and so forth. In ancient India, these atheists
were supreme and very powerful. So subtle were their arguments that even many great pandits, being defeated, turned atheists, according to the custom of those days. In time, Hindus, Jains and Buddhists combated them wholly. Now they are extinct. The Jains and the Buddhists are not atheists,—says Prof. Rhys Davids.

Towards the latter part of this Age, Society became so priest-ridden, barbarous and debased that even Rishis and thoughtful Warriors became sceptical.

The Upanishads now established Monoism

IV. Literature.—(a) Sacred: The Vedas, the Vedāngas, the Brāhmaṇas, Aranyakas and the Upanishads form the so-called revealed literature of the age. The Rig-Veda.—Most of the hymns were composed in the Vedic Age and first compiled by Agnī Deva in the same. New hymns were composed till some time before 1400 B.C. for, they mention Devāpi, Saṅtana, Dasa-ratha, Rāma and other things. They were finally arranged about 1400 B.C. The other Vedas also were compiled in the Epic Age.

The Hymns of the Rig-Veda mention different classes of priests who performed different duties at the sacrifices. The Adhvaryus were entrusted with the material performance of sacrifice. They measured the altar, built the altar, prepared the vessels, fetched wood, water and immolated animals.

The Udgātris sang or chanted hymns. The Hotris recited hymns. The Brāhmaṇs presided at sacrifices over all the rest.
The Adhvaryus and the Udgatris required special training and manuals. The Rig-Veda has the name Yajus and Saman. The formulas and chants, collected and compiled later on, are the Yajur and the Śāma Vedas, as we have now. Surya Deva, the younger brother to Brahmā had at first compiled a portion of the Śāma Veda. Dr. Stevenson and Prof. Bentley have shown that Śāma Veda is mostly a selection from the Rig-Veda hymns, set to music for a special purpose.

The Yajur Veda.—The more ancient Black Yajur Veda is called Taittiriya Sanhitā. Tittiri probably compiled or promulgated it in its present shape. In the Anukramani of the Atreyā recension of this Veda, we are told that this Veda was handed down by Vaisampāyana to Yaska Paingi; by Paingi to Tittiri, by Tittiri to Ukha and Ukha to Atreyā. This shows that the existing oldest recension of Yajur Veda was not the first recension. The White Yajur Veda, also called Vājasaneyi Sanhitā was probably compiled and promulgated by Yajna-valkya, priest to Janaka after 1350 B.C.

The arrangement of the two Yajur Vedas differ. In the Black Yajur Veda, the sacrificial formulas are followed by dogmatic explanation and by accounts of ceremonials belonging to them. In the White Yajur Veda, the formulas only are given in the book, while the explanation and ritual are given separately in the Satapatha Brahmana. Yajna-valkya was the promulgator of this new school. Its contents show that it was not the composition of one man or of one age.
Of its 48 chapters, the first 18 are cited in full and explained in due order in the first 9 books of the Satapatha Brahmana. The formulas of these 18 chapters are found in the old Black Yajur Veda. These 18 are perhaps the work of Yajna-valkya. The next 7 chapters are probably later addition. The remaining 15 are still later addition and are plainly called Parishishta (Klila) i.e. supplement. The Atharva Veda, though composed early, was, however, recognised after the Epic Age. Some Brahmana works alluded to the growth of a class of literature called Atharvān girasas. The mention of three and three Vedas only appears from Aitareya Brahmana, V 32. S.P. Brahmana IV. 6. 7; Aitareya Aranyakā III. 2. 3. Vrīhad- Aranyakā Upa. I, 5. 3 Chh. Upa. III and VII. This last work classes Atharva Veda with itihāsa. The Brahmans and the Upanishads of the Atharva Veda alone recognise it uniformly. So, the Gopatha Brahmana pleads its necessity. Prof. Whitney says wrongly that modern works are connected with Atharvan and Angiras—half mythical names of ancient and venerated Indian families, for recognition.

Jayanta (7th century A.D.) in his famous commentary on Hindu Logic, discusses among other things, the high antiquity of the Atharva Veda.

Chāṇakya in his Artha-Sastra, the Taittiriya Brahmana (last Pra-pathaka, chap. 18), the Satapatha Brahmana Kanda 11, prapathaka 4) and other works distinctly allude to three Vedas only. Next, he cites authorities in favor of it:—(1) S. P. Brahmana (XIII.
3. 7); (2) The Chha. Upa. VII. 6; also III. 3; (3) Bhatvacharya an ancient authority. (4) The, Taittiriya Upa.; Taittiriya Brahmana. (5) The Yajur Veda.

The Atharva Veda has 20 Books and 6,000 verses. One sixth of it is in prose. One sixth of Book X is taken from the Rig-Veda. The 19th Book is a supplement to the previous 18. The 20th is composed of extracts from the Rig-Veda. It chiefly consists of formulas intended to protect men against baleful influences of divine powers, diseases, harmful animals and curses of enemies from doing harm. It is full of incantations for long life, wealth, recovery from illness; invocations for good luck in journey, gaming etc. These resemble the like hymns in the Rig-Veda. Prof. Weber points out that in the Rig-Veda, they are apparently additions. The special feature of this Veda is its Brahma-Vidya i.e. knowledge of the Supreme Being. Sāyana supports it and says that the other three Vedas give the bliss of heaven, but the Atharvan combines both World and God.

§ The Brahmana Literature.

Perh. 2500 to 2,000 B.C.

The Brahmana Works—the Talmud of the Hindus give details of the ceremonies, their origin and meaning, with curious legends, divine and human.
"The Brahmanas are theological prose works held to be divinely revealed and to form part of the canon. Their purport is to supply a dogmatic exposition of the sacrificial ceremonial. Their contents, generally uninteresting, are yet of considerable importance, both as regards the history of Indian institutions, and as the oldest body of Indo-European prose, of a generally free, vigorous simple form, affording valuable glimpses backward at the primitive condition of unfettered Indo-European talk."

Prof. Whitney.

"In the Brahmana works, Hindus have shewn how far human intellect can rise in thoughts."

Prof. Weber.

"Their contents wearisome in the extreme, however give a few gleams of beautiful thoughts. Their scientific value may be great, but they possess no interest for general readers. The Brahminical intellect is here debased by a meaningless ritual."

Prof. E. B. Cowell.

The Rig-Veda has two Brahmanas viz, the Aitareya, by Mahidasa son to Itara, one of the many wives of a Rishi; and the Kausitaki by the sage Kausitaka. These two agree in many respects. Only the last three chapters of Aitareya. are not found in the Kausitaki, which probably belong to a later age.

The Sama Veda has Tandya or Pancha-Vinsa Brahmanas, Sadvinsa Brahmana, the Mantra-Brahmana and the Upanishad. These works, in 40 chapters, form the Brahmanas of the Sama Veda.
The Black Yajur Veda has only Taittiriya Brahmana. The White Yajur Veda has the voluminous Satapatha Brahmana. It is the work of many and not of Yajnavalkya alone. Its first 9 Books are the oldest in 60 chapters called the Šatashipatha in the time of Panji, 2nd century B.C. (Weber). The remaining 5 Books in 40 chapters, are of later date.

The opinions of Yajna-Valkya are authoritative in the first 5 Books, while those of Śāndilya, in the next 4 Books.

Sanjīvīputra reconciled the two schools and finally adjusted the first 9 Books. 5 more were added at a later age.

The Atharva Veda has the Gopātha Brahmana a comparatively recent work. Its contents are a medley derived from different sources.

§ The Aranyakas and the Upanishads.

2,000 to 1400 B.C.

The Aranyakas.—These philosophical works, closely connected with the Vedas and the Brahmanas, relate to the forest and are meant to be read by those who have retired from the world and are ascetics. They are supplements to the Brahmanas works. They are the deposits of bold speculations.

The Rig-Veda has Aītārīya Aranyakas by Mahidāra and Kausitaki by the sage Kausitaka. The Black Yajur Veda has Taittiriya Aranyakas. The last Book
of the Satapatha Brahmana is called its Aranyaka. The Sama and Atharva Vedas have no Aranyakas.

The Upanishads.—Upanishad literally means “a sitting near the preceptor” for spiritual wisdom. Hence a book of that kind: from Upani, near and sad, to sit. Another meaning is, thorough destruction of ignorance. from Upani, entire and sad to destroy.

These philosophical works are of purely speculative nature and are the first attempts at a systematic treatment of metaphysical questions.

The total number of these works is 1194. Of them, some 150 are rather old and important. The rest are modern and enter into sectarian views. The best and most ancient are 10. They are short treatises forming part of the Aranyakas or detached works composed in the latter part of the Epice Age. They are in dialogues; generally in prose, occasionally in prose and verse, or in verse alone. The authors are poets. They breathe a freedom of thought only found in the Rig-Vedic hymns themselves.

The Karma Kanda or the Ceremonial Portion of the Vedas is meant for purifying the mind and preparing it for sublime truths. The Upanishads deal with the Jnana-Kanda (wisdom) and are parent of the Vedanta philosophy.

The Aitareya and Kausitaki belong to the Rig-Veda. The Chhandogya and Taittirikas, called Kena, belong to the Sama-Veda. The Taittiriyas and Kathas belong to the Black Yajur Veda. The Katha more properly belongs to the Ath. Veda. The Vaja-Saneyi
QUESTION OF LIBERATION.

(13a) and the *Vrihad Aranyaka* belong to the White Vajur Veda. The *Mandaka* and *Prasna* belong to the Atharva Veda, rich in Upanishads, having no less than 52. The Mandukya and Prasna are most important in the Vedanta School.

The question of *Moksha* i.e. Liberation from the earthly encumbrances, appears to have attracted the serious attention of the Aryans. Of course, the notion of *Salvation* has not been always the same. The Rig-Veda says that *Action, Wisdom and Faith give salvation*. By *Action*, the early Seers meant pious meditation and harmless sacrifice done by the offering of grains and Soma beer. The Deva Aryans of the North gave great importance to ritual religion. Their animal sacrifice was an innovation. Strong opposition arose from several great thinkers. The Rishis protested it. Narayana discovered *Brahman*—The Supreme Being—the Highest Self—the Great Source of all. Vâk Devi explained this Monotheism in her famous Devi-Suktas. Uma Haimavati explained it to Indra and other Devas. The Rishis accepted it and introduced it into the later Vedic hymns. The authors of the Atharva Veda also devoted a Chapter to it. Kapila blamed the animal sacrifice and gave a solution of his own, based on Reason alone. Rishabhâ Deva, in his Jainism gave another solution; while the Atheists showed a new path altogether.

The Children of the Deva-Aryans brought their ancestral religion to the North Indian plains, where they became powerful kings. For a century or two
the ritual religion with the animal sacrifice, might have been followed with the true spirit. But it declined gradually till at last both religion and politics became corrupt to the extreme before 1400 B.C.

Luckily a re-action followed soon. In the field of politics, Krishna set to work in right earnest to establish a Dharma Rajya i.e. kingdom built on righteous principles. Sick of elaborate meaningless rites, some new thinkers earnestly enquired about the nature of the Supreme Being, Creation, Soul and Salvation. Such enquiries gave rise to the Upanishads. "In them we find an awakening from the dream of endless ceremonies, to grapple with the deepest problems of life and eternity. Though childish and fantastic, yet they are full of fine thoughts and deep meaning." The great teachers of this highest truth are not the Brahmanas, but Kshatriyas with whom arose many great and noble thoughts in India. The Brahmanas adopted this new idea and then secured the monopoly and became teachers.

The idea of a Supreme Being, a Universal Spirit, an all-pervading Soul—is the keystone of the Upanishads. Monotheism generally admits a God, Creator, as distinct from the created beings. The Monotheism of Upanishad recognises God as the Universal Being—all things emanated from Him, are part of Him, will mingle in Him and have no separate existence. This lesson Satyakama Javala learnt from Nature. Yajnavalkya taught it his wife Maitreyi. This idea is taught in the Upanishad in a hundred similes, metaphors and
UPANISHADS EXPLAINS CREATION.  441


The idea of Monoism is carried to its furthest limits. No Dualism is recognised in the Upishtras. In Kapila's Sankhya, Nature is independent of Purusha. But in the Upishtras it is not so. Here, everything is a manifestation of the Universal Being.

Upashad attempts to solve the mystery of creation:

From non-existent came existent; then the mundane egg; gradually the sun.—Chh. Upa. III. 19. The Chha. Upa. VI. 2 gives a different theory:—At first there was only one without a second. He sent forth fire; that water and water earth.

Mahidasa's Ait. Aranyaka, II. 1. 1, derives creation from water. Prāna and his companions made the world. Water is said to be the material cause of creation. Cf. R. V. X. 129; also the Old Testament. The V. A. Upanishad states, "In the beginning, there was Self alone. From Him came a male and a female and from them all.

They discovered a harmony or unity in the creation; that was Brahman, Self, Purusha or Prana. What becomes of the Soul after death? Good acts lead to future bliss, but true knowledge only leads to union with the Universal Being. The doctrine of the transmigration of soul is fully developed in the Upishtras. Souls go to the moon and moon sends them back to be born again according to their deeds and merits.
The soul passes into Brahman by superior moral excellence. Prashana Jaivali taught the Transmigration of Soul. Souls come back, with rain, are born again as rice, corn &c. Persons eat food and begot children. Good actions lead to good birth.—Chh Upa. V. 10.

Final emancipation of the soul and its reunion with Brahman is given below:—

"He who knows it, after having become quiet subdued, satisfied, patient and collected, sees Self in Self, sees all in Self. Evil does not overcome him, he overcomes all evil. Free from evil, free from sordidness, from doubt, he becomes a true Brahmana and enters the Brahma world."—Chh Upa. VIII. 14. 1.

This is beatitude. This is union with Brahman. Buddha's Nirvana rose from it.

The Value and Influence of the Upanishads:—The Upanishads give man a divine origin. They set aside the Animal Law viz., "Man is the enemy of man" and establish the Spiritual Law viz. "All men are but kindred expressions of the one Self." (1) "No Hindu works have probably exercised a wider influence on the world. These forlorn guesses at truth are constantly spoken of as Eastern Philosophy. Familiar ideas in the Phaedrus, Empedocles or Pythagoras, in the Neo-Platonism of the Alexandrians and also in the Gnostic Schools. Plotinus alone tried to free the Greek philosophy from Hindu influence. The Cabals of the Jews and the Sufism of the Muhammadans seem to be derived from the same source. We are too apt to
look on the ancient world as a scene of stagnation. There were travellers and circulation of ideas. Spread of Buddhism shows how men’s minds were awake to new ideas. Then why should the tradition of the Eastern origin of much of early Greek philosophy be incredible, or even improbable?

Prof. E. B. Cowell.

(2) "It is impossible to read the Vedanta or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India."

Sir William Jones.

(3) Victor Cousin, the famous French historian of Philosophy, says:—'When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all, those of India which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth and truths so profound and which make such contrast with the meaness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy."

(4) Friedirich Schlegel says:—'Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason, as it is set forth by the Greek philosophies, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of Oriental idealism, like a feeble Promethean spark in the flood of heavenly glory of the noon-day sun, faltering
and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished. The divine origin of man is continually inculcated to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him in the struggle and incite him to consider a re-union and re-corporation with Divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion."

(5) The great German philosopher Schopenhauer (1819) says:—"From every sentence, deep original and sublime thoughts arise and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us and original thoughts of kindred spirits. In the whole world, there is no study except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating, as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death."

6. Prof. Max Müller says:—"If these words of Schopenhauer required any endorsement, I should willingly give it as the result of my own experience during a long life devoted to the study of many philosophies and many religions.

7. Dr. Matheson says:—"It is not too much to say that the mind of the West with all its undoubted impulses towards the progress of humanity, has never exhibited such an intense amount of intellectual force as is to be found in the religious speculations of India. These have been the cradle of all western speculations and wherever the European mind has risen into heights of philosophy, it has done so because the Brahman was the pioneer. There is no intellectual truth in the West which has not its earlier discussion in the East and there-
is no modern solution of that problem which will not be found anticipated in the East."

8. In "Religion and Reality"—a recent philosophical work, Mr J. H. Tucknell says:—In our main conclusion we have long ago been anticipated by the religious philosophy of India. In the West, our philosophy has been surely but slowly moving to the same inevitable monistic goal. In Prof. Ladd of Harvard we have a notable Western thinker who, by a process of careful and consistent reasoning concrete in character has also arrived at the conclusion that the ultimate reality must be conceived of as an Absolute Self of which we are finite forms or appearances. But it is the crowning glory of the Vedanta that it so long ago announced, re-iterated and emphasized this deep truth in a manner that does not permit us for a moment to forget it or explain it away. This great stroke of identity, this discernment of the ultimate unity of all things in Brahman or the One Absolute Self seems to us to constitute the master-piece and highest achievement of India's wonderful metaphysical and religious genius to which the West has yet to pay the full tribute which is its due."

9. Sir John Woodroffe says:—"The uniqueness of India consists in her religion of eternity. Indian doctrine is not one-sided, but has a time-religion also. The glory of India is that of a high spirituality, a unique genius for grasping and expounding the realities behind the phenomenal world and the innermost meanings of life."
§ The Doctrine of KARMA (Action) and Re-Birth.

In the earlier Books of the Rig-Veda, there is little reference to a Future Life. But there are many hymns in Books I, IX and X, which give an idea of it in plain words. There is, however, no idea of Heaven and Hell in the Rig-Veda. According to Karma i.e. action, one would, after death, enter a kingdom of light, bliss and delight or a world of darkness, dejection and sorrow. In the Brahmanas works of the Vedas, mention is made of Swarga i.e. Heaven. The Doctrine of Karma (action), future life, nature and transmigration of the soul &c., are fully developed in the Upanishads. The doctrine has a strong rational basis. Some allege that it has produced great evil effects on the Indian people, such as enfeeblement of will, absence of energy and disinclination for progress. This is hardly right. For meditative India has produced many eminent men of action, letters and arts.

Philosophers Hume and Cudworth considered the re-incarnation doctrine the most rational theory of immortality.

Prof. William Knight holds that pre-existence has fewer difficulties to face than the rival hypotheses. Once practically the whole civilized world embraced it, as the greater number, nearly two-thirds of the Earth's people now do. It has been known since the dawn of history, and held by both primitive peoples and the highly learned.
It appears since the spread of Christianity. It is said to have been held by the ancient Egyptians (though this is disputed), by some of the Greeks, notably by Empedocles, Pythagoras, Plato, the Neo-Platonists, and was taught in the Mysteries. It was held by some of the Latins and by the Gauls, the Druids, and the followers of the Edda.

It was in primitive Christianity, as for example in Origen. The Christian Gospels assume it (Vide “Reincarnation in the New Testament” by J. M. Pryse).

It appears sporadically again in Europe in the Middle Ages, Christianity and Moslem resisted the belief in Europe and Asia. The doctrine yet in Europe has never entirely disappeared. Recently it has gained a number of adherents:—E. D. Walker’s “Reincarnation.” Rev. W. R. Ager’s “A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life.”

The grand Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno burnt alive by the Church as a heretic. The German philosophers Schelling, Fichte (younger), Leibnitz Schopenhauer and the great poets and writers Goethe, Harder, Lessing, The English Christian Platonist Dr. Henry More and others. Philosophers Cudworth and Hume. The French and English Scientists Flammarion, Figuer, Brewster, and the modern Christian Theologians Julius Muller, Durner, Ernesti, Ruckert Edward Breecher and W. R. Alger. Many others are named in those works. It is held by a large number of poets. Prof. Mc Taggart has an Essay on Pre-Existence. The Jains and Buddhists adopted and preached it.

The *Karma doctrine* is not *somatic*. According to it, Man is a little *Brahma* Sphere. i.e. microcosm. He is master of his destiny amidst unfortunate conditions due to his previous actions.

*Nishkama Karma* i.e. selfless action leads to *Liberation*. The Doctrine of *Karma* reconciles man to his lot. It is not *selfish*. It has full room for social service and philanthropy. He who serves another serves *Self*. "To do good to others is the highest religion."

The Vedanta gives profoundly based reason for all charity and brotherhood.

The Brahmins also framed new laws of phonetics, ceremonials, grammar, etymology, metre and astronomy, to make the Vedic study easier. The works were lost or replaced by later manuals.

(b) Secular Literature:—Brahma, Vivasvan and Sukra were the secular poets of the Vedic Age. Valmiki was the first secular poet of India. He was born of the noted Brighu clan to which Sukra belonged. His father was Valmika and his name was Rama-kara lit. "A mine of Gems." Having neglected education early, he began life as a robber, hunting games and looting travellers. Once two travellers awakened him to the nature and extent of his crimes. He now grew penitent, turned over a new leaf and took to honourable course of life. His poetic genius burst forth with the change. About 1430 B.C., he wrote his lyrical epic the *Rama-yana*. The epic, as we have it now, is complete in Seven
Books and some 25,000 verses. But the *Mahabibhasha* tells us that the poet wrote it in 5 Books (II to VI) and 12,000 verses. Book Seven was added much later. Book One was added after Book VII. Besides, there are many interpolations. Book I and VII also are very old; for a verse from Book VII was quoted in the *Sama-Grihya-Parvishta*. The canto on Sita's Ordeal was thrown into the War Book, after the composition of Book VII. This interpolation also is old, for it (Sita's Entry into Fire) is mentioned in Bana's *Harsha-Charita*.

Vālmiki, a contemporary poet, wrote his epic in the life-time of Rama, its hero. This appears from a saying of Nārada. It also tallies with the last Book. The antiquity of Adi Kanda, i.e. Book I, appears from Bana's *Kadambari*. Styles of different poets are perceived from a careful reading of the poem. At first the poem ran from Oudh Book to War Book. The *Mahabibhasha* gives only the stealing of Sita, her Deliverance and the Return of Rama to Oudh. It does not mention the first and the last Books.

The epic begins from the Oudh Book and leaves all mins. Rama's statement before Bharadvaja, Sita's description of her story to Rāvana, Lakshmana's description of Rama's life to Hanuman, Hanuman's account to Sita about Rama, Rama's going to the hermitage of Visvamitra, Breaking of Siva's Bow, Marriage of the Princes &c.

Several great wars, two terrible famines, general ignorance of the Brahmins, oppression of the tyrants
indeed made India most pitiable towards the close of the 15th century B.C. Prince Krishna righted the politics of India. Rishi Krishna now worked hard to preserve the ancient Hindu learning and thoughts.

Krishna (called from his black complexion) Dvaiapayana (island-born) Veda-Vyasa (arranger of the Vedas) or more popularly called Vyasa, the colossal figure of Sanskrit learning, was a versatile genius like his father Parásara. He collected the scattered and almost forgotten Vedic hymns and arranged, the Vedas, composed the Vedanta philosophy, compiled the Puranas, and history, wrote a History of the Great War, gave a law-book &c. Born of a woman of fisherman class, he was trained as a seer from his youth up. He was ugly in appearance, but very comely in learning, wisdom and religion. It is said that he was at first a staunch Sivite, but late in life, he turned a Vishnuvite. Having quarrelled with the Sivites of Benares, he tried to build a Kasi of his own on the eastern side of the Ganges. But he found no adherents. He had a residence in Kashmir where he composed most of his works. His son, the free-souled Suka-deva was a minister of king Janamejaya in whose reign, his epic the Bharata-Sankhita was first published.

Like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata also is a growth. Vyasa first wrote the outline of his epic in 8,800 verses. (Mahabh. Introd. I. 81). Again, in Mahabh. I. 101, he is said to have composed the Bharata-Sankhita in 24,000 verses. This original epic has undergone repeated revisions for sectarian and caste
purposes. The book, in its present form, was put by Vyasa who received it through another person from Vyasa. 24,000 verses out of 100,000 are alleged in the same place to be the work of the original poet. (Oriental Magazine, vol iii p. 133). By careful reckoning, several scholars have found that 24,000 verses still form the historical groundwork of the Epic. Vyasa was an eye-witness of the exploits which he recorded. Certainly there are things in the present book which could not be known to the first poet. As Krishna is defined, doubtless some parts were of later date. (Preface to the Vishnu Purana P. 19). Further, its claims to very high antiquity (14th century B.C.) are disproved by the advanced stage of the language used in most parts. Prof. Max Muller holds that the two Epics have been recast in modern Sanskrit,—a view hardly tenable (See ante.)

The Great Epic is mentioned as Bhārata and Mahābhārata in the Grihya Sutra of Asvalayana. The leading names and even the name of the poem itself are mentioned in Panini's Grammar (800 B.C.) The word Yavana mentioned in the poem, does not imply the Greeks of the 4th century B.C., but a people who lived in a part of Afghanistan—where Raja Varuna had been ruler in the 29th century B.C. (Rig-Veda). These Yavanas, as children of Varuna, may have been the ancestors of the Greeks, according to a Hindu tradition.

The Epic was familiar to the Hindus at least 3 or 3 centuries before Christ. (Oriental Magazine, Vol. III.
EPIC AGE: PRAISE OF THE EPICS.

P. 133). Patanjali also mentions it in his *Great Commentary* (140 B. C.)

The earliest direct mention of epic poetry in India is made by Dion Chrysostom (80 A. D.)

The Vedas, the Upanishads and the philosophies were the favourite studies of the learned class. The Epics and the Puranas were adapted for lightless women and the Sudras.

The *Mahabharata* in its present form, was compiled perhaps in the 5th century B. C.

*All except Colebrooke are enthusiastic in their praise of the two Epics. Nor is this admiration confined to critics alone. Even Dean Milman and Schlegel vie with Wilson and Jones in their applause for (i) The simplicity and originality of the composition. (ii) The sublimity, grace and pathos of particular passages. (iii) The natural dignity of the actors. (iv) The holy purity of manners and the inexhaustible fertility of imagination in the authors.

The story of Nala and Damayanti (an episode) is a model of beautiful simplicity. The *Bhagavat-Gita*—“Song Celestial”—a work of much later age—is admired for the clearness and beauty of the language and illustrations. It deserves high praise for the skill with which it is adapted to the original epic and for the tenderness and elegance of the narrative by means of which it is introduced.”

*Elphinstone.*

To the early foreign scholars, the Epics appeared as “utterly valueless” as histories; but sober modern
critics rightly call them "semi-historical romances." They are valuable as records of the manners and civilisation of ancient times. They now rank as popular Hindu Scriptures and exercise boundless influence on the Indians.

The Ramayana is prior to the Mahabharata for the following grounds:

(i) Tradition makes Vālmiki ēdi kavi i.e. the first secular poet of India.

(ii) The language of Vālmiki approaches nearer than any other Sanskrit poem to the early form used in the Vedas.

(iii) An Epitome of it is introduced into the Mahābhārata itself.

(iv) The names of the sages and seers mentioned in the Ramayana, are found in the other, but not vice versa. Even the name of Vālmiki occurs in the Mahabharata.

(v) The Ramayana knows nothing of Vyasa, the Puranas and the Battle of Kurukshetra.

(vi) The Mahabharata speaks of Vyasa and the 4 Vedas. The Ramayana never mentions the 4 Vedas. It gives Trayi i.e. 3 Vedas. It makes repeated mention of the 6 Vedangas, Sruti, Smriti (law-books), &c. but never the 4 Vedas.

(vii) The 4 Vedas, the Sankhya, the Nyaya (Logic), Upanishad, itihasa (history), Vedangas, Nataka (drama), stories &c. are all in the Mahabharata, but not at all in the Ramayana.
(viii) The Ramayana holds the systems of *Karma* (action) and *Yoga* (abstraction of mind), but known as *Jnana* (wisdom) and *Bhakti* (faith).

(ix) Valmiki was the contemporary of Rama and Vyasa of the Pandavas whose exploits they sang. At the end of the Lanka War, Rama had placed Prince Bibhishana on the throne of Lanka. The same Bibhishana tendered his submission to the Pandava Prince out on conquest of the Deccan. Again, Kripa and Kripa, grand children of Satamanda, priest to the marriage of Rama and Sita, were fostered by King Sántanu of Hastinapura. Kripa was married to Drona, the military preceptor to the Kuru and the Pandu Princes. This shows that Rama had preceded the Pandavas by some 4 or 5 short generations. We have already said that the Kingdoms of Kasi, Kosala and Videha were noted for their pure manners, lofty morals, high learning, good religion &c. while, Kurukshetra, Matsya, Panchala &c. were marked for their fiery valour bold self-assertion, over-bearing manners and rather corrupt morals &c.

Vyasa also wrote the *Hari-Vansa*, i.e. History of the Dynasty of Krishna; a commentary on the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali &c. Jaimini, a disciple of Vyasa also wrote a Mahabharata, but now we possess only a portion of it. Kāmandaka wrote his *Niti-Sūra* a work on worldly wisdom, about 1400 B. C.

V. Learning—No nation has valued learning and knowledge so much as the Hindus. Good works and religious rites lead to happier states of life and due
reward; but true knowledge—pure wisdom alone leads to final union with God. Every Aryan was socially bound to study the Vedas &c., to perform daily sacrifices. The defaulters were not only denounced and despised but were also classed as Sudras. The seats of learning were 4, viz, Royal Courts, Parishads, Private Schools of sages and seers and the sylvan seats of learning and sanctity.

Learned men from distant towns and villages were invited to the royal courts, honoured and rewarded. They held discussions with the learned priests of the courts or other learned men not only on rites and ceremonies, but on mind, soul, future world, nature of the gods, the fathers, different orders of beings, nature of Brahman whose manifestation is all. Many of the Brahman works and Upanishads were probably composed there.

Learned Brahmans retired to forests where they taught higher wisdom and much of the boldest speculations. Those teachings are known as the Aranyakas.

A Parishad was an Academy of Letters or a University. Young men learnt there. (Vrīhad Aranyaka Upanishad, VI. 2.) Svetaketu went to the Parishad of the Panchālas for his education.

A Parishad consisted of 31 Brahmins well-versed in philosophy, theology, law &c. Parāsara (15th century B.C.) says that even 4 or 3 learned Brahmins in a village may form a Parishad.

Kashmir, Prithudaka, Taxila, Canouj, Benares, Oudh and Mithila as great centres of learning, had grand Parishads.
Our sages and seers also maintained numberless private schools where pupils of different classes and countries would live for education. All studentship was then residential.

Vasista was called a Kula-pati (chancellor), as he fed and taught over 10,000 pupils, in different schools of his own. The State and rich men gave munificent subventions to the professors. Princes were generally paying students. The poor boys rendered service to the preceptors. Orphans were maintained and taught as punya sishyas i.e. free students. There were also female teachers and preceptors. Girls were generally taught at home. Some ladies and queens had composed Vedic hymns, held learned discussions with distinguished professors or savants on religion, metaphysics &c.

Every Aryan boy was early sent to school where all were educated together. Finishing studies after 12 years or longer, and making suitable presents, they would return home, marry and settle as house holders.

As a house-holder, he now lights a sacred fire under an auspicious constellation to offer libations, perform other duties, rites, offer hospitality to strangers, to receive and honour guests.

The Taittiriya Upanishad, 1. 2 sets forth his duties as follows:

"Say what is true; do thy duty; do not neglect the study of the Vedas. After having brought to thy teacher the proper reward, do not cut off the lives of children. Do not swerve from the truth. Do not
swerve from duties. Do not neglect what is useful.
Do not neglect greatness. Do not neglect the learning
and teaching of the Vedas. “Do not neglect the works
(sacrifice) due to the gods and fathers. Let thy mother,
father and the teacher be to thee like unto a god.
Whatever actions are blameless, those should be regard-
ed, not others; whatever good works have been
performed by us, those should be observed by thee.”

§ Subjects of Learning.

Even in those early times, various subjects were
taught and learnt.

In the Chhandogya Upanishad VIII. 1. 2, Nárada says
to Sanat-kumára thus:—“Sir, I know the 4 Vedas,
Itháss-Púrāna (History and theogony), the Veda of the
Vedas (Grammar), the Pitrya (Rules for sacrifice for the
ancestors), the Rāsi (Arithmetic), the Daiva (Science of
Portents) the Nidhi (Science of Time), the Váko-Vákyā
(Logic), the Ekáyana (Ethics), the Deva-Vidya (Etymology),
the Brahma Vidya (Pronunciation, Prosody etc.), the
Bhuta Vidya (Science of Demons), the Kshatra Vidya
(Science of weapons), the Nakshatra Vidya (Astronomy),
the Sarpa-Deva-jñan Vidya (Science of Serpents and of
Genii)—all these ! know Sir.” The Vribhad Aranyaka
Upanishad III. 4. 10 states that the 4 Vedas, Itháss-
Púrāna (History and theogony), Vidya (knowledge),
Upanishads, Slokas (Verses), Sutras (Prose Rules),
Anu-Vyakhyana (Glosses) and Vyakhyanas (Comment-
taries)—have all been breathed forth from Brahma.
The Sata-patha Brahmana, XI. mentions, the 4 Vedas, the Anu-Saunas, the Vidyas, the Vako Vakyas, the Ithasa-Puranas, the Nara-sansis and the Gathas. The original works on these subjects are lost to us, being replaced by good later books on the subjects.

§ Encouragement of Learning.

An eminent French writer has called the Hindus "an immortal people." Indeed, religion and learning have preserved them still. Numberless hymns of the Rig-Veda show the grateful dana-statis (songs of gifts) of Rishis in praise of their great patrons. In the Epic Age, the Ikshvakus of Kosala, the Janakas of Videha and the kings of Benares were renowned patrons of learning. Besides, the Vaisyas (merchants) encouraged learning much.

Janaka of Videha had gathered round him the most learned men of his time, discussed with them, taught them holy truths about the Supreme Being. Gautama wrote his Logic and Yajna-Valkya composed his works at Mithila that gave light to the Eastern provinces. Her light and reputation attracted even Fyza, brother to Abul Fazal, minister to Akbar, who, in guise of a Hindu, learnt the entire Hindu lore from a Brahman whom Akbar gave a large estate inherited by the present Maharajas of Darbhanga.

King Ajatasatru of Kasi (Benares), himself a learned man and a most renowned patron of learning, once exclaimed in despair, "Verily, all people run away from
my kingdom saying ‘Janaka is our patron’—Vrihad Aranyaka Upanishad II. 1, 1. A somewhat similar sigh came from a Maharaja of Sirohi State, Rajputana, who spoke to his minister thus—‘Good Sir, learned men do not come to our courts in these days. For we do not honour them. Bees do not come to the flowers that have no honey’!

§ Philosophy. Close of the 15th century B.C.

The Logical Schools.—The 29th and 28th centuries B.C. had witnessed a great display of Reasoning in religion and philosophy. The sharp edge of reasoning was blunted by the ritual religion of the Epic Age. After 10 or 12 centuries, a re-action—an awakening followed. Thoughtful persons again thought of God, soul, creation, life, death and other vital questions. Their ‘guesses at truth’ are found in the Aranyakas and the Upanishads. By a process of close reasoning, these sublime truths were soon systematised into philosophies. Formerly, Logic or Vak-Vakya was one of the subjects of learning. About 1425 B.C., Gautama dignified it in his Metaphysics of Logic. He was priest to Siradvaja Janaka of Mithila and had married Ahalya, a princess of Benares. His Nyaya School contains 5 Chapters and 521 aphorisms. Pakshila Swami’s ‘Commentary on Nyaya’ is said to be the oldest known.

The Jain Scholar Hem Chandra says in his Dictionary that Pakshila Swami and Chanaaka (4th century B.C.) were the same.
About 1420 or 15 B.C., Uluka, another philosopher, prob. of East India, wrote his physics or philosophy of sensible objects. We do not know his parentage nor his home; but he was a Brahmana of the Kasyapa gotra (clan). He is better known as Kanada from Kama = atom and ada = expounder.

Gautama and Kanada, founders of the Logical Schools of Hindu Philosophy, agree and differ. Yet each supplies the other’s defects.

Kanada’s *Vaiseshika* (Atomic theory) work has 10 chapters and 370 sutras or aphorisms.

It knows no Buddhistic tenets and is mentioned in the Mahabharata &c., therefore, western scholars think that its date was at least 1100—1000 B.C. From the likeness of classification, method, arrangement and syllogism, Gautama is often compared to the Greek Philosopher Aristotle (4th century B.C.). But Gautama’s syllogism is rather rude in form, having 5 propositions, of which 2 are evidently superfluous. Kanada speaks of 6 *padārthas* or predicaments viz. substance, quality, action, community, particularity and ultimate relation. Acc. to some, one more viz. privation.

Striking resemblance is found between Hindu Logic and Aristotle’s. The subjects of both are the same—the senses, the elements, the soul and its different faculties, time, space &c.

According to all Hindu Schools, mind is the sixth and the internal sense; it is the same with Aristotle. The definitions of the subjects often differ and the general arrangement is entirely dissimilar.
Gautama’s arrangement is more comprehensive and complete than Kanada’s.


The sub-divisions are more natural and systematic. Proof is of 4 kinds viz, perception, inference, comparison and affirmation.

The objects of Proof are 12 viz, Soul, Body, the Organs of sensations, the objects of sense, Intelect, Mind, Activity, Fault, Transmigration, Fruit of Deeds, Pain or Physical Evil and Liberation.

All these are fully and minutely discussed. The immateriality, independent existence, eternity of the soul are asserted. God is considered as the supreme soul, the seat of eternal knowledge, the maker of all things etc.

The Atomic School of Kanada supposes a transient world composed of aggregations of eternal atoms. It is not clear whether their temporary arrangement depends on their natural affinities or on the creative power of God. Gautama admits God, but not His creative power. Kanada admits God rather indirectly.

The Vedic Schools of Philosophy:

The bold speculations, the sceptical theories &c. seemed to have sealed the fate of the Vedic rites. But the Hindus cannot do without the Vedas. So, Jaimini,
EPIC AGE: PRIOR MIMA’NSA.

the most prominent disciple of Vyasa wrote about 1400 B.C. a philosophy called Prior Mimansa in defence of the Vedic Rites. He admits the authority of the Vedas but not their revelation. According to him, an intelligent performance of the Vedic rites, leads to Salvation. His work has 13 chapters. He admits Brahma, but never uses the word Isvara (God) in his book.

Jaimini asserts that the gods are not separate powers, but the Mantras i.e., Hymns alone are gods. Prof. E. B. Cowell here observes:—“In the course of its critical investigations, Prior Mimansa discusses, however, various philosophical doctrines. It appears to have been originally atheistical, the sacrifices and other ceremonies which it so zealously upholds, being said to produce their fruit by an inherent law or fate. One of its most curious speculations is the doctrine of an eternal sound underlying all temporary sounds. This is by some identified with Brahma. The grammarians have naturally adopted this doctrine”. (Elphinstone’s History of India, P. 123, note.)

Jaimini here adopts the Sabda Brahman as given in the Rig-veda, Book X. This vast world had its origin in Vāk i.e., sound. All perceptions and conceptions, rose from Sound. This Sound is Veda: this Sound is Vedic Hymns. All gods are really Sounds. The Vedas have adopted nominalism: All existence are names in Sounds. (R. V.) Vāk Devi, daughter to Seer Abhrina, in her Devi Sukta, in the Rig-Veda, says, “Sound is Brahma: Sound is the origin of all creation.” In the Greek philosophy
also, this visible creation of God is spoken of as Lago or Speech or Sound. St. John in his Gospel says, "Originally, there was Sound; Sound was in God and Sound was God." This truth was taken from the Neo-
Platonists. Thus Jaimini defended the ritual religion (Karma Kanda) of the Vedas. His preceptor, the illustri-
ous Vyasa, having collected and arranged the Vedas, next wrote about 1400 B.C. or shortly after, a philo-
sophical View of the Vedic tenets. Colebrooke, misled by the mention of Jains and Buddhists, thinks that Vyasa's first book was written in the 6th century B.C. Needless to say that these Jains and Buddhists were early sects. 6 Buddhas had lived and preached before Gautama Buddha. We have noted Jainism already. The 22nd Jain Tirthankara (reformer) called Nemmnatha or Arahita-Nemi, an uncle to Krishna, preached his Jainism some time before 1400 B.C.

Vyasa's work called the Utara or Latter Mimansa, in 558 aphorisms, is also known as Vedanta which shows the highest flight of Hindu philosophy.

Though based on reasonable arguments, yet it professes to be founded on the authority of the Vedas and appeals for proofs to texts from those Scriptures.

Main Principles of the Vedanta.—Everything is from God, is in God and shall be to God in the end. Individual souls are from His substance like sparks of fire. Soul is infinite, immortal, intelligent, sentient, true, capable of activity, but naturally reposing. The Supreme Being causes it to act. It is encased in a body. There are a subtle body and a gross body. The former
follows soul in all its migrations. On death, it leaves the corporeal body, goes to the moon, is closed in an acqueous body, falls in rain, is absorbed in some vegetable and hence through nourishments, into an animal embryo. Finishing transmigrations according to deeds, it receives liberation and divine grace. The Vedanta denies the eternity of matter, gives the existence of the Universe to the energy and volition of God.

The Vedanta has two schools: One party says, "All that exists, arises from God." The other says, "Nothing does exist except God." This last view is brought in by Sankara in the 9th century A.D.

The Sānkhyā and the Vedanta.—The Sānkhyā maintains the eternity of matter: its principal branch denies the existence of God. While Vedanta derives all things from God and one sect denies the reality of matter. Though atheistical and material, yet Sānkhyā does not differ very widely from that which derives all things from Spirit. Kapila says, "Nature exhibits herself like an actress." (Text). Soul perceives all, not being affected like a mirror which receives all images without itself undergoing any change. Mind like the village head-man takes perception and finally to the king i.e. soul." (Wilson's Sānkhyā Kārikā, pp. 107, 117.) Kapila admits the separate existence of souls and allows that intellect is employed in the evolution of matter: hence he denies any Supreme Being, material or spiritual, by whose volition Universe was produced. Patanjali however admits souls, but besides, a Supreme Soul unaffected, called God, the Supreme Ruler.
PHILOSOPHY: ITS CHARACTER & TEACHINGS. 465

There are altogether 19 different schools of philosophy in India. Of them, some are atheistical and so, inconsistent with the religious doctrines of the Brahmanas; others, though perfectly orthodox, advance opinions not stated in the Vedas.

Hindu philosophy appears to have been originally atheistical in general, though afterwards made to serve religion.

In India, philosophy is practical and inseparably connected with religion. In Europe, it is theoretical and speculative.

All the schools agree, after all, and agree in having one object, viz., deliverance from all corporeal encumbrances.

Hindu Philosophy teaches, among other sublime truths, the following:—"The Universe in its ultimate ground, is Spirit. What is material, is the expression of the Eternal Spirit in time and space. Man is essentially either that Spirit or a part of it or akin to it. The Universe is governed by a just Law which is the very nature of its true expression. All life is sacred. Morality is the law of humanity which is the master of its destiny and reaps only what it has sown. The Universe has a moral purpose and the social structure must be so ordered as to sub-serve it.

Hindu and Early Greek Philosophy much alike.—The relation of mind to matter, creation, fate and many similar subjects are mixed by the Hindus with questions now discussed in modern metaphysics, but were not known to the Greeks. The various doctrines viz, the
eternity of matter or its emanation from God; of the separate existence of God or His arising from the arrangements of nature; the supposed derivation of all souls from God and return to Him; the doctrine of atoms; the successive revolutions of worlds &c. were likewise maintained by one or other of the Grecian schools. Do they speak of independent origin? Was each coincidence accidental? How could a whole system as the Pythagorean, be so similar to that of the Hindus?

Certainly they shew a common origin. Tradition also speaks of the Eastern journeys of Pythagoras.

*Pythagoras and Hindu Philosophy:*—"The end of all philosophy, according to Pythagoras, is to free the mind from encumbrances which hinder its progress towards perfection; to raise it above the dominion of the passions and the influence of corporeal impressions so as to assimilate it to the Divinity and qualify it to join the gods.

The soul is a portion of the Divinity and returns after various transmigrations and successive intermediate states of purgation in the region of the dead to the eternal source from which it first proceeded. The mind is distinct from the soul diffused through all things, the first principle of the universe, invisible, incorruptible, only to be comprehended by the mind. Intermediate between God and mankind are a host of aerial beings formed into classes, and exercising different influences on the affairs of the world.

"The aversion of Pythagoras for animal food and his prohibitions of it unless when offered in sacrifices;"
his injunctions to his disciples not to kill or hurt plants, the long probation of his disciples and their mysterious initiation &c, clearly show his direct imitation. Further coincidences:—affinity between God and light; the arbitrary importance assigned to the sphere of the moon as the limit of earthly changes etc. These doctrines of Pythagoras were quite distinct from the opinions of all the Grecian Schools that existed in his time.

The ancient Egyptians are said to have had some of these tenets, common to Pythagoras and the Hindus. The only early authority is Herodotus (450 B.C.). He lived long after the Pythagorean philosophy had been universally diffused. If, however, these doctrines existed among the Egyptians, they were scattered opinions in the midst of an independent system. In India, they are the main principles on which the religion of the people is founded, to which all philosophy refers and on which every theory in physics and every maxim in morality depends.

Colebrooke says, "The Indian philosophy resembles that of the earlier, rather than of the later, Greeks. He infers that the Hindus were in this instance, the teachers and not the learners."

Elphinstone.

§ Astronomy.

In a previous chapter on Astronomy, I have noted that considerable progress was made in the subject in the Vedic Age. This we know from the Rig-Veda, the Suryya Siddhanta and other traditions. In the Vedic
Age, the year was divided into 12 lunar months to which a 13th month was added to make it solar (R. V. I. 5. 8.). The Six Seasons viz., Madhu, Mādhava, Sukra, Suchi, Nabha, Nabhasya—were connected with different gods (R. V. II. 36). The phases of the moon were observed and deified. Rākṣā was the full moon. Sinibāli was the day before the New Moon. Čandra was the New Moon. (R. V. II. 32) The position of the moon with regard to the Nakshatras, is also alluded to in the Rig-Veda, VIII. 3. 20. Some of the constellations of the lunar mansions are named in X. 85. 13.

The Lunar Zodiac was finally arranged towards the close of the Vedic Age. For, 28 lunar mansions are mentioned in the Black Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda and the Taittiriya Brahmana.

There has been a good deal of controversy in Europe and America as to the originality of the Lunar Zodiac. Colebrooke (1807) is in favor of its Hindu origin. French Biot (1860) describes the Chinese Siyen as original, from which Hindu Nakshatras and Muhammadan Manasil were borrowed. Prof. Lassen adopted this view. Prof. Weber is for Hindu origin. He, however, conjectures that the Hindu system was probably taken from Babylon. But the Assyriologists, by repeated search, could find no Lunar Zodiac among the archives of old Babylonian learning. Prof. Max-Müller says that the Babylonian Zodiac was Solar. There was no Lunar Zodiac. Hindu Veda and the Brahmana works clearly show the Lunar Zodiac as original in India.

_India: What can it Teach us._ P. 126 (1886)
Hindus also observed the solstitial points to fix the dates of events. Bentley gives 1442 B.C. as the date of the formation of lunar mansions and 1181 B.C. as the date of the naming of months. (Hindu Astronomy. P. 3 and 10, (1824). London. Needless to say that these conclusions are not reliable.

The Solar Zodiac, if borrowed at all, was borrowed from the Chaldeans, both by the Greeks, and the Hindus. Mr. R. C. Dutt says that considerable progress was made in the subject in the Epic Period; but I find no proof of it. No doubt; astronomy continued to be cultured as a science and there were professional astronomers called Naksatra-Darsas and ganatas as we have now; (Tattiriya Brahmana. IV 5; White-Yajur Veda, XXX. 10. 20) yet certain it is that no new truths were discovered. For 10 centuries at least (2500 to 1500 B.C.) the subject suffered terribly from Brahminic obscurcation.

Of course, sacrifices were regulated by the position of the moon. Sacrifices lasting a year, were regulated by the sun's annual course divided into Uttarayana (Sun's Northern Progress) and Dakshinayana (Sun's Southern Progress). The Southern Progress was regarded as bad. All sacrifices were performed in Spring i.e. April and May. (Ait. Brahmana IV.) The Months were now of 30 days. They marked the Vishvavat = Equator = Central Day. (Dr. M. Haug's Introduction P. 46—47)

With the awakening, we meet with the venerable Parissara (fl. 15th century B.C.) who not only wrote on astronomy, but also on law and agriculture. We still
possess a portion of his astronomy. He first observed the place of the Celestes. Mr. Davis holds (As. Res. vol. V, P. 388) that that observation was made in 1594 B.C. Another passage quoted from Paraskara shows that the heliacal rising of Canopus took place in his time at a period which agrees with the date assigned to him on other grounds.

Our best and most learned work on astronomy is the Surya-Siddhanta, remodelled in the 5th or the 6th century A.D. It was written by Vivasvan, father to Manu. It is known as a revelation from heaven received upwards of 2,164,900 years ago. Here also is employed the enigmatical mode of communicating knowledge. Priestly obscuration of early authors has cast a veil over our sciences. Even astronomy has been made subject to extravagant chronology: all the epochs are thrown into confusion and uncertainty. No general view of the system has been given. Only the practical parts of sciences are made known. Even here, the original sources are carefully concealed and the results shewn as revelations from God. There is no record of a regular series of observations. This was certainly a great bar to the progress of science. The art of making observations was taught to few.

The Ramayana, Kishkindhya Book, speaks of the sunless Polar Region and refers to the Aurora Borealis. The minister Sanjaya, speaking to the blind king Dhritarashtra, says, 'The roundness of the Earth is seen in the Moon when the shadow of the former is cast upon the latter.' (Mahabh) Yaska, explaining a
hymn of the Rig-Veda probably composed in the Epic Age, says "The moon is lighted by the sun."

Astronomical forecasts were taken by the kings to avert or mitigate the evils of the coming year. The youngest Pandava Prince Sahadeva studied astronomy carefully and wrote a book on it, now lost.

Vyasa is our next astronomer. He gives us the following descriptions of the chief nine planets of the Hindus:

Sun.—Red as Champa-rose, son to Kasyapa, very bright, foe of darkness, destroyer of all sins and maker of day.

Moon.—White as a divine conch or snow, born of the Sea of Milk (this shows the extreme humidity. Cf. Moist Star) marked by spots, shining like a jewel in the crown of Giva—the Destroyer and Reproducer. (This probably refers to the moon causing death when in an unfavourable position)

Mars.—Born of the Earth, shining like a mass of splendour, full of heroic spirits, bearing the weapon called Sakti in hand and red in colour. (This is regarded as the planet of war.)

Mercury.—Rather black in colour like the bud of a Priyangu flower, extremely handsome, matchless in beauty, peaceful, endowed with all the qualities and son of the moon.

Jupiter.—Preceptor to the Devas and the Seers, like a very sea of talents, golden in hue, lovely and lord of the three worlds.
Venus.—White as snow, Spiritual Guide to the Daitya Aryans, expounder of all the Sciences, very bright and son to Bhrigu.

Saturn.—Deep blue in colour, son to the Sun, elder brother to Yama, born of Chhaya i.e. Shade and very slow in motion.

Rahu (Node)—Half in body, heroic, cause of eclipse to the sun and the moon, born of Sinhika and very dreadful.

Ketu (Apside)—Having a colour like that of burning flesh, crooked in nature, fierce in form and tormentor of the Stars and the planets. (Stava-Panchaka) These last two are not regular planets.

Similes and metaphors abound in the Sanskrit Epics, illustrating the swelling of the sea by the attraction of the moon.

§ Other Sciences.

Law.—Laws form the back-bone of a society. To bring about the best possible unity and harmony amongst the heterogeneous communities of Ancient India, very wise and good laws were required and our great Rishis gave them. We have ample proof to show that Hindu civilisation was daily advancing towards polish, perfection, purity and sanctity. The Vrihad Aranyak Upanishad, I. 4. 14 gives a very noble definition of Law. There were punishment of criminals and proper administration of law, The
judicial procedure was still crude. The criminals were often tried by the ordeal of fire. (Chhā. Upa. VI. 16).

The chief law-givers of the Age who flourished between 1600 to 1300 B.C., were Sankha, Skātāpā, Likhita, Apastamba, Kātyāyana, Gautama, Parāśara, Vyasa, and Yājna-Valkva. Their high antiquity is still discernible in their present but spoiled law-books.

Lofty conceptions of justice appear from the Mahābhārata Peace Book. Chap. 91. Verses 14-27 and 31. The Brāhmaṇ criminals had no preferential treatment. Law recognized the rights of the weak and the supreme need of absolute impartiality for the king:

"Protecting all men by works, body and deeds and never forgiving even his offending son himself from the great duty of the king. Neither mother, nor father, nor brother, nor wife nor priest is unpunishable in the sight of that king who rules agreeably to his duty."

Medicine.—The trying Indian climate was a great friend of disease. Addressing Fever, the Atharva Veda, V. 22. 14 says, “As people give servants or wealth, so do we give you to Gandhari, Mujavān, Anga, Magadh and other countries.” Fever still prevails in many parts of India and the weekly human sacrifice to this terrible goddess is over 10,000. Many in these days ignorantly ascribe the prevalence of fever to the Railway embankments. We think, it is a natural evil in India. Intense heat followed by excessive rain,
generally produces fever. According to our Rishis, rubbing the body well with oil before bath, cow-dung plaster on the ground, occasional lasts, Tulsi plants (Holy Basil) and Nim trees in the house, good food, thoughts, air, water &c. not only prevent fever and other harmful influences of Nature, but give healthful longevity. But it is a pity that these time-honoured wise practices are falling into disuse daily.

The Medical Experts of the Age.

Works

1. Janaka...a king of Videha. Vaidya-Sandeha-Bhanjanam.
   Perh. 2500 B. C.

2. Agastya the earliest civiliser of the Deccan. 22nd century B.C.

   2000 B. C.)

   B. C.

   B. C.

   18th century B. C.

7. Kasirâja, the 2nd king of Chikitsyâ Kaumudi.
   Benares Perh. 17th century B. C.
MEDICAL EXPERTS: SUSRUTA.

Works

8. Dhanvantari the 4th king Chikitsya Tattva Bijna- of Benares. Peh. 16th nam.
   Century B. C.

9. Divodasa the 7th king of Chikitsya Darpanam.
   Benares. Son of Bhima-
   rathu by queen Ganavati
   15th century B. C.

10. Susruta, a prince of Camouj and son to Visvamitra came with 100 Rishi boys to study medicine
    with Divodasa of Benares. He became highly proficient especially in surgery.

The Bhava Prakasa.

The Susruta Sankita as we have it now, was remodelled by the famous Buddhist Nāgārjuna. The fact is confirmed also by the annotators Dalvana and Bāg-bhata. The original work is known as Vriddha Susruta. Nāgārjuna preserved a little of the original poetical work. The sense of the rest he explained in prose. Susruta was probably the first to discover that spleen and liver make blood in the body. The Vedas speak of 360 bones in the body; but Susruta proved 300 bones satisfactorily.

The earliest physicians spoke of the origin of limbs of the embryo in the womb, one after another. But Divodasa appears to give the wisest view on the point, in that he says that all the limbs of the body grow simultaneously.
11. Charaka.—(Not later than 1400 B.C.). His parentage and home is not known. His name is explained as a “spy” on the earth to ascertain the state of health. He brought together the works written by the 6 disciples of Atreyu and consulted other works and compiled his own. The defects of Charaka were afterwards made up by the learned Drirhavala, a writer of the Panjab. Charaka is mentioned in the Mahabharata.

The properties of beef were discussed and ascertained by both Susruta and Charaka who, however, declared it unsuitable to the Indian climate.

The most ancient medical works, mentioned in the Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Brahma Part, Chap. 16, were all based on the "Bhāskara Samhitā" of Vivaswān whose Suryya-Siddhānta is a learned work on astronomy. Of the numerous early works, those of Charaka and Susruta alone have survived the test of time.

12. Nakula and Sahadeva, the two Pandava Princes wrote about 1380 B.C., Vaidyaka Sarvasvan and Vyādhi-Sindhu-Vimardakam respectively. Great improvements were made in medicine and surgery. The culture of Anatomy and Botany formed a part of medical training then. Hindu knowledge of Anatomy, obtained from the dissection of the sacrificial beasts, was really little; our ancestors never excelled in this subject.

The Mahabharata tells us that before the War (1389 B.C.) both parties were busy procuring the best physicians, surgeons, medicines, surgical instruments &c. for the treatment of the sick and the wounded soldiers.
In Chemistry and other sciences, progress of those early Hindus was no less remarkable.

Social Life.

Caste.—Later caste-system is wholly unknown in the Rig Veda. Traces of the three ‘twice-born’ are indeed found. The word Brahman (priest), even Brahmana occurs. The Rig Veda is entirely silent as to the Sudras except in the 90th hymn of Book X. The other Vedas give the system fully developed. Sudras were subjugated people. Sudras of Ancient India, Demos in the Greek states and colonies, the Plebs of Rome, the Perioeci and Helots of Sparta and the Tyrrenhens of Etruria were all of the same class to their Aryan conquerors.

Caste was regularly formed in the Epic Age by hard and fast rules. But the system was still pliant.

The simple origin of caste based on professions, was afterwards obscured by myths and legends. The true origin of Caste appears from

(i) The Vāyu Purana.—‘There were no castes in the first Age. Divisions arose gradually according to their works.’

(ii) Ram. BK. VII. Chapter 74.—‘In the Vedic Age, the Brahmanas alone practised austerities. In the Epic Age, Kṣatriyas were born; then were established the 4 castes.’

(iii) Mahabh. Peace Book, Chap. 168.—At first, all were Brahmanas. Then those who were fond of
sensual pleasures, fiery, irascible, daring, forgetful of sacred duties—became *Kshatriyas*. Yellow men living by cows, agriculture and not practising religious performances, became *Vaisyas*. Black twice-born men impure, addicted to violence, lying, covetous, living by all kinds of works—became *Sudras*.

Sir John Woodroffe’s remarks will not be out of place here:—“Indian caste arose naturally under the influences of the unifying forces of advancing civilisation to bring about the best possible kind of unity and concord among the heterogeneous communities.

“Sociology shows the existence of caste everywhere. The distinctions of rulers, warriors, merchants, agriculturists &c. rose from the inherent needs of society and its organisation. Classes and the castes in a practical sense exist in the West today. The notion that “all men are equal” in work, capacity or utility is unfounded.

Original castes were 4. Now only 2 remain, *viz.* the Brahmanas and the Sudras. Sudra castes have multiplied into professions—secular occupations. The “Untouchables” were unclean. Their habits were generally so.

There is now prohibition of inter-marriage and inter dining. Subject to caste-rules, there is still social association.

“Many are of opinion that classes will always exist, however much they may shift. Prof. Giddings the sociologist says—classes do not become blended as
FOUR STAGES OF LIFE.

Societies grow older: they become more sharply defined. Any social reform that hopes for the blending of classes is foredoomed to failure."

"The main class-divisions in modern Europe and America are between the rich and the poor.

"The ideal Indian scheme of social order is based on religious and philosophical principles which are also the practical ideals of daily life."

In the Epic Age, caste was organised mostly in the Indo-Gangetic Valley. The Dravidian converts formed the bulk of the people, Vaisyas (merchants) one compact body and still entitled to religion and learning. To preserve traditions, to guide the kings and the people and to save the nation morally, the Brahmins were made the Guardians of the Treasury of Religion and Learning.

(The caste-rules were gradually made rigid to prevent the small Aryan community from merging into the Natives whose daughters they married or kept and whose corrupt manners, morals, food &c. were creeping into the Aryan society.)

(We find another institution *via the four stages of life*, well developed in this Age. An ideal Brahmin's life aimed at *dharma* (morality), *artha* (fair wealth), *Kama* (moral desires lawfully realised) and *Moksha* (salvation). No nation but the Hindus has so justly and logically balanced, harmonised and served the World and God in one whole. (An ideal Hindu life was mapped out into 4 stages *via*, continent student-ship, married householder, liberation and forest life and
mendicancy in which a person without anything of his own and going to his death, sought union with the Great Source of all. The first two were paths of lawful enjoyment serving God. In the last two, an entry was made on the path of renunciation and union with Spirit. This round of life, first adopted by the worthy high-caste Hindus, was gradually imitated by all. Only some great souls might seek *aśrayga* (renunciation) at once.

A somewhat clear view of the state of society may be had from the following professions given in the White Yajur Veda. Chapter 16 and 30.

Thieves, horsemen, infantry, dancers, speakers, frequenter in assemblies, lewd men, sons of unmarried women, charioteers, chariot-makers, carpenters, potters, jewelers, cultivators, arrow-makers, bow-makers, dwarfs, crookedly formed men, blind and deaf persons, physicians, astronomers, elephant-keepers, wood-cutters, horse and cattle keepers, servants, cooks, gate-keepers, painters, engravers, washermen, dyers, barbers, learned men, women of various kinds, tanners, fishermen, hunters, lowlers, goldsmiths, merchants, men with various diseases, wigmakers, poets, musicians and other sorts. These were professions and not castes. Till 200 B.C., the mass were Vaisyas, entitled to the full rights of the Aryans, Sudras alone were disallowed; for they had neither tradition nor aptitude.

That the caste-rules were not so rigid early, appears from (i) the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. I. 16 and II. 17. One other than a Brahmān could perform a sacrifice. Ait:
Social Life: Caste.

Brāh. VII. 29.—Persons born in one class might enter into another. Visvāmitra, Debāpī and Janaka became Brāhmans (S. P. Brāh. XI. 6. 2. 1.). Kavasha, son to lusha, was admitted as a Rishi for his learning, purity and wisdom (Ait. Brāh. II. 19). Satyakāma Javāla became a Brāhmaṇa by his truthfulness and learning. (Chh. up. V. 4.) A Brāhmaṇa imparts knowledge to a Sudra accepting presents and taking his daughter for his wife. (Chh. Up. IV. 2.) The upper three classes could sacrifice, not the Sudra. (S. P. Brāh. Ill. 9.) The supremacy of the Brāhmaṇa was nominal yet. (S. P. Brāh. Ill. 3. 1. 40.)

Mr. R. C. Dutt says that the sacred thread came to be used in the Epic Age (1)—S. P. Brāh. II. 4. 2 and Kausitaki Up. II. 7. The thread was worn by the twice-born at the time of the sacrifice only. Now it is habitually worn at all times. In the Vedic Age, probably mehbbal or a golden chain was worn.

Special Features of Social Life.—

(i) Caste almost unknown in the Vedic Age, was developed in the Epic.

(ii) In the Vedic Age, people were warrior-cultivators; in the Epic, cultured Hindus. Culture and progress went on through centuries. (Hindus were now highly refined, developed minute rules to regulate their social and domestic duties.)

(iii) Royal courts were new seats of learning. Learned men from all quarters were invited, honoured and rewarded.
(iv) Justice was administered by learned officers. Laws regulated every duty of life.

(v) Towns with strong walls, fine edifices, were many; had their judges, executive officers, police &c.

(vi) Agriculture was fostered; king’s officers settled all disputes, looked to the collection of taxes and the safety and comforts of cultivators.

(vii) Arrangements were made for the education of all classes of people.

(viii) The White Yajur Veda XXII. 22 has an excellent prayer for the weal of the people and the country.

(ix) Wealth was in gold, silver and jewels; in cars, horses, cows, mules, slaves; in houses, fertile fields and in elephants and buffaloes. (Chh. Up. V. 13, 17 and 19; VII. 24; S. P. Brab. III. 48; Taitti. Up. I. 5. 12 &c.

Besides gold and silver, other metals are mentioned in the White Yajur Veda, XVII. 13; Chh. Up. IV. 17. 7. Lavana (borax), tin, lead, iron, leather, wood, copper &c.

(x) Food.—consisted of various kinds of grain and meat of animals. The Vrihad Aranyaka Upanishad VI. III. 13 mentions 10 kinds of seeds viz. rice (vrihi), barley (jawa), sesameum (tilia), kidney bean (Mazas), millet and panic seed (anu-prijangavas), wheat (godhuma), lentils (masura), pulse (khalvas), vetches (khalakulas). The White Yajur Veda XVIII. 12 adds mudge, ribura, syamakara.

Grains were ground, sprinkled with curds, honey, clarified butter and made into various cakes; milk and
its various preparations have ever been a favourite food in India. Animal food was much in use. Beef was still a dainty eating. Bull, ox, miscarrying and barren cows were killed when a king or an honoured guest was received. (Ait. Brah. I. 15.) The Brahmana of the Black Yajur Veda states the kind and character of the cattle to be killed.

In the Asvamedha Sacrifice, more than 180 domestic animals are killed. The Gopatha Brahmana gives the portions to be taken by different persons. Beef was washed with Soma beer. The S.P. Brahmana IV. 5, gives a detailed account of the slaughter of a barren cow and its cooking. The S.P. Brah. III. 1. 2. 21, discusses the propriety of eating beef. Mild objections are, however, raised in the Rig-Veda. Ath. Veda, S.P. Brahmana, to cow-slaughter. Priests are desired not to eat beef. Yajna-Valkya says, "I for one, eat it, if that is tender." He draws some difference between a vegetable diet and animal diet, (Vrhahad. A. Upa. VI. 4. 17-18.

(x) Towns were surrounded by walls, beautified by finest edifices and laid out in spacious streets; the palace stood in the middle and was frequented by barons, soldiers, saints, priests, learned men and by people on special occasions. All loved, respected and worshipped the king. There was perfect loyalty. Ministers and officers were loyal. Kings had very high regard for their queens. House-holders had wealth in various things, kept fire, honoured guests, lived up to the laws of the land, offered sacrifices, honoured virtue, learning and knowledge.
Various were the manufactures of civilised society. All followed professions from generation to generation. The people were not yet divided into numberless castes. Agriculturists lived round each town. Saints and learned men lived in forests.

(xii) Position of Women.—Women knew not absolute seclusion; had an honoured place from the dawn of civilisation. Many beautiful sayings are found which give honour to woman, marriage and Motherhood. They inherited and possessed property. (stridhana). They are regarded as the earthly representatives of the Great Mother of all. There are repeated texts to show that “no injury, no ill word should be used to her. She should be honoured always.” They took a share in sacrifices and duties; attended assemblies, openly frequented public thoroughfares, distinguished themselves in learning, wisdom, administration, politics and battle-prowess. They never mixed freely with men. They were held in very high honour. (V. A. Upanishad). Cf. Learned Mātreya, Gārgī Vāchakūnavi and others.

They were well trained in general matters and especially in domestic duties.

(Early marriage and girl marriage were still unknown. There was a distinct sanction for the re-marriage of widows. Men of one caste married widows of another. Even Brahmans took widows of other castes. (Atharva Veda. V. 17. 8).)

Polygamy was common in kings and wealthy lords. In ancient times, it was almost universal among the rich
of all nations. Polyandry was exceptionally rare. A prohibition against it is found in the Aitareya Brahmana III. 23.

Marriage in near blood was objected for 3rd or 4th generation. (S. P. Brah. I. 8. 3. 6.)

Women were faithful and affectionate to their lords. Female unchastity was rather rare. The S. P. Brahmana. II. 5. 2. 20. alludes to a confession of sin of adultery.

Women took great care for their hair and used fine dress, bright ornaments, gems, jewels, perfumes, dyes &c.

(xiii) Ceremonies customs &c.—Coronation Ceremony, the Imperial Ceremony and the Horse Sacrifice were the most imposing and ostentatious royal ceremonies of Ancient India.

The Coronation rite is described in the Aitareya Brahmana. VIII. 6-9; IX. 39; X. 87. The advice given to a king in this last, is worth quoting here:—

"If thou shalt be a ruler, then from this day, judge the strong and the weak with equal justice; resolve on doing good incessantly to the public and protect the country from all calamities.

The Imperial Sacrifice (Rajasa) was performed by an overlord. In it, even the menial offices are done by the vassal kings.

The Horse Sacrifice was a means of expiation of sin and of assumption of the Imperial title, Funeral
**Cremation**—Cremation of the dead and the burial of ashes was general in the Vedic Age (R. V. X. 15 4; X 16. 1.) There was occasional burial also. (R. V. X. 18. 11). There was no burial in the Epic Age. There was cremation and the burial of ashes only. (W. Y. Veda Chap. 35) Bones were collected and buried near a stream and a mound raised as high as the knee and covered with grass. Relatives bathed, changed their clothes, and went home, (Aranyaka of Black Yajur Veda).

*Satism* was in progress. Gift of cakes was made to the Manes (White Yajur Veda. Chap. 2) Cakes, wool, thread or hair were offered to the Fathers. Departed spirits received offerings from their living children and none when the line is extinct. So, desire for a male issue is a part of Hinduism. Continuity of line is a norm of nature.

**IX. Administration No.**

Many deny self-government in Ancient India. But we have clear evidence in favour of it.

"In no country in the whole world has communal autonomy been so developed."—M. B. St. Hilaire.

"It was self-government in all its purity."—Prof. M. Williams.

The constitution of self-governing Indian villages in the most ancient Hindu rule, as described in old Sanskrit works, was found almost unchanged by the servants of the Hon'ble East India Company from
whose official records, made from actual observation and enquiry, the following is taken:—

"A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundreds or thousands of acres of arable and waste land; politically viewed, it resembles a corporation or township. Its proper establishment consists of officers and servants of the following descriptions. The potail (Skr. grāma-pati head-man) who has the general superintendence of the affairs of the village, settles the disputes of the inhabitants, attends to the police and performs the duty already described, of collecting the revenues within his village, a duty which his personal influence and minute acquaintance with the situation and concerns of the people renders him best qualified to discharge; the curum who keeps the accounts of cultivation and registers everything concerned with it; the talliar and totie, the duty of the former appearing to consist in a wider and more enlarged sphere of action, in gaining information of crimes and offences and in escorting and protecting persons travelling from one village to another; the province of the latter appearing to be more immediately confined to the village, consisting among other duties, in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them; the boundary-man who preserves the limits of the village or gives evidence respecting them in case of dispute; the superintendent of tank and water-courses distributes the water therefrom for the purpose of agriculture; the Brahmin who performs the village worship; the school master who is seen teaching the children in
the villages to read and write in the sand; the astrologer who proclaims the lucky or unpropitious periods for sowing and threshing; the smith and carpenter who manufacture the implements of agriculture and build the dwelling of the ryot, the potter, the washerman, the barber, the cow-keeper who looks after the cattle; the doctor; the dancing-girl who attends at rejoicings; the musician and the poet."

Under this simple form of municipal government, the people have lived from time immemorial. States after states, kingdoms after kingdoms, empires after empires rose and fell; but the townships remained entire.

It shows us at a glance how the great agricultural population of India tilled their lands and manufactured their commodities in their own self-contained little-republics through thousands of years. Happy it were if the British rulers had preserved and fostered and reformed these ancient institutions and thus continued to rule the people through their organised assemblies.


Mr. Kannaaswami Aiyangar M. A., in his Ancient India, gives a description of the Rural Self-Rule in Southern India under the Cholas, in the eleventh century A.D.

The villages of those days were generally large. Over each village, there was a headman. A union of 10 villages was under a Superintendent. A group of
100 villages was under a Sub-Divisional Officer. Over him was the District Officer who had the charge of 1,000 villages. The village was self-governed. King, the chief executive head of the State, bestowed honours and dignities upon the State Officers. An S. D. O. would get the revenues of a rich and populous village as his pay (Mahabh. Peace Book, Chap. 87, St. 3-7). A District Officer used to get the net revenues of a small town, after public charges and the costs of administration. A minister of the Crown was in charge of these district administrations. All crimes in the village were reported to the Sub-divisional Officer through the proper channel (Ibid, St. 5.) Every large town had its Mayor for looking after all matters relating to his jurisdiction (Ibid. St. 10.) Drinking shops, public women, pimps, actors, gamblers, keepers of gambling houses &c.—were put down (Ibid. Chap. 88, 14-15). There was perfect religious toleration but there were laws against vagrancy. India now swarms with beggars, numbering over five millions, but then nobody—holy or unholy—was allowed to beg. Of course, the physically unfit were an exception to the law, (Ibid. Peace Book. Chap. 88, St. 16, 17 and 24.) The kings were occasionally despotic, but generally they were bound to rule acc. to law; or they would risk their thrones. Public opinion was a great power in the land. (Mahabh. Chap. 89, verses 15-18). Lofty conceptions of justice appear from the Mahabh. Peace Book. Chap. 91. verses 14-27 and 32.

Trade, agriculture, cattle-rearing and money-lending on which depends the happiness of the subjects, were
under the special care of the State. Advance of seed-grain was made, taking only a fourth part of the produce. (Mahabh. Peace Book, Chap. 88, 26-30; Chap. 89, 23-24) The State provided irrigation works at public cost and gave tax-free advances. (Mahabh. Court Book, Chap. 5, 76-79.)

Taxes were light and reasonable. The king was merely a public trustee. Public funds were religiously spent to promote the prosperity of the people. (Mahabh. Peace Book Chap. 87 and 88.) "Necessaries of life" were exempted from taxation (Ibid, Chap. 87, Sl. 14.) Excise duties were moderate. When the country was threatened with invasion, special war-taxes were imposed and war-loans were raised (Ibid, Chap. 97, 30-35.) The beneficent results of these policies were the advancement of trade, increase of wealth and general prosperity. There were good many millionaires and billionaires in the land who were wealthier than most of the kings.

The kings were the chief Executive Officers and ever devoted to the good of the people. Monarchies were constitutionally limited. The voice of the leading people could not be slighted. Generally the kings were just and popular. Their first care was for agriculture and commerce. Agriculture was held so sacred that even the worst war could not disturb it. There was a system of state-loans to the poor people. The state maintained police and army for the life and property of the people. Every state consisted of the Crown, the Lords Spiritual, the Lords Temporal and the Commons, still found in the Native States. The order is the same in England also.
King was the sole owner of the crown-lands. The third was the Feudal system. Every state had large funds for the encouragement of learning &c. Every state would demand not more than 20 p. c. of the produce. People were exempted from the payment of revenues or rents during famines or on occasions of a prince's birth, coronation &c. &c. Prisoners were set free on state-occasions. Due provisions were made for the convenience of all foreigners. There were hospitals for men and beasts, rest-houses, good roads, various conveyances, jala-yantras (fountains), yantra nauka (machine-boats), air-ships &c. There were countries, divisions, districts, subdivisions, mandalas and villages. There were village-units or unions. Each representing a miniature republic, managed by Panchutā i.e. panchayets, a council of five members, now revived by the Br. Government. During a crisis, the unions would get aid from the superior stations. There were emperor (samrāt) kings, viceroyas (upa-rājas), ambassadors (dutas) &c. Every state had 8 ministers to manage 8 different departments. The king was the spring of all. The Aryans lived in joint-family system. Husband and wife were dāmpati, "rulers of the house." There were exogamy and endogamy. Marriage was held sacred. It appears that the Indo-Aryans tried their best to maintain their pristine purity of blood on the one way and to admit Non-Aryans into the Hindu pale on the other. The Pardāh and infant marriage were unknown. "The Sanskrit Epics give good illustrations of war and art (Painting and Sculpture)" P. Brown in Dacca Review,
June, 1915. The Rishis discouraged the use of blue (indigo) and deep-red cloths. The practice of wearing long hair by both males and females, became gradually rare with the males, as that gave an air of softness and effeminacy. Ornaments of gold were in common use. Diamond, pearls, and precious stones were used by the richer classes. The military science was much improved. Coloured cloths were much in use.

X. Trade.—The magnificent sacrifices of the kings and gifts of gold &c.—clearly show the extent of India’s foreign trade.


The Indians of the Age traded more in the east than in the west. The Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Arabs traded with India till 1300 B.C. when the Phoenicians arrived and became supreme.

The Old Testament speaks of the “wondrous products of the East.”

The Ramayana, Ayodhya Book, Chap. 82 states that priest Vasishata asked Bharata’s permission to accept presents from the foreign merchants living in the northern, western and southern provinces of India and from those living in the islands (about 1460 B.C.)

Hindu commercial activity will appear from the following points—

“Damayanti joined a trading caravan going to sea” (Mahabharata. Episode of Nala and Damayanti).
"Gautama left home and made for the coast; on the way, he met a body of merchants going to sea. With them he proceeded towards the shore."


The Ramayana, Kishkindhya Book, Canto 40, alludes to Japan (Java Dvipa) composed of 7 islands and also to Gold and Silver Islands.

Prof. Wilson, carefully examining the list of presents mentioned in the Court Book, Mahabh., says that India during Yudhishthira's Imperial Sacrifice, had commercial relations with China. Exchange of goods cannot be ascertained now, but certain it is that China was famous for its silk. See also As. Res. Vol. IV. P. 226. Tod's Rajasthan II. P. 185. Dr. Royle's Essay. PP. 129-137.