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TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF INDIA

(A DIGEST)

by

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Allahabad*

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
MY UNCLE
EDATHANAT NARAYAN PILLAI

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PREFACE

That great soldier Napoleon Bonaparte said, "What is history but a fable agreed upon." But Indian history did not begin with mere fables. It began with the genealogies and chronologies kept by genealogists and chronologists whose duties were to narrate them almost daily in the courts of princes and potentates, in the presence of all those who desired to listen to them. They were known by the names of the Magadhas and Sutas, whose professional descendants were in existence till late in the history of India.

Then came a time, in or before 1000 B. C., when these traditions began to be collected and combined together in documentary forms, with the life-history of kings and great men fully complemented with their meritorious deeds, aspirations and achievements. As these leaders were men of faith and convictions, their activities in the religious sphere also began to appear in what we now consider as history. But when religion appears in any text, history recedes, and sectarianism and propaganda predominate.

It is in this state that the texts on Indian History known as the Puranas now appear. Hence the Puranas need careful sifting before historic material can be taken out of them. History is liable to be obliterated by the passage of time. But it can be built up from "traditions, fragmentary stories, names, words and proverbs." India is

fortunately abundant in these materials. In addition there are among the Hindus deep-rooted social habits and customs that are but little affected by time and circumstances. These are the materials on which this narrative is based.

The building up of history from these materials is most difficult but an attempt is made here to find historical truth without the influence of upbringing, preconceived notions and prejudices as far as it is humanly possible.

My grateful thanks are due to Dr. David Rubin of Columbia University for reading through the draft, and to Mr. B. N. Pande, Joint Director of Centre of Indology, Allahabad for correcting the proofs.

*2nd January, 1960,
18 A, Queens Road,
Allahabad.*

G. K. PILLAI

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INTRODUCTORY

History begins with traditions. When traditions are agreed upon, they become history. India is rich in traditions. The Puranas are the treasure-houses of Indian traditions.

The traditions are generally oral statements transmitted from generation to generation. But the Puranas are not oral statements. Though none of the Puranas that we possess to-day may date earlier than the fifth century A.D., they are translations and transcriptions of earlier texts. The earliest of them were known as Itihasas. Whether the Itihasas, like the Vedas, were written documents is a matter of controversy.

The Indians are not credited with an alphabet before the sixth century B.C. Even that is supposed to have been derived from those originals that were brought by traders from Assyria or Babylon. But the Mohenjo-daro excavations have revealed that at any rate from 2,800 B.C., they possessed some kind of script or hieroglyphics that served the purpose of communicating thought or ideas, which after all is the main purpose of writing. This script is supposed to have died out. But to a student of epigraphy, it will be most obvious that a number of these forms are traceable in the inscriptions of Asoka or the third century B.C., and in other inscriptions and coins

dating from the sixth century B.C., in a script that has come to be known as Brahmi. If the art of delineation or writing was not prevalent between 2,800 and 600 B.C., how the Mohenjo-daro forms began to appear in Brahmi forms is not easy to explain, unless the former went out of India and came back after a lapse of over 2,000 years.

However, the Puranas indicate three distinct stages in their composition, whether the texts were handed down by word of mouth or in writing. This will be obvious from the three tenses, Past, Present and Future, which the Puranic authors used in their narrative. The Present should refer to a period in which they were composed, the Past to a period prior and the Future to a period later than the Present. The Present is distinguished by four generations of kings from Parikshit II to Adhisima Krishna, who belonged to the same dynasty. The Past is distinguished by 98 generations from Ikshvaku, king of Ayodhya to Adhisima Krishna of the Puru line. The Future refers to a period later than that of Adhisima Krishna.

During the period between Parikshit II and Adhisima Krishna, a great deal of literary activities is well in evidence. The prior texts of the Puranas would appear to have been written during this period. This period, according to the Genealogical Table Appendix A will cover the four generations between forty-one and thirty-seven generations before Pushyamitra, who ascended the throne of Magadha about 180 B.C. The texts themselves were based on Itihasas, or genealogies and chronologies of an earlier period. This period,

which may be called Itihasa period, covers 93 generations before Parikshit II.

The Puranas are eighteen in number, written by various authors at different dates. The earliest of them may date from the fifth century A.D., and the latest of them about the twelfth century. In passing time, every author would appear to have made additions, probably alterations and errors. They added on what they thought expedient. All of them have included religion and cosmology. Some have included art, architecture, astronomy, astrology and science. Hence they have become encyclopediac works of immense value. No doubt these could have been written in a better way. But the writers, probably to hide their inefficiency, attributed every statement to some Rishi or god, which served the purpose well. God's utterances in them made each volume a sacred text; to possess a copy of it became an act of religious merit, and to have it read or hear it read a sure way to salvation. If they had not contained words of gods, these valuable documents might have been lost for ever. But their popularity became less with the advent of the Epics, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata. All of them are based on the Puranas. However, the Epic authors have shown better discretion. They have marshalled out the facts better, and have kept a continuity of purpose. Their heroes are the same Puranic heroes. Their facts are all taken from the Puranas. Their religious themes are those introduced by the Puranic authors, but given out in a way more coherent and convincing.

The Puranas are based on history. The Itihasa portion of them is nothing but history. The inclusion of extraneous matter in them should not discredit their historic value. Two out of five essentials that entitle a book to be called a Purana are the genealogies of kings and great men, and the chronologies of their activities and achievements. Does history give us anything more? But the Puranas provide us more. They give us a glimpse of social conditions, religious developments, and scientific attainments of a nation or groups of people, who were once the leaders of thought and men of action.

But history without dates will be nothing but fairy tales. The Puranic events are given without dates. Deeds of great men bear no dates; battles fought and kingdoms won are not given in sequence. The authors have given an incredible number of years for the life-time of their favourites. The favourites are extolled as gods, and their enemies are invariably classed among the demons, whether they are related to those gods or not. The gods appear in person to help their favourites, while the demons accrue immense powers through austerity as gifts from gods. Yet the undercurrent of the Puranic narrative is history, but that has to be sifted out and put together.

To remedy the defect of having no dates for the events given in the Vedas, a Time Scale has been framed by the writer as shown in the first Book of this series, "Vedic History set in Chro-

nology." The same Time Scale may be used in giving dates to the events narrated in the Puranas. For ready reference the relevant portion of this Time Scale is given in Appendix I. It is based on genealogies given in the Puranas. How it has been prepared and how it has been synchronised are fully explained in that Book. However, it may be mentioned that a unit in the Scale represents a generation signified by the name of a king. Each generation or step may be given an average number of years. Though opinions may differ on this point, the writer is of opinion, for reasons given elsewhere, that an average of 18 years per step is neither too optimistic nor pessimistic.

At the top of the Scale stands Ikshvaku, king of Ayodhya and at the bottom Pushyamitra, king of Magadha, who according to the historians ascended the throne of Magadha about 180 B.C. As Pushyamitra stands 135 generations after Ikshvaku, the approximate date of Ikshvaku's accession to the throne will be 135×18 , plus 180, or about 2,600 B.C. The dates for every step can be ascertained like this.

Though such dates will be only approximate, they cannot but serve the purpose of ascertaining sequence of the events and distinguishing the cause from the effect.

Against the names of the kings shown in each step, the names of their contemporaries are shown. Some of them are kings while others are religious preceptors, but all are connected with various events in Puranic history. Though these names

are not exhaustive, they are the names of persons who made history, some in the political field and others in the religious sphere. More names can be added in the list as warranted by circumstances.

From the Time Scale it will be seen that no steps are either counted upward from Pushya Mitra or downward from Ikshvaku, but Adhisima Krishna is taken like Christ to count the time or steps backward and forward. This is in conformity with the Puranic practice in narrating the events in the past and future tenses. The advantage in doing so is mentioned in Book I of this series.

Another device followed by the Puranic authors is to designate the Manus, Past, Present and Future. Manu in the literary sense means man, and in the Puranic sense a progenitor of mankind. Five Manus are designated by them as Past Manus, two as Present and seven as Future Manus. Certain tribes or groups of people are said to have descended from each of them. The groups mentioned under the Past Manus belong to the Traditional Period, the groups under the Present Manus belong to the historic period of the Puranic history and the groups under the Future Manus belong to a later period. The information about the Tribes under the Past Manus is meagre, a great many Dynastic details are available about the groups under the Present Manus, while the Puranic authors give scant attention to the groups under the Future Manus.

The Puranic device such as this enables one to divide the Traditional History into three parts,

which may be conveniently called Pre-Dynastic, and Post-Dynastic. Very little is known about the Pre-Dynastic Period. A great deal is given in the Puranas about the Dynastic Period. Though the Puranas are vague about the Post-Dynastic period a great deal about this period can be found from the Arthasastras and Dharmasastras, and other Post-Vedic works.

PART I—PREDYNASTIC

CHAPTER I

THE ANCIENT NAME FOR INDIA

India is a land of great antiquity. Though some may give greater antiquity to Assyria and Egypt, the Hindus in general are sceptic about it. Archaeological discoveries are the surest way of determining the antiquity of nations or antecedents of their culture, but should their traditions be left out of consideration? The Hindu traditions are not all religious, they are also geological, geographical, anthropological, historical and astronomical. Each of these traditions should be studied in detail before a clear concept of Indian antiquity is ascertained.

The ancient name for India was Jambu Dvipa, or the Island of Jambu. It is the name for India given in the Puranas. It is the name used by Asoka in his inscriptions. It is also the name that is being used by many a Brahman in his daily prayer, in which Bharat or Bharatvarsha is specified as a 'khanda' or division of Jambu Dvipa.

Geographically India being a peninsula, how is it then it came to be called a Dvipa or Island? Two alternatives are possible. The word Dvipa may have been used by the ancient mariners for an Island as well as a peninsula, or it may have been reminiscent of a geological age when the Deccan was an Island.

According to the geologists the Deccan was once a huge Island, that stood as a 'rock' for immense

number of years even before the Cambrian Period, and the Indo-Gangetic plain, with the Punjab in the west and Bengal in the east is of 'yeaster-year' in geological history, being formed by alluvial deposits brought down from the Himalayas. The Extra Peninsula areas consisting of Afghanistan and Baluchistan in the west, and the Hill Tracts of Assam and Burma in the east, were also under the sea at one time, judging from "the fossil remains of invertebrate fish and reptiles, and flowerless plants that are found there."

The Hindu geological traditions also speak of a period without the mountains and rivers of North India. Though they are found in later traditions, in earlier traditions only the mountains and the rivers of the Deccan are mentioned. The seven mountains according to the earlier traditions are—the Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Suktiman, Risha, Vindhya and Pariyatra. Five of them still retain the old names, while the Pariyatra may have been the Aravali Hills, which may have formed a 'yatra' or passage for the early inhabitants of the Deccan to the Northern plains. Suktiman may have been a Mount in Ceylon when it was connected by land with India. These seven mountains are called 'Kula Parvatas' which may indicate that they were the original habitat of the Kulis, a term which is still being used to indicate tribal distinctions. Though the Hindus now use the word Kula or Gotra in designating people with common ancestry, tribes like the Oraons use the word Kuli to indicate a common descent.

Piccard is of the opinion that South India was occupied by man from Quarternary onward. Quarternary is divided into two periods, the Recent and the Pleistocene; the Recent goes back to 20,000 years and Pleistocene 1,000,000 years. The Hindus date their calendar even prior to Pleistocene. Their astronomers maintain that 725, 447, 750, 625 days have passed before the beginning of Kali Era which commenced from Vernal Equinox in 3,101 B. C., which is well over two million years.

The Christian idea about the beginning of the world and mankind did not go beyond 4,000 B. C. But the Chaldeans allowed in their days 473,000 years for the age of mankind and two million years for the age of the world. But the modern scientists are of opinion that the world is about three thousand million years old.

In judging the Hindu astronomers' claim to antiquity, archaeological discoveries so far made should not be lost sight of. The Indus-Valley civilization goes back to 3,000 B. C. Their Kali Era, the dates of which are even now progressively counted, not only in number of years, but also in number of days, goes back to the Vernal Equinox in 3101 B. C. The Neolithic culture of Mysore goes back to 4,000 B. C. And the flake industry of the Palaeolithic culture of Kashmere and Potwar (near the Salt Range) goes back from 187,000 to 435,000 years.

"Southern India," says Sir John Evans, "was probably the cradle of the human race", and "investigations in relation to race show it is possible that

South India was once the passage ground which the ancient progenitors of the Northern and Mediterranean races proceeded to the parts of the globe which they inhabit."

However it might be, it was from within the sailing distance from South India that the anthropologists have found the near-human population. In Java they found fragmentary fossils of skulls, thigh-bones and teeth of *Pithecanthropus erectus*, or erect ape-man with incipient Austroloid characteristics, who lived between 500,000 and 800,000 years ago. And the Austroloids are one of the main racial groups in India.

All countries bear names given by others. Even for our own name we have little responsibility. Jambu Dvipa must have been a name given to India by some outsiders, and calling it a Dvipa or Island must have been done by a sea-faring people. Then why was it called the island of Jambu? The Puranic explanation is that Jambu was a tree, the fruits of which on decomposition gave fertility to the soil, and the land thus fertilised was called Jambu Dvipa. But this tree has not been identified. However, the word 'Jambu' could be found in Santali, the language of the Santhals, a tribe who lived on comparative isolation till recently. The Santhals are grouped among the Austroloids.

In their language 'Jambu' means great heat. Hence Jambu Dvipa could be taken for the island of great heat. For one from the East Indies, South India is decidedly a hot country.

Jambu is not the only Dvipa mentioned in the Puranas. They speak of seven Dvipas and seven

seas. The seven Dvipas are Jambu, Plaksha, Salami, Kusa, Krouncha, Saka and Pushkara; and the seven seas are the seas of Lavana (salt), Ikshu (sugar), Sura (wine), Sarpi (ghce) Dadhi (curd), Dugdha (milk) and Jala (water). These names are evidently according to their contents or appearance. One might scoff at the idea of a sea being called the sea of milk or wine, while taking for granted names like Yellow Sea, Red Sea or White Sea. During the Puranic period the description of the seven seas and seven Dvipas had undergone a ludicrous change, when these seas began to be described as annular with annular islands bordering on them. Evidently the Puranic authors were victims of language difficulties. Literal translations from pre-Sanskrit to Sanskrit might easily have created such misnomers.

Any sea-faring people who called India a Dvipa, might easily have called similar land-formations jutting into the Southern seas Dvipas. The seven Dvipas may have been India, Further India, Sumatra and Australia on the east, and Arabia, Africa and South America on the west.

This will raise the question whether the people of such distant lands could have known of each other's existence. But a glance at the map of Ocean Currents in the Southern Seas will show that even primitive crafts propelled by the wind and drawn by the currents could have made the contact between them possible.

Another factor that should not be lost sight of is cultural similarity among the original inhabitants

of these lands. The Totamism of the Indian Tribes bears close resemblance to that of the Australian Tribes. The Matriarchal system of Kerala, though with variations existed in Egypt and South America. The Mohenjo-daro script or something similar to it has been found on Easter Island. More instances like these can be cited.

However, if the Australoid or Santhali origin for the word Jambu Dvipa is accepted, a similar origin for the word India can also be advanced. The name India is said to have derived from 'Sintu' by which the Persians are said to have designated the land beyond the Indus. But the Persian name for India, if it ever meant India at all, was Hindu. Hindu appears as a Satrapy of Persia on two inscriptions, one on a platform of the palace at Persepolis, and the other in an inscription on the tomb of Darayavaush (Darius, king of Persia, 520-518 B. C.) at Naqsh-i-Rustam. But how Hindu became Sintu is not explained. On the other hand the Santhalis still retain the words 'sind' or 'sindh' and 'sindri.' The word 'sindri' means the edge or ridge, while 'sind' or 'sindh' means to break into a house by making holes in the wall. These ideas would have included one to call the land, by the Bolan and the Khyber passes, Sindh, as any exist from India except through the sea-coast could have been only through these 'holes' or passes. Even now these are the only passes to get out of India. The excavations beyond the Bolan Pass has shown that Mohenjo-daro of the third millennium B. C. was in contact with the land beyond the Kirtar Range.

CHAPTER II

THE MANUS, MANVANTARAS AND YUGAS

The Puranas divided the old inhabitants of India according to Tribe. Even now the main division of the people is by Kula or Gotra, which is based on heredity. Other divisions such as Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya or Sudra are horizontal divisions based on professions that cut across Kula or Gotra divisions. The Puranas assign a period of time for various tribes or groups during which the tribal integrity was kept alive. The Tribal grouping is done under various Manus, to each of whom a Manvantara or period of time is assigned. The Tribal grouping is maintained in the Puranas. The beginnings of the Manvantaras are maintained by the astronomers. Thus, though the Manus are mythical persons, the tribes who are said to have descended from them, as well as the Manvantaras commencing with their commencing dates give them substance that should not be overlooked.

The Tribal divisions under the Manus are not complete. The Puranic authors would appear to be vague about them ; yet some idea about them could be formed from what they state. The Tribal grouping under the Past and Present Manus is given thus :

Names of Manus	Names of the Tribes.
<i>Past Manus :</i>	
1. Svayambhuva	: Agnidhras or Agni- vahas.
2. Svarocita	: Chaitras and Kimpur- ushas.
3. Uttama	: Dvijas and Parasus.
4. Tamasa	: Khyatis, Mukhyas, and Janujanghas.
5. Raivata	: Balabandhus and Sat- yakas.
<i>Present Manus :</i>	
1. Chakshsha	: Purus, Urus and Satad- yumnas.
2. Vaivasvata	: Ikshvakus, Nabhagas, Nabhanedishtas, Satyat- is, Dhrishtas, etc.

The Puranic history deals with the people who are grouped under the Present Manus. The genealogies of the Purus and Ikshvakus are in a limited sense complete ; in fact the Time-Scale of Appendix I is mainly based on these genealogies. Members of the rest of the tribes under these groups are often groups in relation to the Purus and Ikshvakus.

The details about the tribes under the Past Manus are meagre. But the names of some of them crop up in Puranic history. At least one Rishi named Agnidra is traceable in the Dynastic period, while the Chaitras and Kimpurushas have become even during the Vedic period superhuman

beings of mischievous tendencies and uncanny powers. Gandharvas of the Vedic or Dynastic period are grouped among the Kimpurushas. The Powers of Gandharvas were dreaded by the Vedic Rishis. The gods worshipped by the Agnidhras, Yama and Satakritu were the gods of the Vedic people. The Parvatas or the mountains worshipped by the Chaitras and Kimpurushas are still venerated by the Hindus, Siva worshipped by Dvijas and Parasus, and Hari (Vishnu) worshipped by Khyatis are the most important gods of the Hindus even today. Instances like these will make the tribes under the Past Manus historic, despite mythical origin and superhuman activities that are attributed to them.

The Traditions begin with Manu Svayambhuva or self-born. Even among the gods Siva is the only one with the attribute Svayambhu or self-born. Svayambhuva is said to have had two sons, Prayavarta and Uttanapada. Prayavarta's sons are said to have occupied the seven Dvipas. The probability of the seven Dvipas being India, Arabia, Africa, South America, Australia. Further India, and East Indies, has already been shown in the last Chapter. The seven sons of Prayavarta to whom he distributed the seven Dvipas were Agnidhra, Medhatithi, Vapushamat, Jyotishmat, Dutimat, Bhavya and Savalai. The sovereignty of Jambu Dvipa was given to Agnidhara. Agnidhara, in turn, distributed the sovereignty of Jambu Dvipa to his nine sons ; and they were Nabhi, Kimpurusha, Ilavarta, Ramya, Hiravat, Kuru, Bhadrasha, and Ketumala." He conferred on Nabhi the country of Himakuta,

on Harivarsha, the country of Nishadha, on Ilavarta the country in the centre of which the Mount Meru is situated, on Kanya the countries lying between it and the Nila Mountain, on Hiravat the country lying to the north of it, on Kuru the country bounded by Sringawat, on Bhadrassa the countries situated on the east of the Meru, and on Ketumala the country of Gandhamadana situated on the west of it." Here a confusion of place names with the persons or tribes, and personal names with the names of the countries are most obvious. However, this distribution of Jambu Dvipa among the sons of Agnidhra will indicate that India at one time was occupied by only one race. Likewise, the distribution of the seven Dvipa or continents among the seven sons of Prayavarta will indicate the racial unity of the people of India with the inhabitants of Australia, South America, Arabia, Africa and the Indies during the period known as Svayambhuva Manvantara.

How long ago was this period is difficult to ascertain. It may be presumed, however, that it was later than that period envisaged by the geologists when the Indian Peninsula was separated from the rest of Asia by the sea and the Deccan had land connections on the one side with Africa, and on the other with Australia.

The Manvantaras or the period covered by Manus and Yugas are confusing elements in Indian chronology. Different authorities give varying number of years per Manvantara and the Yuga. According to the Vishnu Purana, a "Manvantara

takes up over 852,000 years", or a little over 71 four Yugas. As it is also stated that "the period of 12,000 years of the deities constitute the four Yugas," *viz.* Krita, Treta and the others, the 71 four Yugas make a Manvantara of 852,000 years. But without knowing what the author exactly meant by the 'years of the deities', it is impossible to test the accuracy of this statement. However, before this claim is set aside as worthless it should be remembered that the anthropologists have given to flake industry of Kashmir and Potwar half this number of years or 435,000 years, and to the earliest known Hominid, the *Pithecanthropus* of Java, they have given a period of 500,000 to 800,000 years of antiquity. Such being the case, one cannot but wonder whether the original author of the Vishnu Purana meant by a Manvantara something like Quaternary.

However, for the beginning of Svayambhuva Manvantara the astronomers maintain a date of its beginning called Svayambhuva Manvadi. It is generally known as Maha Navami, or the great Navami. It is the peak day of the Dasera festival which is celebrated all over India by high and low, by the Brahmans, and untouchables and by the aborigines and the civilised. In North India it is celebrated as Rama-lila, when Rama's exploits are enacted, culminating with setting fire to the effigy of Ravana, Rama's greatest enemy. In Kerala it is celebrated as 'Pooja Vaipu', when the books are heaped together and worshipped. In Mysore huge processions accompanied by well-caprized elephants are taken out in great jubilation. In Bengal

it is observed as Pooja when Devi is worshipped with great zeal and enthusiasm. Some warlike people worship their military weapons on this occasion. Even the aborigines have their special form of celebration accompanied by all-night dance and hilarity. But the Bengalis consider this as their New Year festival, though their present New Year Day is Vishnu, which to them is not so important as Pooja festival. It is their Christmas, when presents are distributed, new clothes are worn, friendly and neighbourly visits are made and every one simulates an enhanced prosperity. Thus the Bengalis still retain the characteristics of Maha Navami as the beginning of a New Year.

Maha Navami falls on the ninth lunar day in the lunar month as Asvin, which invariably falls in the Solar month of Kanni. The lunar calendar also gives the Kali-Yugadi or the beginning Kali Era, which falls on the 28th of the previous Lunar month of Proshtapad, or 11 days before Maha Navami. The beginning of two eras at short intervals needs investigation.

It has been the practice in India to commence the Lunar months with the New Moon, but it was not the oldest practice. Once it began from the day after the Full Moon, as will be seen from the name Poornamasi for the Full Moon, which means that which completes the month. Some of the Manvantaras still begin with Full Moon, which even the aborigines celebrated with great eclat. Then some time or other they changed the end of the month from the Full Moon to New Moon. The beginning of Kali, as shown above, is truly

indicative of this change. That being the case, why did they introduce a New Year beginning from eleven days after or with Maha Navami ?

The Ancient Egyptians at one time followed a calendar with 360 days to the year. It was based on Lunar computation. But when they adopted a Solar or Seasonal Calendar they added five more days to the Lunar year. They treated these five days as holidays. The Christians, when they adopted the Egyptian Calendar for their use, made these five holidays Holy Days with special fast and prayer. The Indian would appear to have adopted a similar procedure. But the Hindu Lunar year had only 354·8 days, while their Solar year had 365·25 days. So they added about eleven more days to their Lunar year to make it Solar. These eleven days are days of fast, prayers and pooja for them. All work was once prohibited during these days ; even school children were not to attend their classes. All had to begin reading and writing afresh when the required number of days and hours were completed. This practice was strictly in force in Kerala till the beginning of the century.

Maha Navami, the peak day of the observance, invariably falls in the Solar month of Kanni, and the Hindus have been commencing their New Year from the Vishnu, a practice that has not yet completely disappeared. It has been followed in Bengal since the introduction of the Sanh Era. In Kerala it is celebrated as the New Year's Day of a forgotten Era with festivities and presentations. Vishu is the Vernal Equinox or the day of equal

night and day. They ascertain the day and the exact time of the Vernal Equinox now by astronomical calculations. But in days gone by they would appear to have determined it by the observation on the Sun's shadow cast on a gnomon or peg in a specified manner. How it is done is fully explained in the writer's Book, "*The Way of the Silpis*". It is by this method that even now the indigenous architects determine the true East-West line for correct orientation of their building. Even the Mohenjo-daro people of 3,000 B. C. orientated their buildings with accuracy. As they had no Prismatic compass or Theodolite, they should be presumed to have used this method. From certain hymns in the Vedas it will be seen that the Vedic people had known this method before 2,500 B. C.

The Post-Vedic literature speaks of the Annual Satras or sacrifices performed when the Vernal Equinox was a Kritika Nakshatra. From the position of the Nakshatras or Lunar Mansions, as fixed by Arya Bhata in the year 499 A. D., it will be seen that the Vernal Equinox was at Revati Nakshatra on that date. As the Hindu astronomers allowed a processional variation of 53 and one-third second per year, calculating back from that position, the Vernal Equinox at Kritika, which is the third Nakshatra from Revati, should have been in 2201 B. C. and at Mrigasirsha, which is the third Nakshatra from Kritika, in 4001 B. C., the distance from Nakshatra to Nakshatra being 13 and one-third degrees, processional variation from Nakshatra to Nakshatra should be equivalent to 900 years. When Arya Bhata on this occasion dated

the beginning of the Solar Kali back to 3101 B. C. the Vernal Equinox at the beginning of Kali should have been at Rohini, the second Nakshatra from Kritika.

Therefore if the Svayambhuva Era had commenced from the Vernal Equinox, and if it were in the Solar month of Kanni, its date can be fixed astronomically. There 12 Rasis or Asterisms, occupying 360 degrees and each Rasi being 30 degrees in extent for the transit of Equinox from the first point to the last point in the Rasi will take about 2100 years. At Arya Bhata's epoch in 499 A. D., as the Vernal Equinox was in the First Point of Mesha, and as there are six Rasis between Kanni and Mesha, the Vernal Equinox in Kanni should have been between 14200 and 12100 B. C.

If an intermediate date of 13600 B. C. is taken, a relation between the beginning of Svayambhuva and the beginning of Solar Kali as fixed by Arya Bhata can be established.

The Past Manus according to the Puranas are five, and it is stated that their periods were in succession, indicating a lapse of five Manvantaras between the beginning of Svayambhuva Epoch and the beginning of the Chakshusha or Vaivasvata epoch. This lapse of time can be fixed if it is known what a Manvantara is or how many years constitute a Manvantara. Astronomers give a clue to this. The Hindu Almanac gives the Manvadi of the second Manu Svarocita as falling a month after the epoch-making day of Svayambhuva. The epoch-making day of Svarocita is the 12th Lunar

day in the lunar month of Kartika. If the Svarocita epoch had also commenced from the Vernal Equinox, between this epoch and the Svayambhuva epoch there is an interval of 31 days, or the Vernal Equinox have changed its position by 30 degrees showing a lapse of 2100 years. This gives the period of a Manvantara as 2100 years. Hence the prevalence of the first five Manvantara periods can be fixed as follows :—

Svayambhuva Period : From 13,600 to 11,500 B.C.					
Svarocita	„	„	„	11,500	„ 9,400 „
Uttama	„	„	„	9,400	„ 7,300 „
Tamasa	„	„	„	7,300	„ 5,200 „
Raivata	„	„	„	5,200	„ 3,100 „

The last of these dates 3,100 or 3101 B.C. is the date fixed by Arya Bhata for the beginning of Solar Kali Era. The Solar Kali is living era, the date of which is even now maintained by the Hindu astronomers even in number of days. A perusal of the Hindu Almanac will show that the number of days that had passed on the day of the Vernal Equinox in 1958 was 1847842 and that in 1959 will be 1848207.

Thus the long forgotten past in tradition is linked with the living present by means of Manvantaras. Who has done it or when it was done is not known. The astronomical activities in India have been tremendous, even before and after Arya Bhata. Arya Bhata's works will indicate that, though he took his observations at the observatory at Ujjain, Malwa, he based his calculations on the position of stars in Lanka, Ceylon. He hailed

from Kusumapura, in Patna, and he does not appear to have been to Lanka. Even if he had been to Lanka, he would not have seen any observatory in Lanka as there was none in his day. The observatory which he refers to was at the Equator, which according to the Tamil tradition disappeared when the land beyond Ceylon became submerged under the sea.

Many astronomical works existed before the days of Arya Bhata, and some after him. The important works before him are those that are in the name of Brahma, Soura, Vasistha, and probably those by Paulisa and Romaka. Because of the foreign touch in the names of the last two, some scholars are of opinion that Paulisa was a Greek and Romaka was a Roman, and they thereby establish foreign influence in Hindu Astronomy. But long before the Greek and even Babylonian development in astronomy, the Indians would appear to have made great strides in this science. This will be evident from the Vishnu Purana where certain astronomic details are given by Parasara, who calls himself father of Vyasa, which itself should indicate that he lived about 1000 B. C.

Parasara says to his disciples gathered round him at Naimisaranya that the stellar system is centred on Dhruva (North Pole Star). "To Dhruva are attached the Planets and the stars including those of the Asterisms and the Lunar Mansions. They all move in their respective orbits being kept in their places by their respective hands of ether. As many are these so many are ethereal cords by which they are fastened to Dhruva. As

they turn round they cause the Pole Star to revolve. As the oilman goes round the spindle and makes it revolve, so the celestial bodies suspended by the ethereal cords are also whirled round the centre. 'The substance of the ethereal cord is called 'Pravaha' because it bears along the orbs like a disc of fire driven by an aerial wheel.'

To the ancient Hindus even the Pole Star was not stationary. Its displacement about three degrees from its original position now is an established fact. They, unlike others, never thought that the Sun was stationary. Hence they included the Sun among the seven Grihas, or Planets. They observed the movements of all the Grihas and determined the period of time taken by each for one complete revolution. Their estimate has been accurate enough. They even observed the progress of the shadows cast by the Sun and the Moon on each other and even now keep a record of their day-to-day progress, which enables them to ascertain beforehand both the solar and lunar eclipses. These shadows they designated as Rahu and Ketu, which completes the number of their nine Grihas.

Parasara's description of the Little Bear is illuminating. He calls it a Celestial Porpoise. Dhruva is poised or fitted to the tail end of the celestial porpoise. The four stars on its tail are Agni, Mahendra, Kasyapa and Dhruva. The three others of the group are Asvin, Varuna, and Aryamar. These stars according to him never set. He describes the Sun's path to the rim of cart wheel, the short end of its pole as if fixed on the Pole Star.

He divides the astral regions into five spheres, namely, (i) the Bhu-loka, the sphere of the Earth, (ii) the Bhuvār-Loka, the sphere of the Grahas or Planets, (iii) Mahar-Loka, the sphere of Dhruva, (iv) and (v) Tapoloka beyond Dhruva-loka and Satya-Loka beyond the Satya-Loka. They tried even to give the radius of these spheres in the units of Yojanas. But these cannot be tested for accuracy, as we are still trying to fix the spheres of only some of them. They have noticed even the slow motion of earth in winter months.

The Planets or the Grihas with which they were most concerned were Ravi (Sun), Soma (Moon), Mangal (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Guru (Jupitar), Sukra (Venus), and Sani (Saturn). The Dravidians still keep their old names for most of these planets, *viz.* Njayar for the Sun, Tinkal for the Moon, Cova for Mars, Vyaza for Jupitar, which to all appearance are older names. These names they have given to their Week Days. Yet some are of opinion that the cycle of weeks and the names of the respective days the Hindus have borrowed from the West.

The Hindus have known about the rotation of the Earth, long before it was appreciated in the West. Parasara says to his disciples, "O Maitreya, while in one continent the Sun shines at mid-day, in the opposite continent it will be mid-night," rising and setting thus take place at all seasons and are opposed in different directions and intermediate points in the horizon." They had known that the Moon was not self-luminary. In a primitive hymn the Sun is praised for making the Moon

visible by means of his rays striking on it. Surya, or the rays of the Sun, is described in Vedic hymns as constantly being wooed by the Moon. In Brahman marriage the bride is made to represent Surya and the groom the Moon. The attainment of the ancient Indians in astronomy could be judged even from these few instances.

It should, however, be mentioned here that the commencing dates of the next three Manvantaras do not indicate that they were begun when the Vernal Equinox was in successive Rasis. The third and the fourth would appear to have begun from the Winter Solastic from which they stand third and fourth positions, and the fifth would appear to have commenced from the Autumnal Equinox from which it occupies the fifth position.

However, as it has become evident that a Manvantara is a period of 2100 years, at least according to one usage of the word, it may be investigated what a Yuga is. Yuga, like Manvantara, is used to denote various cycles of years. According to Kautilya's Artha Sastra, it can be used to denote even a cycle of five years. The chronologists used it to denote a cycle of one thousand years. The Puranic authors at times used it to indicate a cycle of 12,000 years. In each case the cycles are counted Krita or Kali, Dvapara, Treta and so on, which do not indicate anything more than I, II, III & c. But a Yuga literally means two or a couple. Therefore it be used to indicate a couple of Manvantaras as well. A couple of Manvantaras then will indicate 4200 years.

Now, the Hindu Calendar gives the 9th. of Kartika as the beginning of Treta Yuga or III Yuga. We have already seen that the 11 of Kartika as the beginning of the Svarocita Manvantara. If this slight difference in the number of days is omitted, the beginning of Svarocita can be taken as the beginning of Treta Yuga. Then the beginning of Dvapara Yuga will be the beginning of Tamasa Manvantara or 7,300 B. C. On the same basis the beginning of Vaivasvata Manvantara or Kali Yuga will be 3,100 B. C., which is nothing but the beginning of Kali era.

There are other instances in the Hindu Calendar by means of which a Yuga can be shown as a cycle of 4,200 years. The beginning of Krita Yuga is given as 3rd, Vaisakha, which is designated as Akshaya Tertiya, or everlasting or ever to be remembered Tertiya or the third day of Vaisakha. Along with it if a date given for the beginning of Dvapara Yuga as 30th of Magh is taken, it will show that the interval between the two is two months or equivalent of 4200 years. But it should be pointed out that this Dvapara is not the same as the previous one. This Krita is not the same as the Kali. It can be correct only if the computation is made from the Winter Solstice and not from the Vernal Equinox. As stated before there were those in India who commenced the New Year from the Vernal Equinox as well as from the Winter Solstice. The astronomers have recorded both or all the practices. It should be remembered that Indian Almanac is an integrated

one, and not of any particular group, who happened to be a particular area.

Now just as the Manvantaras are checked by means of the Yugas, the Yugas can be checked by means of a correct appreciation of the names given to two eras, Vikramaditya and Saka. The Vikramaditya era is supposed to have been introduced by king Vikramaditya and Saka era by Saka king Kanishka. Vikramaditya era began from 57 B. C. and the Saka era from 78 A. D. But the historians have not so far found a king who might have lived at the Vikramaditya epoch. As to Kanishka too there are difficulties. As to the date of the accession of Kanishka, who is presumed to have introduced this era to celebrate his accession to the throne, there is no unanimity among the historians. According to Dr. Fleet Kanishka ascended the throne in 58 B. C. According to Bhandarkar it took place in 278 A. D. Vincent Smith, after weighing all the pros and cons, says, "Kanishka, then, may be assumed to have succeeded Khadphisis II, to whom presumably he was related, in or about 78 A. D. "It is on the presumption that Kanishka, the Saka leader, invaded India. But his invasion itself is a doubtful point as some are of opinion that it was his father, Khadphisis, who invaded India.

However, whoever introduced these eras, the one who introduced the Vikramaditya epoch determined that on that date Kali era had completed 3044 years, and the one who was responsible for Saka era determined that at that epoch Kali era had completed 3179 years. The number of years

thus determined is in conformity with 3600 years for the beginning of Kali given by Arya Bhata in 499 A. D. It is evident from this that all the three have had their eyes on Kali as a landmark. It was already shown how the beginning of Kali as fixed by Arya Bhata synchronised with the beginning of the Manvantaras, the dates of which were fixed by him or not. Similarly, had the epoch-makers of the Vikrama and Saka eras thought of connecting their respective eras with some other epoch, Manvantara or Yuga, they would have done so.

It has been an age-long practice among the astronomers to connect two events by means of certain made-up words. For instance, on the Malabar Coast they connect the years of Kali with the years in Kollam era, by means of the code-word "Taralangam" or "Charadhala". Both mean the same number, as we see when we decipher them. The number of years in Kollam era plus the number represented by these code-words give the equivalent number of years in Kali.

The number is made up of numerical values given to the letters, of the alphabet and by reading the numbers in reverse order. The numerical values for the letters are :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
Ka	Kha	Ga	Gha	Nga	Cha	Cha	Ja	Jha	NJO
Ta	Tha	Da	Dha	Na	Th	Tha	Da	Dha	Na
and so on*									

*For the rest please see Appendix II.

When these values are given, for instance, Caradhala becomes 6 2 9 3, and when it is read in reverse order it gives the number 3926. When this is added on to any year of Kollam era it gives the equivalent number of years in Kali.

When the word Vikramaditya is treated in this manner it would give the number 8, 5 2 4. But before treating Saka in this fashion, its real name should be used. It is Salivahana. It came to be called Saka for it was greatly used by the Saka kings of Central India. Salivahana would mean 8,437. Suppose, the astronomer, who determined that Kali had completed 3179 years at the beginning of his epoch, had desired to commemorate that date with reference to another datum say a Yuga or Manvantara, he could not have done better by the use of a code-word in the time-honoured fashion. It seems it is exactly that he had done. By adding 8,437 to 3179, gives 11616 years. As the date of this epoch was 78 A. D., from this figure 78 should be deducted to get its equivalent number of years in Christian era. Its equivalent in Christian era is 11, 538 B. C. We have already seen that the beginning of Treta Yuga was 11, 500 B. C. Evidently it was the Treta Yuga that the astronomer had in view as a landmark or datum to count backward at the epoch of Salivahana.

Similarly it will be seen that it was the same Treta Yuga which the astronomer of the Vikramaditya era had also in view. Though the difference between Vikramaditya and Treta Yuga should be less than that of the Salivahana by 135 years, the word Vikramaditya indicates a greater number.

But this discrepancy will disappear if it is taken that the author of the Vikramaditya epoch counted back the number of Years to Treta in Chandrama or Lunar years, and the author of Salivahana epoch counted back the number in Solar years.

This may also indicate that Northern India followed a Lunar calendar, though accurate in itself, but that they did not take notice of Solar computation until Salivahana epoch, or they did not introduce their Luni-Solar computation until this period. It must be then that they introduced 'Adhi-Nasa' and other devices to synchronise the lunar with the solar calendars. Magh Mela, Kumbha Mela and Ardh-Kumbha Mela celebrations would appear to have been introduced to drive home to the people the importance of this change. It should be noticed that these Melas are not celebrated in the South and all the places of Mela celebrations are in the North. The chief of them are Allahabad and Haridwar. Nasik is also one of them, but it could be accounted for when it is realised that it was at Ujjain not far from Nasik that this calendar reform was effected.

But who was responsible for this reform? It could not have been Kanishka; if ever he invaded India at all, his conquest did not extend to Malwa. The Satavahanas from the South who extended their conquest to Malwa and Maghdha would appear to have been responsible for the introduction of the Saka era. They must have extended the Solar calendar to the North, evidently for the efficiency of administration, as the British introduced the English calendar for the same purpose.

Even at this date they did not go *ad hoc* at the reform. They did not count the year from the Vernal Equinox as the Southerners were doing. They began to count the Salivahana year from the New Moon in the solar month of Chaitra by retaining the New Moon traditions of the North. As the epoch-making day of this era was Tuesday, the third March, it could be presumed that then the Vernal Equinox was at the New Moon or near about.

The introduction of the Vikramaditya era would appear to have had only a partial success. The West Indians did not agree to the commencing date for the Vikramaditya year. The North Indians counted the year from the Full Moon of Chaitra and the West Indians counted from the New Moon of Kartika, a procedure that is still being followed. This difference indicates provincial differences even at that date. It may also indicate a kind of group difference and attempt at unity. The Nagar Brahmans of Gujarat still celebrate the New Year on the First of Kartika. Though some of them claim to be the first Aryan invaders of India, the name Pandya among them needs investigation as this name has a south Indian touch about it. Pandya is the name among the Keralias for the Tamil country.

The West Indian practice is in conformity with that of Treta Yuga, while the North Indian way of commencing from Chaitra will show their concern for the Vernal Equinox. The west Indians would appear to have followed the Mohenjo-daro

traditions, as a scrutiny of the Mohenjo-daro seals cannot but make one wonder whether the Mohenjo-daro people did commence the New Year when the Vernal Equinox was in Tulam Rasi.

However might it be, the main object of the astronomers at the Vikramaditya, and Salivahana epochs would appear to have been to refer back to Kali and Treta Yuga. At a later epoch, Arya Bhatta did the same, when he fixed the beginning of Kali 3600 years earlier. Thus it can be safely presumed that the Yugas and Manvantaras that the Puranic authors speak of were not mythical ages; but they were cycles of years based on astronomical events. Viewed in this light the name given to Manu Vaivaswata, is most significant as it means son of the Sun. Is it not the Sun which measures time for us? Is it not the Sun which enables us to determine the years, the cycles of years centuries, Yugas or Manvantara?

The Manvantara that stands in the name of Manu Vaivasvata or Chakshurtha, however, heralds a new era, namely, Kali, that has commenced in 3101 B. C. Kali is a still living era, and as such it has a reality that cannot be denied. Though the Puranic chronology may not go so far as this, there is a regular genealogy which begins with Ikshvaku, who is said to be a son of Manu Vaivasvata. But Manu Chakshusha, who is said to be a contemporary of Vaivasvats, has a genealogy for himself. His genealogy is traced from Uttanapada, who is said to be the second son of Prayavarta.

Uttanapada had two wives, Suruchi and Suniti.

Suruchi was his favourite, and her son was Uttama, who inherited his father's kingdom. Suruchi's son was Dhruva, after whom the North Pole Star is named. Dhruva's sons were Sishti and Bhavya. Sishti had five sons; Ripu was one of them, Ripu "begot upon Vrihat, a highly effulgent son named Chakshusha, who again begot Manu Chakshusha on Pushkarani of the race of Varuna." On Nabhala, a daughter of Vairaj, Manu Chakshusha begot ten sons, and they were Uru, Puru, Satadyumna, Tapasher, Satyavak, Kavi Agbistoma, Atiratra, Sudyumna, and Abhimanyu. Uru begot on Agneyi six sons, Anga, Sumanas. Savit, Kritu, Angiras and Siva. Anga had a son named Vena. "The Rishis rubbed his right hand, and from his arm sprang a famous king, Vainya, who was celebrated as Prithu for milking the earth for the advantage of his subjects." This is according to Parasara's narrative as is given in the Vishnu Purana, "This genealogy of Chakshusha and his descendants being different from that of the descendants of Vaivasvata, and Vaivasvata and Chakushasha being contemporaries evidently indicates the presence of two racial elements side by side, which may be called Chakshusha and Vaivasvata elements. If the Vaivasvata element happen to be the descendants of the Agnidhras, who in the remote past occupied the whole of India, the Chakshusha element should be considered as new-comers. If it is so where could they have come from?

Did they come by land or sea? The Chakshusha genealogy itself may give the answer. In this genealogy, Manu Chakshusha is stated to be the

son of Pushkarani of the race of Varunas. Now Varuna is the sea-god, and Pushara is one of the seven Dvipas, the sovereignty of which was conferred on Savala, one of the sons of Prayavarta, the son of Manu Svayambhuva. As this shows Chakshusha's connection with the sea and a Dvipas (Island) in the Southern Sea, the Chakshusha element in the racial make-up of India should be considered as having come by the sea and not by land. This conclusion fits in well with the opinion of the anthropologists, who hold that the Austroloid element in the Indian racial make-up come by the sea.

Further it should be noticed that the ancestry of Chakshusha is taken back to Uttanapada, who is said to be a second son of Prayavarta, son of Manu Svayambhuva. This will indicate the ethnic relation that once existed between Chakshusha and Vaivasvata races, though it may have been some ten thousand years before the common period attributed to them.

The regions that these new-comers first occupied in India can also be ascertained. From the Puranas it will be seen that the regions associated with Satadymanas, and Angas constituted Assam, Bengal, Orissa, and Southern Bihar. It is in these regions that the Australoids are still traceable.

The anthropologists divide the Austric races into two, the Austric and Austronesian, the former comprising the Munda, Mon-Khmer, Khasi and Nicobar groups ; while the Austronesian comprise the Indonesian, Malanesian and Polynesian. Hence

it can be judged from what regions the Chakshusha element has come to India. If they came from Pushkara Dvipa, this Dvipa should be where the Austronesians have come. The Vedic god Varuna must also have come from there. Varuna is a sea-god. So he must have been a god of a sea-going people. It should also be observed that he was not worshipped by any one of the groups that are mentioned under the past Manus.

Among the Chakshusha element many famous names can be traced, the names of those who made the ancient history of India. The names of Uru, Puru, Sudyumna, Kavi, Anga, Kritu, Angirasa and Vena have already been mentioned. Among these, Sudyumna will be found as a contemporary of Ikshavaku. The Purus will be found as having taken their origin through an unconventional alliance between Sudyumna and a princess of the Ikshavaku line. Angirases were Rishi famous in the Atharva Veda, and more especially in the Rig Veda. Vena will be found among those who first conceived Brahma as a god over and above all other Vedic gods. Kritu and Kave or Kapi will be found among the Rishis, who are said to have come from a sacrificial fire lit by Brahma in the presence of Siva. The rest of the six Rishis who are said to have come from the same sacrificial fire were Bhrigu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Angirasa, Marichi and Atri. If the names of these and their descendants are omitted from the Puranas, their bulk will be reduced to less than half.

The descendants of Manu Vaivasvata were :—
(i) the Ikshvakus of Ayodhya on the banks of the

river Saraju, (ii) the Nrigas who were on the banks of the Yamuna, (iii) the Dhrishtas who occupied Bahlike, which according to the Siva Purana was Balk, (iv) the Saryatis of Anarta (Gujarat and probably Sindh), (v) the Narisanyas whose offspring are said to have been the Sakas; (vi) the Pramsus whose whereabouts cannot be traced, (vii) the Nabhagas who occupied the country east of Ayodhya, which came to be called Vaisali in later days, (viii) the Karusas, who occupied the Southern regions including Rewa and probably extending further south, and (ix) the Prasadhras, who occupied the regions between those of the Ikshvakus and the Saryatas. This includes the whole of North India, except those parts that were under the occupation of Chakshusha descendants, and extended far into Central Asian regions. As there were only two racial elements in Jambu Dvipa at that time, and one has been found to contain Chakshusha or Austric element, all the rest should be Dravidian or proto-Dravidian. The distribution of all of India between the descendants of Agnidhar has already been mentioned, and the archealogists are of opinion that the Indus-Valley people were Dravidians; hence it could be that all of North India was occupied by the Dravidians once upon a time, and they progressed towards the Central Asia on or before the beginning of the Vaivasvata Manvantara, or 3100 B. C.

CHAPTER III

ON THE EVE OF THE VAIVASVATA MANVANTARA

The cultural and material attainment of Jumbū Dvīpa on the eve of Vaivasvata Manvantara may be gauged from the archaeological findings from the Indus Valley. To the surprise of all, Mohenjodaro excavations have revealed a very high standard of civilisation, which existed about 3000 B. C. The Indian or the Vedic civilisation had not been taken beyond 1000 B. C. The Vedic civilization, as could be judged from the Vedas, was rural. It showed a stage when wise men lived in mud huts with bamboo and thatch roofing. Even now the majority of the people in India live in houses that are not far removed in design and construction. While beside them there are the Taj in Agra, Juma Masjid in Delhi and the temples of Srirangam and Madura. Likewise, there is no reason to believe that even during Vedic days there were no big towns like Ayodhya and Dwaraka which may have excelled in their planning and architectural features.

The date of Mohenjodaro culture is often placed as low as 2900 B. C., while its contemporary culture of Sumer is dated 3600 B. C. and that of Egypt 3500 B. C. centuries, however, must have been taken for the development of a culture that was found at the 2900 B. C. level of Mohenjodaro.

daró. Mohenjo-daro exhibits a high order of commercial, industrial and civic development. Seals of Mohenjo-daro origin that were found at Susa will indicate the extent of their trade, though there is no reason to believe that it did not extend to Egypt of the Dynastic period when they built the Pyramids. In fact the orientation of the Pyramids and Mustazas show a similarity to the architectural principles adhered to by the civic architects of Mohenjo-daro. Their industrialists scoured the countries all round for raw materials. They got copper from Baluchistan, Afghanistan or Rajputana. Tin they got probably from Kheravan, Asia Minor through Sumer. Copper they used for daggers, knives, hatchets, sickles, chisels domestic utensils. Copper for domestic utensils had been the chief material in India till the age of cast iron and aluminum. They made bronze by an alloy of copper and tin, and by it they manufactured hard-cutting tools, chisels and razors. No use of iron by them has been traced; even if they had used that metal, no trace of them could have been possible due to the peculiar climatic condition, that prevailed once in the Indus Valley. The use of iron even by the Vedic period is supposed to have been unknown. Yet at any rate in the ninth century B. C. persons with the name of iron, namely, Ayasa Angiras could be traced. Ayasa means iron, and Ayasa may even have been the root from which the word iron has derived.

The artisans of Mohenjo-daro used their hard-made tools to shape the stones hard and soft. The average thickness of saws they used was

0.025 of an inch. Lancelot Hogben says that the civilisation of a nation should be judged by the fineness of the instrument they used, and the smallest divisions on their measuring-rod. Now 0.025 of an Inch is equal to 0.03333 of an Angula. An Angula, that was based on the average width of the knuckle of the middle finger of the human hand, has been the standard measure in India from time immemorial, and if one is to judge from the divisions on a broken piece of measuring-rod found in Harappa, it could be presumed that the Indus valley artisans used the Indian standard measure, which is still used in remote villages in the country.

They used kiln-burnt bricks in the construction of the houses, public buildings, pavements and sewers. They made radiating bricks for the rim and rings of their wells. Sir John Marshall, when he saw the excavations at Mohenjo-daro, felt that he was standing somewhere in the outskirts of Birmingham. Earnest Mackay, another archaeologist, says that the city of Mohenjo-daro was not of an haphazard growth, but well laid out in accordance with some prearranged scheme, and it is also clear that some definite civic authority existed for the purpose at that time. The streets there were found aligned from east to west or north to south to enable the north or south wind sweeping down a broad thoroughfare to suck stagnant air out of the smaller streets and lanes running at right angles, which would in turn amply ventilate. The skill that was used by the town-planners of Sumer at the contemporary period has been found far inferior.

Their artistic skill is well evidenced in the de-

sign and execution of the numerous seals and statues found there. They had shown good taste and skill in making ornaments and jewellery. They used gold, silver, copper plated with gold, blue faience, ivory, carnelian, jade and multi-coloured stones of various kinds as mediums for their execution. The ornaments in India even today will be found not far remote from Indus Valley models.

The drapery round their figurines will indicate the efficiency achieved in the art of weaving and printing.

These are by no means meagre achievements. They will indicate the standard of civilisation that the inhabitants of Jambu Dvipa attained by the beginning of the period called by the Puranic authors, Vaivasvata Manvantar, and from which they give dynastic details.

PART II. DYNASTIC

CHAPTER I

I. 'THE BIRTH OF 'THE AILAS

The Dynastic period in the Traditional History of India begins with king Ikshvaku on the throne of Ayodhya, which is now called Avadh or Oudh. The town of Ayodhya was on the left bank of the river Sarayu, as it is even now. It is visited by thousands of pilgrims every year. Many places there are sacred to the memory of Rama, who is considered to be an Avatar or incarnation of Vishnu, and as such they are of abiding interest to the Hindus.

Ikshvaku's neighbours on the east were the Nabhagas, on the south the Karusas and Satadyumnas, and on the west the Nrigas. As stated before the Nabhagas and the Nrigas were collateral groups of Ikshvakus, while the Karusas and the Satadyumanas were of a different group. At this time, the king of the Nabhagas was Nabhanedishta and the king of the Satadyumnas was Sudyumna. It has been a usual custom among the Puranic authors to designate all those who were against their favourites as Asuras, or demons. Hence one will find both Karusas and Satdyumnas are designated Asuras, Rakshas or demons. Even late in history they called the Buddhists Asuras.

Asura originally would appear to have been a

classification according to the nature of the individuals. Both Agni and Varuna being relentless gods, the Vedic Rishis called them Asuras. Even relationship between individuals did not deter the Puranic authors from calling their enemies Asuras and their favourites Devas or gods. Sri Krishna was as a Deva, while his maternal uncle Kamsa was an Asura.

King Ikshvaku had a brother named Ila. While he was on a hunting expedition in the forest he happened to meet Sudyumna the Chief of the Satadyumnas. They became friendly and in his company prince Ila developed all feminine characteristics, and gave birth to a son, who was Pururavas. Like every child born in an unconventional manner, Pururavas had to undergo many difficulties. According to the tribal custom, as is still prevalent, Satadyumnas or Sudyumna's people did not accept him.

Sudyumna had other sons, who divided their father's kingdom between themselves. As Ila was born and brought up as a prince, with a stake in the state Vasistha, the royal priest intervened on behalf of Pururavas, and got him Pratisthan, which formed the centre of his kingdom. After the transformation into a woman, Ila came to be known as Ili.

This would appear to be a reasonable explanation about the birth of Pururavas Aila, Pururavas the son of Ila. But when the descendants of the Pururavas became great and mighty, their genealogy was given many twists and turns. It is said

that when unwittingly Ila wandered into a forest of Siva, one of the celestials, Budha, are son of the Moon, met her and he succumbed to her charms, and in consequence thereof Pururavas was born. Thus Pururavas being a grandson of the Moon, he and his descendants claimed a lunar descent, probably when the descendants of Ikshvaku claimed a solar descent. Then Ili is said to have become again a man. Sudyumna, by the favour of Siva, and as Sudyumna through an unspecified wife, procreated three powerful sons, Udlaka, Gaya and Vinatesva, who became the rulers of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa respectively. There are instances of a child brought up as a boy becoming a girl or a man becoming a woman, but one becoming alternatively man and woman is an unheard of event.

Pururavas, evidently on account of his unconventional birth, had difficulties to overcome. He could neither get a wife nor sacrificial fire. It would appear that even the liberal-hearted Vasistha, the priest of Ayodhya, was not willing to give him the sacrificial fire. But he got a wife from the Gandharvas, a neighbouring tribe, grouped under one of the past Manus. He rescued a Gandharva woman, Urvashi, while she was being abducted. He instantly fell in love with her. She lived with him for a period, and gave birth to at least four sons before her own people traced her out and took her back. The women who had gone astray are still being taken back by the aboriginal tribes after a purification ceremony, though this privilege is not extended to their offspring. (Among

the Oraons the purification ceremony is very simple ; the woman should drink the hot blood of a sacrificed fowl ; and she must give a feast to the people of her community.)

The partisans of the Chandra Vamsi or Lunar Dynasty, had made her stay with Pururavas a period of 4000 years, probably in place of four years, and delegated Urvasi to a high position in Svarga (Heaven), as the chief of the four wives of Indra, named Urvasi, Menaka, Rambha, and 'Tilotama. These four celestial maidens are sent occasionally to the earth to disturb the meditation of the Rakshasas or great sages, for fear of them getting too strong by their Tapas, or austerity. Menaka was sent to Visvamitra, she by her charms enticed him and made him the father of her daughter Sakuntala, the heroine of the famous drama of Kalidasa. The demons like Narakasura and Ravana who did similar austerities were invariably worshippers of Siva who would at the end appear before them and give whatever boons were demanded of him.

Two sons of Pururavas, Ayu and Amavasu, became kings of two countries ; Ayu established himself firmly at Pratisthan, while Amavasu parcelled out Kanyakubja (Kanauj) as a separate kingdom for himself. It was in the family of Kanyakubja that the great Rishi Visvamitra, the reformer of the Vedic religion, was born. He would appear to be the author of Gayatri, the sacred hymn of Dvija baptism.

Ayu's son was Nahusha and his son was

Yayati ; both ruled at Pratisthan. Nahusha got the sacrificial fire from the Gandharvas, and Brihaspati became his priest. Brihaspati is one of the stars of the Great Bear, which in India is called Saptarshis. There is a small and very indistinct star called Arundhati by the side of Brihaspati ; if one could see it with naked eyes, it is believed that he or she will have no death for seven years. The sage Brihaspati is called the preceptor of the Devas (gods). In the Puranas it will be seen that those who were the descendants of the Pururavas and their allies are often referred to as gods, while their enemies are referred to as Danavas or Asuras. Nahusha is mentioned in the Rig Veda hymns : Book 1.36 along with Ila, and also in Book V. 12 where he is mentioned as the Father and Creator of the God Agni, which evidently refers to his achievement in securing the sacrificial fire from the Gandharvas. During the days of Nahusha, many battles are said to have been fought between the Devas (gods) and Danavas (Asuras). No doubt the Devas were the Ailas, and who the Danavas were may become clear from his son Yayati's exploits.

Yayati fought many battles with the Danava king, Vrishaparva, probably the king of the neighbouring kingdom of Karusa. Vrishaparva was assisted by his priest Sukra, who is said to have known the secret of raising the dead to life. The Deva priest Brihaspati had not known this secret; so he sent his son Kacha as a student to the hermitage of Sukra, to get the secret. While he was at the hermitage, Sukra's daughter Devayani fell

in love with him; and through her he obtained the secret and returned to his father. Thus probably when both the parties were equally equipped, peace was declared, all hostilities were stopped, and Vrishasparwa's daughter Sarmishtha, was given in marriage to Yayati, who married Sukra's beautiful daughter Devayani as well.

Sukra's name is still cherished; and he is often quoted as a great authority in art and architecture. Sukra's cousin, Bhargava Cyavana was the preceptor and brother-in-law of Saryata, king of Anarta (Gujrat).

Yayati's marriage with Sarmistha was a diplomatic one, while his marriage with Devayani was a love match. These marriages, however, brought the battle between the Devas and Danavas to an end. King Vrishaparva does not appear to have had any sons to succeed him, his kingdom went to his daughter, Sarmishtha or was taken over by Yayati. Yayati became very powerful and extended his kingdom far and near, but avoided his powerful neighbour, Ayodhya, and the collateral kingdoms of Kanyakubja and Kasi. The latter was founded by Kshatravardha, another son of Nahusha, and the former by Amavasus, a son of Pururavas. Yayati extended his kingdom mainly towards the north-west along the river Yamuna. He is one of the six great Chakravartis or emperors mentioned in the Puranas.

After his death his empire was parcelled out between his five sons. He had three sons through Sarmistha, namely, Druhyu, Anu and

Puru; and through Devayani two sons, Yadu and Turvasu. Putu, being the favourite of his father, and having stayed always with him at Pratisthan and acted for the father in his old age, established himself firmly at Pratisthan. But the other sons, who would appear to have been acting as viceroys during the father's regime, established themselves as kings in their respective provinces. Thus one will find Turvasu as king at Karusa country, Anu as the ruler of a kingdom on the banks of the Yamuna. Yadu in the region of the Chambal, and Druhyus in the north-west, north of the Yadavas and west of the Anus, all ruling independently of each other. The Ailas have shown a tendency to separate themselves from the mother country; consolidation of the empire was not one of their weaknesses. On the other hand, the princes of Ayodhya have always shown a great attachment to the mother country, and a desire to rule from their capital, and great respect for the head of the family. Hence their uninterrupted genealogy and traditions. The rule of the Ikshvakus was always constitutional, aided by public opinion as expressed by Munis or wise men, who were also their priests.

Puru was succeeded by his son Janamejaya, who may be called Janamejaya I, as there are two more Janamejayas in this line. Puru genealogy gives the names of twelve more kings. The last ones mentioned in this line are Matinara and Tamsu. After Tamsu the genealogy completely stops. Some great calamity must have befallen

this kingdom. The main reason for this disappearance can be attributed to the expansion of the Yadavas towards the east. A similar fate would appear to have befallen the Anu kingdom as well, but their genealogy continued even after the Yadava invasion, indicating that though the Anus lost their independence, the family continued to exist. In this line Puranjaya was the contemporary of Tamsu. But the Anus rose again under their great leader, Sivi, though it was some seven generations later. For the complete disappearance of the Purus, there may have been a second reason.

It may have been due to the destruction of the Puru capital, Pratisthan, by the flood waters of the Ganga. Pratisthan was on the left bank of the Ganga opposite Allahabad. Its site may have been the present Jhusi. The devastation by the Ganga at this spot has been notorious. Every year during the flood extensive erosions take place on either side, and after the flood the main stream changes its course. When during Akbar's time the fort at Allahabad was built, it had to be protected by means of a long and high embankment, which still gives protection to the right bank, but not any stability to the course of the main stream. Sri Rama visited Bharadvaja on his way to Dandakaranya. Then Bharadvaja's Asram was on the right bank, the site of which is about two miles inland from Akbar's embankment. It must have been due to devastation caused by the flood that Pratisthan was evacuated by the descendants of Puru. However, some twenty-three generations

after Tamsu when Dushyanta, a scion of the Puru family came to power, he would appear to have fixed his capital on the right bank of the river, at or near the site of the present Bharadvaj Ashrama near the university of Allahabad.

The first Yadava kingdom would appear to have been established in the valley of the Carmavati (Chambal), Vetravati (Betwa) and Duktimati (Ken). From there the Yadavas expended in all directions. While the descendants of Yayati were making history, the descendants of Sudyumna in the south-eastern parts were establishing new kingdoms, by avoiding fights between themselves and becoming prosperous. But little about their history is known; they must have also had their Sutas and Magadhas, but their records would appear to have been lost; probably they were not translated into Sanskrit.

However, from the dawn of the Dynastic period, three groups of people would appear to have played an important part in the making of history. One group consisted of the Ikshvakus of Ayodhya and the Dhritishtas of Vaisali, the second consisting of all Satadyumnas, and the third, the Ailas or the descendants of Pururavas Aila. Some have equated the Ailas with the Aryas. However, their ethnic composition is not foreign unless the Satadyumnas of the Austroloid group are considered.

Pargiter after an exhaustive study of racial elements in ancient India, says, "The broad result stands out clear that the Alia stock, which

began in a small principality at Allahabad, had dominated the whole of north India and down to Vidarbha (Berar), with the exception of the three Manava kingdoms of Ayodhya, Videha (which originally was a part of Ayodhya) and Vaisali; and these had been influenced by the Ailas", and "the Saudyumna stock would no doubt be the Munda race and its branch the Mon-Khmer folk in east"; and the Manava stock held all the rest of India which "seems naturally to declare itself Dravidian".

It will be seen that he is right except in one detail. He thinks that the Aila stock came from outside, through the mid-Himalayan regions, through Almora and settled down in Allahabad. But he does not explain why these Aila foreigners after crossing the Himalayas had to come all the way to Allahabad to settle down. The land between Almora and Allahabad must have been wooded by forests and well watered by numerous rivers, and possessing some of the ideal conditions for a new settlement.

CHAPTER II

THE BIRTH OF A LIMITED MONARCHY

Ikshvaku, king of Ayodhya, is said to have had several sons. In some Puranas it is stated that he had a hundred and one sons, of whom the eldest was Vikushi, and the second son was Nimi. Another version is that he had one hundred and twenty-nine sons; fifteen of them reigned in countries north of the Meru and one hundred and fourteen reigned on the south of the Meru. In later texts, as stated before, Meru is generally taken for the Maha Meru, the Himalayas; but if one will closely study the distribution of tribes descended from Agnidhra, it will be found that Meru stood for the Vindhya, and not for the Himalayas, about which they had little information. To say that Ikshvaku had one hundred and twenty-nine sons who ruled over both sides of the Vindhyas is a eulogistic way of saying that the tribal group to which Ikshvaku belonged spread all over India. One hundred and fourteen of them are said to be the descendants of Dakshinapatha, a third son of Ikshvaku according to certain Puranas.

Ikshvaku's son Vikushi reigned at Ayodhya, and his second son Nimi established the dynasty of Videha, east of Ayodhya. Nimi's capital was at once famed Jayanta, which came to be called Mithila in later days, where the dynasty ruled for

ages. Janaka, who became famous in the Upanishad, belonged to this family. The family priests of this dynasty, like those of Ayodhya, were the Vasisthas.

Vikushi got into trouble with his priests. As a prince, he was sent to the jungle to bring animals for sacrifice. Being hungry and exhausted, he ate the flesh of a hare. For the crime of eating the flesh of the animal that ought to have been first offered to the gods, he was exiled. But eventually he was called back and made to succeed Ikshvaku on the throne. He came to be known as Vikushi Sasada or Vikushi, the eater of the hare-flesh. In Videha, Nimi also got into a similar trouble. He was about to perform a sacrifice at which a Vasistha was to officiate, Vasistha did not make his appearance in time. The king performed the sacrifice without the priest. The priest became furious; ever since a tug of war went on between the prince and priest for a considerable time, till the superiority of the priest was accepted by the prince. The strictures about the Vedic gods and religion as they are found in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, and Janaka's part in them will show that the prince at the end became free from the priests, though it happened only centuries later.

In Ayodhya, Vikushi was succeeded by Puranjaya. He is nicknamed Kakustha because he rode on a bull, when his assistance was solicited by the Devas in a fight against the Danavas. He defeated the Danavas and gained appreciation from the Devas. As he was a contemporary of Nahusha.

the Devas must have been the Ailas and the Danavas a section of the neighbouring Satadyumna group.

Kakustha's son was Anenas, and his son Prithu, whose son was Vistarasva, whose son was Adra, whose son was Yuvanasva whose son was Sravasta, who founded the city of Sravasti. His son was Brihadasva and his son Kuvalasva. Two events that took place during his period need consideration. Perhaps a correct appreciation of them may lead to a satisfactory solution of certain passages in Puranic history. First we should consider why Sravasta built a new capital far away from Ayodhya on the border of the present Nepal. The second event is that Kuvalasva fought a tremendous battle with Dhundhu, an Asura, with the loss of twenty-one thousand of his sons, though eventually he killed the Asura. What was this struggle about? This may mean that the Iskhvakus lost their capital Ayodhya for a time, retreated to Sravasti, and after killing Dhundhu, a usurper, came back to Ayodhya.

Chronologically at the time of Anenas, there was a great revolution which shook the foundation of the monarchy. Vena, a king with autocratic tendencies, appeared. He proclaimed that he was the lord of the earth and king of sacrifices, and forbade all sacrifices to the gods. The priests, with a view to appeasing him, agreed to worship him, provided that they were also allowed to worship the gods. The king did not agree. He contended that all the gods like Indra, Vayu, Yama, Varuna, Agni, Pushan, the Sun, the Moon,

and others who have the power of pronouncing curses and conferring boons, were all in the person of the king, and as such the sovereign is all that is divine; and he exhorted them to obey his commands, not to make any gifts nor oblations to any of them as he was the only one who is entitled to them. They repeated their requests again and again; but the king flatly refused; they rose up in arms and killed him. The country was without a king for a time, and there was trouble in the land. Then the people made representations to the priests, and complained that without a king, the robbers and thieves had engaged in their dishonest work, encroaching upon others' property; in other words, there was no safety or security. The priests thereupon decided to look for a king. The Puranic story is that they rubbed the thigh of Vena, whence came Nishadha, one with very dark complexion, flattened features and dwarfish stature. He was not accepted by the people and they sent him away. From him sprang "a race called Nishadhas who inhabit the Vindhya mountains and are characterised by the exterior tokens of depravity". Now the race with flat nose, dark complexion and short stature who inhabit the Vindhya mountains are the Oraons, while their neighbours the Mundas are of lighter complexion, and with better features; though their neighbours the Asuras, who live in Tatvapet, the highest plateau of the Vindhya mountains, are tall and handsome, with well-proportioned features and still lighter in complexion.

Then the Rishis, rubbed the right hand of Vena,

lo! and behold, there appeared Prithu "resplendent in person, burning like fire"; they accepted him as their king. According to Mahabharata, he came out fully armed, beautiful, skilled in the Vedas and in the art of warfare. Many gods came for his coronation. Vishnu was highly pleased, for he saw the mark of his disc in the right palm of Prithu. He was a good king. When he traversed the depth, the waters became solid. When he went through the forest, the jungle opened out a way for him. During his reign the earth yielded crops without cultivating it. The shrubs stored honey in every flower. The people got their food without work, and the king gave them all milk to drink.

Why were all these praises and adorations bestowed upon him? Mahabharata says that he swore at his coronation, "I will constantly protect the earth, in thought, word and deed, as if it were Brahman. I will carry out the established Laws, in accordance with 'Danda-niti' (Rules of Government). I will never act arbitrarily. The twice-born shall never be punished by me and the world shall be saved from the danger of inter-mixture of classes". One may find an element of anachronism in the oath. The statement that the 'Dvijas' or twice-born shall never be punished is a later addition. For at this age there does not appear to have been any 'dvija' baptism as Visva-mitra, the author of 'dvija' baptism, flourished only in a later period.

Who could have been the author of this remarkable oath? No democracy with a king

could have had one better. It is quite reminiscent of the Vasisthas, who made an old coronation hymn for the kings of Ayodhya, in which the king is described as 'people-lord of the people.' The Vasisthas then were Atharva Vedis. Vena was also an Atharva Vedi. The split between them would appear to have taken place in the conception of Brahman. From the Atharva Vedic hymns it will be seen that the Vasisthas were cultivating a personal Brahman, while Vena was for developing Brahman as a power of being over and above all the Vedic gods.

The Garuda Purana says that Vena was an atheist. The Agni Purana says that he was given to sinning, and did not protect his subjects, and the Rishis therefore killed him and placed Prithu on the throne. Was it on the throne of Ayodhya? All the Puranas are silent about it. Instead they give him a non-Ikshvaku genealogy descending from Manu Chakshusha.

Vena was the son of Anga; his mother was Sunita. Anga's father was Uru, and Uru's father Manu Chakshusha. Vena stands therefore 3 steps below Manu Chakshusha. It will be seen that Anenas stands four steps below Manu Vaivasvata in our genealogy. Both have Prithu as their sons. If it is the same person, the mystery will be solved. Anenas may have been another name for Vena. His quarrel with the Vasisthas brought about the revolution that placed Prithu on the throne.

The institution of the Sutas and Magadhas, as stated before, dates from the days of Prithu. Accord-

ing to the Vishnu Purana, Parasara, a Vasistha, says that "at the auspicious sacrifice which was performed at the birth of Prithu which was headed by his great parent, the highly intelligent Suta was produced from the juice of the Soma plant. And in that great sacrifice the highly intelligent Magadha was born. Thereupon the Rishis accosted Suta and Magadha saying—"Do sing the glory of this powerful king Prithu, the son of Vena".

It should be seen from this that they received directions from the Rishis as to what they should sing and what they should not. Under such circumstances if they concealed certain unpleasant facts and had given undue emphasis to others, as all the partisan writers do even today, one cannot blame them for certain inaccuracies and exaggerations. Many a court historian may have lost his job had he recorded the truth and nothing but the truth. Killing a king for religious difference is bound to leave an unfavourable impression. Cromwell of England is still being criticised unfavourably.

There is another probability. Anenas may have been dissatisfied and disgusted with the Vasisthas and may have taken as his priest Vena, who had different ideas about worship and religion; and Vena may have usurped all the powers of the king as the Vasisthas themselves had done before and after this occasion in Ayodhya and Videha. In that event Vena could be of a different lineage. He may have been a Nishadha, of Chakshusha descent. However, it seems they considered the

candidature of his son Nishadha, before they placed Prithu, the son of Anenas, on the throne.

But the fact that is most important to a student of history is that at this remote period, at least before 2500 B. C., India gave birth to a limited monarchy, which is perfect in every respect. It had its origin in the struggle between the prince and the priest. In all ages the priests in India controlled the princes; whenever the prince tried to override the priest, the consequences often were detrimental to the prince. The priests invariably had the support of the people, as they voiced public opinion. Later there came a stage when the prince depended on the priest for his noble birth and descent from the Sun or the Moon, a descent which they are still proud of.

The priest has had always a seat in the princely council. Even where the kings were Sudras, the Brahmanas often adorned their council. Mahapadma Nanda tried his best to get rid of the priestly influence; with this intention he exterminated many ruling families. But with what result? Chandra Gupta, a scion of his family, who established one of the greatest empires, had Chanakya, a Brahman, as his minister and right-hand man.

CHAPTER III

THE AILAS' BID FOR POWER AND THEIR REVERSES

Yadu, son of Yayati, and founder of the Yadava dynasty had five sons. Two of his sons were Krostu and Sahasrajit. They divided the Yadava kingdom between themselves. Krostu took the northern half and continued to rule in the main line ; while Sahasrajit took the southern half and laid the foundation of a new dynasty which came to a great deal of prominence under his grandson Haihaya.

Sasabindu, fifth in descent from Krostu, became very powerful and extended his dominions in all directions at the expense of his neighbours. He advanced to the east as far as the kingdom of Ayodhya where Yuvanesva was reigning. Kanyakubja and Prathisthan appear to have been taken easily. The Purus of Prathisthan were completely wiped out, and they were not heard of for many generations. Yuvanesva stopped his advance, Sasabindu retraced his steps after giving a daughter in marriage to Mandhatar, the heir-apparent to the throne of Ayodhya. After consolidating his position thus in the east, he marched against the Druhyus and drove them to the Punjab, which paved the way for the outward movement of the Ailas or the Aryans from India. Sasabindu's activities and annexations entitled him to

be called a Chakravarti or emperor, and he is styled as such in the Puranas. But the empire established by him was short-lived; he had seven sons and they divided it among themselves after his death.

The Yadavas were notorious for quarrels among themselves. They were good fighters, if not the best in India, but from the very early stage of their history, they were jealous of each other, and the downfall of numerous kingdoms established by them could easily be attributed to this defect in their character. The squabble for power among the sons of Sasabindu was closely watched by Mandhatar (79 B.A.), the then king of Ayodhya. He lost no time and annexed the Yadava kingdoms one by one. Then he emulated his father-in-law, attached the Druhyus, and drove them entirely out of the Punjab. Arundha or Angra, the Druhyu leader was killed, his son Gandharva accompanied by his tribe crossed the Indus and settled down in the regions beyond, which came to be known after his name as Gandhara, now Afghanistan. This was the second stage in the Aryan drive towards Central Asia. Then extending his possessions beyond the Indus, Mandhatar turned his attention to the South, where he subdued the rest of the Yadava kingdoms. Anarta (Gujarat) was taken. His sons, Purukutsa, Ambarisa and Muchukunda, marched towards the Naramada. The kingdoms of the Gandharvas and the Nagas were on the way, but they were at war with each other. By playing one against the other the invaders gained victory over both. They took up a strong

position where the spur of the Vindhya met the Rksha range, built and fortified the town of Mandhata, probably at the site of the present Mandhata. They then crossed the river Narmada, built another called Pura to serve as the capital of their newly acquired territories. They established very intimate relations with the Nagas, and Purukutsa married a Naga princess called Narmada. In the Puranas she is misquoted as the river Narmada. But it was her son, Trasadyasu, who ascended the throne of Ayodhya after Purukutsa.

Mandhatar is mentioned more than once in the Rig Veda ; and he himself is the author of the hymn RV : X. 134, addressed to Indra. One of the hymns in which Mandhatar is referred to, is RV : Book 1.112, where the author Kutsa invokes the Asvins thus :—

“Where ye compass round the Sun when far away, strengthened Mandhatar in his task as lord of lands.....Come hither unto us O ! Asvins with those aids”.

This hymn was composed long after Mandhatar, for in this, the aid given by the Asvins to Divodasa and Sudasa, two kings of North Panchala, are mentioned. Divodasa and Sudasa stand 37 and 32 B. A. respectively in the chronological list, while Mandhatar stands at 79 B. A. RV : VIII. 39 by Nabhaga addressed to Agni, describes Mandhatar “as first in sacrifice” and for whose sake Agni has slayed the Dasyus. Nabhaga, the author of this hymn, may probably be a successor of Mandhatar on the throne of Ayodhya ; if so he

should stand at 53 B. A. The same Rishi or king alludes to Mandhatar's hymn-making capacity in RV : VIII. 40 12 thus :—

“Thus we have sung anew to Indra-Agni as sung by our Sires, Agnirases and Mandhatar.” Here the author considers Mandhatar as his sire, which may be taken as a proof of his being a king or prince of the royal family of the Ikshvakus. The hymn that stands in Mandhatar's name is full of interest.

RV : I. 34. 1. “As like the morning, thou hast filled, O !
 Indra, both the earth and heaven,
 So as the mighty one, great king of all
 the mighty world of men,
 The goddess mother brought thee forth,
 The blessed mother gave thee life.

2. Relax that mortal's stubborn strength,
 whose heart is bent on wickedness,
 Trample him down beneath thy feet who
 watches for and aim at us.....
3. Shake down O ! slayer of the foe, those
 great and splendid energies,
 With all thy powers O ! Sakra, all thine
 helps, O ! Indra, shake them down ;
4. As thou O ! Satakratu, thou, O ! Indra shakest
 all things down ;
 As wealth for him who sheds the juice, with
 thine assistance thousandfold.
5. Around on every side like drops of sweat
 let lightning flashes fall.
 Let all malevolence pass away from us
 like threads of durva grass.

6. Thou bearest in thine hand a lance like
A long hook, Great Councillor,
As with his foremost foot a goat, draw
Down the branch, O Maghavan!
7. Never O God I do we offend, nor are we
Ever obstinate;
We walk as holy texts command.
Closely we clasp and cling to you, cling
to your sides beneath your arms."

Here it will be noticed that Indra is becoming a mighty god, he has become Satakratu, Sakra, Indra, all combined. The hook of Rudra has already passed into his hand, and he has become the wielder of lightning. Here is the genesis of all attributes which the Rig Vedis later on showered on him on the banks of the river Sarasvati; but Mandhatar was on the bank of the Sarayu. Here is the declaration of a man of action and a mighty leader of men, but with none of the begging mentality of the Rishis. Furthermore, he has placed Indra in his right place, by describing him as one who was brought forth by the Goddess Mother. As a poet he was superb, and as a conqueror he was the greatest until his time. He truly deserves the epithet of a Cakravarti, or emperor as is acclaimed in the Puranas. Mandhatar's empire must have comprised the whole of Western India from the borders of Afghanistan to the Narmada in the South, and his sway must have extended as far as Vaisali in the East.

The supremacy of Ayodhya was soon to receive a setback, a new power was rising among

the Yadavas, Sahanja, a descendant of Haihaya, started an adventurous career, probably even during the last days of Mandhatar. He founded the town of Sahajani, named after him. His son Mahishmant (77 B.A.) carried arms towards the Narmada, and established the town of Mahishmati. From Mahishmati the Haihayas carried out their depredations far and wide. Bhadraseshya, a son of Mahishmant marched towards the East and occupied Kasi. He defeated Divodasa I, king of Kasi, and drove him to the East.

In the meantime, another branch of the Ailas, the Anavas, the descendants of Anu, who were eclipsed long by the Yadavas and Ikshvakus, began to rise. They gained power under two able kings, Mahasala (78 B.A.), and his successor, Mahamanas (76 B.A.). Under the latter they extended their sway over the Punjab. Though Mahamanas is not included among the fourteen Cakravartis, he is styled in some Puranas as a Cakravarti, and lord of the seven 'Dvipas'. As these seven Dvipas were somewhere in the Punjab, they could not have been islands; and most probably they were seven 'duabs', formed by eight rivers, Sindhu, Vitasta, Chandrabhaga, Purusni, Vipas, Satadri, Sarasvati and Drsadvati.

Mahamanas had two sons, Usinara and Titikshu. Usinara continued to the eastern regions, and established a kingdom beyond Vaisali, as Pargiter says "among the ruder Sudyumna stock". His kingdom became the parent country of the later kingdoms of Anga, Vanga, Kalinga and Pundra.

Usinara is said to have established the kingdoms of Yaudheya, Ambasta, Navarastra and the city of Krmila. His achievements were overshadowed by his son Sivi (73 B.A), who is mentioned as one of the fourteen Cakravartis. He extended his dominions further North-West, by driving the Druhyus out of Gandhara (Afghanistan). He fixed his capital at Sivapura. His four sons established four kingdoms, namely. Vrasadarbha, Madra, Kekeya and Sauvira.

The Anava expansion to the North-West led to the emigration of the Ailas or Aryans from India before the Rig Vedic period. The Druhyus, who were driven out of their dominions, went towards the West and the North-West beyond Afghanistan, and according to Pargiter within five generations founded many principalities in 'Mlecha Desa', where they multiplied and prospered. Thus, though it is presumed that the Aryans came to India from outside, according to the Puranic evidence, the Aryans emigrated from India, naturally with their gods and culture. Five generations after Sivi will take one to the 21st century B.C., at the rate of 18 years per generation, or to the end of the 17th century B.C., if one is to take the safe average of 12 years per generation as recommended by Pargiter. In any case the period between the Aila expansion and 1400 B.C., the date of Byghas-Kuei Tablets, may be considered as enough time for the Vedic gods like Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Nasatyas from India to filter through Persia to Asia Minor. If the Aryans came from outside to India, it is unimaginable how the Post-

Vedic writers who were straining every nerve to establish the caste superiority did not take advantage of it.

Five generations after Sivi was one of the most eventful periods in the history of the Vedic religion. It was then the Rajarshi or the Rishi-king Visvamitra raised the standard of revolt against human sacrifice, which gave a blow to the traditional form of worshipping Varuna. Visvamitra (68 B.A.) belonged to Kanyakubja dynasty, descended from Amavasū, son of Pururavas; hence he was an Aila or Aryan. Little is known about the history of this dynasty till the days of Vasvamitra, and much less after him. The genealogy given in the Puranas shows the ancestry of Visvamitra thus:

Amavasū was a son of Pururavas, his son was Bhīma, his son Kanchana-Prabha, his son Suhotra, and his son was Jahnu. Jahnu was his own priest. It is said that while he was performing a big sacrifice, the river Ganga flooded the sacrificial grounds, and he, with eyes red with rage, "united the spirit of sacrifice with himself and by the power of his devotion drank up the river". The story, though it is an exaggeration, will indicate that the kings at this period were their own priests and the worship of Ganga was of later origin. Jahnu's successor was Sumanta or Sunaha, his successor was Ajaka and his successor Kusa. Kusa's successor was Kusika or Kusaśva Kusika, his son was Gadhi, and Gadhi's successor was Visvamitra.

The genealogy shows that Visvamitra was the twelfth descendant from Amavasū. But according

to the genealogical table given in Appendix I, it will be seen that he is shown twenty-eight steps below Amavasū, which at the rate of 18 years per step is 504 years. The twelve kings which cover the same period, will give 42 years per reign. Hence those who consider that 18 years per reign is inadequate, need not be alarmed at the smaller average per step.

What happened in the royal family of Kanyakubja will further indicate that difference between the prince and priest was skin-deep. It was only a matter of profession, as it has been among the Muslims and the Christians; water-tight distinctions like Brahman and Kshatriyas were not in existence in early days. Kusika's son Gadhi had a sister Kausiki whose hand in marriage was sought by Rchika, a Rishi belonging to Bhargava Gotra. As Gadhi was not in favour of this marriage, he raised the 'bride's price' to a thousand herd of white horses each with one black ear; all the same the Rishi fulfilled the condition and got the royal bride. Jamadagni, the father of Parasu Rama, was their eldest son from this marriage.

To appreciate the quarrel that took place between Visvamitra and Vasistha, the nature of the relationship that existed between the Aila family of Kanyakubja and the Ikshvaku family of Ayodhya will be of assistance. These two families were closely related by marriage. Gadhi's father Kusika married Purukutsi, a descendant of Purukutsa, the son of the great Mandhatar of Ayodhya. Hence Visvamitra, the Aila or Aryan, was related to the Ikshvaku family of Ayodhya, who were not

Aryans. This relationship might have been sufficient reason for Visvamitra to get interested in the affairs of Ayodhya. Then, Trayyaruna, the king of Ayodhya, banished his son and heir Satyavrata-Trisanku from the court, and he was kept in exile by Vasistha for 12 years. After the death of Trayyaruna, Vasistha usurped the throne. Then a famine extending for twelve years occurred in the kingdom. The people became discontented; they, like Indians in all ages, were convinced that the famine was due to the misrule or wickedness of the ruler. Visvamitra, who was then the king of Kanauj, took up the cause of Satyavrata, and had him reinstated on the throne. This enraged the Vasisthas, whose chief was Devaraj by name. Devaraj was deposed from the post of the high priest and Visvamitra himself functioned in his place for some time. This led to the endless quarrel between the Vasisthas and Visvamitras. The Vasisthas and their adherents vilified the Visvamitras, whose adherents did not spare the Vasisthas either.

Harischandra succeeded Satyavrata on the throne and during his reign, a more serious split took place between Visvamitra and Vasistha, about the sacrifice of Harischandra's son Rohita, who was substituted by Sunahsepa, which resulted in a schism among the Vedic Rishis. Those who differed from Vasisthas came to be known as the Rig Vedis. (See Vedic History Set in Chronology by the same author). All these facts should be taken into consideration in judging the truth of many a Puranic story that gives incredible accusations against both the Visvamitras and Vasisthas.

While the Vasistha rule and the famine were continuing in Ayodhya, momentous events were taking place among the Yadavas, with disastrous consequence to the Ikshvakus for a time. The Haihayas were gaining strength under Arjuna, the son of Kritavirya. He extended his conquests towards the Narmada, and took Mahishmati, which was then under Karkotaka Naga and established his headquarters there as a base for further aggressive operations southwards. His progress on the other side of the Narmada was stopped by one Ravana, presumably a Dravidian emperor. Though Ravana was defeated, he was made an ally. Arjuna returned to his capital probably to Sahajani, and made preparations for a wider invasion of the North. At the head of a large force he advanced as far as the Himalayas, presumably without much opposition. He was a great conqueror, and though he is one of the few kings who is called in the Puranas as a Samrat and Cakravarti, his name is not included among the fourteen Cakravartis. The reason for this is not far to seek. He was not a favourite of the Puranic authors, especially of the Bhargava group.

The Bhargavas, from the dawn of Puranic history, were associated with Saryatas of Gujarat. The king who was a contemporary of Ikshvaku appears to have been Saryati. Saryati had a daughter named Sukanya, and a pious son named Anartha. Cyavana, a cousin of the Danava Rishi Sukra, and a great ancestor of the Bhargavas, married Sukanya. The country over which king Anartha ruled was called Anartha, and its capital was at Kushastali.

Anartha had a son called Revata, and a daughter called Revati. Nothing more about this country and its people is known for a considerable time. The Puranic writers confused this Revati, who was the wife of Baladeva or Balabhadra of Dwaraka, and brother of Krishna, skipping over a period of ninety generations, as listening to a song, sung by the Gandharvas in praise of Brahma. But neither the Saryatas, nor the Bhargavas went 'to sleep' during this long period. From the first four books of the Atharva Veda it will be seen that among the Rishis who composed the hymns, there were Bhrigus or Bhargavas and Bhrigavangirases, which shows that wherever these hymns were written the Bhargavas were well in evidence.

It will be interesting to see that the disappearance of the Saryata kingdom synchronises with the desertion of Mohenjo-daro. According to the archeologists, Mohenjo-daro is contemporaneous with the latter part of the Early Dynastic period of Babylon, which is estimated to be 2550 B. C. According to the Puranic chronology, Saryati was a contemporary of Ikshvaku, king of Ayodhya or 2600 B. C. As Raivata was the grandson of Saryati, the Saryatas should be considered as having disappeared three generations after Saryati, or one hundred and thirty-two generations before Pushya Mitra or about 2570 B. C. The archaeologists' version about the Indus Valley people is similar to the Puranic version about the Saryatas. The Vishnu, Purana says, "There is no trace of their family on the earth. Many ages have passed away whilst Raivata was listening to the songs of the Gandharvas,"

Was it the Gandharvas who drove the Indus Valley people away? The Gandharvas were in India from pre-Vedic days and were, feared and venerated by the earliest of the Vedic Rishis. As such they can not be considered as a new wave of foreigners who on their entry into India drove the Dravidians of Mohenjo-daro towards the south. The Gandharvas may have reached the Indus valley from the south. It is seen from the Vedic hymns that they were a sea-faring people, as such, it is probable that they went up the river Indus and occupied the Indus Valley.

However, the Saryatas did not die out, for 30 generations after Raivata, they came to a great deal of prominence as leaders in the confederate army of the Talajanghas, who invaded Central Asia. The Bhargavas appear to have followed the Saryatas wherever they went.

When the Haihayas reached the river Narmada they saw the Bhargavas prospering there; when they reached Madhya-Desha the Bhargavas were already there. They appear to have been a militant class of priests. There might not have been any clear-cut distinction between the priest and the prince, or between the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas in those days. The Bhargavas were first in the good books of the Haihayas, Kritavirya, Arjuna's father, was very pleased with them. He bestowed immense wealth on them. But when Arjuna came to power, he wanted to disgorge a portion of their fabulous wealth. Bhargavas naturally resented. The king dismissed them from the court, and appointed Datta Atreya as the royal priest. The Bhargavas

were persecuted ; they fled to other countries for safety. They had good luck in Kanyakubja, where one of them, Rcika, married a sister of king Gadhi. Rcika himself was well versed in warfare. His son Jamadagni followed in his father's footsteps, not only by getting himself trained in warfare, but also by seeking a royal bride. He married Renuka, daughter of Renu, a junior prince of Ayodhya, who gave birth to the famous Rama of the 'Parasu' or battle-axe, who excelled all his predecessors in warfare. Thus being closely associated with the ruling families of Ayodhya and Kanyakubja, the position of the Bhargavas became very secure in Madhyadesa. But the Haihayas under Arjuna pursued them even to this sequestered retreat. Arjuna attacked the colony of the Bhargavas, and killed Jamdagni, while his son Rama was away. Rama vowed to exterminate the race of the Haihayas. Though the Puranic partisans of the Bhargavas state that Rama exterminated the entire Kshatriya race twenty-one times, it does not appear he was very successful ; for, as the story goes, he in the end left Northern India altogether for Sahyadri Hills in the South. Some say that he spent the rest of his life there in penance. But the Kerala tradition gives a slightly different story, according to which he took a group of Brahmans with him to the South, stood on the top of the Western Ghats, or Sahya Parvata, threw his 'parasu' or axe into the Arabian Sea and demanded from Varuna, the sea god for the water to recede. Varuna obeyed, and the coast of Malabar came up. The receding of the Arabian Sea is a geological fact.

The sea was once lapping on the outer hills of the Western Ghats. Even during the days of Grecian trade in these regions, the sea was further inland than it is at present; some of the old sea-port towns, like Muzuris (the present Kotungalloor) are now inland towns.

However, any part that might have been played by Kanauj or Ayodhya in defeating the Haihayas under Arjuna is not mentioned in the Puranas. But the Puranic authors have arranged an incredible and impossible meeting between Parasu Rama and Rama Dasrathi of Ayodhya over a gap of 34 generations, in which a trial of strength is stated to have taken place between the two Ramas which ended in a draw and appreciation of each other's prowess.

Arjuna's empire crashed after him. His son Jayadhavaja ruled only over Avanti (Malwa), while his brothers Sura and Surasena ruled over two small kingdoms, which came to be known after their respective names.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPLOITS OF THE YADAVAS

Arjuna's son was Jayadhvaja, his son was 'Tala-jangha and his son Vitihotra. Under the leadership of Vitihotra a formidable confederacy was formed. It consisted of Vitihotras, Hailhayas, Bhojas, Avantis, Tundikeras, Yadavas, and many warlike chieftains who descended from the old Saryatas of Gujrat. The Puranas do not give any reason for the formation of such a huge confederacy, which consisted of many units and involved the whole of Western India. From the accounts, one would think that it was based on lust for conquest and plunder. But it may appear that it has every element of self-defence. Mutually warring elements do not as a rule give up their petty jealousies and quarrels to start on and expedition for plunder.

First what they did was an attack on the Gandharvas and Nagas, who always were a thorn on the side of the Yadavas. Was there an enemy attack from some direction or other? From what happened afterwards, it will be seen that the kingdom on the near east was not strong enough for an attack. Therefore this must be an attack presumably from the North-West. But no attack from this direction is mentioned in the Puranas. But they give enough detail so as to clarify the situation. They say that the confederate army

took the Punjab, Kashmir (Kamboja) and Afghanistan (Gandhara), and marched further on into Central Asian regions, and returned with a formidable army that consisted of the Yavanas, Sakas, Pahalvas and Paradesas (foreigners in general). Perhaps the Persian historian, Ctesias the Greek Doctor, may supply a reason for this confederacy. He speaks of an invasion of India by Queen Semiramis of Babylon with a fighting force of 6,00,000 from her base at Bactria. She was successful in crossing the Indus with special boats constructed for the purpose and brought with her. Then she met a force equally formidable and strong under the leadership of Stahrabatos, who defeated her, with personal injury to herself, that made her recross the Indus and return to Bactria. If Stahrabatos were Vitihotra, or another leader of a similar name, a ground for the formation of the Talajangha confederacy and their marching towards Central Asian regions can be easily found. But one will have to contend with the present opinion that the Semiramis of Ctesias is a myth.

However, it will be seen from the Puranas that Taljanghas on their return with a formidable army engaged on a conquest of the East. They brought the Bhargavas under subjection, for there was no one like Parasu-Ram to oppose. They walked over Kanyakubja, for the main reason that the princes of Kanyakubja gave up the sword of warfare and took up the spatula of sacrifice.

Ever since Visvamitra I (68 B.C.) raised the standard of Vedic revolt in the capital of Ayodhya, his descendants, especially Madhuchhandas and

his adopted son Sunahsepa, were engaged in religious pursuits, and little attention was given to state affairs. Kanyakubja could not have looked at Ayodhya for help. Visvamitra embittered the Vasisthas at the intended sacrifice of Sunahsepa. Rohita, who succeeded Harischandra, could not have been very popular with his priests, the Vasisthas, and those who succeeded him were certainly weak.

When the Talajangha horde reached Ayodhya, Bahu, known as Bahu Asita, was on the throne. He would appear to have been a young king at that time. Whatever resistance Ayodhya was able to make was inadequate against the invaders. Ayodhya fell and king Bahu, with his pregnant wife, took to their heels and found shelter in a hermitage. Ayodhya was then handed over to the leaders of the foreign legion. Videha was never strong without the assistance of Ayodhya. There the kings were more under the thumb of the royal priests the Vasisthas than in Ayodhya. Any independent resistance on their part should be ruled out. But when the invaders reached Vaisali, they met their equals. Though king Karandhama was weak and old, his son Avikshit, and grandson Marutta turned out to be formidable foes to be reckoned with,

In the Puranic narrative though Talajanghas are not mentioned Karandhama is said to have been besieged by a formidable confederacy, which could only have been the confederacy of the Talajanghas. Vaisali at first suffered defeat; Avikshit was taken prisoner by the king of Vidisa

(Besnagar, Malva). Marutta released him, and followed the enemy in hot pursuit. The enemy would appear to have taken a short cut back to Malwa. On the way Marutta met and defeated the Naga forces; the Nagas were feudatory to the Talajanghas. The defeat of the Talajanghas must have been complete, for after this Marutta, according to ancient custom, proclaimed himself Chakravarti, or emperor.

A Chakravarti who is called a Rajika as well is one, who has conquered surrounding kingdoms or brought them under his suzerainty. Among them one will find Prithu Vainya, Yayati Nahusha, Sasabindu Chaitraratha, Mandhatar Yuvanesva, Sivi, Ausinara and Marutta Avikshita, all of whom, we have already mentioned. There are others as well. Sixteen Rajikas are mentioned. Among whom Gaya Amurtarayasa is one. The second name in every case is the father's name, so that one may not be mistaken for another of a lesser light.

Viewed from this point, Marutta would appear to have established control over the neighbouring kingdoms. But Ayodhya was not one of them. In Ayodhya, the leaders of the foreign legions would appear to have established themselves firmly at various centres like Saketa (of Sakas), Yavanapur (city of the Yavanas), and so on, all reminiscent of their occupation. But their rule was short-lived.

Sagara, the posthumous son of Bahu, who was born in the hermitage of Aurva Bhargavas, and brought up by Agni Bhargava, came of age. With

the help of the Bhargavas and other loyalists, he raised an army and retook Ayodhya. He was on the point of putting every foreigner to death. Then the family priest Vasistha, who stayed back all the time and ministered to the religious needs of the foreigners, pleaded on their behalf. He said to the king—"O my child, these are already dead. What is the use pursuing them? To keep your vow I have made them renounce their religion and the company of the twice-born". In obedience to the request of the family priest, the king spared their lives, but on certain conditions. The Yavanas were to clean—shave their heads. The Pahalvas were to grow beard; the Sakas were to shave and arrange their hair in a particular fashion. All foreigners were to show their respective identification by some way of keeping their hair, whiskers or beard. But all were debarred from participation in Vedic rites, the benefits of the Vedic religion, and ministration by the Vedic priests.

This was not introduced by an Aila or Aryan ruler, nor even by a Rig Vedic priest. The name of the Vasistha, who enforced these restrictions, was Apava, and he was called Atharva-nidhi, or the wealth of the Atharva Veda. This would appear to be the first instance in which any section of the people was debarred from the study of the Vedas. But even at a time as late as that of Chandra Gupta Maurya, the Sudras were not debarred from the study of the Vedas. In fact Kautilya prescribes punishment to those Brahmans who refuse to teach Veda even to a Chandala.

He also says that a Brahman should study the Vedas even from a Sudra.

Sagara stands at 59 B.A. in our chronology, or about 1900 B.C. The restrictions imposed on these foreigners would appear to have continued till the time of Salvahanas, when the Sakas and others were converted into Brahmanism. During this long interval it will be seen from Sukra-Niti that these tribes were ruled by their own laws, and they were beyond the scope of the Hindu Laws. The Yavanas often appear in Puranic history. The Sakas and Pahalvas appear in later history. At every time the historians are inclined to take them as newcomers to India. Perhaps most of them may have been descendants of those who came to India in the wake of the Talajangha confederacy about the 20th century B. C.

According to the historians the original home of the Greeks was on the shores of the Caspian Sea. From there they "wandered West through the shores of the Black Sea", crossed the Danube, and after a long march settled down in those parts which came to be known in later periods as Greece and Aegean. Based on the poetry of Homer, (850 B.C.) sung in the courts of the potentates, the theory is that the Greek exodus from the Caspian regions took place about 1200 B.C. In some respects a certain similarity was found between the gods and the social customs of the Greeks and the Hindus, which at one time made the scholars wonder whether the Hindus were indebted to the Greeks in these respects. Now, if it were probable that the Druhyus, who were driven out of Gand-

hara, and established many principalities in Central Asian regions, were the carriers of the Hindu culture to the Black Sea regions, a solution may be found for the affinity between the Hindu and the Greek cultures. It may then even become probable that the Yavanas in India with Greek-sounding names were the descendants of these recruits who were brought by the 'Taljanghas. When they arrived in India, they must have had some form of Vedic worship. If not, the Vasisthas may not have ministered to their religious needs at first.

Among the Sakas, especially, who became powerful rulers in Central India, fathers could be found with foreign names, while the sons had typical Hindu names. This may also indicate the exact period during which the impositions enforced by Sagara may have been partly or wholly withdrawn by later descendants of the Vasisthas. It should be seen that it was from a sacrificial fire lit by a Vasistha at Mount Abu, that many a still famous Rajput clan came out. Even among the Satvahana kings of southern origin, there were some with the distinction of being called Vasistha-putra.

Sagara, after imposing a sort of serfdom on the foreigners in his kingdom, directed his attention to his erstwhile enemies, those who were confederates of the Talajanghas. He brought them under subjection one by one and made some of them flee towards the Narmada. He pursued them further and crossed the river Tapti, and married princess Kesini, the daughter of a king of Vidarbha

(Berar) who was descended from the Yadvas. Among the former enemies, the Bhojas remained evidently as feudatories. It will be seen that this was the second time the Ikshvakus crossed the Narmada, and established their supremacy in the region beyond.

By these means, Sagara established himself as the supreme ruler of North India, except Vaisali and the regions beyond. The Puranas acclaim him as a Chakravarti and a just ruler. He disinherited his son Asamanjas, for having been cruel to his subjects. He was succeeded by his grandson Ansumant. During his time Ayodhya would appear to have become weak. For Chedi, a grandson of Vidarbha, crossed the Vindhya mountains and extended his kingdom as far north as the Yamuna.

CHAPTER V

THE BHARTAS AND THE ROYAL SUPPORT TO THE RIGVEDIS

The Rig Vedis, as is shown elsewhere, were dissenters from the Atharva Vedis; the cause of dissension was disagreement between the Vasisthas and Visvamitra. The descendants of Visvamitra left Kanyakubja at the time of the Taljangha invasion, and settled on the banks of the river Kosi in North Bihar. From there, due to the displeasure of king Varutta of Vaisali, one Brihaspati of Angiras Gotra, who became a Rig Vedi, emigrated to Kasi, which henceforward became a centre of the Rig Vedic group.

In the meantime, the Purus, who disappeared as a result of Yadava invasion under Sasabindu, came to power again. It took place under Dushyanta. Little is known about his antecedents, except that he was the grandson of an old lady called Ilina, and an adopted son of one king Varutta of the Turvasu line. He claimed descent from the Puru line, and evidently with the support of the Turvasus laid claim to the heritage of the Purus. He was installed on the throne by Dirghatamas, who evidently was an Atharva Vedi.

While on a hunting expedition, probably before he became the king, he happened to go to the hermitage of one Rishi Kanva, and met Sakuntala, a foundling brought up by him. At the first sight,

Dushyanta fell in love with her, and took her as his wife under Gandharva rites. By these rites, which are still practised by the aborigines, one can take a wife with the mere consent of the bride. No bride's money is paid, no parent's sanction is required, and the children from such marriages have had full legal rights. According to *Manu Smriti*, even the Brahmins could have contracted such marriages.

After Dushyanta's return, being immersed in state affairs, he forgot all about this marriage and probably married again, as a queen was essential at the coronation according to the ancient rites. In the meantime a son was born to Sakuntala. He was named Bharata. In course of time, he was taken to the court of Dushyanta. But Sakuntala could not prove either the identity of the child, or make the king recollect his marriage with her. The only proof she could have had was a signet ring given to her by Dushyanta, but it was lost on the way. She had nowhere to go, and out of shame, she did not return to the hermitage of her foster-father. But she took refuge in the hermitage of a Marici, where young Bharata grew up to manhood, skilled in warfare, and resplendent with all the good qualities. In the meantime, the king received the lost ring which brought to his mind all that had happened in the hermitage of Kanva; but he failed to trace the whereabouts of Sakuntala and her son. Circumstances, however, took him to the hermitage of Marici, where he recognised Sakuntala, and became reconciled with his son and they were taken to the capital. Even-

tually Bharata succeeded Dushyanta on the throne.

Bharata became very religious, evidently due to his bringing up in the hermitage of the Rishis. He decided to perform all the sacrifices known in his days. He sent for Bharadvaja, a descendant of the Rig Vedic Brihaspati who had settled down in Kasi. Bharadvaja pleased the king immensely with his sacrifices. Bharata had many sons; but he killed them all for being impious, probably for not becoming Rig Vedis. Bharadvaja succeeded him on the throne, until Vitatha, his begotten son through a queen, came of age.

While Bharata was busy with the sacrifices, momentous events were taking place in the neighbouring kingdom of Ayodhya. There Anusmant was succeeded by Dilipa I, and his successor Bhagiratha came to great prominence. Towards the end of the Sagara rule, he appears to have commenced the construction of a canal, which was opposed by the Rishis of Kasyapa Gotra. The work was delayed, until it was taken up by Bhagiratha. Overcoming all opposition, and with great difficulty, he completed the construction. The extent of the trouble he had to undergo, and the persistent efforts made by him in its completion, may well be seen from the current phrase "Bhagiratha-Prayatna", meaning most difficult task. Bhagiratha, like Sagara, is stated to have been a Chakravarti. In the case of Sagara, it was legitimate, for he fought many battles, destroyed his enemies and made conquests. To Bhagiratha's credit, the completion of the canal is the only event. But it was a momentous event. The Puranas say that when

the work was completed, the Ganga came down from heaven with such a great force that the gods feared that the earth would be destroyed; they approached Siva, who came to their rescue, and received the flood in his matted hair. Ever since goddess Ganga, as sung by the lyricists and depicted by the artists, sits in Siva's matted hair, hidden from the gaze of his jealous wife Parvati.

Bharata Dushyanta is also styled a Chakravarti; it must have been due to his services in conjunction with Bharadvaja in giving royal support to the Rig Vedic religion. But what was the extent of his dominion is not known. Did he get only the old Pratisthan back, or did he make any annexation? It is all lost in praise of his service for the Rig Vedic sect. However, his descendants were weak. If he had extended his kingdom along the Ganga, it would appear to have been soon annexed by king Ambarisha third in succession to Bhagiratha. Ambarisha Nabhagi, who is mentioned as a Chakravarti, did austerities on the bank of the Ganga and performed many sacrifices. If the site of his sacrifices were the present Gharmukteswar, some thirty miles south-east of Meerut, where thousands of people go on pilgrimage every year, it will indicate that Bharata's descendants were driven away from Prayag (Allahabad) towards Delhi.

However, three generations afterwards, they rallied round, and under the leadership of Hastin established Hastinapura, where despite vicissitudes of fortune, they reigned for nearly fifty genera-

tions. The extent of Hastins realm may be roughly judged by the size of the four smaller kingdoms into which it was parcelled out by his descendants, namely, Dvimidha, North Panchala, South Panchala, and Hastinapura. All these four kingdoms together may not have been any bigger than the present districts of Meerut, Bulandshahar, Barcilly and Delhi.

About the same period Hastin's cousin Rantideva Samkriti established a principality of his own on the banks of the Karmavati (Chambal). He is also styled a Chakravarti ; but his chief claim to posterity would appear to have been his munificence to the Brahmans, of whom he was one. His capital was Desapura. His successors, all split themselves into five different Gotras of Brahmans. These five groups apparently are the five Aryan tribes settled down on the bank of the seven rivers with three sources, which the Vedic scholars have been looking for. It is shown in *Vedic History set in Chronology* that these seven rivers must have been the Gomti, Ganga, Yamuna, Drishadvati, Sarasvati, Karmavati and Vetravati, with three sources, the Himalayas and the Simla Hills for the first five rivers, and the northern outspurs of the Vindhya for the last two.

The size and the importance of these petty kingdoms will be reviewed later on.

CHAPTER VI

TRIALS OF THE IKSVAKUS AND THE TRIUMPH OF RAMA

The kings of Ayodhya had trouble with their priests from the days of Vena, if not earlier. The most beneficial effect of the strife between the prince and the priest was the establishment of a limited monarchy. But the limitation of king's powers gave rise to a priestly hierarchy. What had happened at the time of Trayyaruna and Harishchandra is mentioned in Book I, *Vedic History set in Chronology* and needs no reiteration. But the greatest trial that this monarchy ever had to undergo took place at the time of Sudasa (47 B.A.), five generations after Ambarisha.

Sudasa performed a sacrifice with the assistance of his priest Vasistha. What took place at this sacrifice and afterwards, as narrated in the Vishnu Purana and corroborated by other Puranas, may be stated thus :

At this sacrifice, Sudasa, being influenced by the spirit of a tiger that he once killed, gave human meat for Vasistha to eat. Vasistha cursed him to become a Rakshasa or a cannibal for twelve years. Thereupon Sudasa became an out-and-out cannibal, visiting forests at night and eating the tasty flesh of holy Brahmans. Once while eating the flesh of a pious Brahman who was about to make love to his wife, she uttered a curse that he

would die if he ever made advances to his queen. After the expiry of twelve years, he was called back to the throne by his priest Vasistha. But on his return as he could not approach his wife for fear of the Brahman wife's curse, he solicited the assistance of Vasistha to impregnate a son through his queen Madayanti. For seven years no child was born to her, then Amsaka came. Amsaka's son was Mulaka, who was called Narikavacha, for he was protected by women, "when the Kshatriyas were rooted out from the earth". Mulaka's son was Dasaratha, his son Ilavila, his son Visvasakha, and his son Khatavanga who was called Dilipa. Dilipa was invited by the gods to assist them in their fight with the Asuras.

This geneaology is not corroborated by the Matsya, Padma, Siva and Agni Puranas ; they give a different version. They insert six other kings between Sudasa and Dilipa, namely, Kalmaspada, Sarvakarman, Anaranya, Nighna, Anamitra, Raghu and Duliduha.

What is the explanation for all these? It may be:—

- (i) The Vasisthas had a quarrel with king Sudasa ; and he was deposed from the throne. They then placed a branch family on the throne, or the Vasisthas ruled on their behalf for seven generations, until Dilipa was brought back to the throne.
- (ii) As the quarrel between Sudasa and Vasistha took place at the sacrifice, it must have had something to do with the precedence at

the sacrifice. Such quarrels at the sacrifices had taken place between the kings of the Bharata line and their priests, though they were closely related by blood. From the Puranic statement it would appear that Sudasa was his own high priest at this sacrifice, and the Vasisthas were only assisting him. Even today at the Oraon sacrifices, the king Pahan is their high priest, and 'Panbhara', or the proto-priest, is only his assistant. Sudasa giving meat to Vasistha, or the king giving meat to the priest after the sacrifice, is a practice that could be traced among the aborigines among whom the Pahan distributes the meat, and not the 'Panbhara'. Now the practice is reversed; the Brahman priest first eats or takes his share of the 'prasada' or sanctified food before any distribution of it is ever done.

- (iii) The story of giving human meat must have served the Vasisthas well in mobilising public opinion against the king. The people in general must have been against human sacrifice at this time. The protest against human sacrifice which was started by Vishvamitra over twenty generations earlier might have been gaining ground. However, human beings must have been sacrificed quietly at the king's sacrifices. If it were not so, the availability of the human meat, after the sacrifices, is impossible to explain.

- (iv) 'The priestly agitation against the king was successful, as he was banished like Vikushi (97 B.A.), and Trayyaruna (70 B.A.), before him.
- (v) 'The chief priest, in addition to usurping the throne, appears to have kept the queen as his mistress. The story behind the queen's pregnancy lasting for seven years may indicate that the secret was not known to the public until the child Amsaka was born.
- (vi) Amsaka did not gain the throne, for he was an illegitimate child. Though the requisitioning of the service of the great Rishis to beget children through royal spouses was permissible under the old custom. Vasistha's action does not appear to have been condoned by the public. Even Amsaka's son Mulaka did not gain the throne. The agitation started against Sudasa might have continued even during the days of Mulaka; if not, the Puranic statement that "when the Kshatriyas were rooted out from the earth". Mulaka was concealed by women, will have no significance whatsoever. There must have been an attempt to uproot the whole royal family, when Mulaka as a child might have been concealed by a woman under her clothes; this may be the reason why he was called 'Nari-Kavacha', or one who was shielded by women.

It may be noticed that there were, according

to the Puranas, three other occasions when the 'Kshatriyas were rooted out',—once previous to this and twice after this. The first uprooting was done by the Brahman Parasu Rama, and the third by Sudra Nanda and the fourth by 'the peculiar Brahman king Satakarni.'

(vii) The priestly supremacy in Ayodhya on this occasion must have lasted for about eight generations, until they sent for Dilipa. He was evidently a scion of the Ikshvaku line, being descended from Amsaka. It is stated in the Puranas that he was sent for by the Devas (gods) to fight a battle against the Asuras (demons). The gods on this occasion were the Vasisthas no doubt, and evidently they were attacked by some powerful enemy. Who were the Asuras that Dilipa had to fight against? His neighbours were the Bharatas, Kasis, Videhas and Vaisalis. The Bharatas after Hastin and Rantideva were too weak a foe, for they were more of priests than kings. The Vasisthas appear to have been on most cordial terms with Videhas. There is a story which has been partly narrated earlier, that will establish cordial relationship between the Vasisthas and the Videhas. Nimi, the founder of Videha, was a son of Ikshvaku. He invited Vasistha to take part in a sacrifice. As Vasistha was late to keep up the appointment, Nimi performed the sacrifices without Vasistha. He became furious on his arrival and cursed Nimi, and Nimi cursed him in return. However, peace between the two was restored on each having the privilege of being addressed as Mitra-Varuni, or the sons of the gods Mitra and Varuna. The

relationship, thus established as the foremost worshippers of Mitra and Varuna, appears to have lasted until the two kingdoms were united and came to be known under the combined name of Kosala. Kasi was a small kingdom, and it neither at this time nor at any time, appears to have been strong enough to wage war against Ayodhya. But Vaisali, at any rate from the days of Marutta who drove back the Talajanghas, was a very powerful kingdom. Hence it could be presumed that the Asuras, or the demons the Vasisthas and Dilipa had to fight, were the kings and people of Vaisali. Vaisali appears to have been defeated very badly at this battle, for the genealogy of the kings of Vaisali stops soon after this. From the genealogical synchronism it will be seen that the contemporary of this Dilipa or Dilipa II was Kṛsasva, and after him only three more names of this dynasty are mentioned in the Puranas. Dilipa or Dilipa Ailavila Khatavanga is acclaimed as a Chakravarti. It must have been the victory over the Asuras of Vaisali that earned him this title.

If the Vasistha influence in the court of Ayodhya is not fully realised the historic background of the Epic Ramayana may remain misunderstood for ever. The ancestors of Rama, after Dilipa, on the throne of Ayodhya, were Dirghabahu, Raghu, Aja and Dasaratha. The stage for the Ramayana is laid in the court of Dasaratha. He was getting old. He had three wives, Kausalya, as the name implies, was a princess of Kosala, Kaikeyi a princess Kekeya the distant Punjab, and Sumitra a princess of Magadha. None of them gave

Dasaratha a son. As is usual in such cases, the family priests, Vasisthas, must have done all they could in the way of sacrifices and 'pujas'; yet no heir to the throne was born. Then Dasaratha heard of one Rishi Sringa, who did wonders in the Anga kingdom of Bengal.

There was a severe drought in Anga, which lasted for twelve years and caused immense distress to the people. The king Lomapada of Anga, heard about the marvellous attainment of a young Rishi, a son of Vibhandaka Muni of Sringeri, on the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats, Mysore. This young man came to be known as Sringi, as he came from Sringeri. The Hindu artists, who made all the Rishis look similar in appearance, distinguished him by giving two Sringas or horns on his head; even today he is shown with two horns. Lomapada's difficulty was how to induce this young man to come to Bengal. He selected a number of courtesans with exquisite beauty, charm and accomplishments and sent them to Sringeri to entice the young sage all the way to Bengal. The young man succumbed to the allurements, went to Anga and performed a sacrifice, which brought down the much needed rain. The king was so pleased, he gave him immense wealth and his beautiful daughter Santa in marriage. Since then he settled down on the banks of the Kosi and joined the Rishi Kula of the Visvamisras. It was to his hermitage therefore that the messengers of Dasaratha hastened to fetch him. He came to Ayodhya and performed 'Putra-Kameshti Yagya,' when from the sacrificial fire a plateful of 'Paramanna', or a special

kind of rice pudding, came up, which Dasaratha apportioned between his two favourite wives, Kaikeyi and Kausalya. They on seeing that Sumitra did not get a share, gave half of their shares each to her. The Ramayana story is that the queens, after eating the 'paramanna' became pregnant, and Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi gave birth to Bharata and Sumitra gave birth to Lakshmana and Satrughna. As Lakshmana was born from the half share of Kausalya, he became attached to Rama and followed him everywhere, while Satrughna was born from the half share of Kaikeyi, he followed Bharata everywhere ; thus the pairs became inseparable.

The Ramayana deals with the exploits of Rama. It presents Rama as a god. Many religious-minded people read it with devotion and find all spiritual consolation that it gives. But to a student of history it would appear that in extolling Rama as a god, the author of Ramayana has done incalculable damage to Rama as a man. Even without any godly attributes Rama was one of the greatest heroes that the world has ever produced. Rama perhaps became a god later in history. Neither in the Vedas nor in the post-Vedic literature, is Rama mentioned. Rama may not have contributed anything to the Vedic religion, or he may not have been a favourite of the post-Vedic authors. Hymns by more than one of his grandsires are found in the Rig Veda, and they are also honourably mentioned in other hymns. Perhaps Rama failed to placate any of the Vedic groups, though he appeared to have received instruction from the Atharva Vedic Vasisthas, and the Rig Vedic Visva-

mitras. Rama's champion was Valmiki, a non-Brahman who is said to be of the lowest caste. Even now it is the non-Brahmans who are his great worshippers. However, by taking Rama as a prince and king of Ayodhya, the following incidents in his life stand out most prominently :—

- (1) His visit to the hermitage of Visvamitra.
- (2) His marriage with Sita, the daughter of Janaka.
- (3) His exile.
- (4) His fight with the Rakshasas.
- (5) His alliance with Sugriva, king of Kishkindha.
- (6) His victory over Ravana.
- (7) His coronation as the Emperor of all India.

His visit to the hermitage of Visvamitra, according to Ramayana, was at the request of sage Visvamitra for the protection of his sacrifices which were constantly being desecrated by the Rakshasas or demons under Maricha. There is some incongruity in this. The Vasisthas were the royal priests of Ayodhya, and the Vasisthas and the Visvamitras were never on the best of terms. As Rama was a prince of Ayodhya, he was expected to have been educated and trained by the Vasisthas. Was it likely that a Visvamitra could have requested the assistance of a pupil of his rival to protect his sacrifices? The truth about Rama's visit to Visvamitra may be seen from Garuda Purana, when it says that "Rama,

the beloved of his parents and firmly devoted to them, learned the use of arms and weapons from the holy Visvamitra". From elsewhere it will be seen that Visvamitra instructed Rama and Lakshman over twenty ways of shooting the arrows such as Varuna, Saiva, Indra, Vaishnava, Mara, Dama, Paisacha, Raksasa, Dhara, etc. ; three ways of lassoing enemies, such as Dharma, Kali and Varuna, and different ways of fighting with disc, mace, etc. However, sending Rama to Visvamitra for completing his military training would not have been complimentary to the Royal priest Vasistha. Was the Vasistha influence waning in the court of the Ikshvakus? Were the Visvamitras, who had their hermitage on the bank of the river Kosi, or Kausaki, gaining ground in Ayodhya? The Visvamitras were Rig Vedis and there is no reason to presume that the Vasisthas even at this period were not Atharva Vedis. The Puranic authors, to placate the descendants of both Vasisthas and Visvamitras, appear to have passed over this important development, which is most essential to understand the background of Rama's exile.

It is not surprising that Rama was sent to Visvamitra for training. Was he not born as a result of the sacrifice performed by Sringi, who was then a Visvamitra or Kausika?

The nature of the military training given to Rama and Lakshman may be judged from what they accomplished while they were with Visvamitra. They defeated Maricha, killed Taraka, Subahu and others. Maricha was a close relation of Ravana

of Lanka (Ceylon). What was he doing in Mithila (North Bihar)? Had he come all the way from Ceylon to desecrate the sacrifice of the Visvamitras? If they were human beings, the presence of Maricha and his followers can be better explained in view of later developments. They were the advance or reconnoitring party of Ravana's army which was moving northward with the object of conquering Ayodhya and North India.

After the completion of their military training, Visvamitra took Rama and Lakshmana to the court of Janaka, king Siradhvaja, who was the adopted father of Sita. Vishnu Purana says that Siradhvaja had no sons; in order to gain a son, he was about to perform a sacrifice; while preparing the sacrificial ground, a beautiful damsel sprang up from the furrows, and she was Sita. Sita became beautiful and of marriagable age. Siradhvaja decided to give her in marriage only to a prince, who could bend a strong and unused bow which was in the family for ages. Many princes had tried, but all of them failed. Encouraged by Visvamitra, Rama had a trial and he succeeded, and won Sita for his bride. This became a matter of momentous political importance to Ayodhya. It brought together Ayodhya and Videha; and Ayodhya gained an ally against Ravana. Kasi also came on their side. For, Kusadhvaja, king of Kasi, was at that time a brother of Siradhvaja.

The marriage between Sita and Rama was performed in due form. Visvamitra must have solemnised the ceremony. An emissary of Visvamitra was sent to Ayodhya to announce the marriage.

Lakshmana also married a princess of Videha. The old king Dasaratha was overjoyed at the news. He decided to abdicate in favour of Rama ; and ordered to make all preparations for his coronation. But there was an intrigue brewing in the capital of Ayodhya probably instigated by the Vasisthas, who were at variance with the Visvamitras ever since the Rîg Vedic revolt at the intended sacrifice of Sunahsepa in place of prince Rohita had taken place. Rama and Lakshmana with their wives, with Visvamitra and a retinue from Videha arrived in Ayodhya. The date was fixed for the coronation.

But on the previous day Manthara, a hunchback maid-servant of Kaikeyi, the second wife of Dasaratha, appeared before her mistress, and reminded her of two unspecified and unfulfilled promises made by Dasaratha. A long time ago, Dasaratha was in hot pursuit of an enemy, with Kaikeyi by his side in a chariot, when a cotter of the chariot became loose and dislodged. Kaikeyi on seeing the danger put her finger in the hole and prevented a catastrophe. Overpleased with her, Dasaratha promised two boons, to be asked for. Kaikeyi forgot all about this. Manthara reminded her of it on this occasion, and gave shape to the requests. One was that Rama should be sent to exile for fourteen years, and the other was that Bharata, Kaikeyi's son, should be installed in his place.

Now as Kaikeyi was equally fond of Rama and Bharata, she was most reluctant to make such a demand. However, she yielded at last. Vasistha, the royal priest himself went to distant Kaikeya

where Bharata and Satrugghna were undergoing education in court of Bharata's grand-parents. Poor old Dasaratha was made to agree; Rama, with Sita and Lakshmana, went to exile.

Circumstances being such, one cannot but wonder whether Rama went to exile of his own accord, and effaced himself to enable his old father to fulfil a promise long forgotten. If one is to judge from what had taken place during his exile, one cannot but resist the temptation to consider that it was a ruse on Rama's part, a ruse that would match with high military stratagems even of the present day. He had already encountered in North Bihar or in Kosi regions the advance party of Ravana's forces headed by Maricha, an uncle of Ravana, the emperor of Lanka or Ceylon. Later on in exile he met Khara, Ravana's brother-in-law with a huge army beyond the Vindhya's. If he ever had any intention of foiling Khara's march towards the north, he might have adopted such a ruse to beguile Khara. In this light Rama's exile may be studied carefully.

If it were only an exile to enable his father to fulfil his promise, and not to be a thorn by the side of Bharata, he might just as well have gone to the east, west, north or anywhere outside Ayodhya. Why did he prefer to go to the south? That was not one of the demands made by his step-mother. But Rama's intention would appear to have been different.

His first interview during his exile was with Srngivers, the Nishadha king, at his capital Srin-

giverapura. It is unusual for one on his exile to visit a king. The village of Singer or Singror about 22 miles north-west of Allahabad on the opposite bank of Ganga has been recognised by Cunningham as Sringiverapura. According to the Ramayana, Rama visited the Nishadha king because he was a great devotee of Rama. But Rama was not recognised as a god at this time. If he were recognised as such, even Ravana, may not have abducted Sita and waged a war against Rama. Hence Rama's visit to Sringivera should be considered as a diplomatic move to seek his aid in the event of an invasion by Khara.

The next place of importance in Rama's halt was Chitrakuta, Ghar-Chitra of the Munda tradition. According to Ramayana this was a region of 'anarya wretches' and man-eating Rakshasas of various shapes and forms; and the Rishi residents of the place invoked Rama not to tarry there. What were the Aryan Rishi doing there? However, Rama proceeded further into the interior of the jungles.

Bharata on his return from the Punjab went in hot haste to meet Rama, to entreat him to come back to Ayodhya and ascend the throne. Bharata met him at Chitrakuta. But after a talk with Rama evidently in confidence he returned to Ayodhya with Rama's wooden slippers, to be placed on the throne and rule on his behalf until his return.

Rama lived in the jungle with Sita and Lakshmana, in an improvised hut somewhere. Was it

at Ramtek, a high peak about 30 miles north of Nagpur? It is believed that Rama stayed there. Thousands of people visit the place and climb the peak, where there is a temple now. Even there Rama was not to be left alone. He received the attention of Ravana's party. Ravana's sister Surpanakha visited him in disguise, made amatory approaches to him and tried to abduct Sita. Rama sent her away with a brutal punishment.

One of the major incidents in Rama's exile was his fight with Khara. Khara had an army of 33,000 Rakshasas, under two generals, Dushana and Trisira. Rama is said to have defeated and killed them all in three and three quarters of a Nalika or within an hour and half. It is said to have been done by Rama single-handed. Whether it was so or not, Rama achieved a great victory.

Ramtek is an admirable observation post. From the top of the peak, the country all round could be watched for an enemy attack. The operation base of Ravana, as could be judged from the Puranas, was near the mouth of the river Godavari, which was in communication with Ceylon by the sea. Therefore any advance towards the north against Ayodhya could have been made conveniently along the course of a tributary of the Godavari that runs along the eastern side of Ramtek. The railway engineer have followed this route when they laid rail-road along these regions to Jabalpur, connecting Allahabad and Fyzabad, which is only four miles from Ayodhya. Ravana's force under the command of Khara would appear to have taken this route. Rama, from his observation post

at Ramtek, could have easily emerged even with a small force, cut Khara's marching army into two, destroyed them in no time and gained an easy victory, as is extolled in the Ramayana. Rama would appear to have done this.

Thereafter Rama went in search of Sita. When he came near the mouth of the Godavari, as is stated in the Vishnu Purana, he saw a strong concentration of the Rakshsas, which can only have been what was left of Ravana's invading force. Finding that Sita was taken away to Lanka he undertook the troublesome journey towards the South. He could not have done anything else as Ayodhya was an inland country with no navy at its disposal. The Epic writers, perhaps with a view to making the story more interesting, made it out that Ravana came in person, abducted Sita, and took her away in his 'Vimana', or self-propelling air vehicle to Lanka.

At last luck came in Rama's way when he reached Kishkindha (in the neighbourhood of Mysore). He met Sugriva and his general, Hanuman in the jungle hiding away from the wrath of Bali. Bali was the king of Kishkindha, and Sugriva his younger brother. According to the ancient custom they shared a wife, Tara, between them. Bali misappropriated this wife all to himself, and Sugriva resented it. This caused strife between them.

Rama promised to help Sugriva, in return for his help to rescue Sita from the clutches of Ravana. Emboldened by Rama's help Sugriva came out in

the open, and challenged Bali for a duel. The duel was fought. Fearing that Sugriva would be killed, Rama, who was hiding behind a tree, shot an arrow and killed Bali.

'This is how it is given in the Ramayana. But it is doubtful whether Rama did behave in this manner, which is contrary to all the rules of the game. The truth may have been somewhat different. Probably there was a battle between the two parties, in which the two leaders Bali and Sugriva met face to face, as was usual in all the battles till recent days. Seeing that Sugriva being worsted, Rama may have faced Bali and killed him with an arrow.

(In judging the story of the Ramayana, the circumstance in which the original of the Epic was written should be taken into consideration. It was written by Valmiki, a thief turned into a sage. When Sita was turned out by Rama to stop the wagging tongue of the people who calumniated her for having been a prisoner of Ravana, Lakshmana took her to the hermitage of Valmiki and left her there. She was then pregnant. In due course, she gave birth to the twins, Kusa and Lava. The boys were brought up and educated under the care of Valmiki. When the boys came of age, Sita decided to send them back to Rama. The boys had not known the injustice done to their mother. Had the true story of her sending away from the Court been told, what would have been their reaction and what the boys would have done is impossible to know. Yet, Sita wanted her sons to go to Ayodhya and claim their heritage. How could

she convince Rama that these two grown-up boys were his sons. She consulted Valmiki. The old sage wrote a story of Rama, in which he included all the incidents in Rama's life which Sita alone could have known, and making him a great hero with no faults. The boys learned the story by heart and went to Ayodhya and began to sing it in the streets. When Rama came to know of it, he sent for the boys, and being convinced that they were his sons accepted them. If Valmiki's story was different, it is impossible to imagine what would have been the result).

However, after the defeat of Bali, Sugriva was enthroned. He in gratitude raised a formidable army. The combined forces of Rama and Sugriva marched on to Lanka.

The generals of Sugriva were Hanuman, Nala, Nila and other redoubtable leaders. They must naturally have marched under their national flag, the flag of Kishkindha, which evidently had the emblem of 'vanara' or monkey on it. This must have been the reason why the Sugriva army came to be known as 'Vanaras' or monkeys.

Such flags are still in use among the Oraons in the vicinity of Ranchi. They use them in their processions and keep them in their Dhunkudia or civic centre. The monkey is their Totem, which they revere. During World War II, when a new District was formed at Nagpur, the District Officers were using a snake emblem on their arm-band, to indicate that they were from the District

Headquarters, Nagpur. Nagpur means the city of the snakes.

Kishkindha, like Ayodhya, being an inland country, had no fleet. So the combined armies of Rama and Sugriva negotiated a land approach to Lanka. There were several small islands scattered in the narrow strait between the mainland of India and Ceylon. They took advantage of these islands and built bridges across them. They knew that they were pretty safe in their attempt, as the big sea-going vessels of Ravana could not have risked in these regions of shallow sea and submerged rocks. Hanuman first made a commando raid on Lanka, studied the military dispositions, met Sita in the dead of night and returned safely.

Then the invasion of Lanka took place. Ravana's younger brother, Vibhishana was for peace with Rama and for giving up Sita. But Ravana was adamant. Though his main force still may have been in the regions of the Godavari, he made the best use of what was left in Lanka. All the fortifications were strengthened, strong forces were placed at the gates, under the command of capable leaders. Ravana's son Indrajit met the enemy first. He was killed after he had inflicted great losses on the enemy. Then Kumbhakarna, Ravana's brother faced the enemy; he was defeated and killed. Finally Ravana himself faced the enemy. He was in turn defeated and killed. Thus ended the attempt of Ravana to extend his empire towards the north.

Ravana, though he is characterised as the worst

of the demons, was a great devotee of Siva. One of his hymns in praise of Siva is still sung by many a Brahman in North India. He is also said to have been a Brahman. His father was the great Rishi, Visravas; his elder step-brother was Kubera, the reputed god of wealth. Ravana had shown many noble qualities. His behaviour with Sita, while she was in his captivity, was most exemplary.

After the defeat of Ravana, his kingdom was given back to his younger brother Vibhishana, though many 'vanaras' were allowed to settle down in Lanka. Then Rama commenced his victorious journey to the north with Sita and Lakshmana. Sugriva and Hanuman followed them with a great retinue. The people flocked together on the way to do him homage. His achievement must have made a lasting impression on them, which evidently paved the way for worshipping him as a god. Even for less deeds than Rama had done, many kings even in later days were worshipped as gods. The Roman kings were worshipped as gods even during their life-time. One of them had a temple on the Malabar Coast, where he was worshipped by Roman traders, probably by the Greeks as well.

On Rama's return from the South, though he could have performed the Asvamedha or the traditional horse sacrifice, he waited until after the conquest of the North. He let loose horses in different directions accompanied by adequate forces under the command of his cousins. Lakshmana set out towards the North and subdued the kingdoms on this side of the Himalayas. Satrugna directed his

course towards the west, where he brought all the Yadavas under subjection. Lavana the most powerful of them was killed by Satrugghna, his famous pleasure forest Madhuvana was destroyed and the city of Mathura was built on the site. Bharata went further north-west and subdued all the Punjab-kingdoms. To the east, there was no occasion to send a horse or army, for the kingdoms like Mithila and Vidha were in close relationship with Ayodhya. Thus after completing the 'dig-vijaya', or victory over the surrounding countries, Rama completed the Asvamedha ceremony and proclaimed himself as Chakravarti or emperor. There was no Chakravarti like him before, who brought the whole of India under 'ek-chhatra', or one umbrella, and none after him. The Mauryan empire extended no doubt as far as Persia, but it did not include South India beyond the river Pennar. Rama appears to have ruled his realm well, so much so that even now the people wish for Rama Raj or Rama's rule.

The great empire thus created by Rama was divided into smaller kingdoms after him. Bharata's sons, Taksha and Puskara, divided the north-western regions between themselves and established two kingdoms with their capitals respectively at Takshasila (Taxila), and Pushkaravati. Satrugghna's son Surasena reigned at Mathura, hence that country came to be known as Surasenya in later days. Lakshmana's sons, Angada and Chandraketu, established two kingdoms on this side of the Himalayas with their capitals at Angadya and Chandrachakra. Rama's son Kusa built his capital

Kusastali on the Vindhya range, and ruled over the Southern Kosala, while the Northern Kosala was ruled by Lava from Sravasti, an old capital of Ayodhya which continued to be a place of importance even during the days of Gautama Buddha, in the fifth century B.C. The reason for the change of the capital from Ayodhya to Sravasti, on the Nepalese border, for a second time must have been due to the intrigue of the Vasisthas, who lost the royal favour from the time of Rama.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRIESTLY GRIP OVER THE KURUS

The four principalities over which the descendants of Hastin ruled, as stated before, were North Panchala, South Panchala, Dvimidha and the mother kingdom of Hastinapura. The relative size and importance of these kingdoms would be studied before the so-called Aryan invasion is put in its true perspective. Hastin's son Ajamidha had Hastinapura for his share. His brother Dvimidha parcelled out a kingdom of his own, which may be called Dvimidha country, in the region of the present district of Bareilly, probably with Ahichhatra as its capital. After Ajamidha, Hastinapura would appear to have lost its importance for some generations until the days of Samvarana. But Ajamidha's successors Nila and Brhadvasu established two principalities, which came to be known as North Panchala and South Panchala. It is in the family of North Panchala that the so-called Aryan invaders Divodasa and Sudasa were born. Neither North Panchala nor South Panchala was of much consequence when Rama's army scoured the country. When Rama's father Dasaratha invited all the prominent kings of North and some from South India to a sacrifice at Ayodhya, neither the king of North Panchala nor the king of South Panchala was invited. North Panchala first came to prominence as a Rishi settlement in the upper regions of the Sarasvati and Drishadvati, under Mudgala, a

Brahman descendant of Nila. Vadharyasva, a grandson of Mudgala, for the first time claimed sovereignty over the regions. It was two generations before Rama of Ayodhya. Divodasa, the son of Vadharyasva, is praised for his munificence to the hymn-makers of the Rig Veda. His successor Sudasa, fifth in succession, started on a military enterprise by encroaching upon his neighbour's kingdom. He took Hastinapura and drove the claimant to the throne, Samvarana, into exile, and he fled to the west and took shelter in a fort on the bank of the Indus. After this victory Sudasa decided to perform an 'asvamedha' as was usual among the kings great and small. Preparatory to the ceremony, horses were let loose by his priest Visvamitra with adequate military force to the north, east and west. No horse was sent towards the south. Evidently Sudasa had no intention disturbing his kinsmen the South Panchalas in the south. What happened to the forces that were sent to the east and the north is not known. But the force that was sent to the west was met with opposition. Probably the opposition came from Samvaranas' friends who fled towards the west. When his force was hard-pressed Sudasa sent for help. The Tritsus headed by Vaisthas came to help him from the east. They crossed the Yamuna and Vipas (Bias), and drove the opposing party into the river Parushi (Ravi). All this can be deduced from the Rig Vedic hymns, one by Visvamitra, who let the horses loose at first, and the other made by one Vasistha, who praised the Vasistha who went to the help of Sudasa. What

became of Sudasa after this is not known from the Vedic hymns.

It is this exploit in the life of Sudasa that has been interpreted as the Aryan conquest of India. The only argument to substantiate this presumption is that Indra gave victory to Sudasa, and Indra the rain god shattered the Dasyus or dark rain-bearing clouds. This act of Indra is taken as the help given to Sudasa in his fight against the dark-complexioned inhabitants of India. But from the genealogy it will be seen that Sudasa was not an outsider; his ancestry can be traced back to the Purus of Pratisthan, Allahabad.

However, the Puranas that have maintained the genealogy of Sudasa are silent about the exploits of Sudasa. Even the Vishnu Purana, the original of which was a work by Parasara, a descendant of the Vasistha who helped Sudasa, in his battle, is silent about it. None of the descendants of Sudasa, except his immediate successor, Sahadeva, would appear to have ruled over North Panchala. The disappearance of this dynasty of the so-called Aryan conquerors may have been caused by either, one or both of the following reasons. When the exiled Samvarana regained the throne of Hastinapura, he would appear to have reduced the North Panchala kingdom and annexed it to his own.

The second reason may have been the disappearance of the Sarasvati and the Drishadvati, which made the north Panchala kingdom very fertile. The Sarasvati, to the flood-waters of which

the Rig Vedic Rishis prayed most fervently not to destroy them and let them leave their native land, united with the Drishadvati, cut out new course and found its way to the Indus above the ancient town of Mohenjo-daro, which in itself would appear to have been the cause of that city's destruction as well.

Samvarana was succeeded by his son Kuru. From him North Panchala received its final blow. The Dvimidhas and the South Panchalas accepted his suzerainty. He extended his kingdom from the Sarasvati to Prayag. In fact he placed Bharata-Varsha on the political map of India. He appears to have been as good an administrator as a conqueror. His name is chiefly associated with agriculture. Kurukshetra and Kurujangala were named after him, as he is stated to have brought both the tracts under cultivation; the latter appears to have been a jungle on the eastern side of Kurukshetra. He deserved to be called a Chakravarti or emperor, but as he was not named so, this would indicate that he was not a favourite of the Rishis or writers of the Puranas.

His destruction of the North Panchalas by itself would have made the Rishis dislike him. The kings of North Panchala were the mainstay of the Rishis of Brahma-Varta, the tract between the Sarasvati and Drishadvati. The Rishis on the banks of the Sarasvati were not producers; they were living on the fat of the land made available to them by their princely brethren.

Kuru had three sons, Parikshit (I), Jahnu and

Sudhanvan. Parikshit (I), being the eldest, succeeded on the throne. After him Janamejaya (II) became the king. But he was soon deposed, and Viduratha, a grandson of Jahnu, was placed on the throne. The circumstances that led to the dethronement of Janamejaya is truly indicative of priestly domination over the kings. The story of the dethronement is given naively thus in the Puranas :—Janamejaya injured a son of the Rishi Gargya. Gargya cursed him ; so he was abandoned by the people. In great affliction he went to another Rishi, Saunaka, who purified him with a sacrifice. Still he did not regain sovereignty ; and he and his three sons passed into oblivion. If one does not believe in the efficacy of curse given by one priest, nor in the ability of another priest to perform a sacrifice to regain a lost throne, one may find behind this story that is told with child-like simplicity, a serious struggle in the court of the Kurus between the prince and the priest for supremacy. Janamejaya lost his throne through the displeasure of Gargya, who evidently was his high priest, or in rivalry between two priests for supremacy in the court, and the powerful Gargyas succeeded in placing their nominee on the throne, and taught the kings that one should not 'injure' a Gargya again. The name of the Gargya who was powerful enough to depose the king is not given in the Puranas, but there is enough evidence to trace his antecedents. He does not appear to have been a wandering 'sadhu', who dropped in for receiving alms from the king. The Gargyas were descendants of Garga, a brother of Brhat-

kshatra, grandfather of Hastin, ancestor of Janamejaya himself. Hence they must have been royal priests with royal blood in them. Then who was Saunaka, who performed the sacrifice on behalf of Janamejaya to regain throne, or probably one who led an army to overthrow Viduratha the Gargya representative on the throne? He was a Bhargava or one who belonged to the clan of the most warlike priests and his full name may be traced as Indrota Saunaka. Hence it will be seen that there was a contest between Bhargavas and Angirasas to gain supremacy in the court of the Kurus, and in this contest, the Angirasas gained victory and placed their own candidate on the throne. This may be taken as the beginning of the priestly supremacy in the court of the Kurus. In the overthrow of Vena, the Vasisthas had the people with them, and in the case of Sudasa of Ayodhya the Vasisthas had public opinion in their favour, as they made out that the king had been deposed because he became a cannibal. Here the priests appear to have deposed the king without any camouflage, to suit their own ends.

A fourth descendant of Sudhanvan, Vasu, got away from the priestly intrigue and carved out a kingdom for himself. He took the kingdom of Chedi from the Yadavas, whence he came to be known as "Chaidyoparicara" or one who superseded the Chaidyas or Chedis. Then he annexed Magadha and extended his kingdom as far north-west as Kausambi (near Allahabad). His conquests appear to have been very extensive. Though he is not included in the list of the famous Chakravartis, he

is said to have been a 'Samrat'. His capital was Suktimati, on the river of the same name. One Brihaspati was his priest, but he did not give up his kingly prerogative and he held final authority in religious matters in his own hand. He was the foremost monarch of his time. He was approached by the Brahmans for a ruling in respect of animal sacrifice, and he gave the ruling in its favour. This may be surprising to those who think that the Brahmans have had the last word in all religious matters. Why, on a matter of similar importance, some Brahmans from Maharastra in the twentieth century A.D., approached the Maharaja of Cochin for a ruling in certain religious matters, as he was the foremost of the Kshatriya monarchs of the day. As was usual with the Ailas, Vasu's realm was divided between his sons. He had five sons, Brhadratha, Pratyagraha, Lalittha, Kusa and Maruta. Brhadratha took Magadha. Lalittha occupied the old Chedi kingdom, Kusa took the north-western territories and made his capital at Kausambi, (Allahabad). Maruta would appear to have got a portion of Mithila, but what was the share of Pratyagraha is not known. Of these, the kingdom of Magadha became very prominent and prosperous. Kausambi had to wait for another Kuru for its rise. Brhadratha's successor was Kusagra, who appears to have built the town of Kusagrapura, outside Rajghir. Nothing much is known about the kings of Magadha till the days of Jarasandha (18 B.A.) for an interval of thirteen generations. Evidently the Puranic authors were not interested in this kingdom. But when Jarasandha extended

his conquest as far west as Mathura, they began to take notice of him and designated him as a Raksasa or Asura. Whoever stood against their interest, or against the interest of their favourites, was a demon or Raksasa.

After the dethronement of Janamejaya II (27 B.A.) until the days of Santanu (10 B.A.) nothing much of the Kurus of Hastinapura is known. Though the Puranas maintain the names of the successive rulers, there is no record of their deeds. It may be that the kings became nonentities or that the priestly intrigue during the period was not palatable to the authors. However, the curtain at Hastinapur went up again with a priestly intrigue. After king Pratipa, Devapi was the legal claimant to the throne. He was an excellent prince, but he was not a favourite of the priests. A priestly agitation was made against his succession on the pretext of his having some skin disease, though two generations afterwards another king of the same dynasty, Pandu, with an incurable skin disease, was allowed to rule on behalf of his blind brother. The result was that Devapi had to give up his throne in favour of his brother Santanu. Devapi retired to the jungle and became a 'Muni'. Rig Vedic hymn Bk : X. 98 stands in his name ; and from the contents of the hymn it will be seen that he sacrificed for Santanu. There is a story behind it. For twelve years, rain failed in the realms of Santanu. All sacrifices and prayers done by the court priests failed to bring the much-needed rain. Then the king sent for his brother Devapi, who performed a special sacrifice, and the rain came.

This was a blow to the priestly prestige at Hastinapura. Who could have been the priests then in power? Were they still the Gargyas? It is not known. However, such a prince was not to succeed on the throne. Why? Probably due to the growing influence of another priestly group, the Vasisthas. How did the Vasistha influence come? It is a complicated story.

Parasara was one of the Vasisthas. There were more than one Parasara; three of them are well known. The first of these Parasara was the son of Sakti, a son of Vasistha, who went to the rescue of Sudasa when he was worsted by his enemies. The second Parasara was a contemporary of Santanu. He was a great Rishi. Once while crossing the river Yamuna, he fell in love with a ferry maiden called Rali. She was very beautiful. There was nobody else in the boat. A dense mist was floating over the river. She yielded to the amorous approaches of the great Rishi, and the famous Vyasa was born as their son. After a time Santanu fell in love with her. She married him on condition that her sons would succeed him on the throne. On becoming the queen she assumed the name of Satyavati, and their sons were Chitrangada and Vichitravirya.

Now, the rightful heir to the throne was another son of Santanu, Bhishma, a redoubtable soldier, a great leader and an esteemed counsellor. He was the mainstay of the tottering kingdom of the Kurus. The Kuru empire was lost long ago. Dvimidhas became independent. South Panchala freed herself from the yoke of Hastinapura. Prasta,

who claimed descent from Jantu, the last of the North Panchala family, proclaimed himself as the ruler of North Panchala. In fact the Kuru possessions became less than they were in the days of Samvarana. Ugrayudha of Dvimidha entered upon an enterprising career. He marched against Prasta and annexed North Panchala. Prasta fled from the field of battle and took shelter with the South Panchalas at Kampliya. Ugrayudha then attacked the South Panchalas and wiped out the ruling family. Then he turned his attention towards Hastinapura. About this time Santanu died. Bhishma went out with a large force, waylaid Ugrayudha, destroyed his force and killed him. Thus Hastinapura was saved from disaster. Yet he was not to ascend the throne after his father.

Bhishma gave up the throne without a struggle and in addition he swore to be a bachelor so that his son might not have any claim to the throne. Such fidelity to a father's wish is rarely found. Was there any pressure brought on him by the priests? It was not unlikely, if one is to judge from the influence of the priests in the court of the Kurus. Chitrangada died young. Vichitravirya became an invalid, as he suffered from a wasting disease called 'Rajayakshma'. During his incumbency on the throne, Bhishma had to be the de facto ruler. Vichitravirya died without a son. He had three queens, all sisters, Amba, Ambika, and Ambalika. Amba dissatisfied with her lot, went back to her father's home and took up religion seriously. Having no heir to the throne, the first son of Satyawati and the famous Parasara, was sent for. He

does not appear to have possessed a presentable appearance ; but the queens were to accept him. The first night he approached Ambika ; but to avoid the horrible sight of the man she received him with closed eyes. The result was that her son Dhritarashtra was born blind. The next night Vyasa approached Ambalika ; she, to avoid contact with his repulsive body, wore a full jacket ; the result was that her son Pandu was born without skin or with a skin disease called 'Pandu', and so he was named Pandu. The third night Vyasa approached the queen's maid, a Sudra woman ; and she received him with a warm heart and open arms. As a result the great philosopher, Vidura was born. All these may appear to be excuses or explanations. But the fact remains that they were the sons of Vyasa. Thus it will be seen that the Kuru line was becoming more and more infused with Brahman blood. First it was that of a Bharadvaja, and Angirasa, now it is of Vyasa, a Vasistha.

CHAPTER VIII

A GOD TO DESTROY THE DEMONS

While the Rig Vedic priests were gaining the upper hand over the Kurus, a group of demons or Asuras appeared in the neighbouring kingdom. The most powerful of them was Jarasandha of Magadha, who extended his kingdom as far west as the Yadava kingdom of Mathura. Another one Kamsa more wicked than Jarasandha was reigning Mathura. A third one appeared in Chedi under the name of Sisupala. There were others like Dantavakra, and Poundra in the neighbouring kingdoms of Kasi. Whenever the demons appear, gods were to appear in human form to destroy them. When the demon Ravana appeared in Lanka, Rama was born in Ayodhya to kill him. Now to destroy the demons who appeared in North India, Krishna was born in Mathura. Here the argument that the demons were the Dravidians or the aborigines will not hold good. For all these demons were closely related to the Vedic family of the Kurus. Jarasandha, as stated before, was a descendant of Brahadratha, son of Vasu, a prince of the Kuru family, and Chedi was a cousin of Jarasandha. Kamsa was closely related to Krishna.

In the main Yadava line, which was connected with the Kurus in many ways, Ahuka, the eighth in descent from Andhaka, had two sons, Ugrasena and Devaka. Kamsa was the son of Ugrasena. Kamsa imprisoned his father and usurped the

throne. Devaka had a daughter named Devaki, and Krishna was her son. There are many stories in the Puranas depicting Krishna as a god and describing how he destroyed the demons. Among them only a few are of historic importance. Probably the foremost of them is his encounter with Kamsa. The next in importance is his fight with Jarasandha, and Kala Yavana.

After Devaki's marriage with Vasudeva, a Yadava chief, Kamsa was driving them home. On the way Kamsa heard a mysterious voice saying that the eighth son of Devaki would kill him. Infuriated by this prediction, Kamsa lifted his sword to kill Devaki. He was stopped in time by Vasudeva, on promising that all the children born to Devaki would be handed over to him to be killed as soon as they were born. Vasudeva kept his promise strictly in respect of the first six children and they were killed by Kamsa. When the seventh boy, Balabhadra, was born he was surreptitiously substituted by a girl. The eighth son was Krishna. When he was born, somehow or other in spite of all the vigilance of Kamsa and his guards round the prison of Devaki and Vasudeva, the child was whisked away to a place of safety. Stealthily Krishna and Balabhadra were brought up by Nanda, an Ahir chief, and his wife, Yasoda. As a child Krishna exhibited wonderful talents. The stories that Ben-hur gives about the childhood of Christ are nothing when compared to what is said about the child Krishna. He was a sprightly boy, full of the childish pranks and charming ways. He was the favourite of all who laid eyes on him. As a child

he amused them with childish pranks, and as a youth he surprised them with wise counsels. At last Kamsa came to know that he was duped, and that the youths Krishna and Balabhadra were alive and living in Gokula. He made plots to kill them. Having failed in all his attempts, he deputed Akrura, a renowned Yadava chief, to entice them to Mathura, where an annual display of physical prowess was in progress. The youths took the bait and went to Mathura in the train of Akrura. The first night they slept outside the city. The next morning while they were entering the city gate, a mad elephant was sent on them. Escaping from death, they arrived in the arena where a wrestling match was in progress. Being instructed by Kamsa, who was watching the display, two of the best wrestlers, Chanura and Mushtika challenged them. Chanura fought with Krishna and Mushtika with Balabhadra. The youths put up such a magnificent fight that they drew the admiration of all. Devaki and Vasudeva were also watching the game but with palpitating hearts. The youths then realised that it was not a fair fight and the opponent were trying to kill them. This realisation gave them additional strength; they fought hard, and in the end the wrestlers were killed, to the chagrin of Kamsa. Kamsa then ordered Tomalaka, his court bruiser to attack Krishna. Krishna with great difficulty put him to death. Infuriated and disappointed at the turn of events, Kamsa shouted out orders to drive these cow-boys out of the assembly, to seize the villain Nanda and his cows,

and to get hold of Vasudeva and torture him to death. Krishna got enraged at this command, jumped over the platform where Kamsa was seated, knocked off his crown and dashed him on the ground with such a force as killed him. A cry of admiration and wonder rose from every quarter. Even if the youths were not gods incarnate, certainly they deserved praise. Then to the surprise of all, Krishna shouted out instructions to release the old King Ugrasena from the jail and to place him back on the throne. The admiration for Krishna went still higher, and the people gave a sigh of relief for being saved from the oppressive rule of Kamsa. Had Krishna desired, he could have then occupied the throne, but he had no desire to do so. Krishna's life was full of such knight-errantry, without any selfish motive. It is no wonder that he became a god. In any country of the world in his days and even later he would have become a god, even without being an Avatar of Vishnu.

Krishna and Balabhadra then were sent by their parents to Avanti (Ujjain) to finish their military training. They made such progress under Sandipani, a Brahman from Kasi, that they finished the entire course within sixty-four days and returned to Mathura.

In the meantime Jarasandha, having learned the fate of Kamsa, marched on to Mathura to avenge the death of his son-in-law. He infested Mathura eighteen times and at each time he was driven back by Krishna and Balabhadra, themselves taking the command of the Yadava force. Then

an unexpected enemy appeared from the rear. The Yavanas made an attack from behind. These Yavanas were not the Greeks ; they only have been the descendants of those Yavanas who came to India in the wake of the Talajanghas, some sixty generation earlier. Though it was the Yadavas who brought them to India for the first time, now they turned against their benefactors. The reason was a priestly intrigue. The Gargyas were the priests of the Yadavas. A Yadava noble made fun of one Gargya as being impotent. The Rishi took it to heart, repaired to the western coast and by hard penance regained his manly vigour. While he was there, he became friendly with a Yavana king who had no sons. Being solicited by the princely friend, Gargya procreated a son for him through the Yavana queen. He was named Kala Yavana. When he grew up, he sent an army against the Yadavas to chastise them for the insult given to his real father. Krishna rose equal to the occasion. Fearing a simultaneous attack from the Yavanas and Jarasandha, he had Mathura evacuated, sent the civil population to Dwaraka on the West Coast and posted sufficient forces to defend the city. But he did not waited for an attack. Instead he issued from the fort and staged a feigned retreat. The Yavanas took the bait and followed him. Krishna took up an advantageous position in Muchukanda's cave where Muchukunda, a son of Mandhatar, made his headquarters during his campaign against the Gandharvas, some seventy generations earlier. It was a place where a few could keep an army at bay. Krishna was successful in his tactics. From

the shelter of Muchukunda's cave he repeatedly emerged and destroyed wave after wave of the Yavana forces. The Yavanas in the end gave up the fight. It should be remembered that the conquest of the country and the enslavement of the people were not the main motives of war in those days; defeat of the leaders was the only aim. Whenever the chief of the foes was defeated or killed the war ended. Even at the time of Alexander's invasion, as soon as Porus was taken prisoner the battle ended, and the kingdom was given back to him.

Though Mathura was thus saved by Krishna, from that time onward Dwarka prospered at the expense of Mathura. As soon as the war was over, Krishna took steps to remodel Dwaraka to make it a fit capital of the powerful Yadavas. If *Devi Purana* is right, the manner in which the town was remodelled will draw admiration even from the best of the town planning architect of today.

Krishna is stated to have had 16,008 wives. Surely this was an exaggeration, probably introduced in the stories about him after he became a god; but it will show that he was loved by women. He had a charming personality. Even the rustic was enthralled by his ways and his skill on the flute. Every woman young and old longed to dance with him and dancing was not prohibited in those days. He was not addicted to drink like his brother Balabhadra. It may be that he had eight wives. Monogamy was not the ideal in those days. Men married for love, as well as for diplomatic and domestic reasons.

Krishna's first wife was Satyabhama, the daughter of an immensely wealthy Yadava chief. She was a much sought after bride ; many a noble wished to marry her ; in the end Krishna succeeded in winning her hand and a precious jewel called Syamantakam: There is a scandal connected with the possession of this jewel by Krishna ; but it appears to have been spread by unsuccessful and jealous suitors of Satyabhama.

His second important wife he took by force. Bhismaka, king of Vidarbha (Berar), had a beautiful daughter named Rukmini. Krishna fell in love with her and she fell in love with Krishna. But her father, through pressure brought by the powerful king Jarasandha, agreed to give her in marriage to Sisupala, king of Chedi. At the wedding many chiefs were invited, chief among them Jarasandha, Dantavakra and Salya. The Yadavas of Mathura were not invited. Krishna and Balabhadra, however, with a posse of Yadava horsemen appeared on the scene. When the nuptial ceremony was in progress, Krishna siezed the bride by force, placed her on his horse and galloped off. The whole assembly was up in arms. Rukmana, the brother of the bride, swore vengeance and pursued the fleeing Yadavas. They made a successful escape. Krishna married Rukmini according to Raksasa rites, a rite which is even now practised by the aborigines, who at times take a wife by force.

Krishna never desired to be a king. His acts were all to punish the wicked and save the innocent. Wherever there were tyrants he overthrew

them, or curbed their activities. He had shown a high sense of justice and fair-play. He was always on the side of the weak, though he was as a rule very reluctant to fight. Even when his own brother-in-law Arjuna was fighting for his life against the Kurus, he helped him only by advice or moral support.

The Mahabharata shows that Krishna drove Arjuna's chariot in the battle of Kurukshetra, but never took up arms against the enemies of his brother-in-law. It is no wonder that he caught the imagination of the people and kept them spell-bound by his personality. As a child, as a youth and as a man, he is still the ideal god of the people, at whose shrine they worship, not for any material gain, but for the love of him. Bhakti or uninterested devotion, for which the Hindus are famed, appears to have had its origin in their mental reaction towards Krishna. In religion, Krishna was a great reformer. How he stood against the meaningless Vedic sacrifices and stopped the annual sacrifices for Indra at Gokula has already been stated in 'Vedic History set in Chronology'. His attitude towards the worship of Siva of his time may be gathered from the following Puranic story :

Poundra, a demon king made fun of Vishnu, by claiming all his attributes, wearing his marks and carrying his weapons. Krishna got annoyed, fought against him and killed him. In the battle, one of the allies of Poundra was the king of Kasi, who hastened to help his friend with an army. On

begin defeated, Kasi prayed to Siva, the deity of his devotion, for the destruction of the Yadavas and the town of Dwaraka. Siva, to oblige his devotee, created a monstress from his own lustre and despatched her to Dwaraka. Forestalling this Krishna despatched Vishnu's weapon, Sudarsana-chakra, to Kasi. Sudarsana killed the monstress on the way, attacked Kasi, set fire to the city and reduced it and its temples to ashes. Kasi being the most sacred city of Siva, and the faith that demons like Ravana, Hiranyakasipu and Naraka-sura were great devotees of Siva, suggests the reaction of Krishna towards the worship of Siva.

Krishna as a religious reformer appears to have been forgotten, when he himself began to be worshipped as a god. Many religious reformers are worshipped as gods, not only in India, but in every part of the world. Krishna the man became god, as Rama did before him. Even now human gods are not rare; in their own life-time they may receive homage and worship. Buddha, who did not appear to have believed in God, has temples built for him where he is worshipped as a god. Likewise the Jain saints are worshipped as gods. Even in our own time Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Mahatma Gandhi have temples built for them and their images are venerated and worshipped.

CHAPTER IX

THE PANDAVAS AND THE BATTLE OF KURUKSHETRA

At Hastinapura, until Dhritarashtra and Pandu attained majority, Bhishma carried on the administration of the state. When these princes came of age, the question was whether the blind Dhritarashtra or Pandu with the skin disease should ascend the throne. Dhritarashtra being the older of the two had prior claim, but as he was blind, Pandu functioned for him.

Pandu gained Kunti for a wife at a tourney which was held according to the ancient custom on her behalf. Bhishma then brought him Madri, a second wife from Madra. As Madri was a princess of Madra, a kingdom in the Punjab, it might have been a diplomatic marriage. For this wedding Pandu did not go in person, but Bhishma negotiated the marriage, paid the bride's price in head of cattle to the surprise of the bride's people, who were quite new to the custom, and brought her home. But before these princesses gave birth to any children, the disease that Pandu had from his birth developed to such an extent that he was prohibited from meeting his wives at the risk of his life. However, they became mothers through divine grace. Kunti had three sons, Yudhishthira, Bhima and Arjuna; and Madri had twins, Nakula and Sahadeva. These five princes came to be known as the Pandavas. In the Mahabharata

as well as in the Puranas, it is written that Dharma-
maraja, the god of death, was the father of Yud-
hishthira ; Marut, the god of wind, was the father
of Bhima ; Indra was the father of Arjuna ; and
the Asvins, the inseparable gods, were the fathers
of the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva.

Dhritharashtra married Gandhari, a princess of
Gandhara (Afghanistan), and she is said to have
given birth to one hundred and one sons and a
daughter. Discounting this marvel, we accept as
certain that she had two sons, Suyodhana and
Dussasana.

The epic Mahabharata in the main is the story
of the struggle between the sons of Pandu and
Dhritarashtra for the throne of the Kurus. The
sons of Dhritarashtra are mentioned in the epic as
Kauravas and the sons of Pandu as Pandavas. The
Mahabharata is a very valuable book, not only
does it give the story of the battle of Kurukshetra,
but also many accounts from which the social and
political conditions of bygone days can be deduced
with considerable accuracy. But everything that
is said in the Mahabharata cannot be taken as the
gospel truth. By the time it was written the priest-
ly supremacy was well established and many an
interpolation has been made to enhance it. Prac-
tically every ruler in the country took the side of
the Kauravas, which in fact may indicate that they
were in the right. But in the Mahabharata the
Kauravas are endowed with all evil qualities.
Suyodhana, the chief of them, is often called Dur-
yodhana. Suyodhana means good in battle, while
Duryodhana means just the reverse. His brother

is called Dussasana, bad in discipline, and the names of all other brothers begins with 'Du' or bad. The Kauravas are condemned as greedy for not sharing their kingdom with the Pandavas. But were they altogether unreasonable? What right had the Pandavas to a share? Their father was not really Pandu; the only claim they could put forward was that their mothers were married to a Kuru prince, who due to circumstances happened to look after the affairs of the state. Still, the sympathy of the whole Hindu world is with the Pandavas. It is still alive, though the Mahabharata refers to matters and incidents that may have taken place about three thousand years ago, if at all. There is no story in the Puranas or in any Hindu literature, which agitates the Hindu mind so much as the sufferings of the Pandavas.

The bare historic facts connected with the Kurukshetra battle may be stated as follows :—

After the sudden death of Pandu which appears to have been due to his desire to meet his beautiful wife Madri, the Pandavas were in difficulties. Yudhishthira the eldest of them, being senior to Suyodhana, claimed the right to rule, to which Suyodhana did not agree. However, through the intervention of friends and relations, a part of the Kuru realm which was on the right bank of the Yamuna was given to the Pandavas, and Suyodhana ruled at Hastinapura. Things went on smoothly for a time. The Pandavas developed their territory, built Indraprastha, a beautiful town, as their capital at the site of Delhi. Suyodhana and his brothers became very jealous of Pandava

prosperity. Yudhishtira was a very good man, but he was a great gambler. Suyodhana invited him to Hastinapura, where he arranged for a game of dice. Yudhishtira agreed to play. Suyodhana's maternal uncle Sakuni, an expert gambler, played on behalf of Suyodhana. At the beginning Sakuni purposely lost, to induce Yudhishtira to pledge bigger stakes. Then Sakuni began to win, and Yudhishtira hoping to make up his loss pledged more and more until all the resources of his state and the state itself had been pledged and lost. Then having been left with nothing, he pledged his brothers one after the other, and at the end he pledged his wife Draupadi and himself; these were also lost. Thus, having lost themselves, the Pandavas became slaves. Dussasana was for employing them as menial servants. The elders intervened. The servitude or slavery was converted into exile for 13 years. The conditions imposed on them were that (a) they should leave the Kuru realm, and (b) during the thirteenth year of their exile if they were traced anywhere they were to go into exile again for another period of thirteen years.

Thus the Pandavas left and wandered from place to place. There are many spots scattered all over India where it is claimed that they spent some period of their exile. Even in Kerala there are places where the Pandavas are said to have stayed. During their wandering, they made many friends. Bhima killed a Rakshasa, Hidumba and married his sister Hidumbi and through her he had a son, Ghatotkacha; descent from Ghatotkacha is

still claimed by noble families in Assam. Arjuna was seduced by a Naga princess to Patala (Kara-chi). There he married her, and their son was Iravan. The thirteenth year of their exile they spent in disguise as Brahmans and took service in the court of Virata, the king of Matsya country, next to the realm of Suyodhana. Draupadi in the guise of a Brahman woman worked as maidservant in the palace. Arjuna as a Brahman worked as the charioteer of the crown prince Uttara, and the other brothers also took up service, suitable to their ability.

Suyodhana was very vigilant during the thirteen years of the Pandava exile. His emissaries scoured the country. At last they got the suspicion that the Pandavas were in the service of Virata. They then staged a cattle lifting raid and took away the cattle of Virata. Uttara, accompanied by Arjuna, went in pursuit of the thieves, but when Uttara met the raiders he became frightened. Arjuna took the bow and arrows from his hand and shot with such precision that the raiders were defeated. It was a marvellous feat, but it gave the Pandavas away; Suyodhana thus came to know where the Pandavas were. When the disguise was disclosed, Abhimanyu, Arjuna's son through Krishna's sister Subhadra, married Virata's daughter Uttara and thus formed a very valuable alliance.

Then the Pandavas came into the open and claimed their lost part kingdom. Suyodhana refused. The Pandavas made preparations for a fight. Suyodhana got ready to oppose them. The

opposing armies met on the plain of Kurukshetra. The following kings and people took part in the contest on the side of Suyodhana :—

- (1) The Madras with Salya as the leader, though the mother of the younger two Pandava was a princess from Madra.
- (2) Kosala (Ayodhya) with Brhadbala as the leader.
- (3) The Kekeyas.
- (4) The Gandharas with Sakuni as the leader.
- (5) The chief of Sindh, with Jayadratha as their leader.
- (6) The war-loving Kambojas.
- (7) The rulers and princes of Avanti.
- (8) The Nishadhas of Berar.
- (9) The Vrishnis and Yadavas of Gujarat, though Arjuna's wife Subhadra was a Yadava princess.
- (10) The Anga from Bengal under their redoubtable leader Karna.
- (11) The Kalingas of Orissa.
- (12) The Vangas of Bengal.
- (13) The people of further east (Assam) under Bhagadatta.
- (14) The Magadhas under Sahadeva.
- (15) The Cholas, Pandyas and Keralas from the South.

Against these, those who sided with the Pandavas were the Matsyas and the South Panchalas, who were very closely connected with the Pandavas by marriage. Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas was a princess of South Panchalas ; and Uttara, the wife

of Abhimanyu, came from Matsya. The Chedis and a group of Bhoja princes also joined them. However, the Pandavas collected a huge force consisting of seven 'Aksohinis' against Suyodhana's ten Aksohinis. Suyodhana's forces were mainly supplied and commanded by the friendly kings and chieftains. The Indians were always ready for a fight. They needed only a cause and a leader. If they were satisfied with both they followed them to the last. The battlefield was at Kurukshetra, more or less the same site where at later periods the battles of Thaneswar and Panipat were fought for supremacy over the Gangetic plain. It should give an indication as to the composition of the Pandava fighting forces; they would appear to have been recruited from the North-western regions. The Rakshasas or Nagas from the East took up arms in the interest of Ghatotkacha, Bhima's son, and the Nagas from the West too in the interest of Iravan, a son of Arjuna. Those who took up arms on behalf of the Kurus fought in the main under their respective leaders, while the Pandava brothers individually led their 'aksohinis'. This might have been one of the main reasons for the Pandava victory. Secondly the Kuru commanders were mainly older men, like Bhishma, Drona, Salya, Sakuni and Kripa; while those on the Pandava side were men a generation younger. Thus youth, foolhardiness and personal command secured victory for the Pandavas.

The Pandava army instead of attacking Hastinapura, marched on to Indraprastha, which was once their territory and where they were sure of

local support. This would also indicate that their chief concern was to get back what they lost in gambling. The Kurus, to meet the advancing army had to go out from Hastinapura, and to cross the river Yamuna, before they could have reached the battlefield. By the time they reached the plain of Kurukshetra, the Pandavas were already there. If the Kurus had gone earlier and had met the Pandava force at the mountain pass that led to the battlefield it might have been possible for them even with an inferior force to crush the invading army. The Kurus evidently lost the chance like the Indian force later against the Muslim invaders.

The first general that led the battle on behalf of the Kurus was the aged Bhishma, who kept the Pandava force at bay for ten days before he was shot down and disabled by Arjuna. On the eleventh day Drona took the lead. He was the military instructor of both the Kauravas and the Pandavas in their young days. Though old he was still vigorous and active. He continued the fight for five days, until he was shot down by Dhristadyumna, the crown prince of South Panchala, who thus scored over an old feud between his father and Drona. Then Karna from Anga, a pre-nuptial son of Kunti, the most hopeful of the young generals took the field; but at the end of the second day he fell a victim to the arrows of Arjuna. Then Salya, the old king of Madra, took the lead. He was shot down by Yudhishtira. Having lost all the great generals whose names conjured up victory for him, Suyodhana himself next took the lead.

Bhima met him boldly, killed him and his brother Dussasana in hand to hand fight.

The great loss on Pandava side was the death of Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, and Ghatotkacha, the son of Bhima. Abhimanyu, though young in age, was as clever in battle as his father. He was trapped and killed by Jayadratha that great knight and warrior from far off Sindh before he could extricate himself from a battle formation known as Padmavyuha. Arjuna avenged his son's death by killing Jayadratha before sunset the next day. Bhagadatta, the monarch of the further east, was killed by Sahadeva. The Gandharas under Sakuni were wiped out by Nakula. Thus ended the great battle of Kurukshetra, which they say was the greatest before World War I.

The battle of Kurukshetra presents certain redeeming qualities, which Indians possessed at one time and which are rarely found in later days. The first and foremost is a desire to fight for a right cause. The country was no doubt divided into numerous and mutually independent kingdoms; yet to fight for what they considered right they became one or stood shoulder to shoulder, not under compulsion but voluntarily, and presented a united front. Suyodhana was not an overlord of India. He was not a conqueror like Rama or Chandra Gupta Maurya. His kingdoms may not have been any bigger than any of the administrative districts of today. Yet when the Pandavas unjustly raised their hands against him, the whole of India went to his aid. The Gandharas of Afghanistan may have come to his aid; perhaps

they were his mother's people. But he had no relation with Jayadratha of Sindh, nor with Bhagadatta of Assam, nor with the Nishadas of Berar. Even the far distant kings of Chola, Pandva and Kerala are said to have sent contingents to his aid. The greatest Brahman of the day, Drona, in spite of his love and admiration for his most favourite disciple Arjuna, fought against him as the generalissimo of Suyodhana. The Munda tradition says that their ancestors, under the command of the king of Ayodhya, fought for Suyodhana. Why, even the Yadavas and Madras who were closely related to the Pandavas fought on the side of Suyodhana? Why was there this nation-wide support for Suyodhana? Evidently he was in the right. His refusal to part with what he gained in the royal game of dice was justified. Thus in the cause of right and in the name of justice and fair-play the whole of India stood by him. What has happened since then to India? Why is there no trace of such unity? Only books written, interpolations made in the texts, can reveal the secret. That great enemy of unity, the caste restrictions, were not in existence then, and the priestly supremacy was not firmly established.

Vidura, the son of a Sudra servant, sat in the council of the Kurus side by side with the Rajanya or Kshatriya hero Bhishma, and with the Brahman war-lord Drona. It was in the same court where Vidura's mother served as a Dasi or maid-servant. When the Yadava hero Krishna visited the Kurus, he stayed with Vidura and dined with him. When the Pandava brother Arjuna, in

the guise of a Brahman; won the hand of Draupadi in an archery contest, the assembled princes took it as an insult for a princess to marry a Brahman in their presence. Devapi, the grand uncle of the Kurus, made hymns for the Rig Veda; the Brahman Asvasthama, son of Drona, was an accredited soldier. In fact, caste as it came to be known in later days was not in existence then. The Vedas were open to all; Vidura never thought that it was a sacrilege for him to listen to the Vedic hymns sung or to take part in learned discourses. Arjuna never thought that 'assaulting' the Brahman Drona, 'with the intention to hurt' would result in his being "whirled about for a century in the hell named 'Tamisra'"; Manu-Smriti which draws the invidious distinction between the Brahmana and Sudra, was not then in existence. Women had more freedom in selecting their husbands, and they were not debarred from religious rites. The men had a wider circle to choose brides from. Women were not in purdah. Did not Arjuna and Bhima respectively marry a Naga and Asura maiden? Practically all such elements which create disunity among the people are evidently of a later origin.

The great popularity of Mahabharata is due to the part Krishna has taken in the affairs of the Pandavas. Every chapter in the Mahabharata is resplendent with the advice and help given by Krishna to the Pandavas, and the miracles performed by him on their behalf. When Krishna became a divine person all sympathy went for the Pandavas.

CHAPTER X

PRIESTLY INTRIGUE IN THE COURT OF THE KURUS

The loss of life in the battle of Kurukshetra was colossal. The notables who saved their lives were the five Pandavas. Their sons all died. Yudhishtira was left to mourn for all those who died. He performed the 'Pitru-kriya' or the after death ceremony for the foes and friends alike. Many homes from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the Hindukush to the Brahmaputra, mourned for a husband, son, father or relative. Even now, after a lapse of the three thousand years, people from all over India go to Kurukshetra to pay homage to their ancestors who died there. Victory to Yudhishtira turned out to be a disaster to the nation. In the battle the cream of the monarchy and aristocracy, the brave and the able-bodied, was wiped out. Every house was in distress. Even Yudhishtira wept for them. The bards began to sing that the golden age has gone and 'Kali' or the Iron Age had come. But what was the loss for the nobility was a gain to the priesthood. Great literary activities prevailed. Post-Vedic literature began to appear in which class interest began to predominate. There was no one to exert a check on their activities. Yet the priesthood of that time is mainly responsible for what we know about Ancient India.

Yudhishtira himself would appear to have been a sad man. He was a just ruler. He treated the descendants and the adherents of his erstwhile enemies with the same care and consideration as if they were his own. It may have been at this period that he earned the name of Dharma-putra, or the son of Dharma, which means everything that is good in Hindu conception.

He must have ruled for twenty-one years, until his grand nephew Parikshit II came of age. Then after placing him on the throne, Yudhishtira went into retirement. The story is that he went to heaven, without passing through the gate of death, and reached there after leaving the rest of the Pandavas and his wife dead on the road-side, but with an ailing dog as his companion. Compassion and consideration for all was the redeeming feature in his character.

The throne of the Kurus after the retirement of Yudhishtira was not a bed of roses. The country was overrun by the Nagas, and king Parikshit II himself slain. Though his son Janamejaya III, regained the throne, the Kurus ceased to reign at Hastinapura three generations after him. Nicakshu, son of Adhisima-Krishna, emigrated to Kausambi, which was founded by Kusa, a son of Vasu of Chedi. The Puranas are very vague about the circumstances which precipitated this exodus. They say Hastinapura was destroyed by flood and Nicakshu moved his capital to Kausambi. Was it not possible for him to find a suitable place between Hastinapura and Kausambi, (between Meerut and Allahabad)? What was wrong with Indra-

prastha (Delhi), which at one time was the beautiful capital of the Pandavas ? The real reason for this exodus may be looked for elsewhere.

The Nagas, who invaded Hastinapura, killed Parikshit II, and temporarily occupied the throne. In the opinion of the historians, the Nagas were a wild tribe who came from somewhere outside India. But it was seen that long before this period the Nagas were in the Vindhya regions ; and their leaders like Karkotaka fought for supremacy with the Ikshvaks and the Talajanghas. That means they were evidently in the west of India or to be more precise some 500 miles to the south of Hastinapura, at any rate from the time of Purukutsa, the son and successor of Mandhatar. Purukutsa's exploits in the Vindhya regions must have taken place about the twenty-third century B. C., while Janamejaya's rule in Hastinapura was about the second quarter of the tenth century B.C. The contest between the Nagas and the Gandharvas has already been referred to, and how the Ikshvaks took advantage of their quarrel to subdue them in the Vindhya regions. The Vishnu Purana gives further details. Purukutsa sided with the Nagas, married a Naga princess Narmada, and their son Trasdasyu succeeded Purukutsa on the throne of Ayodhya, as has already been shown. After having allied with the Nagas, Purukutsa defeated the Gandharvas who were enemies of the Nagas. The importance given to the princess Narmada may be judged from the following hymn.

“Salutation unto Narmada in the morning ;

salutation to Narmada at night ; salutation to thee O Narmada, save me from serpent's poison."

Whosoever repeats this Mantra early in the morning on getting out of bed will be free from snake-bite ; even if a snake bites one by mistake, he will be free from poison. Even now in snake-infested areas persons who repeat this mantra can be found. However, the marriage of Purukutsa with Narmada established the blood relationship between later Ikshvaku and the Nagas.

From the Mahabharata it may be seen that Kunti, the mother of the first three Pandavas was a Naga princess ; in Adi Parva (a section of the Mahabharata) a meeting between Bhima, the second of the Pandavas, and his great-grand-mother is mentioned. At this meeting Aryaka, who was Kunti's grandmother embraced Bhima, fed him with her own hands as is usual among the Hindus and at his departure he was decked with valuable ornaments and loaded with other presents. But these Nagas were not from the Vindhya regions. They were from Assam, where the rulers of Manipur still claim descent from Ghatotkacha, the son of Bhima, through the Naga princess Hindumbi. Then the Nagas appear to have been in Sindh as well. Till the time of the Arab invasion, in the eighth century A. D., a part of Sindh was known by the name of Patala. According to Adi Parva again, Arjuna the third of the Pandavas was enticed by a Naga princess called Ulpi to Patala and married him. His son through this mar-

riage was Iravan who was killed in the battle of Kurukshetra while fighting on his father's side. From these instances alone it may be presumed that the Nagas who invaded Hastinapura during the reign of Janamejaya III need not have come all the way from an unknown region outside India. The Nagas in India from the east, south and west could have easily made common cause with the legitimate successors of Ghatotkacha to secure the throne of Hastinapura.

The Puranic story about the fight between the Nagas and Parikshit is rather ingenuous and typically Puranic. Parikshit II while out hunting lost his way in the jungle. He saw a Brahman Rishi sitting in meditation, and asked him for direction. The Brahman did not answer, Parikshit in temper took the dead body of a snake that was lying near by and placed it on the Brahman's neck. The Rishi got angry and cursed the king to die of snake-bite. The king returned to his court, consulted his priests, who advised him to build a palace in the middle of the river and stay inside for the rest of his life, so as to give no chance for any snake to approach him. The king stayed in this fashion for a long time. Then one day he saw a small lemon floating down the river, he picked it up out of curiosity, and on examination found a small hole through which a small worm came out instantaneously. The king thought of the curse and with the intention of fooling the fate, he put the worm on his forehead and let it bite him. The worm turned out to be the king of snakes and bit the king to death. The Brahman's curse must have

its effect. This is the story about the death of Parikshit II.

The details given about the overthrow of the Nagas by Janamejaya, son of Parikshit, are equally ingenuous. To avenge his father's death, Janamejaya performed a 'yajna', or sacrifice. Many famous priests with the highest knowledge were engaged. The sacrificial fire was lit. At the chant of the hymns the snakes from all directions came and one by one they jumped into the fire and burnt themselves to death. All the Nagas with their wives and children met their fate in this fire. How could they have resisted the effect of sacrifice and the power of the sacrificing priests? However, the complete extermination of the Nagas was stopped by the intervention of Astika who made peace with the Kurus and the Nagas. Astika's mother was a Naga princess and sister of the Naga king Vasuki; she married Jagatkaru a Brahman, and Jagatkaru's son was Astika, a great ascetic and a great exponent of the Vedas.

One of the Nagas who is said to have escaped from Janamejaya's sacrifice was Pundarika Naga, and the ruling family of Chhotanagpur claim descent from Pundarika. The story is that Pundarika, assumed a human form, for, the Nagas are credited with such powers. He escaped to Kasi, married Parvati, the daughter of a learned Brahman. They would have lived happily for ever had it not been for the split tongue which Pundarika possessed like all other snakes. His wife became very curious about it; the husband put off the explanation until they were returning after a long pilgrimage from

Puri, through Chhotanagpur, which was then ruled by the Munda chiefs. The wife was pregnant, they were tired and took rest near a lake. Then the husband came forward with the long awaited explanation. The shock was too much for the wife, she died instantly on giving birth to a male child. Then he took his usual form of a snake, jumped into the lake and disappeared. The Munda tradition is that the child was picked up by Madra Munda and brought up as his son. Madra was the Manki or the chief of the village Suriambi. The boy grew up as Phani Mukut Rai, the first king of Chhotanagpur. Phani Mukut was unanimously elected by the Mundas and Oraons to rule over them. The ruins of an old fort at the foot of Mundara Buru, a low hill, is still being pointed out as the first citadel of the Naga Vamsi kings. But there is a snag in the story. The present Raja claims to be the sixty-first descendant of Phani Mukut Rai; but it will not take the founder of the dynasty anywhere near to Parikshit II.

There are many who claim to be Naga Vamsis or the descendants of the Nagas, but none of them are snakes. Thus the sacrifice of Parikshit II to exterminate the race of the snake that bit his father goes to the wind along with the snake ancestry of the Naga Vamsis. But the historic fact that emerges from this story would appear to have been a struggle between the Kurus and the Nagas.

The Naga invasion, to all appearance was a war of succession. In the battle of Kurukshetra

all the sons of the Pandavas were killed. Who was to succeed Yudhishtira? There was the young boy Parikshit, the son of Abhimanyu, or the grandson of Arjuna III of the Pandavas. Evidently there was no grandson to Yudhishtira; if there was one he would have succeeded him on the throne. Was there a grandson to the second brother Bhima? If there was a son or successor of Ghatotkacha, should he not have had a better claim to the throne of the Kurus? Had such a claim been set aside, certainly the Nagas would have tried to set him up on the throne. Hence, it appears that the so-called Naga invasion was not an invasion from Central Asia, and it was a war of succession. All the Nagas may have espoused the claim of Ghatotkacha's successor, deposed Parikshit II, and placed their candidate on the throne. Probably the priests were also in this act. Anyway it shows that in the destruction of the Nagas and placing Janamejaya on the throne, they played an active part. Did they not do the snake sacrifice for Janamejaya? Apparently they placed a Naga prince on the throne and when he was found unsatisfactory they deposed him and placed Janamejaya on the throne. It may be to hide some discreditable part played by them in deposing Parikshit that the story of his having been bitten by a snake was invented. Those who invented the story were clever enough; even now thousands have implicit belief in the story.

Though Janamejaya III was placed on the throne after sacrificing all the snakes his position does not appear to have been very enviable. The

Mahabharata says that he was cursed by Vaisampayana for following the teachings of Yajnavalka and establishing a Vedic school. Though the effect of this curse is not traceable from the text, Vishnu Purana gives some significant information that "he (Janamejaya) will dissociate himself from worldly affairs without abdicating the throne" Evidently he was deposed from the throne and his son Satanika was installed in his place.

One who cursed or was instrumental in dethroning Janamejaya may not have been Vaisampayana himself; the Puranic statement may have meant only that it was done by a member of the Krishneya Yajur group. However, this would indicate that it was a priest of the Krishneya Yajur group who performed the snake sacrifice, or who were instrumental in driving the Nagas away and placing Janamejaya on the throne. In that case, it can be reasonably presumed that it was the priests of the Rig Vedic school who sided with the Nagas and dethroned Parikshit II. This presumption carries further weight, when it is realised that Ayoda Dhaumya was the family priest of the Pandavas and he lived in the days of Parikshit II and Janamejaya III, while his elder brother Devala was "the best" of the six celebrated Brahnavadins of the Kasyapa gotra that figures most prominently among the teachers of the Rig Vedic school.

After Janamejaya III, the Atharva Vedic priests appear to have placed Satanika on the throne. Satanika may have been a follower of their sect.

He was succeeded by Asvamadha Datta and he by Adhisima-Krishna. A great deal of literary activity evidently was going on during this period. The Puranas like Vayu and Matsya, that use the future tense in respect of all events from the date of Adhisima-Krishna, must have had their commencement from his days, while those like Vishnu Purana must have theirs from the days of Parikshit II. Several of the Veda Samhitas were made during this interval. Yaska, probably of the Atharva Vedic school, made his Nirukta (Vedic Dictionary) which made the antique terms used in the Vedas intelligible. The other Vedangas also must have been made during this period.

PART III. POST-DYNASTIC

CHAPTER I

DATES CONNECTING DYNASTIC WITH POST-DYNASTIC PERIODS

Gautama Buddha should be considered as a link between the Dynastic and Post-Dynastic periods. The birth and death of Buddha have been variously estimated. According to one view, Buddha lived between 567 and 487 B. C. Another view is that these dates should be reduced and increased by 10 years or 4 years respectively. But the anniversary of his birth is celebrated by the Buddhists as if he were born in 543 B. C.; in the year 1957, they celebrated his 2500th anniversary. As we have been tracing the traditional history in terms of generations we may as well reduce the date of Buddha to a generation that will fit in with our chronology.

The facts that are available for the purpose are mainly : (1) Buddha's personal contact with certain ruling princes, and (2) the Puranic chronology of these princes.

Buddha had personal contact with : (a) Bimbisara, king of Magadha, who gave him facilities for his stay in the Uruvela forest for his six years' penance ; (b) Ajatasatru, the son and successor of Bimbisara, who tried to murder Buddha at the instigation of his jealous cousin Devadatta ; (c) king Pasanadi or Prasenajit of Kosala thought that

Buddha was too young to be a teacher when he met him for the first time, though he may have been about forty; and (d) Udayana, king of Kausambi, to whose capital he paid several visits.

Buddhism, or Buddha's teachings, reached Kausambi even before his first visit. Pindola Bhadravajra, one of the first disciples of Buddha and a resident of Kausambi, was already preaching the new doctrine there. It is told that Udayana had him tortured by bees for disturbing his siesta, while out on a picnic, by a tedious religious discourse. Buddha's first visit to Kausambi was during the ninth year of his enlightenment. The general impression is that Udayana of Kausambi, Ajatasatru of Magadha, and Prasenajit of Kosala became converts to Buddhism. At the most all they could have done was to show sympathy to the new doctrine, or lend a patient ear to its teachings. None of the three became a Buddhist; had they done so they would have lost their kingdoms. The Buddhists were exclusively monks in those days. Even the first lay-brother was not taken until centuries later; most probably the first lay brother, or upasika, was Asoka Maurya. No doubt, prince Bodhi, the son of Udayana and his viceroy, at Sumsumara Giri (Chunar), became a Buddhist, and consequently he had to give up his succession to the throne. Udayana's successor on the throne was Ahinara. Buddha appears to have spent a considerable time at Kausambi. Ghosita, a rich merchant of Kausambi, built a double-storeyed building for the occasional residence of Buddha. The ruins of his building may

have been outside the fort walls. Buddha appears to have received a royal welcome at his first visit. It was in his subsequent visits, that he delivered the texts—Kausambya Sutta, Sandaka Sutta and Upakilese Sutta.

According to Tibetan tradition Udayana, son of Satanika, was born on the same day and at the same time as Buddha, and "as the world was illuminated at his birth as with the sun, he was called Udayana". Then according to Svapnavasavadattam of the poet Bhasa, Udayana's wife Padmavati, though the fourth, was a daughter of Ajatasatru, king of Magadha. Devi, a wife of Ajatasatru, was a daughter of Prasenajit of Kosala. In a battle Ajatasatru was defeated, captured and released by Prasenajit, who gave him a daughter in marriage. In his old age Prasenajit was driven out of Kosala by his son Vidabha, and died outside Rajagriha in Magadha as a refugee.

All these facts are to be taken into consideration in assigning their respective steps in the genealogical ladder; Buddha, Udayana and Ajatasatru should occupy the same rung in the ladder, and Prasenajit should occupy a step higher.

This would create some difficulty in accommodating all the kings whose names are given in the Puranas. From the Puranas, it will be seen that Adhisima-Krishna of the Kuru line, Divakara of the Ikshvaku line, and Senajit of Magadha were contemporaries; and it is from Adhisima-Krishna, that the 'future' kings have been counted. The Puranas give the names of the 'future' kings of

all these three kingdoms, though with slight variations. Vishnu Purana, for instance, gives the names of 23 kings of the Ikshvaku line after Divakara, 24 kings of the Kuru line after Adhisima-Krishna, and 27 kings of Magadha between Senajit and Mahapadma Nanda. Out of the 27 kings of Magadha, 12 belong to the family of Brahadhala, 5 are Pradyotas and 10 are Sisunagas. As the Puranas state that Mahapadma Nanda of the Nanda dynasty ruled after the extermination of all the Kshatriyas, it should be taken that the dynasties of the Ikshvakus, Kurus and Sisunagas were exterminated by him. This suggests that the reign of 23 Ikshvakus 24 Kurus and 27 Magadhas should be equated and synchronised. To equate the Ikshvakus with the Purus is easy, from Vishnu Purana it will be seen that the name of Vidabha, the son who usurped the throne from Prasenajit, has been omitted; probably it was done purposely by partisan authors with the object of not leaving any blemish on this long and reputed family. Hence the number of kings of the Kuru line may be taken as correct, and the Magadha line may be adjusted accordingly. As there were two changes in this line, two sets of kings, one of the deposed line and one of the usurped line, may be taken as occupying the same step in the chronological ladder. Then there appears to be a repetition in the names; the last king of the Pradyota dynasty and the last but one king of Sisunaga dynasty are both named Nandivardhana. Most probably this must have been an error. If this presumption is correct, it has the great advan-

tage of bringing the number of kings in all the three lines to the same figure of 24. This will also enable one to give an approximately correct place in the chronological ladder to Prasenajit, Ajatasatru, and Udayana in relation to the known facts about Buddha. All these adjustments are shown in the Table Appendix 1.

From the Table it will be seen that Ajatasatru stands 20 generations after Adhisima-Krishna, or 25 generations after the battle of Kurukshetra, which makes his accession to the throne c. 500 B.C., on an average of 18 years' generation. According to Vincent Smith, Bimbisara came to the throne c. 530 B.C., and he reigned for 28 years; this would make Ajatasatru's accession in c. 502 B.C. This would therefore establish both the accuracy of the Table and the average number of years taken per generation. However, it should not be forgotten that averages like this could be correct only when long periods are taken, and never step by step or at short intervals. Then again it is stated that Buddha died ten years after the accession of Ajatasatru. If it were so Buddha's death should have been in c. 490 B.C., which is very near to 487 B.C., one of the dates assigned to his death.

In the Table, Mahanandi is placed on the same step as Sumitra and Kshemaka, and Mahapadma Nanda one step below them. This may be objected to as Mahapadma Nanda is often taken as the destroyer of the dynasties of Sumitra and Kshemaka. But nowhere is it stated that he fought and killed them. The Puranic statement merely

refers to the destruction of their dynasties by Mahapadma Nanda. It may be from the successors of Sumitra and Ksemaka that Nanda took over their kingdom and earned the name of the 'destroyer of the Kshatriyas'. By placing Mahapadma Nanda thus, he stands thirty generations after the battle of Kurukshetra or his accession goes back to c. 410 B.C. This is no doubt earlier than 372 B.C., as approximated by Vincent Smith and 202 B.C., as estimated by Pargiter. Pargiter bases his calculations on two main points. In the Puranas it is stated that Mahapadma Nanda and his eight sons "shall reign for a period of one hundred years". Pargiter by assuming that this is the total to period for the Nanda dynasty from the birth of Mahapadma Nanda, reduces their reign to eight years, by allowing twenty years for Mahapadma Nanda to come of age and by setting this back eighty years from 322 B.C., or from the date of the accession of Chandra Gupta Maurya, he arrives at 402 B.C., for the accession of Mahapadma Nanda, though if the Puranic statement is taken as correct, it should be 422 B.C.

Though the Puranas give for Nanda and his eight successors a total of one hundred years, it is impossible to concede that nine kings ruled one after the other over Magadha for this short duration unless there was intense struggle among them for the throne. No such struggle is mentioned in the Puranas or suggested by the historians. On the other hand, if we are to rely on Greek historians, there could have been only two of the Nanda dynasty who ruled over Magadha. For,

according to them, while Alexander was in India he was informed that a king of low origin usurped the throne of Prasii (East, Patiliputra) and his son, "who was more worth of his father's condition than his own" and who was "odious and contemptible to his subjects", was reigning there. This king of low origin could easily be recognised as Mahapadma Nanda and his son should be Sumatya, the only one mentioned in the Puranas. As Alexander left India in 324 B.C., and Chandra Gupta came to the throne in 322 B.C., there could hardly have been any time for seven Nandas to rule over Magadha. Three step, therefore in the genealogical table are allotted to Mahapadma Nanda and two steps to Sunatya, covering a period of ninety years instead of one hundred years given in the Puranas and eighty years given by Pargiter.

By this arrangement the Mauryans chronology is linked with Puranic genealogy of the Ikshvaks, providing a reasonable measure of time for ascertaining the dates of pre-historic events. But the dark age in the history of India, or the period that is least spoken of in the Puranas, begins with the decline of the Mauryan empire. However, in the table is shown a synchronised genealogy of the Mauryan kings until their empire or kingdoms passed into hands of the Brahman rulers, beginning with Pushya Mitra of Magadha.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSIAN AND GREEK INVASIONS

India's north-western border-land has been for centuries the area of Indian emigration and expansion. From the days of Sasabindhu, 80 B.A., the Druhyus, of the Aryan or the Aila groups were moving towards the Punjab under military pressure. During the days of Mandhatar (79 B.A.) we saw them settling down in Gandhara (Afghanistan). After the days of Sivi, 73 B.A., we have found them colonising many parts of Central Asia. Then we have seen the Talajanghas, 64 B.A., raiding and recruiting the Sakas, Yavanas, Pahalvas and other foreigners. All these should be taken as the Aryan expansion from and out of India, if the Puranas were not recording an untruth. Then the most substantial evidence for the Indian expansion comes from the archaeologists, who unearthed the Boghoaz-keui tablets of 1,400 B.C., with the names of the Vedic gods, especially that of Indra, who could only have been conceived as a nature god only in India. It was in these regions where once the Indo-Aryans or the Aryans from India were very active, that the Pahalvas or the Persians gathered strength and established a mighty empire under the leaderships of Kurush or Cyrus (539 B.C.).

The Persians were once the vassals of their kinsmen, the Medes and their home was in the mountains of Elam. Cyrus threw off the yoke of

the Medes and started on a career of adventure. His ambition was towards the west. The western kingdoms formed a powerful combination against him. He defeated Lydia and Babylon and within a short period of five years swept across Asia Minor to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. After the fall of Babylon in 538 B.C., he freed the Jews from captivity and allowed them to return to Palestine and rebuilt the temple of Jerusalem. The masons who rebuilt the temple in gratitude thereof made the Worshipful Master at their rituals represent Cyrus and afterwards Cyrus Artaxes in recognition of subsequent services rendered to them by the latter. Cyrus fell in battle in 528 B.C. He was succeeded by Cambyzes, who conquered Egypt as far as Thebes. After the tragic end of Cambyzes, one of the Persian nobles, Darius or Darayavaush, became the king of the Persians and the Medes. He is stated to have extended his kingdom towards the east as far as the Indus. The main evidences for this are two inscriptions, one on the platform of a palace at Persepolis and the other on the tomb of Darius at Naqsh-e-Rustum. In these inscriptions 'Hidu' is mentioned as one of the satrapies or divisions of his empire, and 'Hidu' is supposed to be the old Persian name for the Sindhu. It does not appear that there is any other substantial evidence to show that 'all' India as far as the Indus and the Punjab was under Darius as is alleged by the historians. Another reason for supposing that these regions were under him is a trip undertaken by Skylax to explore the course of the river Indus in 515

B.C. About this trip Vincent Smith says that "the commander Skylax of Karyanda in Karia managed somehow to equip a squadron on the waters of the Punjab rivers in the Gandhara country to make his way down to the ocean, and ultimately in the thirteenth month, to reach the Red Sea. The particulars of his adventurous voyage have been lost, but we know that the information collected was of such value that, by utilising it, Darius was enabled to annex the Indus Valley, and to send his fleet to the Indian Ocean". But whether this trip was done in opposition to the wishes of the Indian people on the Indus banks or not is not known. However, two centuries later when Alexander sailed down with a fleet of many ships and 120,000 foot soldiers supplied for his protection by his Indian friends, Ambhi and Porus, he had to face many difficulties and fight his way down. The Swiss have sent expeditions to explore the Himalayas, but it is not called the Swiss conquest of India. The conquered Indian provinces are said to have formed into a separate Satrapy, the twentieth of the Persian Empire, and paid a tribute of 360 Euboic talents of gold-dust worth nearly a million sterling. But according to Banerji, the Provinces of India which were under Darius, consisted of (i) Gandhara or the Kabul valley as far as Peshawar (ii) Thatagu, (iii) Hara-huvat or Kandahar district, (iv) Saka or Seistan, and Maka or Makran. Though all these may have been inhabited by the Indian emigrants or colonists, were they in India in the geographical sense?

Can this be called the Persian conquest? However, the statement that Mahapadma Nanda destroyed all the Kshatriyas may indicate that he conquered and deposed all the rulers of North India at that time; and the might of the Nandas can also be gauged from the Puranic statement that "Nanda will enjoy the earth as Lord Paramount and his commands shall nowhere be disobeyed." From the contemporary history it will be seen that the powerful kingdoms of the North in these days, with the exclusion of Magadha were Anga, Vaisali, Mithila, Kausambi, Kasi, Avanti and Kalinga, all ruled by Rajanyas probably under the guidance of priests, as ministers. Had Mahapadma deposed and exterminated all these royal families and taken over their kingdoms, it will indicate that he had the whole of North India under him. How far his kingdom extended towards the direction of the Punjab may also be guessed from certain statements by Greek historians. Chandra Gupta Mautya, who was then a commander in the Nanda army is stated to have had an interview with Alexander to persuade him to attack and abolish the abominable Sudra rule of the Nanda.

The historians are surprised that the Puranas do not say anything about the invasion of India by Alexander. It may be that the authors of the Puranas were not concerned with the happenings in the north-west border of India, just in the same way that they were not interested in South Indian affairs. They never assumed the role of general historians. Their interests were mainly with their patrons and heroes. Alexander's inva-

sion did not affect their patrons or their religion. After all, what was Alexander's invasion? A student of history cannot but feel that Alexander's incursions into India have been overestimated and unduly stressed.

What are the facts about Alexander's invasion? Alexander invaded Persia. After defeating the Persians at Issus (333 B. C.) and at Arbela (331 B. C.), he took Aria (Herat) and Aracosia (Kandahar) without much opposition on his way to Balkh. After reaching the river Jaxartes and punishing the truculent Bactrians, he was on his return journey. While at Nikai, near modern Jallalabad, was met, in 327 B.C., by Ambhi, the crown prince of Taxila, who was at variance with his neighbour, King Porus. Taxila was a smaller state in comparison to the kingdom of Porus, which itself may not have been any bigger than the present districts of Jhelum, Gujarat and Shahpur. Alexander was adventurous and ambitious. He must have heard about the immense wealth of India. Ambhi entreated him to come to India. Whether Alexander had any intention of coming to India previously or not, he accepted the invitation of Ambhi. He then sent the major portion of his army led by Ambhi along the valley of the river Kabul. He himself with a smaller force consisting of picked men made his way across the mountains towards India, as many Mohammedan invaders have done since then. His task was not easy; he met with opposition on his way. Even now such opposition is bound to be given by the tribes who occupy this region. The tribesmen showed

strong resistance. They tried to stop the intruder, once he himself was wounded. Some surrendered without much resistance, while the others followed a scorched-earth policy. Alexander's historians give many details about his trials and triumphs while engaged with the tribesmen. Some of them are very difficult to believe. They say that the fort at Hasti stood in his way. After a siege of thirty days it had to surrender. He devastated the rich valley of the Aspacians, took 40,000 people as prisoners of war, collected 230,000 cattle and sent them to Macedonia. He made friends with the people of Nysa (Kafiristan), visited their temples and took part in their orgies which were similar to the Bacchanalian orgies of Hellas. They made a contribution of 300 picked horsemen to Alexander, who remained with him until he left the Indian shore. At Malakand he was faced with Assakioni with a cavalry of 20,000 and infantry of 30,000. These are the figures given by the historians of Alexander. Are they not similar to those given by the Sutas employed by the Hindu kings? The accuracy of these and similar figures may be tested from further details given by them. They state that Alexander, on his return journey from the Sutlaj to the Jhelum, along the borders of the kingdom of Porus, took thirty-seven considerable towns and multitude of villages. Even now it is very doubtful whether there are thirty-seven towns of considerable size in the whole of the Punjab. However, Alexander took one fortress held by Assakioni with 7,000 troops. Though he guaranteed their life before their surrender, they

were overpowered in the night and butchered outright while sleeping for refusing to fight against their own countrymen. Alexander then married the wife of the dead chief, and replenished his forces through her influence.

As prearranged, Alexander met his army that came down through the valley of the Kabul river, at Ohind or Und, 16 miles above Attock, where the rivers Kabul and Indus meet. He gave thirty days' much needed rest to his men, and sacrificed to the gods on a magnificent scale. By that time the old king of Taxila died, and his son and successor Ambhi ascended the throne. Ambhi greeted Alexander with 700 horses, 200 talents of silver, victuals consisting of 3,000 oxen and 10,000 sheep, and other rich presents. With the help of Ambhi, Alexander crossed the Indus and proceeded to Taxila as a guest of honour. What was the strength of the forces at Alexander's command is not known. When he started on his expedition or when he first invaded Asia Minor his total strength was 35,000 infantry and 50,000 cavalry. He must have lost a good many of them in Asia Minor, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia, though their number may have been replenished by local recruits on the way. Ambhi appears to have had a considerable force at his command, evidently recruited for his wars against Porus. The comparative size of his army may be judged from a humorous incident that took place at the arrival of Alexander at Taxila. When Alexander was within four or five miles of Taxila, he was startled at the sight of Ambhi's followers who had turned out to greet

him. At first Alexander suspected treachery and ordered his men to charge. The order was withdrawn only after he was assured by Ambhi, who came galloping forward and explained that it was only a sign of welcome in Indian fashion.

Ambhi placed all the resources of his state at the disposal of Alexander. While the preparations for the war were going on, Alexander negotiated with Porus and Abhisara for their surrender, to which Abhisara agreed and assured his help. But Porus preferred to meet the great conqueror and his allies in the battlefield. Thereupon Alexander with the combined forces commenced his march in April 326, and waited for an opportunity to cross the river.

Porus waited for him on the opposite side with an army of 30,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, 200 elephants and 300 chariots. The historians are sure about the strength of Porus, but they are discreet about the force under Alexander's control. Alexander, even with whatever superior force he had at his command, did not dare to cross the river at Jhelum. He waited and waited. Then he sent his army twelve miles up the river to negotiate a crossing. At last they effected a crossing in a heavy storm at the dead of the night. But when they reached the opposite shore they found that they were only on an island in the middle of the river. Certainly Ambhi's reconnaissance was defective. However, they struggled across the stream and reached the opposite mainland. The army of Porus hastened to meet them. It might have been possible for him to drive Alex-

ander's army into the river, had it not been for the treacherous nature of the ground on which he was forced to take his stand for attack. Bow and arrow were his chief weapons. Indians in those days carried very heavy bows taller than themselves. These bows had to be fixed firmly on the ground for the effective despatch of the arrows. The ground where the men of Porus had to fight was soft and boggy, and most unsuitable to give firm footing for their bows according to Indian practice. The consequence was most disastrous. Porus was defeated and taken prisoner. But Alexander treated him like a king and gave back his freedom as well as his kingdom. "The victor," says Vincent Smith, "not only confirmed the vanquished prince in the government of his ancestral territory, but added to it other lands of still greater extent; and by this politic generosity secured for the brief period of his stay in the country a grateful and faithful friend". Such treatment was quite in accordance with the Hindu custom that generally prevailed in those days. Alexander then performed obsequies of the slain, offered oblations to the river divinity and performed the customary sacrifices. It is doubtful whether Yudhishthira had done anything more after the battle of Kurukshetra.

Alexander, then with his allies, new and old, proceeded as far as the Bias. Perhaps his Indian allies might have egged him on, so that they could benefit by his conquest after his return. But his own men decided otherwise. His most trusted cavalry general, Koinos, summoned up courage

enough at last to argue with him to put a stop to any further advance. He represented out "that of the Greeks and Macedonians who had crossed the Hellespont eight years earlier, some had invalided home, some were unwilling exiles in newly founded cities, some were disabled by wound and others, that most numerous, had perished by the sword or disease. Few indeed were those left to follow the standards and they were weary wretches, shattered in health, ragged, ill-armed and despondent". Alexander shut himself up in his tent, thought the matter over and being convinced that any further advance was impracticable, issued instructions for the return, which took place in September 326 B. C.

If the conditions of the army were such as was described by Koinos, Alexander may have had to depend on his friends to see him safe out of India. But fortunately for him, a welcome reinforcement from his cousin Harpalos, Satrap of Babylonia, came just in time, which consisted of 5,000 cavalry from Thrace, 7,000 infantry and 25,000 suits of armour inlaid with gold and silver. Alexander retreated to the Jhelum and made preparations for his return journey down the river. All the boats in the country were requisitioned, new boats were built from the timber obtained from the neighbouring forests. Provisions were collected. Necessary crews was improvised from among the Phoenicians, Cyprians, Karians and Egyptians. A fleet of eight galleys of thirty oars and a multitude of transport vessels and crafts of all kinds totalling about two thousand, were got

ready. All preparations having been completed, Alexander sailed down the river by the end of October 326 B. C., with an army of 120,000 marching along the river bank and other protective forces on the flanks and rear. Evidently, his Indian friends must have been very generous with men and means, to see him safely out of India.

Alexander's historians are lavish in their descriptions about what happened in his cruise down the river. He had to encounter many difficulties. Large forces blocked his passage. His own men mutinied and he himself nearly lost his life in an encounter. However, fortune favoured him. First at the junction of the Jhelum and the Chinab, he was threatened by a combination of Maloi (Malvas) and Oxydrako (Kshudrakas). But before a combination between the two took place, Alexander destroyed the army of the Maloi, which according to his historians consisted of 80 to 90 thousand infantry, 10 thousand cavalry and 7 to 9 hundred chariots. Vincent Smith says that this destruction was done by a very small field force of four thousand. If this is correct, an explanation is required as to why he did not use the main force of 120,000 men that were marching along the river-side and took the risk of encountering a numerically superior force and fighting a battle in which he nearly lost his life. The most powerful formation that appears to have obstructed his way was that of the Mousikanos (Mushikas), who were at war with Sambas, a Yadava tribe. The Yadavas allied themselves with Alexander, so the Mushikas

had to yield. The rulers of Patala with its capital at Deval (Deva) fled at the approach of Alexander, but they "were mostly reassured and induced to return to their homes".

Was Alexander's retreat down the Indus a conquest? If it was not a conquest, his exploits during this period will be reduced to two objectives :— (1) to force a way down the river, and (2) to get provision for his men. To achieve both, evidently, he had to fight. Such a fight loses much of its military glory and political importance.

"The Indian expedition of Alexander", according to Vincent Smith, "may be said to have lasted for three years, from May 327, when he crossed the Hindukush, to May 324 B. C., when he entered Susa". (On his return journey)... "Out of this period only about nineteen months he spent in India on the east of the Indus, from February or March 326 B. C., when he crossed the bridge at Ohind, until September or October in the following year, when he entered the territory of the Arabioi (Arabia)". This short sojourn and transit through the outer fringe of India, first welcomed, then assisted and accompanied by Indians, is what is characterised as Alexander's invasion of India. According to some historians, it is supposed to have conferred many benefits on the people and greatly influenced their culture. Masson-Oursel says that "the eight years of the Macedonian occupation opened an era of several centuries during which Hellenism was to be a factor not only of civilisation but of government on the Western confines of the Indian world. Direct

contact was established between the Mediterranean civilisations and those of the Punjab and Central Asia". A direct rejoinder to this may be found in E. B. Havell's remarks, when he says that "Alexander's expedition did not lead to the opening of new highways between East and West rather the reverse.....The condition which made Greek culture an inspiration for her Roman conquerors had no counterpart in India. The Indo-Aryans, unlike the Romans, had their classic literature, their epic and philosophy, before Athens was built". The truth of Havell's statement will be apparent to any impartial student of Indian culture. Some Indians appear to be proud of the Indian indebtedness to Greece ; but gratitude is to be shown only where it is due. Even after two hundred years of active British rule with English education and introduction of European customs and ways of living, Indians have changed but little. India being such a conservative country, how could it have been possible that 200 days of Alexander's stay in India made them imbibers of Grecian science, art and ideals ?

CHAPTER III

CHANDRA GUPTA MAURYA, AND THE INDIAN GENIUS FOR ADMINISTRATION

Chandra Gupta Maurya was a great soldier, a greater statesman, and perhaps the greatest administrator that India has ever produced. Yet little is known about his early life and upbringing. Inspired by Justin, the European historians characterise his rule as 'untempered autocracy'. The Brahman writers ridicule him on account of his low origin. Both are evidently misguided or prejudiced. The early European writers with little experience of efficient civic administration characterised the Mauryan rule as oppressive; but Chandra Gupta's administration should be judged in comparison to the present-day administration of the most advanced countries in the West. The Brahman priests and their henchmen ridiculed him in the light of a superiority complex which was conspicuously absent during his days. No doubt he was a Sudra, being the son of a Nanda, though recent writers have tried to make him a Kshatriya. How could one be a king without being a Kshatriya? As a youth he must have been exceptionally clever; if not, he would not have risen to the high position of a general in the Nanda army at the age of about twenty-five. Alexander, when he came to India, was older than Chandra Gupta by five or six years.

After the death of Sumatya Nanda, Chandra Gupta appears to have ascended the throne, probably by a *coup d'etat* ; for, no war of succession appears to have taken place. Some are of the opinion that Chandra Gupta was a fugitive from the court of the Nandas at the time of Alexander's exploits in India. It is said that he approached and persuaded Alexander to march on to Pataliputra and put an end to the despised Sudra rule of the Nandas. Those who put forward this theory forget the fact that Chandra Gupta himself was a Sudra, and he would not have despised the Nandas on account of their low Sudra origin. Had Chandra Gupta ever visited Alexander, it must have been for the purpose of getting first-hand information about a formidable adventurer and knowing of his strength and plans. Had he intended to march on towards 'Prachi', or the eastern territories, it was the duty of Chandra Gupta as a general to take all precautions against an attack. It may be possible that he might have pretended that he was a fugitive to gain an audience with Alexander and to gain his confidence. From *Mudra-Raksasam* and *Chanakya Sutram*, it will be seen that Chandra Gupta and his councillor Chanakya were adepts in such games.

Both Chandra Gupta and Chanakya should be judged from Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, whether the book was written during their days or later. When the *Arthashastra* is studied with its political and social background, the true genius of Chandra Gupta and Chanakya will become self-evident. Whether Chandra Gupta ascended the throne by

fair or foul means, it was not a rickety throne that came to his possession. The Nanda empire was mighty and powerful, and probably well governed even when he ascended the throne. The Nanda rule was a break from the priestly-sponsored rule. The priestly ridicule of the Nandas itself may indicate that the Nanda rule was a success. Chandra Gupta had no occasion to start from nothing, as many generals of his type had done; he started with a powerful army and an empire of considerable size. The standing force of the Nandas according to Greek historians were 80,000 horses, 200,000 foot, 6,000 fighting elephants, 8,000 chariots, with necessary equipment and camp followers, whose number should be counted in thousands. Not content with such a mighty force, Chandra Gupta enhanced their number roughly three times. It was with such a force at his command, that he attempted to bring the whole of India under one rule.

Whether he succeeded fully in his attempt or not, there is some doubt. The historians differ on this point. Some are of the opinion that he extended his conquest only to the river Pennar in the South and his empire did not include Pandya, Kerala and Chola. This may be correct, for on abdication and retirement he went to Sravana Belgola, in Mysore, to lead the life of a Vana-prasthi; for such purpose a suitable place for a king would not have been his own dominions. However, his influence was felt all over India. It appears that he returned from the South suddenly without completing his conquest; for Seleu-

cos Nikator, who took possession of the eastern half of Alexander's empire, was marching towards the very borders of India. If he were not checked he might have claimed even a portion of the Indian territory. Chandra Gupta apparently hastened towards the North-west frontier to meet this danger.

There were two competitors for Alexander's eastern conquests. One was Antigonos, and the second Seleucos, the ruler of Syria. In the first round Antigonos was successful and drove Seleucos into exile. But in 312 B.C., Seleucos took possession of Babylon and advanced towards India. The historians say that Seleucos crossed the Indus c. 305 B.C. If so, it must have taken place about the sixteenth year of Chandra Gupta's reign. Though it is not known where the battle took place, Chandra Gupta or his generals met the invading army of Seleucos the Nikator (conqueror) and gave him a crushing defeat. The result of this according to Strabo, was that Seleucos gave up to Chandra Gupta the provinces of Paropanisade, Aria, Arachosia and Gedrosia, which in fact included the present Afghanistan and Baluchistan or all the countries right up to Drangiana, (the Persian desert) and Bactria. If Chandra Gupta had not taken over these ceded territories, there would have been no chapter in Indian history under the heading of the Grecian rule in India, as they were mainly inroads by the Bactrians in these regions. However, a treaty between the victor and the vanquished was concluded. It was ratified by Chandra Gupta, who received a daugh-

ter of Seleucos in marriage, Seleucos received a handsome present of five hundred elephants.

The Nandas appear to have put a break on the growing priestly influence in administrative affairs. But Chandra Gupta's policy would appear to have been reconciliation with the priests and utilisation of their peculiar abilities and opportunities for the advantage of the state. Even before he became a ruler he took the Brahman Chanakya or Kautilya as his trusted companion and adviser. On ascending the throne he appointed Chanakya as his prime minister. He even utilised the impecunious Brahman widows for the purpose of espionage. Who could extract secrets better than accomplished women? He made the best use of the religious mendicants. He saw in them excellent material for espionage as they could go anywhere without assigning any reasons and easily get the confidence of the people. He used women as bodyguards in the palaces. As women they could get access even into the most secluded parts of the palace, where plots to upset the state were generally hatched.

He was not against Brahmans as Mahapadma Nanda would appear to have been. He gave them free lands to establish their hermitage and wastelands for the cultivation of Soma, from which they brewed and distilled their drinks. He made the study of the Vedas incumbent on them, even from a Chamar (lowest of all the caste) if no other teacher was available. He ordered them to teach the Vedas even to the lowest, if they desired to do so, under the penalty of punishment.

He allowed them to pluck flowers from any one's field without permission, if they were intended for any kind of 'Pooja'. But he did not allow them the free use of ferries without paying the prescribed tax. He allowed them to join the fighting forces, but warned the commanders not to put them in the front lines.

He did not teach temperance like his grandson Asoka, but enforced sobriety. He licensed the public houses and posted spies to see that nobody got drunk or drank beyond his means. He encouraged slaughter of animals for food, but the purity and wholesomeness of meat was ensured by the vigilance of supervising officers.

The court rooms were not allowed to be flocked by professional witnesses. Only men of reputation and of impartial temperaments were allowed to appear as witnesses. Justice was dispensed by state-appointed officials or by accredited arbitrators.

How efficient was the administration may be seen from the following departments of state, mentioned in Kautilya's Arthashastra. Each department was under a superintendent. There were superintendents of:—

Stores and Store-houses	Slaughter-houses
Commerce	Ships and ferries
Forest Produce	Cattle
Armoury	Horses
Weights and measures	Elephants

Tools	Chariots
Weaving	Infantry
Agriculture	Passports
Liquor and Public Houses	Cavalry and so on.

The collection of revenue was under the control of a collector-general. Audit and accounting was done by an independent department. They were to keep accounts of income and expenditure as well as of manufacture and trade. For the examination of gems and to maintain a standard in gold and silver and to supervise the work of goldsmiths, there was a separate department. Mining operations and manufacture were done under state control. There was a department of labour, that fixed the wages of skilled as well as unskilled labour, and to see that they worked efficiently and kept regular hours. Even washing charges and the safe methods of washing clothes without damage to them were fixed by the state. Above all, there was a department to watch the conduct of state servants, to see that they did not oppress the people and stoop to illegal gratification. State vigilance was very effective ; and punishment was strict and severe. It was no wonder that Atrian wrote that the Indians were never known to tell a lie.

Much valuable information about Chandra Gupta's court and administration can be collected from the writings of Magasthenes, who was an ambassador sent by Seleucos Nicator to the court of Magadha. But unfortunately only scraps from his memoirs are in existence. Magasthenes, appa-

rently having had no axe to grind, wrote what he saw in the country; yet Strabo calls him a liar, and even Indian historians say that he was misinformed and had no critical acumen. Why is this adverse criticism levelled against him? The man who spent many years in the court of Magadha should be presumed to have had first-hand information. Is it because he speaks the truth, which does not agree with the preconceived notions of the critics? Indian historians appear to be disappointed because he did not classify the people as Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. In place of these divisions, which they consider as old as the creation, he classifies the people as—

(1) Philosophers or ascetics; (2) Cultivators, (3) Herdsmen and Hunters, (4) Traders, Artisans and Boatsmen, (5) Fighters, (6) Government Inspectors and (7) Councillors. One would think in classifying the people in this manner that Magasthenes had shown a great deal of critical acumen. If the Brahmans and Kshatriyas were not castes separate from the rest, how could he be expected to make a classification based on Varna-asrama-dharma? From Kautilya's Arthashastra it may be seen that Brahmans, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra distinctions meant nothing more than the other four sub-divisions as Brahmachari (student), Grahasthi (married man), Vanaprasthi (man of retired life), and Sanyasi (ascetic).

Evidently under the head 'philosophers', Magasthenes appears to have included all classes of ascetics, among them the Brahmans, Sakyas

(Buddhists), Ajivakas and mendicants of all kinds. By classifying them all as philosophers, Magasthenes has done them a great honour. For the status of some of these 'philosophers' at that time does not appear to have been very high. There is a passage in Kautilya's Arthashastra which says that "when a person entertains, in dinner dedicated to gods or ancestors, Sakyas (Buddhists), Ajivakas, and other Prawajitas a fine of 100 Panams shall be imposed. In another passage it is stated that a Brahman should not be accepted as a witness if both parties in the case are not Brahmans.

The Kshatriya, as an exclusive fighting class, does not appear to have had any significance in the days of Magasthenes, as from Kautilya's Arthashastra (section 345) it will be seen that the military service was open to all, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras, though Kautilya seems to have given preference to the three latter classes, as the Brahmans could easily be won over by the opposite party.

Under the Mauryan administration every servant of the state was to receive a fixed salary, on such a scale as to ensure their comfort, to encourage enthusiasm, and to keep them away from temptations. The competence of salary and remuneration fixed may be seen from the following scale:

The Queen-mother, heir apparent, the Prime Minister, the Purohit (chaplain), the Ritving (the sacrificial priest) and the commander-in-chief.	}	... 48,000 Panas.
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The king's door-keeper, the Superintendent of the household, the Army Com- manders, the Chaplain and the Collector-general of the re- venue.	}	... 24,000 Panas.
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The Princes, the Gover- nesses of the princes, Mem- bers of the Council of Minis- ters, the Chief Constable and the Superintendents of the City, of Law, of Commerce, of Manufacture, of Towns, of Counties, and of Boundaries.	}	... 12,000 Panas.
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The Chief of Military For- mations, horses, chariots and of infantry and Commis- sioners.	}	... 8,000 Panas.
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The Superintendents of infantry, of Cavalry, of Cha- riots, of Elephants and of for- rests.	}	... 4,000 Panas.
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The Army Doctors, Train- ers of the horses, the Var- dhakis (Engineers), etc.	}	... 2,000 Panas.
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The Fortune-tellers, the Readers of the Omens, the Astrologers, the Readers of the Itihasas the Magadhas (chroniclers), the Bards, the Priests, and Superinten- dents in general.	}	... 1,000 Panas.
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Trained soldiers, the Staff }
 Accountants, Official writers, } ... 500 Panas.
 etc. }

The Musicians and enter- }
 tainers, Artisans, etc. } ... 120 Panas.

The servants, procurers }
 of labour, etc. } ... 60 Panas.

Even the mileage for messengers was not left out without being fixed. A messenger of middle category was to receive 10 Panas for each Yojana below ten he travelled, and twice as much for any distance above 10 and below 100 Yojanas. One who represented the king at any function was to receive an honorarium of 1,000 Panas.

It is not quite clear from the Arthasastra whether the salaries were for the month or the year. Dr. Shamasastry is of opinion that it was for the year. But from the low paid group, it will be seen that this scale of pay was for the month. However, these rates were considered sufficient to keep the state servants from malpractices. The currency throughout the Mauryan empire was Pana, though it is not known whether it was made of silver or bronze. In Travancore, till the introduction of the Rupee, the standard currency was Pana in silver, where the salaries were paid as so many Panas per month, and till the beginning of the present century one hundred Panas per month for lower grade officials was considered handsome. One hundred Panas were merely equal to fourteen Rupees.

Autocracy does not appear to have been the principle upon which the Mauryan administration was based. Commissioners and Committees were the controlling agencies. Military matters were conducted by a commission which consisted of thirty members subdivided into six sub-committees of five members each. The sub-committees or the Boards were :—

- I. Admiralty.
- II. Transport, Commissariat, Army service, including the recruitment for general purposes.
- III. Infantry.
- IV. Cavalry.
- V. War chariots.
- VI. Elephants.

All these Committees were to work in co-operation with the heads of the Departments.

Likewise, the Municipal Administration was conducted by a commission of thirty, subdivided into six Boards of five members each, entrusted with the following municipal affairs :—

- I. Supervision of industrial arts, to enforce the use of right materials, to fix the rate of wages, to see that a fair day's work was done for a fair wage.
- II. Registration of births and deaths.
- III. Supervision of trade and commerce, to see proper weights and measures are used, to issue licenses and to collect the licensing fees.

- IV. Supervision of manufacture and sale, to see that no old goods are palmed off as new, etc.
- V. Collection of tithes on the value of the goods sold.
- VI. To supervise the affairs of the foreigners and visitors to the towns.

Three of these departments, namely, I, II and V can be recognised in the present-day Municipal departments of Public Works, Health and Tax. For the rest, even India freed from foreign domination may have to wait for years, it seems.

In Chandra Gupta's time appointments do not appear to have been made without proper qualifications for the respective posts and testing the ability of the candidates. According to Kautilya's Arthasastra the qualifications that were required for the Minister of the State (*amatya*) were :—

“Native, born of high family, influential, well trained in arts, possessed of foresight, wise, of strong memory, bold, eloquent, skilful, intelligent, possessed of enthusiasm, dignity and endurance, pure in character, affable, affectionate, firm in loyal devotion, endowed with excellent conduct, strength, health and bravery, and free from procrastination, fickle-mindedness, and such other qualities that may excite hatred and enmity”.

The same authority specifies the qualifications for the High-Priest thus :—

“Him whose family and character are highly spoken of, who is well educated in the Vedas

and the six Angas, is skilled in reading portents, providential or accidental, is well versed in the science of government, and who is obedient and who can prevent calamities, providential or human, by performing such expiatory rites as are prescribed in the Atharva Veda”.

Whether they got men of such high qualifications for these posts or not, the ideal before them was undoubtedly very high. Even a king was to have his qualifications. He should be born of high family. He should possess godliness, valour and virtue. He should be truthful and grateful. He should be enthusiastic and resolute. He should be a good disciplinarian; and he should avoid procrastination, which is considered to be a grave defect in a king. Above all he should govern with an assembly of twelve to sixteen members, or even more, if warranted by circumstances. One who reads Kautilya's Arthashastra, cannot but feel that monarchy in ancient India was selective rather than hereditary. The 'sovereignty of the state did not rest with the king alone. Kautilya enumerated the elements of sovereignty as "the king, the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury and the friend".

The kings in those days do not appear to have had an easy time. According to Sukra Niti, the king's day of 30 Muhurtas (equivalent to 24 hours,) was to be utilised in the following manner :—

2 Muhurtas first in the morning for the financial affairs of the state; 4 Muhurtas on general

administration, such as receiving reports, and issuing instructions ; 2 Muhurtas after the meal for judicial matters, receiving the chief justice and other judicial officers ; 1 Muhurta to be utilised daily in inspecting the regiments, and seeing them exercised ; 1 Muhutra every day in dispensing donations and charity ; and 2 Muhurtas every night before going to bed in receiving reports from secret agents. The kings were allowed only 8 Muhurtas for sleep ; the rest of the time was to be fully occupied with his daily exercises, recreation, meals, etc.

In addition to their share in general administration, the kings had a special portfolio of religion and charitable institutions. All religionists were to receive equal treatment and uniform consideration from the king. Irrespective of his own religious belief, he had to be impartial and helpful to all religionists. He had to treat the Brahmans learned in the Vedas, on equal footing with the heretics (Buddhists). Hence, to judge the king's religion by donations that he may have given to any particular sect, will not be correct. This is a practice that all democratic kings followed even during later periods.

By judicious acts, strict administration, proper control over the administrators, keeping religion out of politics, and safeguarding the interests and welfare of all from the highest to lowest, Chandra Gupta built a magnificent empire, the like of which India had never seen before or after him. The empire of Chandra Gupta was not a number of loose territorial units brought together under

the sway of a conqueror ; it was a consolidated state, ruled by a unitary system of administration, which was maintained not for the extraction of maximum revenue and not for the benefit of a sovereign power, but for the good of the people.

The inspiration for Chandra Gupta's rule is said to have come from the West. Was there any country so advanced at that time in the west as Jambudvīpa (India)? Perhaps the loosely knit empire of Alexander and the military occupation may have taught him not to follow the Greek model. Chandra Gupta's model was based on the best of Hindu traditions. A glance through Kautilya's Arthashastra will convince one how many authorities were referred to before any rule or procedure was adopted. Each and every one of the rules and traditions of the past were fully studied and properly weighed before a new rule or procedure was adopted. Some of the authorities consulted were Bharadvāja, Viśalakṣha, Parasara, Piśuna, Kuṇapadanta, Vāṭavyādhi, and Bhanudanti. Their works have all been lost. The schools of thought that received special consideration were Mānava, Parasārya, Uśanasa, and Brihaspathya (Materialism). Of these Mānava is still found though in a distorted form. The best of the Hindu traditions disappeared altogether.

Chandra Gupta reigned for a period of twenty-four years. Then he appears to have taken to religion seriously or found the cares of a vast empire too much for him, though he may not have been more than fifty-two at the time of his retirement. Perhaps as a result of both he abdi-

cated the throne in c. 297 B. C., on behalf of his son Bindusara, and in conformity with the Hindu traditions, to lead the life of a 'Vanaprasthi', retired to Sravana Belgola in Mysore, where he appears to have died as a Jain within a year or two.

Chanakya or Kautilya outlived Chandra Gupta, and he was Prime Minister of Bindusara for some time. This would naturally indicate that the son followed in his father's footsteps. He reigned for at least a period of twenty-five years. He appears to have had a peaceful reign. He maintained diplomatic relation with the western countries. After the retirement of Magasthenes, Seleucos sent Deimachos as Ambassador to Pataliputra. Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt sent Dionysios as his Ambassador. Bindusara would appear to have been of a studious disposition. In one of his letters he asked Seleucos to send a philosopher, which he failed to do. During the latter part of his reign there was a revolt in Takshasila, due to the highhandedness of his officials, which was soon quelled by Asoka, who was specially deputed for this purpose.

CHAPTER IV

ASOKA AND HIS SUCCESSORS

After the death of Bindusara, Asoka succeeded him in 275 B. C., or four years later. Some are of the opinion that there was a war of succession, which delayed Asoka's succession to the throne. If there was no war of succession there was no reason why Asoka should have delayed his coronation. According to the Bhandarkar, Asoka 'ascended the throne immediately after the death of his father Bindusara. But Asoka does not appear to have been the heir-apparent to the throne, and he is nowhere mentioned as the eldest son of Bindusara.

According to the Divyavadana, a Buddhist text of Indian origin, (in prose), the three sons of Bindusara were Susima, Asoka and Vigatasoka. According to the Ceylonese chronicles, Bindusara's sons were Susima, Tishya and Sumana. Without clearing up the discrepancy between these two statements, what had happened after the death of Bindusara will be difficult to know.

The reconciliation between the two lists does not appear to be insurmountable. Vigatasoka or Vikata Asoka may not have been a real name. (Vikata means one who takes a wrong path). Due to the reaction of Sumana in the war of succession, the partisans of Asoka may have given him such a nickname, which appears to indicate that he stood against Asoka. Many a name in the Puranas and Sastras that we take today as proper

names, are not proper names at all ; they are at the best descriptive or qualifying names ; names given to certain persons on account of certain deeds done by them. Krishna is called Madhu-Sudana, because he chastised the demon king Madhu. The name Tishya may have been the name by which Asoka was known to the Ceylonesc. Tishya or Pushya is the name of a constellation, one of the Lunar Mansions. It has been usual to call a prince by the name of the constellations under which he was born. All the princes of the Travancore royal family, though they will have their proper names like Ravi Varma or Marthanda Varma, are generally known by the constellation at whose ascendancy they were born. It may be that Tishya was the constellation under which Asoka was born ; the chroniclers of Ceylon, according to the South Indian custom, may have recorded his name as Tishya. There are also other names of this kind in Ceylonesc chronicles. Then if it could be shown that Tishya was the constellation of Asoka's birth, it can be taken positively that Asoka and Tishya are one and the same person.

From Asoka's edict dated twenty-sixth year of his consecration it will be seen that bulls, rams and goats were not to be castrated on lunar days, Ashtami (8th), Chaturdasi (14th) Purnamasi and Amavasya (15th), and also on two Nakshatra days Tishya and Punarvasu ; these days were sacred. Ashtami, Purnamasi, and Amavasya have always been special days for fast and worship in India for the Hindus and Buddhists alike. But no religious significance for Tishya and Punarvasu is

mentioned. Bhandarkar says that Tishya was the birthday of king Asoka, and Punarvasu was the Nakshatra of the country. As the country cannot have a birthday, Punarvasu could easily be taken as the birthday of the queen, Karuvaki, the second queen of Asoka, who was a collaborator in all his religious undertakings. However, on the authority of Bhandarkar we can safely conclude that Asoka was born under the constellation Tishya, and evidently it was by that name he was known among the Ceylonese.

Neither the Indian nor the Ceylonese chroniclers say anything about Susima, the first son of Bindusara, or why he did not succeed his father. According to Ceylonese chronicle Asoka was residing at Ujjain and he was summoned to the capital (Pataliputra), "by the news of his father's illness." What was he doing in Ujjain?

There is ample evidence to show that the Mauryan empire was divided into five large divisions or administrative units, and each was preferably placed under the administration of a prince of the royal blood. The headquarters of these divisions were Pataliputra, Takshasila, Suvarnagiri, Tosali and Ujjain. About the geographical position of Takshasila, Pataliputra and Ujjain there can be no dispute as they could be recognised in the later towns of Taxila (near Peshawar), Patna and Ujjain. It was from these centres that the North-western, Central and Western divisions of the Mauryan empire were respectively administered. The location of Suvarnagiri and Tosali have not so far been traced.

However, it may be presumed that Tosali was the headquarters of the eastern division, and according to Vincent Smith, it was in Kalinga, and Suvarnagiri was the headquarters of the Southern division, which probably extended to the southern boundary of the Maurayan empire. The princes, who ruled over these divisions do not appear to have been called Viceroys; probably their titles were Rashtrapalas. The division of the empire and the method of the administration being such, it was natural for the crown prince to have been at Pataliputra, at the time Bindusara's death. Asoka's presence at Ujjain, where he stayed long and married a local lady, the daughter of a rich Sethi (merchant), may show that he was the Rashtrapala of that division. Asoka was sent for at his father's death; this may indicate that there was a party in Pataliputra in favour of seeing him on the throne. Then, if any one of the Rashtrapalas desired to usurp the throne, Asoka had a better chance, as the circumstances made him stronger than the other three. Just at the end of Bindusara's reign he was sent to Takshasila to suppress a rebellion, he being nearest and probably more capable than the other Rashtrapalas. Asoka, after restoring order, appointed a nominee of his as the ruler at Takshasila. Thus having the resources of the two divisions under him, he was stronger than any of the other three Rashtrapalas. Asoka appears to have taken advantage of the circumstances. Asoka's struggle with Sumana must have been a long drawn out one, lasting for a period of about four years. Asoka evidently killed Sumanas

and many other princes of royal blood in this war of succession. The Ceylonese chronicle says that Asoka killed ninety-nine of his brothers, before he ascended the throne. Though ninety-nine may be an exaggeration, the statement by the Ceylonese Chroniclers should receive attention, for they were not concerned with the local-politics of Magadha. The author of Divyavadana may have purposely omitted these unpleasant facts from the life-history of Asoka, especially as he became the leader of Buddhism.

There is another mystery behind Asoka's war with Kalinga. Was it likely that either Chandra Gupta or Bindusara would have left a small country like Kalinga unconquered inside their empire? To all appearance Kalinga was in the Mauryan empire. During the days of Asoka it revolted under somebody, probably under the Rashtrapala of Tolasi, when Asoka usurped the throne. Was Sumana the Rashtrapala of Tolasi? Was it on account of his stand against Asoka that he was called Vikata-Asoka? However, Asoka took eight years after his coronation to lead an army against Kalinga. The cause of his invasion is not mentioned. What force he had with him is not known. His victory was decisive. According to one of his edicts, he mourned for the loss of one hundred and fifty thousand captured, one hundred thousand killed, and many times as many having died of starvation and disease. Was this the loss on his side? Or was it the total loss on both sides? If it were the loss on both sides, Asoka repenting for it may indicate that Kalinga was part of the Mauryan

empire. However, the conquest or the reconquest of Kalinga is the only political act that was ever accomplished by Asoka, which according to the historians "marks the beginning of the decline of the political power of the Mauryas."

Asoka became a member of the Buddhist Church as an 'Upasaka' or lay member in the eighth year of his reign. In Buddhism at that time there appears to have been no room for 'Upasakas'; all were Bhikus or Bhiksus. Asoka remained an 'Upasaka' for two years and a half. During that period he confessed himself that he did not show much zeal towards the religion. Then he became a 'bhiksugatika', half Biksu and half lay member. The order of Bhiksugatika, appears to have been created to accommodate Asoka. The Bhiksus were not to possess money, they had to live on charity or by begging, like the true Brahmacharis among the Brahmans. Had Asoka become a Bhiksu, he would have had to renounce the throne, wealth, power and everything connected with it. The order evidently was not prepared for such a mighty fish to pass through their fingers. So they seem to have created a new order, in which one could possess wealth and be a beggar. As a 'gatika', he lived with the Bhiksus, joined the Sangh, practised Dhamma and believed in Buddha, the three fundamentals which made one a Buddhist.

Accommodating Asoka thus was the greatest stroke of diplomacy that the Buddhists had ever done, for Asoka on becoming a semi-Bhikshu utilised the whole resources of a mighty empire to further the interests of Buddhism. He made use of

district and provincial officers like Yuktas, Rajukas, Pradesikas for religious propaganda. Further, he created a new set of provincial officers called Mahamantas for the special purpose of spreading the Dhamma and dispersing munificence among the converts. The foreign embassies which his grandfather had established and continued by his father, were entrusted with missionary duties. Then he himself devoted his entire time for religion. Any hour of the day or night he was ready to receive reports from the missionaries and attend to their business. His religious zeal grew day by day. In the tenth year of his reign, he stopped the 'Vihara-yatra' or royal tours in the empire. In its place he introduced 'Dhamma-yatra' in the interest of religion. He himself undertook pilgrimage to the places hallowed by the name of Buddha. In some places he built new stupas, at others he rebuilt or renovated the old ones. In certain places, associated with Buddha, all the inhabitants were exempted from taxes, or their taxes were reduced to one-eighth of the usual amount. He is said to have been responsible for 84,000 religious edifices.

Despite his active participation, Buddhism did not fare well. Even during the days of Buddha there were dissensions in the camp. His own cousin Devadatta started a schism. Devadatta had the ears of Ajatasatru of Magadha, and through him a plot was laid to murder Buddha. Devadatta became the founder of a new sect, which appears to have continued till the seventh century A. D. Maha-Kasyapa, the oldest disciple of Buddha held the first of the Buddhist councils at Rajagriha with

the object of consolidating their position and to face the opposition from within and outside. Yet dissensions arose in the rank. The second council was held at Vaisali. The main controversy at that time was whether the monks should receive or possess money. Whatever was the decision of the council, it must have made the cleavage between the parties greater. What a blessing it was for the monks who decided then that they should not own money, to have Asoka and the resources of the Mauryan empire at their disposal. The third council was held at Asokarama in Pataliputra, under the initiative of Asoka. The main object of this council was to settle the differences between different sects, of which there were not less than eighteen at that time. The monks from all over the country attended the council, which sat for nine months. A famous monk called Muggaliputta Tissa by the Ceylonese and Upagupta by the Indian chroniclers took the chair. After due deliberation it was decided that the practice of the Sthavira sect should be followed. Though the ruling was accepted by the Buddhists of Ceylon, it was ignored by many sects in India. However, as a result of this conclave, missionary activities on a larger scale were started by Asoka. Most capable missionaries were sent in all directions, far and near, in India as well as outside India. Mahadeva was sent to Mahishmandala (in the regions of the Narmada). Mahadharma-rakshita was sent to Maharashtra, a Yavana convert named Dharmarakshita was sent to Gujarat, another Rakshita was sent to Vanavasa (Kanara), Majhima was sent to

the Himalayan regions, Sona and Uttara were sent to Burma, Madhyadmika was sent to Kashmir and Gandhara, Maharakshita was sent to the Yavana king Amtiyoka (Anticcus), and Asoka's own son Mahendra and daughter Sanghmitta were sent to Ceylon. These were only the heads of the important missions. Of course they had their followers. And in addition many less important ones were sent into all directions. Propaganda like this could not but have had its result. Asoka was a clever organiser. If such energy and enthusiasm had been shown by him in secular affairs of the State, it is impossible to visualise what would have been the future of his empire.

In addition to giving such tremendous help to foster Buddhism, Asoka appears to have taken a hand in teaching its tenets. Remnants of Bhabru Edicts found at Bairat, in Jaipur State, will show that he issued direct instructions to the monks and nuns, what texts they should follow and what essential portions of them they should keep in memory. The texts that he specially recommended were Vinaya-samukase, Aliyavasin, Anagata Bhayani, Muni-gatha, Moneya-sute, Upatsa-pasina and Laghu-lovada. Though most of these texts in some form or other have been identified by experts, none of them are available in the original form, so as to enable us to ascertain the exact views held by Asoka. His edicts do not betray what his special form of belief was, except for the fact that he hoped for happiness in heaven, and all his endeavour would appear to have been to gain this end. Happiness in heaven does not

appear to have been Buddha's aim in life ; he was for eliminating all happiness here and hereafter, as the desire for it was the cause of all misery. When H. H. Wilson first studied the inscriptions of Asoka, he ventured to dispute Asoka, he ventured to dispute Asoka's allegiance to Buddhism. Edward Thomas wrote that Asoka was a Jain at first. These opinions were not unfounded. There is nothing to show that he was not a Jain at first and his desire for eternal happiness may have been influenced by his Jain background. His marriage with the daughter of a Sethi of Beenagar, and his endeavour to stop meat-eating, both may indicate that he was a Jain at first, for Sethis were generally Jains, and vegetarianism was a Jain ideal. Buddha does not appear to have been a vegetarian; if he were one, he would not have died from the ill effect of eating bad pork, with which he had been treated by a sweeper host. However, whatever, might have been the earlier religion of Asoka he died as a Buddhist near Rajagriha c. 231 B. C.

It is strange that no monument was erected for him, no Stupa built over his grave, and no mortal remains of his reserved by the monks. Probably he may not have held such a high place among the Bhiksus, though he had done far more for Buddhism than all Bhiksus put together. He may not have become a full Bhiksu at any time, and may have been a 'Bhiksugatika' till his death.

No doubt Asoka preached 'dhamma', and like all reformers tried to create heaven on earth, though one on his own model. But, were his reforms popular? Were they liked by the people?

These questions can be properly answered only on realising what took place after his death. A king may rule most unpopularly and no one may raise a finger against him for fear of his displeasure. From his edicts, it will be seen that his reforms interfered with the pleasures of life. He stopped hunting. He discouraged meat-eating, and made it impossible for men to get what they liked to eat and what they liked to drink. He forbade feasting and introduced fasting. He stopped all 'Samaja' or public entertainments and introduced austerity. "Samaj", says Bhandarkar, "was of two kinds; in one, the people were treated to dainty dishes in which meat played the most important part; in the other, they were treated to dancing, music, wrestling and other performances". These were evidently the forerunners of the European restaurants and cabarets. At the Samaj the princes and potentates freely mixed with the rest of the people. Caste or creed was not in evidence. Social contact was perfect, perhaps as good as it is in advanced countries of Europe and America. Had India maintained these institutions, she might have been saved from many of the ills from which she is suffering now. There can be no unity in a nation without a common table.

Asoka hurt the feelings of the Hindus by prohibiting animal sacrifices. How unpopular that reform was may be seen from the fact that as soon as the Brahman dynasty of Sungas came to power, they revived the Asvamedha sacrifice at which many hundreds of animals had to be immolated every day for a full year. Animal sacrifices were

not only to please gods and goddesses, but to provide meat for the needy public, which was an essential item in the diet of the people, irrespective of caste or creed. The Brahman attitude towards meat-eating may be seen from Manava-dharma-sastra, where it is especially mentioned that those Brahmans who refused to eat the lawful meat as prescribed for them would be born twenty-one times as beasts themselves (M—D : V. 35).

During the reign of Chandra Gupta, there were rest-houses in every town, and on every road at few miles apart, where the travellers could have spent comfortable nights with good food and desired drinks. Though each visitor had to give his name, address, profession, object of visit, destination and other details before he was admitted, these rest-houses were comfortable and convenient places for one to halt. Asoka appears to have converted these institutions for the monks and mendicants. The ultimate result of this may be seen to-day in that many a traveller in India has to take with him his "chadar" (a rough cloth) to sleep in, and a lota (a brass vessel) to drink from.

Some historians appear to think that the Brahman writers purposely omitted to record the achievements of Asoka because he was a Buddhist. But the true reason for it may have been his austere social reforms. Asoka was not against the Brahmans, or ascetics of any religion. He showed due consideration to all religious mendicants, and included them among the recipients of his bounty. This is a true Hindu tradition. Early in the thirteenth year of his reign, he had cave dwell-

ings made on Brabar hill (Gaya district) for Ajivikas. His instructions to his Mahamantas will show that he patronised truly religious Brahmans and mendicants of all varieties.

Asoka's successors on the throne were neither so efficient nor so religious-minded as himself. Among his own sons and grandsons there were Buddhists, Hindus and Jains, and they being weak and pleasure-loving were more or less tools in the hands of their religious preceptors. The part religion played after Asoka may be seen from the confusing accounts about his successors. Partisans have stated that their favourites succeeded him on the throne. According to Buddhist chronicles, Kunala succeeded him; and according to Jain tradition he was succeeded by Samprati. None of these traditions should be ignored, and the best inferences should be deduced from them. It may be that these different individuals assumed sovereignty in the different parts of the empire. Even during the lifetime of Asoka, due to his preoccupation with religious matters, his Viceroys would appear to have been actually ruling over different sections of the empire. Kunala evidently was at Takshasila, and he may have ruled there in the capacity of king for eight years, before he was blinded and deposed by some intriguers. The Khota traditions say that their royal family descended from prince Kunala, who was exiled from Taxila. If the blinding and exile had taken place some time after he assumed full sovereignty after the death of Asoka or even during his life-time it may not be all untrue if his partisans recorded

that he succeeded Asoka on the throne, and if his viceroyalty is added to the period of his royalty it will also be true that he ruled for eight years. It was not likely that Kunala sat on the throne at Magadha. He was not a son of Asoka, but only a step-son, being born of Tishya-rakshita, "a dissolute young woman" Asoka married.

Who was responsible for the blinding and banishing of Kunala, may be deduced from Kashmir traditions, which says that Jalauka, a son of Asoka, was an "active and vigorous king of Kashmir who expelled certain intrusive foreigners and conquered the plains as far as Kanuj". He was a Hindu, for he was "devoted to the worship of Siva and the Divine Mother, and in whose honour, he and his Isanadevi erected many temples". Hence it may be that he was antagonistic towards Kunala, who was a Buddhist. However, the shrinkage of the Mauryan empire to that extent which came under the possession of Jalauka is most obvious. Hence both Kunala and Jalauka may be left out in the investigation of finding out who succeeded Asoka on the throne at Magadha.

Vishnu Purana says in prophetic terms that Asoka-Vardhana shall be succeeded by Sujasas, "whose son shall be Dasaratha, whose son shall be Sangata, whose son shall be Salisuka, whose son shall be Brihadbala..... Thereupon slaying his own master the commander-in-chief Pushpa (Pushya) Mitra established himself on the throne." On the other hand, according to the Asoka-vadana, which forms a part of the Divyavadana, Samprati, son of the blinded Kunala, was com-

pelled to be placed on the throne even during the time of Asoka, on account of his "senile devotion to Buddhism and the consequent waste of the resources of the empire." Sampriti's succession to the throne immediately after Asoka is verified by Jain traditions. Evidently he was a Jain, for he is said to have founded many Jain monasteries in "non-Aryan" countries, probably in the districts of Manbhum and adjoining districts, where even now many Jain images can be found, especially along the old highway from Pataliputra to the ancient sea-port town of Tamralipti (on the mouth of the Hooghly) and from there on the road to Orissa. In fact many Jain images and temples of unknown origin are attributed to him. Hence it may be that Samprati was a grandson of Asoka who became independent even before the death of Asoka and ruled over the eastern section of the Mauryan empire, with its capital probably at Tosali.

Samprati's successors, according to the Asokavandna, were Brihaspati, Vrishasena, Pushyadharman and Pushya Mitra. Equating this genealogy with that of the Vishnu Purana may give very valuable information. Pushya Mitra mentioned in both the lists can only be the same. As he stands five steps below Asoka, and as he usurped the throne of Magadha, he should occupy the same step in the genealogical table as Brihadbala. Then the two different genealogies may indicate that two sets of kings or rulers were ruling in this part of the empire at the same time, Sujasas and his successors may have been at Pataliputra, and Sam-

prati and his successors at Tosali, until Pushya Mitra killed Brihadbala and brought both the divisions of the empire under his sway. The historians agree that Pushya Mitra was a Brahman, and belonged to the family of the Bharadvajas. As there were Brihaspatis among the Bharadvajas the name of Brihaspati among the predecessors of Pushya Mitra should not give any surprise. But it will indicate that the Jain rule at Tosali did not last long, and the Brahman Brihaspati, became the master of Tosali immediately after Samprati. Brihaspati and his successors may have ruled at Tosali as Military governors ; it may be the reason that Pushya Mitra was styled as the commander-in-chief in the Purānas. Pushya Mitra may not have been a commander-in-chief of Brihadbala. There might have been a war between them in which Brihadbala was killed and Pushya Mitra became the master of both Magadha and Tosali realms. Brihaspati may have been the Prime Minister of Samprati. According to Kautilya's Arthasastra, it was quite legitimate for the Prime Minister to take charge of the administration, in cases where the heir-apparent to the throne was away or inefficient or under extraordinary circumstances.

Hence all the genealogies may be taken as correct, and also all the kings mentioned as successors of Asoka as correct, but with the reservation that they did not rule at the same place. After the death of Asoka evidently there was a scramble for power, and a desire among his descendants to become independent of each other, and hold on to the territories over which they were *de facto* rulers even

during his lifetime. Jalauka may have reigned at Kashmir, after deposing Kunala; Samprati reigned at Tosali, and Sujasas at Pataliputra.

There may have been minor princes like Bandhupalita and Indrapalita reigning at different parts of the ruined empire. But the successors of Samprati and Sujasas are the only important ones in respect of the Mauryan chronology. After Asoka, the kings who reigned at Pataliputra may be taken as Sujasas, Dasaratha, Sangata, Salisuka and Brihadbala; and those who reigned at Tosali, as Brihaspati, Vrishasena, Pushya Dharma and Pushya Mitra. As it was from Brihadbala that Pushya Mitra usurped the throne of Magadha and became the overlord of the combined kingdom of Magadha and Tosali, there is a synchronism between the two lines.

The Vishnu Purana gives a total of 173 years for the kings of the Mauryan dynasty; while others reduce it to 137 years. The kings of this dynasty, excluding Brihadbala, should be taken as having reigned for seven generations. If the lower figure of 137 is taken as correct, the average per generation is less than 19 years and a half. If the higher figure is taken, the average will be about 25, which is excessive. Therefore the lower figure may be taken as correct. The commencement of Chandra Gupta's reign is known as 322 B. C., therefore by having an average of 18 years per king, Pushya Mitra's reign should commence at 185 B. C., which according to some historians is 184 B. C. Thus the Genealogical Table Appendix I has been thus extended down to Pushya Mitra's accession.

CHAPTER V

THE BRAHMAN RULE AND FOREIGN INVASIONS

The weak rule and dissensions among the later Mauryas gave rise to the disintegration of the empire. In many parts the administrators themselves become independent rulers. Pushya Mitra's bid for power brought Kalinga and Magadha together. But within three years of his rule, Kalinga declared its independence under Karavela, a youth of about twenty-four. The fact that he was a Jain and a Sudra by caste may indicate that the Brahman rule of Sungas was not popular in Kalinga.

After declaring the independence of Kalinga, Karavela started on an adventurous career. First he directed his attention towards the Deccan. Within four years he brought a considerable portion of the Deccan under his sway. Thus after bringing about two-fifths of the old Mauryan empire under him, he proclaimed himself king and performed 'Rajasuya', or the traditional coronation ceremony. In the same year he completed a canal project started by the Nanda kings, probably for the water supply of his capital. In the eighth year of his independence he led an army against Magadha, and defeated Pushya Mitra's forces in the battle of Gorath Giri, in Gaya, and harassed Rajagriha, the old capital of Magadha. After this expedition he appears to have built a

costly edifice to commemorate his victory, a structure called Mahavijaya at a cost of 300,000 standard currency of his days. In the tenth and twelfth years of his reign he again undertook the invasion of Northern India, the first of which was directed against Bharatavarsha (the western section of the United Provinces) and the second against the north-eastern regions. Karavela himself conducted the operations, while Pushya Mitra appears to have left the fight to his commanders; Bahasati Mitra, the governor of Magadha, sued for and concluded peace with Karavela.

This was his last expedition to the North. Karavela then directed his attention towards the south, where in the thirteenth year of his reign he subdued the king of Pandya and returned with immense booty. Karavela was a great patron of the Jains. He built for the Jain ascetics the cave dwellings on the Kumari Parvata, which came to be known later as Udaya Giri. Banerji says that Karavela was a man of Kalinga and of pure Dravidian origin, who made Pushya Mitra seek refuge in the middle country.

After peace with Karavela, Pushya Mitra re-established the prestige of Magadha. From Buddhist sources it will be seen that he extended his sway as far north as Jalandhar (the Punjab). But some historians are doubtful about the accuracy of this statement. Perhaps it did not fit in well with the exploits that they have attributed to some Greek invaders. Hence a clear grasp of the Grecian exploits from the days of Chandra Gupta Maurya may help one to study this question.

Seleucos Nikator, or Seleucos the conqueror, (whether he was Greek or Asiatic) gave up his claims over Aria, Arachosia, Gedrosia and Paropanisadae, in favour of Chandra Gupta Maurya; he was murdered in 208 B.C. His place was taken by his son Antiochos Soter, to whom Bindusara wrote for grapes, raisin-wine and a philosopher. Soter was succeeded by his son Antiochos Theos in c. 261 B.C. He was a "drunken sensualist", styled himself as Theos or god, and was worshipped as such even during his life time. It was to this Theos that Asoka sent Maharakshita, his missionary to preach Buddhism. Towards the close of his divine rule which apparently was very weak, the Parthians under Arasakes and Bactrians under Diodotus revolted and declared their independence in c. 248 B.C., when the "senile" Asoka was still ruling in Pataliputra. The Arasakai dynasty of the Parthians continued to rule till 226 B.C. But the Bactrian dynasty established by Diodotus was soon overthrown by Euthedemos, a native of Magnisia (Asia Minor) in c. 230 B.C., or approximately a year after the death of Asoka. Euthydemus had a continuous war with Antiochos, the great of Syria, which finally ended in reconciliation between the two parties by which the Bactrian independence was accepted and Demetrios the son of Euthydemus, married a daughter of Antiochos. The peace between Syria and Bactria proved to be a danger to the Indian possessions beyond her frontier. The first indication of it took place on the return journey taken by Antiochos the Great. He crossed the Hindukush, com-

pelled the Indian Governor Suphagasenos or Subhagasena, to surrender a considerable number of elephants and large treasure, and forced his way through the Indian possession of Arachosia and Drangiana to Karmania. The second encroachment on Indian possessions was made by Demetrios. According to Vincent Smith, Demetrios "repeated his father-in-law's exploits with greater success, and conquered considerable portion of North India, presumably including Kabul, the Punjab and Sindh". But the historian does not appear to show any proof for this presumption except perhaps that Demetrios styled himself as "the King of the Indians", for which he could have been entitled even if he had taken any one of the Indian possessions like Arachosia; Darangiana or Karmania. About fifteen years later, another Greek, Eukratides, who usurped the powers of Demetrios, is said to have reduced India.

The coin of Demetrios with legends in Greek and Kharoshti have been found, and also coins of another Greek ruler with Greek and Prakrit legends on them. These rulers on the Indian frontier, if their territories were trading with India and Bactria, could have adopted this expediency. Asoka, though he was a man from Magadha, adopted Kharoshti for his edicts, intended for the frontier provinces of his empire. Whether these coins can be taken to establish the Grecian conquest of India appears to be a doubtful point. Then the Greek origin of these rulers does not appear to have been substantiated by evidence

other than that their names are given in Greek forms. Many Syrian Christians of Travancore on getting education in English have changed their Syrian names into English equivalents without any British parentage. The Grecian writers have given many Indians Grecianised names without any Grecian blood in them. If Sandracotus is taken for Greek, we will be doing an injustice to the nationality of Chandra Gupta. If these are the only proofs of Grecian conquest and Grecian rule in Indian history they must be left without grave doubts. The Grecian conquest of India appears to be as indefinite and indeterminate as the Grecian nationality of these rulers. According to Vincent Smith, the Bactrians from the time of Alexander the Great came under the influence of Grecian culture, and they in return, for the royal favours bestowed on them by Alexander, "readily assimilated the elements of Hellenic civilisation", while the Parthians did not. Can culture settle the question of nationality? Was there any hindrance for any Asiatic at that time in becoming Hellenised? If Chandra Gupta could have married a daughter of Seleucos, religion and nationality did not appear to have been a hindrance in those happy days.

The next invasion of India by a Greek general was that of Menander. He is said to have "annexed Indus delta, the peninsula of Surashtra (Kathia-war), and some other territories on the Western Coast; occupied Mathura on the Jamna, besieged Madhyamika (Nagari near Chitor); invested Saketam in Southern Oudh; and threatened Pataliputra, the capital" of the Sungas. Menander's

extensive invasion of India is mainly based on following grounds :—(1) Identifying Kusambadhvaaja as Pataliputra by presuming Kusamapura and Kausambadhvaaja as the same. (2) Confusion between Seistan with Saketa, which the historians place sometimes in Persia and sometimes in Oudh to fit in with their arguments. (3) A prophetic statement in Gargya Samhita that after the reign of Salisuka, the king of Magadha, the “viciously valiant Yavanas after reducing Saketa, Panchala and Mathura will reach Kausambadhvaaja”. If the order of this march is correct one would have thought that the movement of the Yavanas was from east to west, as Saketa was on the east of Mathura. But we have seen that the Yavanas infested Mathura about a thousand B. C., during the days of Krishna. For the old Indian authors, the Yavanas could only have been the descendants of these people. Is there any proof to show that the Yavanas mentioned here were the Greek under Menander? The only recorded proof about Menander’s advance towards the east is the information received by Strabo through Apollodoros that Menander crossed the Hypanis (the Bias). This appears to be without date.

Vincent Smith has tried to establish a Greek nationality for Menander, whom he describes as the last of the European conquerors who tried to invade India by land. But after trying to trace the Bactrian history from the time of Alexander the Great, he concludes by stating that Menander was “one of a crowd of obscure princes”; and he “seems to have belonged to the family of Eukra-

tides, and to have had his capital at Kabul, whence he issued in or about 155 B. C., to make the bold invasion of India."

Menander has been recognised as Milinda of the Pali text *Milinda-panho*. He was born in the village of Kalasi on the island of Alasanda, probably an island in one of the Punjab rivers. The distance of Kalasi from his capital Sakela (Sialkot) is given as two hundred Yojanas. If one could know what was the correct equivalent of a Yojana and the direction of the route, it might be possible to locate the birthplace of this Grecian king. He was a Buddhist and a disciple of Nagasena. *Milinda-panho* consists of questions and answers, between Milinda and Nagasena, on matters of Buddhism. Milinda must have been a saintly ruler. According to Plutarch he was a great and just king, and after his death many cities vied with each other for the honour of preserving his ashes. This evidently is an honour which they did not accord even to Asoka.

Five hundred Yonaka courtiers are said to have attended on him. Though Yonakas are stated to be Greeks, Banerji has recognised two of them, Demetrios and Antiochos as Devamantriya and Anantakaya. Yonaka, derived from Yovana does not appear to have been referred exclusively to the Greeks. On the Malabar Coasts, Yonaka or Jonaka means a Musalman, the same as 'nasrani' means a Christian. Is it essential that Indian names should always derive from Greek forms? Is there any rule which prohibits the change of Devamantriya to Demetrios or Subhagasena to Suphagasenos?

Menander's invasion of India is fixed by Vincent Smith "in or about 155 B. C.", that is about seven years before the date of death fixed for Pushya Mitra. If Menander invaded Saketam and Magadha, at the beginning of Pushya Mitra's reign, when northern India was subjected to the frequent invasions of Karavela, the disorganised condition of the country might have helped his venture, but not at the end of Pushya Mitra's rule, when the country would appear to have had a stable government. Realising this difficulty, some historians state that it was not Menander who invaded Saketa and Madhyamika, but Demetrios.

The date of Menander's crossing the Bias may have been at the time of Pushya Mitra's horse sacrifice or Asvamedha. Asvamedha, according to immemorial custom, could have been performed only by a sovereign who claimed paramountcy. The attempt on the part of Pushya Mitra to perform the Asvamedha will indicate that he was powerful enough to meet any opposition from the neighbouring states. Pushya Mitra dispatched his young grandson Vasu Mitra with the horse. He did not appear to have encountered any serious opposition except on the bank of the river Sindhu, where he was challenged by an army of Yavanas. He must have defeated them, for otherwise the sacrifice could not have been performed. Even the historians admit that without defeating the Yavanas and other rivals and establishing his paramountcy over northern India, Pushya Mitra could not have proceeded with "the magnificent celebration of the sacrifice at his capital". But

some of them are reluctant to admit that his empire extended as far as the Sindhu or Indus. They have discovered another Sindhu between Bundelkhand and Rajputana, which would considerably shrink the extent of Pushya Mitra's empire. Why? Without a substituted Sindhu, they would find it difficult to lionise Menander, the "European General", who tried "to conquer India by land" by emulating the exploits of Alexander the Great.

However, if the author of *Malavikagnimitra* can be relied upon, it will be seen that the Yavana opposition to the horse led by Vasu Mitra was a trivial affair. If it were a major undertaking, Agni Mitra, the son of Pushya Mitra and the Viceroy at Vidisa, must have known about it. The letter of invitation from Pushya Mitra to Agni Mitra to come with his wife to the sacrifice, will show that the sacrifice or the proclamation of suzerainty was attempted without even informing him, and the Yavanas on the banks of the Sindhu (Indus) were crushed without calling upon the resources of his Viceroyalty. Bhandarkar is of opinion that the Greek king who opposed Vasu Mitra was Demetrios and not Menander.

However, there is no positive proof to show that Menander invaded India during the reign of Pushya Mitra or at any time; if he ever had been to Saketa, Mathura or Magadha, he may have gone there as a pilgrim visiting the sacred places of Buddhism with the knowledge of the Sungas, which may also explain the presence of his coins in the interior of India. Is it essential that a Greek king should invade Hamirpur, U. P., to explain

away the presence of frontier coins with Greek legends on them? The Roman gold coins were found in the interior of South India. Did they conquer and occupy those countries?

The Sunga rule appears to have been a military rule, as they did not adopt the title of Raja or King. It will be seen from Pushya Mitra's invitation to his son for the horse sacrifice that he signed himself as Commander-in-chief. According to the political ideology that was in vogue, a prime minister or commander-in-chief could have ruled the state in his own capacity under extenuating circumstances, without assuming royalty. Till recently there was a kingdom in India where the ministers permanently ruled as kings. Among the Sungas, this procedure for the first time may have been adopted by Brihaspati, and continued by his successors.

The Sunga administration seems to differ greatly from the Mauryan. Mauryan administration was centralised, but Pushyamitra's rule would appear to have been self-governing kingdoms under the suzerainty of Magadha. This would explain why "the kingdom of the Sungas had become divided into a number of semi-independent states" as observed by the historians. Dahala, Oudh, Ahichhatra and Mathura appear to have been most powerful feudatory states of Magadha. Some names of the rulers of Dahala are found from the inscriptions at Bharat. Arya Mitra and Muladeva of Oudh issued coins in their names, though they were feudatories. The Nizam of Hyderabad and

the Maharaja of Travancore issued coins in their own names during the British rule. There is no reason to suppose that no frontier ruler with or without a Grecian name did not follow this procedure. With wide powers the feudatory rulers had under the Sungas may be seen from an unexplained incident. When Karavela invaded Magadha it was Bahasati Mitra, "with the title of Rajan," who made a treaty on behalf of Pushya Mitra. As no explanation could be found for this, K. P. Jayaswal came to the conclusion that Bahasati Mitra and Pushya Mitra were one and the same person. Some of the feudatory kings were members of the Sunga Mitra family. The historians state that these small Brahman kingdoms came to existence after the downfall of the Sungas; but it was more likely that they were the feudatories who became independent after the downfall of the Sungas.

Pushya Mitra reigned for a period of about 35 years. The Puranas give the names of ten kings of this line, and a total of 112 years for their combined rule. They are, in succession according to Vishnu Purana, Pushya Mitra, Agni Mitra, Sujeshta, Vasu Mitra, Odraka, Pulindaka, Ghosha Vasu Vajra Mitra, Vagbhata, and Devabhuti. Agni Mitra was the Viceroy at Ujjain during the rule of Pushya Mitra. Vasu was the prince who led the horse for the Asvamedha sacrifice. Odraka is mentioned in the inscription found at Pabhosa, near Kausambi, which shows that he reigned for ten years. Devabhuti, the last of this line, was a dissolute sovereign, and was done to death by his chief

Brahman Minister Vasudeva, "with the aid of his slave woman's daughter".

If Mahāpadma Nanda is to be credited with the extermination of the Kshatriyas, Pushya Mitra in the same sense should be credited with the creation of a new order of Kshatriyas. According to the "Malavikagnimitra", Pushya Mitra is said to have supplied "a guard of a hundred Rajputs" to accompany the sacrificial horse for the Asvamedha. If the author of the *Malavikagnimitra* is not committing an anachronism, this may be taken as the first instance where the Rajputs appear in Indian traditions. The Rajputs claim their origin from the sacrificial fire lit by Vasistha at Mount Abu. Was a similar fire kindled on behalf of Pushya Mitra, who was a Bharadvaja? Was the creation of the Rajputs into a new order of Kshatriyas made to ensure an obedient fighting group for the ruling family of the Brahmanas? Kshatriyas are still being created by them. In a well-known ruling family of South India, the Kshatriyanisation process did not conclude until the prince got inside the womb of a golden cow through its mouth, and took a second birth through its tail end.

The Śunga rule marks the commencement of Brahman supremacy. The Brahmins till the downfall of the Mauryas would appear to have been mainly priests whose social position was not very high and who took up all kinds of lucrative occupations. From Jataka stories it will be seen that some of them worked even as hunters' assistants and trappers. Though 'jati' differences in a way existed from time immemorial, the so-called caste

distinctions do not appear to have been then in vogue. The creation of a new race of Kshatriyas or Rajputs to be at the beck and call of the Brahmans was the first step towards the maintenance of their caste supremacy. The Sunga usurpation of the throne cut at the root of loyalty, which was deep-rooted in the heart of every Indian from time immemorial. The Hindus loved their kings and their royal families. Though they never accepted the Divine Right of kings, they saw the working of the divine will through their kings. Kings to them were the representatives of all that was good on the earth. In case of exceptionally good kings, the line of demarcation between Monarch and Divinity was often faint. Yet they were against autocracy. They did not mind the removal of bad kings from the throne ; but they were always for finding a successor from a ruling family. Sungas broke that tradition. Just as they removed the Mauryas from the throne, they were removed by the Kanvas who in their turn were removed by the Satavahanas.

Many a post-vedic text for which the orthodox claim equal antiquity with the Vedas appear to have had been written during this period, as no record of Brahman supremacy could be made before the birth of such a supremacy. However, the Brahmans of this period were different from the Brahmans of a later period. During this period they were out to win and unite, and they succeeded in both. Among their most glorious contributions to the unity of India, the foremost was the introduction of a common language, a

language of culture and refinement ; they were the pioneers in introducing and propagating Sanskrit as the *lingua franca* of India. In the cultural sphere they succeeded, but in the political sphere their failure was most dismal. The reason was jealousy among themselves. They were unable to rise above their Gotras or families. The head of each gotra considered himself a tin god, to whom God Himself had to surrender. Even now though all stand out as Brahmans, there is no unity amongst them. The sub-divisions among them are many. They are too numerous in comparison to their total strength. Marriage or inter-marriage among the other castes generally smooth down social barriers, but among the Brahmans it only increases. Even the abode on the right bank of a river is sometimes a hindrance for the Brahmans of the same gotra to have inter-marriage and inter-dining with those who are on the other side of the river.

Vasudeva, who usurped the throne of Magadha from his debauchee sovereign Devabhuti, was a Kanva, a high Brahman family of Rig Vedic fame. Four Kanva kings, Vasudeva Vasu-mitra, Narayana and Susarma, according to the Puranas, ruled over Magadha for a period of 73 years. Nothing is known about their activities. They appear to have been very weak, though Brahmanism prospered undiminishingly during their regime. The feudalism started by the Sungas appears to have had its most disintegrating effect under the Kanvas, for most of the feudal chiefs broke away from the suzerainty of the Kanva overlords ; the

worst offenders in this respect were those feudal chiefs who were related to the Sungas. Their independent activities continued for a long time with petty quarrels and jealousies among themselves, until the whole of them were wiped away by the imperialistic Guptas, after a period of nearly three centuries and a half.

The Kanva rule came to an abrupt end in c. 28 B. C. Vishnu Purana says in prophetic terms that "a servant by the name of Sipraka of the race of the Andhra shall slay Susarma, the last of the Kanva kings, and by force will place himself on the throne, and thereafter his brother Krishna shall govern the earth". Then Krishna was to be succeeded by his son Purnotasanga, and he by his son Lambodara, and so on. Though it is said that thirty illustrious kings of this dynasty will govern the earth for four hundred and fifty years; this Purana gives the names of only twenty kings. But the historians have traced the names of all the thirty kings, and the respective years of their reign totalling about 452 years. Unfortunately in certain respects this justification has only increased the confusion. If 452 years are projected forward from 28 B. C., which is the accepted date of Andhra usurpation, the rule of the Andhras will extend to 424 A. D. This cannot be accepted as correct as the Gupta rule in Magadha had commenced a century earlier or from about 320 A. D. Then the first of the Andhra kings according to the historians was Simuka or Sisuka, whom they identify as Sipraka, as he also had a brother Krishna, or Kanha. If this is accepted, according

to the periods given by the historians for the reign of each of the sovereigns, Simuka should usurp the throne of Magadha in c. 227 B. C., or 100 years earlier than the date on which Siptaka killed his master. Hence the natural conclusion should be that Simuka was not Siptaka and the founder of the great Andhra dynasty was not Siptaka, though he may have established a principality in Magadha.

Even before the usurpation of the Magadha throne, an Andhra kingdom would appear to have been flourishing. According to Pliny, based on the information supplied by Megasthenes, during the days of Chandra Gupta Maurya, Andhra was a powerful Dravidian kingdom with thirty well-walled towns, and a standing army of 100,000 infantry 20,000 cavalry and 1,000 elephants. Whether Andhra was independent of Magadha is not clear from this statement. However, based on the assumption that it was, some historians have excluded the kingdom of Andhra from Chandra Gupta's empire. It may be that the Andhra kingdom, with its capital at Sri Kakulam on the lower course of the river Krishna was tributary to Chandra Gupta. The next information about the Andhras is derived from the Udayagiri or Hathigumpha inscription of Karavela, king of Kalinga, who described Sri Satakarni as lord of the West, which evidently may indicate that the Andhras were independent rulers like Kalingas at the time of Karavela.

It may, therefore, reasonably be presumed that Andhra was a subordinate state during the days of the powerful Mauryas, and declared its indepen-

dence at the beginning of the Sunga rule. They then pushed forward their possessions towards the north, and as Banerji says, "upon the downfall of the Sungas, took possession of the Eastern Malava with its capital at Vidisa or Bhilsa, and about half a century later usurped the throne of Magadha from the last of the Kanvas". Sipraka, who usurped the throne, may have been a prince of the Andhra family who took service under the Kanvas, hence the significance of his being called 'a servant' of the Kanvas by the Puranic Authors.

In the opinion of Banerji, the Andhra or Satavahana empire was "one of the most important empires in India", and the nucleus of it has been traced to Satavahani-hara in the district of Bellary, Madras. First the kingdom of the Satavahanas expended towards the west, then towards the north as far as Nasik. Satakarni, the third king of the dynasty and a contemporary of Pushya Mitra and Karavela is said to be the real founder of the empire. He conquered most of Malaya. During the reign of another Satakarni, Gauramiputra, it will be seen from a Nasik inscription dated c. 113 A. D., that the Satavahana possessions included the provinces of Asmaka or Asika (Maharashtra), Mulaka (the district round Paithan), Suratha (Kathiawad), Kukura (West Rajputana), Aparanta (North Konkan), Vidabha (Berar), Anupa (Central Gujrat) and Avanti (Eastern and Western Malava); and he was also the lord of the mountains, Vindhya, Rikshavat, Patipatra, Sahya, Krishnagiri, Macha Sritana, Malaya, Mahendra, Setagiri, and Chakora. In the opinion of Banerji, the list of

these provinces shows clearly that Gautamiputra Satakarni conquered all those provinces that once formed the kingdom of Nahapana. The list is from an inscription by Vasisthaputra Pulama VI, the son and successor of Gautamiputra, from whom, according to Vincent Smith, most of these possessions were taken away by his father-in-law Rudradaman I, the Saka Satrap of Ujjain. From the coins of the Western Satraps, Banerji has come to the conclusion that the reign of Rudradaman came to an end in c. 150 A. D. Hence it could be stated that the Satavahana hold on Northern India came to an end before 150 A. D., though they continued to retain the hold on their southern possessions.

One cannot but observe the omission of Magadha in the list of the Provinces held by Gautamiputra Satakarni. Was Magadha independent of him, and ruled by a direct descendant of the usurper? The Satavahanas appear to have had more than one capital, where different princes of the same family ruled more or less independently. At any rate it is certain that all the thirty kings of this family did not rule at the same place or in succession. Hence it may appear that the Satavahana empire unlike the Mauryan empire was a loose-knit federation of states under princes ruling at different places at the same time.

The Satavahanas were Brahmans. The first Sri Satakarni is said to have been "a follower of the orthodox Indo-Aryan faith", which may only mean that they were the followers of the Vedic religion. Gautamiputra Satakarni "claims to be

a unique Brahman" and the destroyer of the pride of the Kshatriyas. But the only people whose pride he appears to have destroyed was that of the Kshaharatas. Was Kshaharata a new order of the Kashatriyas? Both the words are evidently derived from the same root. Rudradaman is stated to have been a Saka Satrap one of the new arrivals from outside; if it were so he was a foreigner whom the Brahmans should have considered a 'Mlechha'! Hence, the marriage of the Brahman, Sri Pulumavi, with Rudradaman's daughter needs explanation. The historians appear to have overlooked this important point. If these Satraps were foreign invaders subordinate to Kaniska, such a marriage with an Indian king and a Brahman of the Vedic group could never have taken place. Though the Brahmans were allowed to have wives from the Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras, *Manu Smriti* does not say that they could have wives from foreign Sakas, Pahalavas or Yavanas. This could have been possible only on condition that these foreigners must have been Hindu converts, who formed new castes of Kshatriyas or Brahmans, under the dispensation probably given by a Vasishta. The foreign descent of Rudradaman is explicit from the very name of his grandfather Chastana or Tistanes. Evidently Gautamiputra Satakarni was against this new class of Kshatriyas. Hence he may have destroyed their pride first and later on established friendly relationship by marriage of his son with the daughter of Rudradaman.

However, the Satavahanas were Vedic Brahmans, and the Vedic religion appears to have

penetrated to the south through them. This must have been the first step in "the Aryanisation of the south". Nayanika, the queen of the first Satakarni, is said to have performed the Asvamedha sacrifice twice. Then later Sri Satakarni, Gautamiputra, made many endowments for religious purpose. "He posed as the champion of the Hindu religion", says Vincent Smith, "including both Brahmanical Hinduism and Buddhism, as against the creeds of casteless foreigners, Sakas, Pahalvas, and others, and prided himself on having re-established the practice of caste rules."

The Satavahanas appear to have been great patrons of art and literature. One of the best works in Prakrit is attributed to Hala, who, according to certain Puranas, was the seventh king of this dynasty. The 'sattasai', by king Hala, has a great influence on the Sanskrit and Prakrit literature. Hema Chandra in the 11th century used Sattasai models to illustrate his grammatical rules. The love songs of Krishna and Radha, in Hindi of Mathura, by Bihari Lal in the 17th century, are said to be the imitation of the Sattasai. The Sattasai is in Maharashtri Prakrit, and contains seven hundred stanzas of animated love songs to accompany dancing. It is a metre called Arya, which is "perfectly suited to the simplicity of the images and the softness of the Prakrit". The great poet Vallathol of Kerala adopted this metre in his works in our own time.

CHAPTER VI

THE SAKA SATRAPS AND KANISHKAS

About the beginning of the Christian era, India is said to have been subjected to the incursions of the Sakas and the Kushans. According to the historians, the Sakas were barbarian inhabitants of Trans-Oxiana, or Bactria. They were known to the Greeks by the name of Sakai or Sakarauli, and to the Chinese by Sse. They were driven out of their home by another barbarian tribe called Yeu-chi by the Chinese, some time after B.C. 165. They settled down first in Asia, Arachosia, Gedrosia, and Drangiana, about B.C. 150. Then they were dislodged from their new homes by successive kings of Persia—by Phrates (131-128 B. C.), Artabanus (128-123 B. C.). Mitra dates (123-88 B. C.) and finally by Vonones in c. 53 B. C. Then it is said that they poured down into India, occupied Taxila, Mathura and Malva; and by the middle of the first century A.D. covered the delta of the Indus, occupied the banks of the Narmada, established kingdoms of their own, adopted the Indian title of the Rajas and Maharajas, and ruled as independent sovereigns. If it is all true, their achievement was most remarkable, as even the well-organised armies of the Mohammedan conquerors in the most decadent period of Indian history, were not able to accomplish so much in such a short time. Then the

most surprising thing is that these mighty rulers, at the arrival of the Kushans, are said to have accepted them as their overlords and served under them as their vassals. Such an easy conquest as this raises a few questions :—(1) As according to the historians, most of the countries taken over by the Sakas were under the Greek kings of Bactria and under their satraps, was it likely that they all yielded to the Sakas without a murmur? (2) when the Kushans came, did the Sakas forget the treatment their ancestors received at the hands of the Yeu-chis or Kushans, and welcomed them as their overlords? The historians do not appear to have given sufficient attention to these points.

The main proof of the Saka invasion of India centres on one point, namely, the recognition of the Sakas of India as the Sse of the Chinese. The Chinese historians state that about the year 156 B. C., the Hiungnu drove the Yeu-chi westward, and they displaced the Sse. Then to connect this displacement of Sse with the Sakas in India, some historians have allowed them a halt in Siestan or Sistan, though there are others like Dr. F. W. Thomas who are of the opinion that the Sakas were in Seistan long before this period, and it was most improbable that a Saka incursion into India could have taken place at this period. According to Canon Rawlinson the Sakas were the inhabitants of Kashgar and Yarkand, which formed the fifteenth satrapy of Darius c. 500 B. C.

On the contrary, we have already seen from the Puranas that the Sakas, Yavanas, and Pahalvas were in India from the twentieth century B. C. ;

ever since they arrived first as recruits in the army of the Talajangha confederacy, and after the overthrow of that confederacy they were allowed to stay in India by king Sagara of Ayodhya under certain social and personal disabilities. From the Dharmasastras and Nitisastras, it will be seen that they were not governed by Hindu Laws or social customs. They would appear to have remained as separate communities for centuries. Then all of a sudden they disappeared or nothing is spoken about them. As there is no evidence to show that they had been repatriated, it should be presumed that they became one with the Hindus and adopted their ways, laws, customs and religion. When this took place, and how can only be guessed. The historians have traced some Saka and Parthian satraps with foreign names, while their sons and descendants have been found with typical Hindu names. For instance, the first Saka Satrap of Malva bears the foreign name of Chastanas while his father's name was Zamotika and his son's name was Jayadaman, and grandson's name was Rudradaman. Zamotika may have been a foreign name like Chastana; but Jayadaman and Rudradaman can only be Indian. As Chastana was a foreigner, why should his son and grandson adopt Indian names, unless they had become Indians and Hindus? Hence if a fresh batch of Sakas had not penetrated to India at this period, and if Zamotika and Chastana were foreign names, it could be legitimately presumed, that they were the descendants of the Sakas who came to India some time in the twentieth century B. C. Similarly

it will be seen that the son of Ranjubula, who was called a Persian Satrap, was Sudasa, a typical Hindu name. The degree of Indianisation or Hinduisation effected among the descendants of the foreigners may be seen from the fact that a daughter of Rudradaman was married to Pulomayi, son of Gautamiputra Satakarni, who is characterised as a peculiar Brahman in the Puranas. Among the most orthodox Brahmans of to-day, the descendants of these foreigners may be found. Decidedly some of the Brahmans who claim to have come from a foreign land may be their descendants. The historians appear to think that they are the descendants of the Hunas and other barbarians, who came to India after the downfall of the Gupta empire, but the main feature of Hinduisation of this later period was not Brahmanisation, but Kshatriyanisation.

The Puranic authors have been more fair with these so-called foreign Satraps and kings. Even while they omitted to mention anything about the illustrious Gupta emperors, they did not fail to speak of these 'foreign' kings. It is not surprising for the descendants of these so-called foreigners were Brahmans or Brahman-made Kshatriyas; while the Guptas were the non-Brahman Sudras, who were not entitled to the Vedas. Vishnu Purana, after dealing with the kings of the Andhra dynasty, says in prophetic terms, that there will be seven kings of Aviras, sixteen of Gardavilas and sixteen of Sakas; and then eighteen Yavana Kings, fourteen Tukharas, thirteen Mundas, and so forth. At least in one instance the accuracy of

this statement would appear to have been proved. The historians have traced the names of all the sixteen Saka kings, and from the study of the coins issued by them Mr. Banerji has ascertained their dates as well. Their names and dates are as follows :—

1.	Zamotika		
2.	Chashtana, or Tiastanes of the Greeks.		
3.	Jayadaman.		
4.	Rudradaman I	... Father-in-law of Pulomayi.	
5.	Damayadasa	... 150—178	A. D.
6.	Rudrasimha	...	
7.	Jivadaman	... 178—198	,,
8.	Rudrasena I	... 198—222	,,
9.	Sanghadaman I	... 222—223	,,
10.	Damasena	... 223—236	,,
11.	Isvaradatta	...	
12.	Vridaman	... 234—238	,,
13.	Yasodama	... 238—239	,,
14.	Vijayasena	... 239—250	,,
15.	Damajada III	... 251—254	,,
16.	Rudrasena II	... 256—264	,,
17.	Visvasimha	... 277—273	,,
18.	Bhartidaman	... 279—295	,,

These dates are as ascertained by Banerji from their coins. They all used Salivahana Era on their coins. It is no wonder that the era came to

be known as the Saka Era. Though the Puranas say there were only sixteen kings, the historians have proved that there were eighteen. The omission of two in the Puranic statement may well be attributed to the fact that the first two of them were not Hindus or Brahmans. The first two, Zamotika and Chastana, with foreign names presumably were not Brahmans. Hence the social disability imposed by Sagara should be considered to have been removed only during the time of Jayadaman, and the Andhra king at that time was Gautamiputra Sri Satakarni (109-135 A. D.) It may be that it was this king who extended to the descendants of the old foreigners the privilege of becoming Hindus and Brahmans. Perhaps it may be on account of this that he was described as a "unique Brahman." He is said to have "prided himself on having re-established the practice of caste rules". This may mean perhaps that it was he who enforced the caste system in the Deccan.

Some Saka kings are designated as Western Satraps, for, from the days of Rudradaman I, they founded a new kingdom in Kathiawar and Cutch. But his grandfather Chastana ruled at Malva, the great geographer Ptolemy of Alexandria described Ujjain as the capital of Tristanes and the historians identify Tristanes as Chastana. Perhaps he was a ruler or Governor of Malva under the Satavahanas. There was a greater chance of his being a governor under a Satvahana king, rather than being a feudatory of the Kushan king Kanishka.

Who were the Kushans of whom Kanishka was one? According to the historians they be-

longed to a named tribe called Yue-chi. After driving the Sakas out of Bactria they settled down in different groups, until the head of Koue-choung, one of the sub-tribe, made himself master of Bactria. He has been identified as Kushana or Kushan, or Kujula Kadphises or Koxoulo Khadphises. He lived for 80 years, and after him, his son Kadphises succeeded him on the throne. He struck coins in copper and gold, with the figures of Siva standing by the side of a bull, and with the legend "the great king, king of kings, and lord of people, the great lord". These legends appeared in Greek and Kharosti, and his coins were found "all over India". Hence the historians presume that "his kingdom extended as far as the United Provinces". Banerji says that "most probably he ruled India by his generals and viceroys". There appears to be no more evidence to establish a Kushan invasion of India. Could an invasion be established on these grounds? A student of Indian history may require something more substantial. The legend on his coins in Greek and Kharosti, may not indicate much more than his trade contact with the people speaking Kharosti and Greek; likewise the bull and Siva on his coins may indicate only that he was a worshipper of Siva. Where his capital was, is not known. Even without ruling over India, could he not have been a Siva-worshipper? Was there any geographical limit for the worship of Siva? According to the historians' accounts, when the Kushans invaded India; the Saka Satraps and Parthian Satraps under their Persian overlords were the rulers of the

western and north-western regions of India. Did they not raise any objections to the Kushan invasion of their territories? One may expect non-resistance from the Indians, for whom one foreign rule may have been as good as the other. But the Greek, Persian and Saka rulers were expected to show resistance. Then did the Sakas receive the Kushans with open arms? Did they forget within such a short time how Yue-chi treated their forefathers? One cannot but feel that the historians have presumed too much.

However, India does not appear to have been the chief concern of Kanishka. According to the historians, even before he came to the throne the Chinese Viceroy Panchao was carrying on a formidable war against the Kushans in Central Asia. The trouble with the Chinese became aggravated when Kanishka assumed at his coronation the title of Devaputra, or the son of god, which was the equivalent of the title held by the emperor of China. Then Kanishka is stated to have crossed the Pamirs in 102 A. D., and fought a losing battle till 119 A. D. On his return, while he was preparing for another expedition to China, he was brutally murdered by his own general. Preoccupied thus as he was, some suggest that it was Vima Kadphises who inaugurated the Saka era, and probably even conquered India. Some appear to think that as long as a Kushan is available to conquer India, the object is achieved.

However, Kanishka of Kashmir would appear to be different from Kanishka who fought against the Chinese. According to the Kashmir chro-

nicle there were in that land "three kings called Huska, Juska and Kanishka who built three towns after them. That wise king Juska, who built Jaskapura with its 'kihara' was the founder of Jayaswami-pura. These kings were given to acts of piety, though descended from Turuksha race, built at Sushaletra and other places, mathas, chait-yas and similar (sanctuaries)". The Turuksha may be identified with the Tukharas of the Puranas. According to Vishnu Purana there were fourteen Tukhara kings and a distinction was drawn between the Tukhara and the Saka kings. From the order in which the Tukharas are given it may be presumed the Tukhara rule in Kashmir began after the commencement of the Saka rule in Gujrat under Rudradaman, which may not have been earlier than 120 A. D.

Kanishka or Kanita as the Chinese called him, was a great Buddhist, and a pious king of Kashmir, which according to Kalhana to a large extent "was in the possession of the Buddhists". The convening of the fourth and the last of the great Buddhist Council is attributed to him. The reason for convening the Council, as it was on previous occasions, might have been different among the followers of Buddhism. Kanishka, like Asoka invited the monks from all over the country. As the Ceylonese chroniclers knew nothing about this council, it may be presumed that no invitation reached them or they refused to come. However, with all his attempts only a few attended the Council. No one except Sarvastavadins, a sub-sect, appear to have taken part in the assembly,

which may indirectly indicate the limitation of his kingdom and his political influence. If Kanishka was the Kushan Emperor Kanishka, who is stated to have conquered all the land from the Aral lake to Pataliputras, and who had Satrapies beyond the Vindhya, such a poor attendance at his council needs some explanation.

However, the Council was held at Kundalavana. It may be futile for the historians to search for the sides of Kundalavana, for it may have been a place like Tilak-nagar and Gandhi-nagar, which the Indian National Congress have had from year to year for their conventions. The council was held under the presidency of one Vasu-Mitra, who as the name indicates must have been a Brahman convert. Asvaghosha was the renowned teacher among the Buddhists at this time. He was a Brahman convert from Saketa in the Sravasti district of Ayodhya, and not from Drangyana. He was a great Sanskrit scholar, a dramatist and a writer of lyrics. He advocated the tenets of the Sarvasta-vadin sect. He appears to have been the first author who wrote about Buddha and Buddhism in Sanskrit. The classical texts Buddha-charita, Saundrananda and Sutralankara stands in his name. Buddha-charita, as the name indicates is the life-history of Buddha, and it is written in Mahakavya style of classical Sanskrit, more or less like the Raghuvamsa of Kalidasa. According to Paramartha (A. D. 499-569), a biographer of Vasubandhu who made king Vikramaditya of Ayodhya interested in Buddhism, Asvaghosha was invited by Kanishka "for the purpose of applying his well-

known literary skill to the reduction of the commentaries drafted by the Council". The Tibetan tradition says; "Kanita despatched a friendly invitation to Asvaghosha, who being unable to accept it on account of age and infirmities; sent his disciple Jhana in his stead". But the consensus of opinion is that Asvaghosha went to Kashmir and drew up a Vibhasha, or gloss, explaining the principles of Buddhism, which came to be known as Hinayana, contemptuous term given by another council held by another sect in Anga (Bengal) and Odivisa (Orissa), who came to be known as Mahayanis. Asvaghosha could have made the Vibhasha even without going to Kashmir. But, on the other hand, it is stated that Kanishka "penetrated far into the interior of India, and attacked the king residing at the ancient imperial city of Pataliputra" and carried off from that "city a Buddhist saint named Asvaghosha". This decidedly glorifies Kanishka; but it may not have any substance behind it, except that Kanita went to Patna to fetch Asvaghosha.

However, Asvaghosha's service to Buddhism will not be fully appreciated without a short retrospective survey of Buddhism from the days of its founder. Buddha's disciples, who were prepared to give up the world, formed themselves into a circle for practising and preaching 'dhamma', a mode of life, in thought, word and deed. They as mendicants, like Ajivakas and other sects of the Hindus, went from place to place without money or means. Wherever they went they received respect as 'Sadhus'. But few appear to have joined the order,

as it necessitated the renunciation of the world and everything that it stood for. Then during the days of Asoka, probably with Asoka as the first, they created an order of Lay-brethren, apparently to bring into the fold sympathisers who were not to give up the world and were privileged to carry on with their private and public avocations. They were not required to lead the life of mendicants, but each was to take an oath of allegiance: 'I take refuge in Buddha, I take refuge in 'Dhamma', and I take refuge in Sangha (assembly)'. The Jataka stories may have been written for getting people interested in the order.

Then stories and 'Avadanas' gave currency to the doctrine of 'paramitas' or transcendent virtues. The paramitas were:—'dana' (charity), 'sila' (observance of moral virtues), 'Kshanthi' (forbearance), 'virya' (energy), 'dhyana' (meditation) and 'Prajyan' (knowledge). These were to be practised by all; and it was held that when they attained perfection in the practice of these transcendental virtues they might become Buddhas. Thus it will be seen that Buddhism prized all lofty morals. But Buddha avoided the topic of God; according to Jataka stories, even when his disciples asked him about God, he avoided giving a direct answer. When it was avoided by Buddha, his followers may not have troubled to preach. Asoka laid great stress on 'Dhamma', on his 'sasanas' or ordinances, but no edict has been found so far where he spoke of God or even of his grace. A religion with no theological encumbrance, and dependent on such

high morals would have thriven anywhere, and especially in India of those days with the confusing logic of the Upanishads, on one side, and rank materialism of the Charvakas, on the other. People may have left the Vedas, the Upanishads and the materialism to become Buddhists, not as ascetics but to live their lives as men and women of the world. But this happy state of affairs was not to continue. Asoka's enthusiasm for asceticism interfered with the individual liberty in the choice of pleasures, such as eating, drinking, hunting, singing and dancing. A reaction was bound to set in. The immediate result, as stated elsewhere, was the revival of the Vedic religion under the Sungas and continuance of it under the Kanvas, Andhras and Sakas. It was at this stage that Asvaghosha appeared on the scene, "a poet, musician, scholar, religious controversialist, and zealous Buddhist, orthodox in creed, and a strict observer of discipline". From his poetic temperament there arose an intense love and devotion (bhakti) for Buddha. His lyrical tendency gave birth to *Budhacharita*, a story of Buddha in poetry. His knowledge of Sanskrit gave Buddhism a new language. As a playwright and dramatist he made dramas about Buddha and had them staged, at times acting himself in the play. In one of his plays he made a new convert explain, "In the cold take refuge at the fire, during the summer heat in the cool stream, in darkness and gloom with Buddha. He alone gives me 'amata', sweet realisation of immortality". As a musician he played instruments and sang songs on the love of

Buddha. He played music, acted and sang wherever he went. Towns and villages invited and welcomed him. He made his stringed instrument vibrate with the plaintive, yet melodious, songs of 'bhakti'. He charmed the hearts of the multitude and made them reflect on the phenomenal life. He gave life to the individual consciousness or the Self, preached by the Upanishads. He met the arguments of the materialists, and asserted that the objects themselves have no real existence, except as phenomena of consciousness. And he drew the attention of all to super-idealism, in which the soul, and nothing but the soul, was real. He gave something for the philosopher to ponder over and for the man in the street to think. For the first time he brought Buddhism to the intellectuals. Kanishka, king of Kashmir, stood by him. It may not have been exactly what was preached by Buddha, nor what was advocated by Asoka, but it was a religion in which there was ample room for love, devotion, and happiness. Had the shade of Asoka the ability to see the singing, dancing and acting in the name of Buddha, as Asvaghosha had done, his comfortable and complaisant existence in heaven may have been greatly disturbed.

Asvaghosha dragged Buddhism out from the cloisters of the monks, from their cave dwellings and the Chaitya halls; he made it a topic of the market-place and the wayside rest-houses; even the rustic by the village fire, after a hard day's work, began to talk about Buddha, his renunciation of a princely throne and a beautiful wife, his

austerities, his fight against the temptations of Mara, and what he said and did. Soon Buddha became a god like Rama and Krishna, and even non-Buddhists began to show reverence to him. The Hindus religion is very accommodating; the Hindus have not shown any objection in accepting any saint or god, provided they are not asked to give up their own. Later the Hindus made Buddha an Avatar or incarnation of Vishnu. Buddhism throve. Hindus did not kill Buddhism. With the acceptance of Buddha as an Avatar of Vishnu, it became a part of Hinduism.

CHAPTER VII THE PRIESTLY SUPREMACY

For a period of five hundred years from the accession of Pushya Mitra to the rise of the Guptas, India had a long spell of Brahman rule. The foundation of the Brahman supremacy was laid during this period. The priestly supremacy in the court of kings was checked during the Nanda rule. In the days of Chandra Gupta Maurya, the Brahmans received respect as custodians of learning. Asoka allowed them privileges as religious mendicants, but curtailed their religious rites in the matter of sacrifices, and their mode of living. When Pushya Mitra came to the throne, he revived the Vedic religion and sacrifices, to the delight of all the Hindus. The Vedic religion prospered in Magadha, which once was not considered a fit place for true Brahmans to live. The torch of the Vedic revival lit by the Sungas, and fed by the Kanvas and numerous satellite rulers, spread all over Aryavarta (Northern India). The Satvahana kings took it to South India.

The Sungas proved themselves capable rulers and empire-builders. The Magadha Empire was again placed on the map of India. The Brahman stock went high for a time. But the Kanvas who usurped the throne from the Sungas unfortunately lacked political acumen. Under them the whole country became divided into small principalities.

Though the Brahmans ruled in most of these States, dissensions among them became rampant.

One of the most beneficial things done by the Brahman rulers was the adoption of Sanskrit as the language of culture. They used Sanskrit for inscriptions. (Asoka's inscriptions were in a sort of Prakrit or pre-Sanskrit.) Books began to appear in Sanskrit, both original and translated from Prakrits. The Courts of even petty kings became centres of learning. Most of the post-Vedic literature would appear to have taken shape during this period.

They extended the benefit of the Vedic religion to a selected few. A few sakas, Yavanas and Pahalavas were given the status of Brahmans.

The Brahman rule of this period compares well with the British rule in India. By religious tolerance both secured the goodwill of the people. Both introduced a common language; the British introduced English as the language of culture and official transactions, the Brahmans introduced Sanskrit for similar purposes. The Britishers spread Christianity through English; the Brahmans spread Hinduism through Sanskrit. Both established class superiority, the British based on colour, the Brahmans based on Vedic sanctions. The British maintained their racial superiority by shutting themselves within the fourwalls of their clubs; the Brahmans by means of restrictions on intermarriages and interdining. Both allowed one-sided intermarriages at the beginning, then restricted and avoided them at a later stage.

The offspring of the early marriage between the Indians and the Europeans passed often as European. When such marriages became more frequent, the offsprings were delegated to an inferior position as Eurasians, who became strong supporters of the British rule in India though they did not get social equality with the rulers. Likewise the Brahman offspring from other classes became the great supporters of Brahmanism. The British ensured the support of the Indians by conferring on them honours and titles. But such titles being of a personal nature, the expected loyalty died out with the individuals. The Brahmans were more astute in this respect. They conferred social and religious distinctions on families which their descendants still cherish. The result is that Brahmanism still prevails, while the British regime disappeared.

Despite these advantages, the Brahman rule was a failure politically. No empire was built by them after the Sungas in North India, and no empire by them in the South after Satvahanas. Even during the days of the Sungas and Satvahanas disruptive forces were at work. Many new principalities sprang up all over the country. These principalities no doubt wielded tremendous power, but only locally. The old democratic rule sponsored by the Vasisthas of old and maintained by the Mauryas disappeared altogether. The councillors became priests more than politicians. The religion progressed often at the expense of the material welfare of the people.

Some of the new dynasties that came to power, according to Vishnupurana, were Aviras, Gardas-

vilas, Sakas, Yavanas, Turukshas, Mundas, Manus, Pauras, Kailakilas, Valhieckas, and Nagas. Some details of the Sakas and Turukshas have already been given. According to the Puranas the Nagas were in Padmavati, Kantipuri, and Mathura. From the Puranas it may be presumed that Kailakilas and Valheekas were Yonas or Yavanas of some kind, and that they flourished in Sapta Kosala, which may be identified with Bilaspur, Raipur and Gondwana. The historians speak of Vahataka rule in Central India and Northern Deccan. The founder of this dynasty was Vindhyasakti. His name may be identified with Virdhyasakti of the Puranas and the founder of the Kailakila dynasty. The Vahatakas and Kailakilas appear to have been Yavanas who became Brahmans, as the Puranas were particular in recording their names. After Virdhyasakti nine more names are given, but they cannot be identified with the names traced by historians for the Vahataka dynasty. Three names of Valhiecka kings given in the Puranas are Pushya Mitra, Parupa Mitra and Padma Mitra, indicating that all of them were Brahmans. From the Puranas it may be seen that there some more dynasties collateral to the Kailakila dynasty; perhaps the names of the kings, which the historians have traced as Vahatakas, may have been of the Kailakilas. The Mundas might have been the ancestors of the same Mundas we find in Chota-Nagpur. Their tradition is that their original home was in Ayodha, probably Ayodhya, which means mother country. After leaving the mother country they settled in various parts of U. P., and came to Ranchi Hills through

a circuitous route. The Manus and Puras would appear to have been in South Bihar. The Asuras and Gardavilas are the only dynasties whose countries cannot be located from the details available at present. Yet there is a tribe of Asuras in the tableland of Manbhum, a sturdy good-looking people with a fair complexion, who live in a primitive state with loose marital relationships. One wonders whether they like the Mundas have taken refuge in these mountain retreats away from the new Brahman religion and its proselytising influence.

Vishnu Purana further speaks of one Visvapatika in Pataliputra (Magadha), who routed out all fighting class, elevated the Brahmans to power, and created new castes from fishermen and barbarians. This indicates the nature of *ad hoc* Brahmanisation that was going on everywhere in the country. It was immediately after this that the Guptas came to power. The Guptas, as the term indicates, were not Brahmans ; they were Sudras, though those who claim descent from them now, call themselves Brahmans. Gupta reaction to the Brahman kingdoms should be studied with this background.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUPTA EMPIRE AND THE RISE OF VAISHNAVISM

The rise of the Guptas was most phenomenal. The founder of the dynasty was Chandra Gupta. Nothing much is known about his antecedents, except that his father was Ghatolkacha, whose father was one Gupta. A seal of Ghatolkacha was unearthed at Vaisali (Basarh). The fortune of the family appears to have been made through Chandra Gupta's marriage with Kumara Devi, a lady of the Lichchhavi clan. The Lichchhavis or Lichchivikas, according to Kautilya's *Arthashastra* had the title of Rajas, and they belonged to an organised group of fighters. Chandra Gupta, like his father, appears to have been a local chief, who, strengthened by the alliance with the warlike Lichchhavis, took advantage of the misrule of Visvapatika and his newly converted Brahmans, and proclaimed himself as the master of Magadha about the year 320 A. D. He died after a short reign. The real founder of the Gupta empire which remained supreme for a period of two hundred years, was his son and successor Samudra Gupta. Samudra Gupta conquered the whole of northern India, as far north-west as Balkha, established supremacy over the Deccan and Western India, and probably over a good portion of Southern India as well.

The importance of the Gupta rule will be

missed if it is not realised that they were not Brahmans, and were broad-minded Hindus belonging to a rising religion, namely, Vaishnavism. The historians have noticed that they were Vaishnavites. They have also noticed their liberal attitude to Buddhism, and their contribution to the Buddhist university of Nalanda. But they seem to have lost sight of the Gupta reaction to Brahman rule. The peculiar satisfaction in violently uprooting the western satrapy felt by Chandra Gupta II, is attributed by Vincent Smith to their hatred of the casteless Saka foreigners. But enough has been said to show that the Sakas at this period were not 'casteless'; and they were not really foreigners. Hence if Chandra Gupta II felt any satisfaction in uprooting them it can only be due to their misrule and what had been going on in their country. Neither lavish gifts to the Brahmans, nor the performance of Asvamedha or horse-sacrifice should be taken for their administration of Brahman ideology. Asvamedha had never been an exclusive Vedic rite. And kings in all ages extended munificence to all creeds and sects.

The Brahman reaction to Gupta rule may well be seen from Vishnu Purana. It says in prophetic terms that the Guptas will come to the throne of Magadha and "these and other contemporary kings will be of churlish spirit, of violent temper and addicted to falsehood and wickedness; they will destroy women, children and cows; they will be of limited power they will rapidly rise and fall; the duration of their life will be very short;

they will form high expectations, and acquire little piety."

Against this prophecy what has been found out by epigraphists about the Guptas, their empire and administration can only create high admiration for them. The Guptas failed to find an adequate place in the Puranas not because the Brahmans had no historic sense as the European writers say; they seem to have been omitted purposely. Who would care to record unpleasant things about themselves? The Guptas put a brake on the growing misrule of the Brahman kings, and for a century and a half Brahman pretensions suffered at the hands of the Guptas. Vishnu Purana stops the historic narrative after saying that the Guptas of Magadha will rule along the Ganges to Prayag (Allahabad). This may have been true in respect of Chandra Gupta, the first king of that line. What had been added on to Gupta possessions by his son and successor Samudra Gupta may be seen from the stone pillar inscription which is at present in Allahabad fort. According to this inscription Samudra Gupta uprooted and exterminated several ruling dynasties and took over their kingdoms, while other dynasties were overthrown.

The dynasties he uprooted were those of Achutya and Nagasena; both according to Banerji were kings of Central India. The rulers he exterminated were Rudra, Deva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapati Naga, Nandin, Bala Varman and others of Aryavarta. The kingdoms he overthrew were those of Daivaputras, Shahis, Sahamushahis, Sakas, Murandas and Simhalas.

The kingdoms he conquered were Samata (South-east Bengal), Vavaka, (North Burma), Kamarupa (South-east Assam), Nepal, and Kartipura, which according to Vincent Smith included Kumaon, Almora, Garhwal and Kangra Valley. In addition, he subdued the Malavas, Arjunayanas, Yaudheyas, Madrakas, Abhiras, Kakas, Kharaparikas. Prajunas and Sanakanikas. The kings he captured and liberated were Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghra-raja of Mahakatnara (Gondavana). Manta-raja of Kerala, Mahendra of Pistapura, Swami Datta of Kottara, Damana of Erandapalli, Vishnu Gopa of Kanchi, Nila-raja of Avamukha, Hasti Varman of Vengai, Ugra sena of Palakka, Kunera of Devarashtra, Dhanarajya of Kustalapura, and other kings of the Southern regions. From these, the extensive conquests of Samudra Gupta will be self-evident. But the historians consider this inscription a panegyric made out by a minister of the Guptas. When there is no record the historians accuse the Indians of having no historic sense; and when full details are given, carved out indelibly on stones, they are considered mere laudation. If there is no truth in this inscription, would any king of self-respect have allowed it to be carved on stone pillars to be gazed and laughed at by the passers-by? From these details an attempt at extreme accuracy is most obvious. If it were not so, what was the object of specifying various shades of conquests? From these details the policy of the conqueror as well as the object of his undertaking could be appraised. Several kingdoms were brought under direct rule, others were conquered and given back to be ruled, evidently

by rulers of a more suitable type, while from others only submission was demanded. Is it not the policy of every Imperial government? It is open to question whether even any great conqueror like Alexander or Napoleon has done differently.

However, it will be seen that the kingdom that were brought under the direct rule of the Guptas were predominantly Brahmanised ones. The imperial policy of the Guptas may better be judged by the drastic action they took though on a second round towards the Saka kingdom of Gujarat. Skanda Gupta, son and successor of Chandra Gupta II, led an army against them, overthrew the rulers, and brought it directly under the imperial sway.

Those who have made the map of the Gupta Empire do not appear to have done full justice to the extent of their sway. Those who made the map of Kanishka's empire allotted him a vast empire extending from the Aral Sea to Pataliputra, evidently based on the Kushan coins found in these regions. But when they made the map of the Gupta Empire, it would appear that they whittled it down as far as possible.

Skanda Gupta is stated to have removed the capital from Pataliputra to Ayodhya. One of the reasons for the change of his capital given by Vincent Smith is the availability of old material at the site of the ruins of Rama's capital. The historian is nearly correct in referring to the old material. But it was not likely that Skanda Gupta was in search of old building material, such as broken

bricks and stones. He was after historic material, the traditions of a long forgotten age, the traditions of Sri Rama Chandra, the ideal king of the Hindus, who overthrew Ravana and made himself the emperor of the entire Hindustan. Skanda Gupta evidently knew that his move to a place like Ayodhya, would appeal to the imagination of the public, which even then must have become a place of pilgrimage.

The Guptas stood not only for the just and traditional rule of the Hindus, unhampered by Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism; and they also stood for what was the best in Hinduism. They patronised art and literature. Fortunately for them, they had a ready medium in Sanskrit for literary development. Grammar and works of rhetoric were composed under their patronage. No branch of art, sculpture, painting or music did go without royal support. Even the kings and ministers themselves participated in the dramas, wrote poetry, and played music. Great poets like Kalidas flourished in their courts.

Some authors are of the opinion that the Puranas were rewritten in the Gupta period. It is absurd to think that any Brahman writer would have had enough courage to rewrite the Puranas, with such absurd presumptions of Brahman superiority over the Sudras, a class to which the imperial family itself belonged. The most genial background for rewriting the Puranas was not in existence until after the death of Harsha, or the early part of the eighth century A. D.

The religion of the Guptas was no doubt

Vaishnavism. But it was not the Vishnu worship of the Vedas, neither was it the Vedantified Vaishnavism of the Acharayas which was developed in Southern India only about the tenth century A. D. Gupta Vaishnavism was the popular Vaishnavism of Krishna worship, dating back from about 1000 B. C. Ever since Krishna raised the standard of revolt against Indra worship at Gokula, as is stated in the previous Books, Krishna, who made this protest, himself became the god of this new religion. The religion preached by Krishna, the worship of Cow and Mountains, spread all over India, wherever the Gopals had wandered with their cows. There appears to have been no part of India at that time where Krishna or Kanna worship had not penetrated. The cow worship or even sanctity for the life of the cows, does not appear to have been started by Vedic Brahmans. It seems from the post-Vedic literature that Yajnavalkya, one of the great exponents of the Upanishads had a taste for the meat of milch cow. With rise of Krishna worship, the Vedic Brahmanism was losing ground. They soon identified Krishna with Vishnu of the Vedas.

During the days of the Guptas the difference between Vaishnavism and Buddhism was threadbare. The Bhakti doctrine enunciated and preached by Asvaghosha was similar to the 'bhakti' practised by the Vaishnavites. The Neo-Buddhist ideals of Nagarjuna was similar to Vaishnavism.

Nagarjuna was a Brahman convert from the Deccan, who lived in Bihar. He was a metaphysician, who introduced metaphysics for the first

time into Buddhism. Before his days, while Asva-ghosha was preaching the love of Buddha and the idealism of the soul, there appeared at Vedalya, in Dakshinapada (south), a monk named Naga who preached the doctrine of Sunyata ; his followers were known as Sunyavadins. This doctrine in a nutshell was a declaration of everything as unreal including the idealism of the soul on which Asva-ghosha laid considerable stress. Nagarjuna steered clear between the extreme positiveness of Asva-ghosha and the negativeness of Naga ; and advocated a middle path. He upheld the individuality of the immortal soul. He neither advocated the renunciation of the world, nor sinking deep in the "slime and mire of it, which may happen, if the immortality of the soul is denied". He advised the people "to keep right in the rush and bustle of life and yet to be above it ; to enjoy all things, but to contemplate them from an external angle". This in fact is nothing different from the main teachings of the Bhagavat Gita of the Vaishnavites. Among the rest, he conceded to his followers psychic practice, occultism, wearing of 'vibhuti' and 'tantrik' rites. Did they not form part of Hinduism as well ?

Then there appeared in Buddhism three kinds of Vimutti, or salvation ; namely, Chitta Vimutti (salvation by contemplation), Prana Vimutti (Salvation of the Soul), and Sila Vimutti (salvation by action). The Vaishnavites appeared to have improved upon them further, and made four kinds of Vimuktis ; Salokya, Samipya, Sarupya and Sayujya. Salokya is to be in the same region with

Vishnu ; Samipya to be near Him ; Sarupya to have the same form as Himself ; and Sayujya was to be immersed in Him, or be united with Him. If the word Vishnu is substituted by God, there is no religion in the world with ideals that will not come under these categories.

The Vaishnava classifications accommodated Buddhas and Bodhisatvas. The Buddhas only could get Sayujya or Nirvana. The Bodhisatvas could have any of the other three stages according to the state of their spiritual attainment, and stay there and come back to earth as many time's as may be required for reaching the final stage of Buddhahood.

No doubt this was a blow to the Vedic religion, and a great deal of discomfort to the followers of the Upanishads. Vaishnavism made all Vedic sacrifices and chanting of the hymns superfluous. Among the Vedis themselves there was a move towards this direction. They realised the futility of sacrificing animals, and croaking hymns like frogs. They substituted ritualistic sacrifices in place of real ones. They substituted the whole Veda, first by one 'mantra' (hymn of Gayatri) and then by one syllable, OM. But all these could have been done only by a privileged few, by the Brahmans only. But the narrow gate of salvation was opened wide for all by the Vaishnavites. Any-one could reach the innermost heaven or attain salvation by repeating a single and simple name Krishna or 'Kanna'.

'Kanna' was more characteristic of this god. Kanna appears to have derived from the Dravidian

'Kannu' the eye. Hence Kanna may mean God with the eye, or all-seeing God. When Siva became the God supreme, the Saivites gave him a third eye. There are cults in which God is symbolised by an ever open eye. This all-seeing Kanna was a great relief to mankind. In him they found a witness of all their actions, intentions and thoughts. Occasions may happen when one cannot convince even those who are nearest and dearest to him of his intentions and motives. In Kanna he can find consolation that there is one who could see what is going on in the innermost recess of his heart.

The best part of this new religion was that it was very simple and easy to practise; in fact, the easiest religion in the world. There was no need for set prayers, no prostrations nor bending the knees; nor beating the ground with the forehead; and no attendance at the shrines or congregations, no penance, no fast, nor any kind of mortifications. One had only to turn one's thoughts towards him and repeat the word Kanna, or any of his other names such as Narayana or Govinda; and it could be done anywhere, or in whatever state one might be. It could be done by standing, walking or sitting.

The worship of Kanna was as popular in the South as it was in the North. We have already seen one of the earliest kings of Andhra about 250 B. C., from regions beyond the river Krishna, with the name of Kanna. Before the names of the gods and saints are given to the mortals a fair duration probably of many years or even centuries should

be allowed. Though it is not known when the worship of Kanna spread to the South, it can be well imagined that the South as well as the North was under the spell of Vaishnavism before the Gupta period.

Historians wonder why "Samudra Gupta, an orthodox Hindu, learned in all wisdom of Brahman and an ambitious soldier full of the joy of battle" was interested, as a young man, in the doctrine of the Buddhist sage Vasubandhu. The simple reason for this was that there were more things common between Vaishnavism and Buddhism, probably more than there were between Vaishnavism and Brahmanism. This is why Chandra Gupta as well as Skanda Gupta sat at the feet of Vasubandhu and listened to his teachings, by preference. That was why a later Gupta built a new college for the Nalanda university, and it was the reason that in the university of Nalanda, the Buddhists as well as the heretics were allowed to sit together and learn the words of wisdom, probably from the same teacher. Buddhism and Vaishnavism flourished side by side, and both got inspiration from each other. Fahian, the Chinese pilgrim, in his wanderings found Buddhism flourishing everywhere. He found in the neighbourhood of Mathura twenty monasteries occupied by three thousand monks. Was there any wonder? Were not Mathura, and its suburb of Vrindavana, associated with the boyish pranks and exploits of Krishna, who became one with Buddha, both being 'avatars' of Vishnu? "It was the theism of Gita (Vaishnavism)", says Ernest P. Horowitz, "which trans-

ferred agnostic Buddhism to the new theology in the beginning of our era. Worship of a personal god strongly appealed to the human craving for love and service. Humble prayer and dependence on the Lord engender self-restraint, the control of the mind-enslaving senses brings self-realisation, which shatters delusion and lawless desire. Buddhism ignored deity, but the theistic texts of the Neo-Buddhism deify him as another incarnation of the Sun (Vishnu) and made a god of Buddha."

Asvaghosha changed the Buddhist outlook on life. In place of asceticism and self-mortification, he held out love and beauty, music and drama, joy and ecstasy. Nagarjuna after him, warned the people from extremes, and advocated and encouraged a happy mean, which was not different from the Hindu outlook on life. It is incorrect to say that Buddhism was killed by the Hindus. When Buddhists in India found that there was no call to be different from the Hindus, some of them went back to their original 'jati' or caste, while others remained as casteless Hindus outside the jati-group.

The exact dates of neither the accession, nor the abdication of Samudra Gupta are known. However, he appears to have lived to an advanced age and reigned uninterruptedly for a period of about half a century. Then true to Hindu traditions, he placed his son Chandra Gupta II on the throne and led a retired life. The new king who took over the destiny of a vast empire was not a novice; he had been selected by his father and trained to be a successor to the throne. Chandra Gupta

walked in the foot-steps of his father, carried on the administration efficiently and continued the patronage of art and literature with undiminishing zeal. In certain respects he appears to have excelled even his father. The strong action taken against the Western Brahman Satrapy has already been mentioned. This opened out uninterrupted trade between his empire and countries beyond the seas. The trade with the eastern countries continued as usual through the old port of Tamralipti on the Bay of Bengal. Indian manufactured goods found their way into foreign markets. Gold and silver made a regular stream into Indian coffers. North India does not appear to have been ever so prosperous as it was during this period of her history. Yet no word of praise for the Guptas is to be seen in the Puranas.

Chandra Gupta II assumed the title of Vikramaditya; his reign is taken to be from 380-414 A.D. About the latter part of his reign, Fa-hcan, a Chinese traveller and scholar, spent three years in Patna studying Sanskrit and collecting Buddhist literature on his way from Taxila to Tamralipti. He speaks very highly of what he had seen. He says that the towns were large and prosperous. Transit across the country was easy, without the encumbrance of passports and restrictions. Inns were on the road-side for the travellers to rest and stay. Charitable institutions and hospitals were to be found everywhere. "The people were rich and prosperous and they seemed to emulate one another in the practice of virtue". About the charitable hospitals maintained

by benevolent and educated citizens, he says :—
 “Here come all poor or helpless, patients suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They were well taken care of, a doctor attends them, food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they were made comfortable, and when they were well they may go away”. This evidently speaks well of Gupta administration.

Kumara Gupta I (414-455 A. D.) succeeded Chandra Gupta II on the throne. Like his predecessors he was also a great patron of art and literature. According to the historians, the golden age of Indian art and literature was during the period of his long reign. Some of the best specimens of Indian sculpture are attributed to this period. During the last years of his reign, the Brahman rulers again created trouble, as they did during his father's time. This time it was in the south, by the “rich and powerful” ruler named Mitras. Fleet has located them in the reign of the Narmada. Nothing much is known about them. They may be recognised in the Valhika Mitras, *viz.* Pushya Mitra, Purupa Mitra and Padma Mitra, mentioned in the Puranas. If they are the same, there were Yavana converts to Brahmanism. As we do not hear anything more about these Mitras, it may be presumed that they were defeated and exterminated. Guptas had a powerful ally and probably a feudatory, in Vakatakas, in the neighbourhood of Valhikas. Chandra Gupta II gave his daughter Prabhavati Gupta in marriage to Rudra Sena, the king of the Vakatakas. After her husband's death, she ruled for a period

of fourteen years, over a growing kingdom which extended as far south to Karnul, in Madras. This may be presumed from a recorded visit of hers to a Siva temple at Sri Sailam.

It was about this time a tribe of barbarians called Hunas, invaded the north-west frontier, where the Emperor's brother Govinda Gupta ruled as the Viceroy. Skanda Gupta, the Emperor's son after quelling the disturbance in the South repaired to the North-west and drove the Hunas back. Kumara Gupta is stated to have performed an 'Asvamedha', like his grandfather. The victory over the Vahliekas in the South and the Hunas in the North-west should fully justify the horse-sacrifice.

After Kumar Gupta, Skanda Gupta (445-468 A.D.) came to the throne. He had a rival, in the Royal Court at Pataliputra, in his step-brother Pura Gupta, another son of Kumara Gupta. His father appears to have nominated Skanda Gupta as his successor, evidently on account of his ability and probably as a reward for his meritorious services to the Empire. All the same a plot against him was ripening at the capital, which he had to leave on account of the renewed activities of the Hunas in the North-west. Soon after his accession, the savage Hunas from the steppes of Central Asia poured down on India, with lust for plunder and delight in brutality. Skanda Gupta who was now mature in years and ripe in experience repaired to the frontier, not only stemmed the advance, but also gave them a crushing defeat. To commemorate this victory, he erected a column,

surmounted by a statue of Vishnu. This column, though without the statue was found at Bhitari, in Ghazipur district, probably the home of his mother. The column contains an account of the delivery of his realm from the barbarian hordes.

Again a fresh swarm of barbarians crossed the frontier, occupied Gandhara (Afghanistan). Skanda Gupta, who by this time had assumed the title of Vikramaditya, rushed to the frontier, tried to combat the barbarians and drive them once again out of his realm. But he had no support. During his absence from the capital, the faction against him became so powerful that they set up Pura Gupta as a rival Emperor, and interrupted the smooth flow of supplies to the battle front. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, he fought against the enemies most bravely for thirteen years, until at last unluckily for India "the last of the great Gupta Emperors fell fighting, with his enemies in front and in the rear". Thus ended the glorious rule of the Guptas. As they were non-Brahmans, the Brahman chroniclers had nothing to say about them. For what we know about this unparalleled period in India's history, we should really be thankful to the European historians, archaeologists and antiquarians. The rule of the Guptas has given rise to many stories and tales. The Gupta Emperors came to be known by the generic name of Vikramaditya. Everything in Indian tradition is attributed to Vikramaditya; the golden age of the country was in the days of Vikramaditya. They appear to have mixed all Vikramadityas into one, and they even attributed the Vikramaditya Era

to the hero of their tales. The story of Vikramaditya is even now told by old men in the villages to groups of attentive listeners by the fire-side on cold nights. The hero of their story was a man of great virtue and supernatural powers. The troubles he had to undergo, the difficulties he had to encounter, on being narrated, will bring tears in the eyes of the audience. His victorious exploits were many, though his trials were unparalleled. In these stories one hears the echo of the difficulties and troubles Skanda Gupta had to undergo during his various battles with the Mitras and with the Hunas. He had to sleep on the floor, as one of his inscriptions reveals, he had to go without food and water for many days. Sometimes he had only one companion with him, who is described as a genie called 'Baitala' and who was at his beck and call like the genie of the Arabian Nights. The forces he had to fight against were dark and formidable. In many a story he was the victorious hero, but in some he was the loser. He has never been forgotten by a grateful people, though his annals have become clouded. It is good that before the story-tellers died out, the historians have come to our rescue.

CHAPTER IX

CREATION OF A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The Hunas are said to have shattered the Gupta Empire. This appears to be an exaggeration. A careful study of the circumstances which led to its downfall may indicate that the main cause of it was dynastic dissensions. Even while Skanda Gupta was stemming the inrush of the barbarians on the frontier, his step-brother Pura Gupta usurped the throne, which could only have been detrimental to the proper prosecution of the war. Despite this drawback, Skanda Gupta resisted the Huna invasion for thirteen years. This was a most remarkable achievement, to which history does not present many parallels, and it speaks well of Gupta administration in the Provinces.

How far the Hunas encroached upon the Gupta Empire is difficult to determine without knowing first what was its north-western boundary. According to the historian's map, it did not extend any further than the Chandrabhaga or the Chinab, and it excluded Kashmir, Afghanistan, the North-West Punjab, Sindh and Rajputana. But according to Banerji, when Skanda Gupta repelled the first Huna invasion, his father's brother, Govinda Gupta was the Viceroy of Gandhara or Afghanistan. If the Gupta Empire had not extended as far north-west as Gandhara, no Gupta Viceroy would have ruled there. On the other hand, if Gandhara,

Kashmir, North-West Punjab and Rajputana were not included in the Gupta Empire, the damage done to it by the Hunas loses all its importance.

It is also difficult to know who was the Huna leader, who shattered the Gupta Empire. According to Vincent Smith, the Huna leader who "penetrated into the heart of the Gangetic provinces and overthrew the Gupta Empire, was no doubt Toramana, who established himself as the ruler of Malwa in Central India prior to A. D. 500". But Banerji says that "it is possible that Toramana did not conquer Malwa before 511 A. D., and the first known Huna prince of India was Khinkhila, as this king and his successor, Toramana and Mihirakula, are mentioned in the history of Kashmir". If Banerji is correct and if any of these kings had been established firmly as the ruler of Malwa, it should be Mihirakula who came to the throne in 510-511 A. D. But Mihirakula does not appear to have been more than a local prince of Gandhara; for, from the account of Songyun, the Chinese pilgrim envoy, Vincent Smith says that the 'local' king of Gandhar to whom the envoy paid his respect in 520 A. D. "must be identified with Mihirakula". If in 520 A. D. Mihirakula was a local king of Gandhara or Afghanistan, he could not have been the well-established ruler of Malwa in 511 A. D. It is probable that he might have invaded and occupied Malwa after 520 A. D. Then his rule over Malwa should be considered as lasting for about seven years only; for according to Vincent Smith, Mihirakula was defeated, taken prisoner, and liberated magnani-

mously in c. 528 A. D., by Baladitya, a king of Magadha and Yasoverman, king of Malwa. However, this battle does not appear to have been fought anywhere near Malwa. It is said to have been fought at Kahrar, in the Western Punjab. The only evidence to quote in favour of the occupation of Malwa by the Hunas seems to be an inscription found in Gwalior, dated about 525 A. D. Does it indicate a conquest? If it were a conquest or occupation of Malwa it may not have lasted more than a period of five years. However, his defeat by a king of Magadha at Kahrar may indicate that the Guptas were still a power to be reckoned with though they may have lost a great deal of their former glory.

At the most what we can deduce from the historians' account is that the Hunas were a wild tribe who entered and occupied parts of Kashmir and Afghanistan, and probably a part of the North-Western Punjab also and carried out raids into Rajputana, even as far as Gwalior, until they were driven back. If so the political importance of the Huna war may be considered as not of much importance. But the incursion of the Hunas eventually would appear to have created a great social upheaval in India.

Little is known about the antecedents of the Hunas. The Chinese called them Yc-tha. The European scholars recognise them as the Ephthalites or the White Huns. To the Indians they were Hunas. The word Huna may be of the same root as 'Hina' (low) indicating a man of low culture

or a 'Mlecha'. They are stated to have come from the valley of the Oxus, which they were compelled to leave on account of food scarcity. They assailed the kingdom of Kabul first, and "thence poured into India". The most peculiar thing about most of the invaders or intruders was that they were worshippers of Hindu gods, soon before they came to India, while others became Hindus on their arrival. Was Hinduism then the prevailing religion in Central Asia? If they were Hindus on their arrival, should these invasions be considered in a different category other than that of Kharavelas' invasion of Northern India, or Chandra Gupta's invasion of Southern India? On the other hand, if they were not Hindus before their arrival, who made them Hindus? Did they become Hindus themselves by adopting Hindu ways and worshipping Hindu gods, or gods of the people they conquered? Or did somebody convert them to Hinduism? Did the Brahmans convert them? Was there any one else who had the privilege of conversion? If the Brahmans were in the habit of taking outsiders into Hindu fold, why did they discontinue it in later years? A satisfactory explanation to all these questions may reveal many an unknown truth about India and her past.

The Europeans surmise on these matters as influenced by nineteenth-century conceptions. The Europeans came to India as conquerors; therefore, they appear to think that every one who came to India in ancient days must have come as conquerors. They saw two powerful kingdoms, Afghanistan and Persia, on the North-western

border of India, which even the might of the British army failed to bring under subjection. They saw the frontier tribes making frequent incursions into British India, and could be kept quiet only by giving them concessions. They saw that the people of the frontier as well of the neighbouring kingdoms were Muslims, professing a faith that had its origin outside India. These conditions appear to have clouded their vision. But before the people of the frontier adopted the Muslim faith, were they different from those who were on this side of the barrier? Before the days of European civilisation, no one appears to have taken much notice of the racial differences. Even during the Mohammedan rule, racial differences did not count much. The Europeans divided the people into Black, White, Yellow and Red. The Mohammedans divided them only as Muslims, and Kaffirs (non-Muslims). The Hindus divided them as Mlechhas and Hindus. Both the Hindu and Mohammedan distinctions were based on religion. Hindus like the Muslims believe in the superiority of their religion, but among the Europeans the distinction is based on colour, and arbitrary geographical limits. However, till late in the period of the Mohammedan rule the people who were beyond the frontier of India were not considered as foreigners. There was no check at the frontier and no passport system appears to have been in existence, except during the reigns of Chandra Gupta and Bindusara. Then the boundry was further back. Any tribes from outside could easily have come

and settled down in India, which was a thinly populated country. On the other hand, if a leader or king from outside were forcing his way, bent on conquest, there was resistance from those who ruled at the frontier, whether they were indigenous rulers or those foreigners who settled down in Indian territory. Even then the opposition was not much more than it was in the case of an invader from the South. All battles in India used to be on dynastic considerations and not on racial grounds. When all the so-called invasions and foreign occupations of India are viewed in this light, they may lose all that tremendous importance given by the historians. Indians do not appear to have shown any racial animosity in ancient days.

The Hindus from time immemorial had a firm faith in monarchy, and realised the advantage of having a king to rule over them. Their traditions go back to a state when there was no sovereign nor established laws; and there was no one to punish the wrong-doers: and when greed, intoxication and vices prevailed then they approached the gods, and monarchy to them was a gift from the gods. The monarchs did not rule by Divine Right. The foundation of their authority was the dispensation of justice and enactment of Danda-Niti, or law of administration. The Indians in ancient days were not concerned with the religion or racial affinity of their rulers, though they cherished one from their own jati. As long as the ruler dispensed justice, and ruled according to the law of the land, they paid allegiance to him. It

was quite immaterial to the common man whether A or B ruled. As long as A or B did not interfere with their rights and ruled justly, they were content. They had always been submissive to just rulers. The secret of their attachment to the British crown and a few Mohammedan rulers like Akbar was this. Before the Mohammedan invasion few monarchs in India would appear to have ruled without the consent of the people. Fight between the rulers was their personal affair, and not a national or a racial issue. No ruler is known to have levied taxes for the sake of fighting his neighbour. Even when big battles were fought and crowns rolled in the dust, the common man went on with his usual avocation in life, undisturbed and practically unconcerned. Battles did not affect him, as long as he was not fighting on one side or the other. The losers as well as the victors left him alone.

Peculiar features such as these should not be lost sight of, in judging the importance of battles and conquests in ancient India. The historians do not appear to have taken cognisance of this peculiar Indian background. They seem to place Indian events in a European background, with which we are well acquainted. The battles and conquests in India were not for the purpose of economic exploitation, neither were they for the enslavement of the conquered. How the conquerors were to treat the conquered may be seen from Manusmṛiti which says, "Having conquered the country, let him (the conqueror) respect the deities adored in it and their virtuous priests ; let him also distri-

b...te largesse to the people. Let him establish the law of the conquered nation as declared in their book". This was the ancient custom in India. However, no conqueror, whether he was a Saka, Kushana, Yavana, Pahalava or Huna, ruled over any extent of territory in India without accepting some form of Indian religion, or becoming a Hindu or Buddhist. Even the great 'savage' Mihirakula who is said to have caused the destruction of countless millions of peaceful Buddhists and destroyed their stupas and monasteries was a great devotee of Siva. If the Hindus followed him and submitted to his rule, it may not have been due to his might or foreign origin ; the fact that he was a Hindu would have weighed with them more in their submission.

The coming of the Hunas created a great social upheaval. The priests would appear to have looked upon them favourably. Those among them, who succeeded in "winning chieftainship", says Vincent Smith, "were readily admitted into the frame of Hindu polity, as Kshatriyas or Rajputs". This had a far-reaching effect on Hindu polity, the great importance of which is least appreciated today. This led to the creation of a new order of Kshatriyas. On previous occasions when the foreigners like Sakas, Yavanas and Pahalavas were admitted into Hindu polity, at least some were made Brahmans. On the other hand, when the Hunas were admitted, the policy was to baptise them as Kshatriyas. Before this period the distinction of Kshatriyas does not appear to have been applied to a caste or jati, it was nothing more than a distinction like

'grahastha' or 'vanaprasthi', that had only an individual application, but it was not a group of caste distinction. The history of India, henceforward, for centuries had been the exploits, failures, and achievements of this class of new Rajanyas, who received their Hindu baptism in the symbolic fire lit by Vasistha at the Mount Abu. Their rank and file was soon enlarged and enriched by new converts from the aborigines. "Further to the South", says Vincent Smith, "various indigenous or aboriginal tribes and clans underwent the same process of Hinduised social promotions, in virtue of which Gonds, Bhars, Kharwas, and so forth emerged as well-known Rajput clans, duly equipped with pedigrees reaching back to Sun and Moon". In fact this Kshatriyanisation spread all over India; even in the furthest South-west in Kerala, many ruling families became members of the new order, where their order still exists intact. Some are of opinion that the Kshatriyas of the Puranic traditions have completely disappeared. But it will be seen that they are still here and their number is only increasing. They are found everywhere, they go under the names of Somavamsis, Suryavamsis or Rajputs. There never was any one else classified as Kshatriyas. The word Kshatriya does not appear in the Vedas, as a clan or caste. On the Malabar Coast, where Brahmanism attained its highest perfection, the Kshatriyas, Somavamsis and Suryavamsis are numerous. There, many families of non-Brahmans by adopting Brahmanism and Brahman ways have become Kshatriyas. On the Coromandal Coast,

Abbe Dubois looked for the real Kshatriyas about the beginning of the last century, but he failed to see them, but he says, "Howbeit, the Brahmans assert that the true Kshatriya caste no longer exists, and those who pass for such are in reality a debased race". It is not because the Madrasis refused to undergo the Kshatriya baptism. According to Banerji, when the Chalukyas of Badami spread all over the Deccan, "the Brahmans invented a special genealogy for them". But there the majority of the rulers resisted this temptation which ultimately made the cleavage between the Brahman and non-Brahman communities much wider than anywhere else in India.

It was this Kshatriyanisation that maintained the Brahman supremacy ever since. The Kshatriyas, whose social superiority was gifted by the Brahmans, and kept alive by Brahman ways became great supporters and upholders of the Brahman order. Without submitting to the Brahmans acting according to their instructions they were likely to lose their social superiority. How far the Kshatriyas became dependent on the Brahmans may be seen on the Malabar Coast, where had it not been for the Brahmans, the women of the Suryavamsi Kshatriyas would have had to go without husbands. By tracing the Kshatriya lineage from the common source of Sun or Moon, the women and men of each generation became sisters and brothers; as brothers and sisters could not marry each other, no man or woman is allowed to marry within the community. Hence the ladies of the Suryavamsis have to marry Brah-

mans, who are a caste above them. While the ladies of the Somavamsi group may marry a Brahman or a Suryavamsi Kshatriya their men should always have to look for a wife from the Sudra caste.

These partial intermarriages were not concubinage, as some are inclined to presume, but were legalised by social customs. From Manusmriti, it will be seen that such marriages were legal and the sons of such marriage had the right of inheritance. But on the Malabar Coast the right of inheriting the father's property did not arise, as the Kshatriyas and the Sudras were all Marumakathayis, or inheritors of the mother's property. However, these intermarriages, though partial, created a kind of communal and social harmony the like of which is seldom found anywhere else in India. It might be due to the social harmony that this part of India kept almost free from foreign conquests, or remained least disturbed by foreign invasions.

But the effect of Kshatriyanisation in general would appear to have been estrangement between the rulers and the ruled. The rulers and the ruled, before Kshatriyanisation, were of the same community, tribe or clan. The Kshatriyanisation with the investiture of the sacred-thread and Brahmanic rites separated the rulers from the ruled. Adoption of these rites and ways made the Kshatriyas a superior caste, though lower than the Brahmans, but higher than others. These Kshatriyas abstained from intermarriage and interdining with the

the sovereignty as well as its prerogative. A dignitary called Rona came forward, invested the king with a drawn sword, and then knelt before him. He placed the sword in the hand of the king by saying "I invest thee with the right of beheading the people"; and he knelt before the king saying "Do thou thy will." The king in token of the powers newly vested in him, touched the neck of the kneeling chief with the sword, before he was allowed to rise.

This shows what was the old custom, when no king was installed without common consent, and whatever power the king had was not by divine right, but conferred on him by the people.

But such idealism and rituals began to disappear with the rise of the new Kshatriyanised castes. Since then, the Brahmans crowned the kings, and the non-Brahmans were excluded even from witnessing the ceremony. The new oath the king was to take may be seen from the Mahabharata, according to which the king had to swear that "the Dvija (Brahman) shall never be punished by me, and the world shall be saved from the intermixture of classes" Thus the Brahmans became above the Law; the kings no longer received the insignia of sovereignty from the people, and their power became dependent on the Brahmans. In the Mahabharata it is said that "the Kshatriya power is the source of Brahmans, and the Brahmans are the source of the Kshatriya power. When these two powers constantly help each other, they attain high prosperity; but if their primeval

alliance is broken, everything is plunged into confusion.

When the kings made no alliance with the people, they were there to obey the dictates of the Brahmans; the Brahmans had the power of dethroning the king, if he dared to go against their interest.

Under such circumstances, what was there to hold the people attached to any particular sovereign? Of course remuneration was there, or a price for loyalty. But if one was prepared to render service, his remuneration was surely irrespective of the fact whether he served A or B. The medieval history of India records many instances of desertion. The real cause for such may be traced to the social estrangement, between the rulers and the ruled. The rulers and the ruled had little in common. Even in the battlefield no Kshatriya king could sip a 'kula' (earthen cup) of water touched by his own minister or Chief of the army if he happened to be a non-Brahman. The wonder is how even such loyalty as it was was in existence. Evidently they feared worse from the enemies.

The new social order, created by the Brahmans, was made to fit in with the Varnasrama-dharma ideology. According to this ideology, the duty of a Kshatriya was "study, performance of sacrifice, military occupation, and protection of life", while that of a Brahman was "study, teaching, performance of sacrifice, doing sacrifice for others, and giving and receiving gifts." Though the new order of caste was made parallel with the old Kshatriya classification, the privilege of conducting

sacrifices was taken away from the Kshatriyas and made an exclusive prerogative of the Brahmans, and in return they were given an exclusive right, as of fighting. Before this, fighting was not the allotted duty of any special caste; military occupation was open to all. From Kautilya's *Arthashastra* it will be seen that the army consisted of all classes or castes, though the Brahmans were considered a bit soft to be soldiers. Yet Pushya Mitra, the usurper of the Mauryan throne, and his ancestors were military commanders, and the Brahmans on the whole proved to be the best fighting material, even during the British regime.

How the Brahmans made themselves indispensable to the Kshatriyas may be seen from the following extract from the Aitareya Brahmana, Book VIII. V. 24 :—"The gods do not eat the food offered by a king who has no house-priest (Purohita). The king intending to bring a sacrifice, should appoint a Brahman to the office of house-priest. The king, who (wishes) that the gods might eat his food, has, after having appointed a Purohita, however, use of the (sacred) fires (without having actually established them) which lead to heaven; for the Purohita is his Ahavanya fire, his wife the Grahayatya, and his son the Dakshina fire. When he does anything for the Purohita, then he sacrifices in the Ahavanya fire (for the Purohita represents this fire). When he does (anything) for his wife, then he verily sacrifices in the Grahayatya fire. When he does (anything) or his son, then he verily sacrifices in the Dakshina fire. These fires thus appeased carry,

pleased by the wishes for sacrificing, lead the Kshatriya to the heaven world and make the royal dignity, bravery, a kingdom, and subjects to rule over. But if the Kshatriya has no wish for sacrificing (not doing things for the Purohita and his family), then the fires get displeased with him, throw him out of the heaven world, (and deprive him) of the royal dignity, bravery, his kingdom and subjects over whom he rules." Under such circumstances, who will not have a Purohita ?

CHAPTER X

HARSHA AND THE REVIVAL OF BUDDHISM

From the ashes of the Gupta empire, as it were, a new empire came to existence. It was that of Harsha, though not so extensive and long-lived. During the latter part of the sixth century Prabhakara Varman of Thaneswar, son of a Gupta princess, made successful encroachments on neighbouring states and assumed imperial powers. He waged war on Malwa and the Huna state of Sialkot. He formed close relationship with the Maukhari king, Grahvarman of Kanauj by giving him a daughter, Rajya-Sri, in marriage. The Hunas were finally crushed by a force sent under the command of his eldest son Rajya-vardhana, a boy of sixteen. The boy on his return found that his father was dead, and soon after assuming sovereignty he heard that Deva Gupta, king of Malwa had formed an alliance with Sasanka, king of Bengal, invaded Kanauj, killed king Grahavarman and took his queen Rajya-Sri prisoner. Rajya Vardhana soon marched on to Kanauj with a cavalry of 10,000 and defeated the king of Malwa, but in an attempt to rescue his sister lost his life c. 606 A. D., at the hands of Sasanka. Harsha, the younger brother of Rajya-Vardhana, took the reins of government on behalf of his widowed sister-in-law, marched against the enemies, rescued his sister from the Vindhya hills and pursued Sansaka, the slayer of his brother. Harsha formed an alliance with the king of Kama-

rupa (Asam), and crushed the might of Sasanka. Success after success made the young Harsha dream of greater achievements. He then assumed full sovereignty ; and at the head of an army of 50,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, and 5,000 elephants, started on a career of conquest. In the words of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, "he went from east to west subduing all who were not obedient; the elephants were not unharnessed, nor the soldiers unhelmeted". Within a short period of five and a half years, through his untiring efforts, he became the master of the whole of Northern India. Ambition took him further. He advanced as far as the Narmada: but his further progress was foiled by Pulikesin II, the great Chalukya king, about the year 620 A. D.

Harsha actually ruled from 606 to 647 A. D. Hiuen Tsang spoke well of his administration. The principal source of the revenue was from the crown lands, amounting to one-sixth of the produce. The European historians do not appear to believe that the rate was so low. Perhaps they are not accustomed to such low rates. One-sixth called *Raja-bhaga* was the traditional rate in India. In some places it was even less. In Travancore till the beginning of the present century, the landlords did not demand more than one-tenth, which they called '*michavaram*', signifying that it was one-tenth of the net produce.

The officials were remunerated by grant of land. This was contrary to the practice that was in vogue during the reign of Chandra Gupta Maurya, when all officials were paid in cash from

the treasury. "Compulsory labour upon public works were paid for". "The personal services exacted from the subjects were moderate". But it seems that the maintenance of law and order appears to have been less efficient than it was in the days of the Guptas. Roads and river routes were not safe. Robbery and dacoity appears to have been common. Punishments were severe. Mutilation of limbs, as a punishment, was not rare. Education in the upper classes was widely diffused. Harsha himself was an accomplished calligraphist, and he was a great patron of literature.

In later years of his life he became very religious. If he had not taken to Buddhism like Asoka, his empire may not have crashed immediately after his death. The religious activities of Harsha were not liked by the Brahmans; not that he was against Brahmanism, but he showed more zeal for Buddhism. First the Brahmans laid a plot to assassinate Hieun Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, who, as it were, was completing the conversion of Harsha to Buddhism. Then they made an attempt on Harsha himself. It took place in Allahabad, where the king was completing a great celebration, which he commenced at a special assembly held in Kanauj. The king marched along the southern bank of the Ganges from Kanauj, attended by an enormous multitude, while his friend and ally Kumara, king of Kamarupa, walked down with another though less imposing crowd on the northern bank. The march took a period of ninety days. When the Emperor's cavalcade reached Prayag, he was received by the kings of Kamarupa and Vallabhi (west-

ern India) and eighteen tributary princes with four thousand Buddhist monks, and some three thousand Jains and Brahmans. A large monastery and shrine was constructed on the river bank for the occasion. The shrine had a tower 100 feet high, and contained a golden image of Buddha, equal in stature to Harsha himself. There were other images of similar nature to be taken out in procession. They were escorted by twenty kings and three hundred highly caparisoned elephants. The ceremonial umbrella over the main image of Buddha was held by the emperor himself, while princes of the royal blood waved the 'Chamras', or white whisks standing by him. These were sufficient in themselves to rouse the ire of the Brahmans. But to aggravate it further while doing the menial services to the image of Buddha, the emperor was attired in the garb of the Vedic god Sakra (Indra), while his friend Kumara of Kamarupa was attired in the guise of Brahma. This was an affront to the Rig Vedis and Atharva Vedis alike. Certainly no Brahman could stand such a wanton insult to his religion and supreme gods. Under the sting of these insults they laid a plot to assassinate Harsha. First they set fire to his monastery by means of flying arrows. The fire was put down and the king was saved. Then on another day, while he, attended by a princely train, was coming down the steps of the great stupa, one of the conspirators attacked him with a dagger. There again the emperor was saved. Five hundred Brahmans were arrested. On being interrogated they confessed their crime. All the

principal conspirators were executed and some hundred Brahmans were sent into exile. Evidently, that portion of the Law of Manu, that a Brahman should not be subjected to capital punishment, was not then in force.

Harsha followed the Mahayana Buddhism, which was not much different from Vaishnavism. Like Asoka, he built hospitals and rest-houses all over the country. Though these rest-houses may have been mainly for the wandering monks, the others who were prepared to take advantage of it do not appear to have been debarred from their use. In certain respects he went a step further than Asoka. It was by gradual steps Asoka aimed to stop the slaughter of animals for food. Harsha, on the other hand, forbade the slaughter of all living things with 'utmost strictness and scant regard for human life'; the penalty for the violation of the order was the sentence of death without hope of pardon. A man had to be hanged if he killed a fowl for his food, while Asoka allowed a pea-fowl for his royal table. This appears to have been the first time in the history of India that vegetarianism was enforced by royal command. Neither the Buddhists nor the Brahmans appear to have been complete vegetarians at this time; perhaps the theory of the transmigration advocated by the Neo-Buddhists may have influenced Harsha to take this drastic step. How could one know whether the goat that was killed for dinner was not one's own father reincarnate? The theosophic theory of reincarnation provides against such a contingency, for according to them

man cannot reincarnate below the level of humanity, though instances against the presumption can be found in the Puranas.

The ruin of the Mautryan empire was due to Asoka's weakness for religion. But the religious policy of Asoka was mild when compared to that of Harsha. Harsha may have been forced by circumstances to institute a theocratic state. Whether he was a creature of circumstances or not, the theocratic state that he created faced instantaneous ruin just after his death. He died in 647 A. D. The first one to revolt was his own minister Arjuna or Arjunasva. He attacked the Chinese mission, which obviously was Buddhist, massacred the personnel and confiscated their property, including all the rich presents bestowed on them by Harsha. The Chinese envoy, however, escaped, and returned with a force of 7,000 horse, supplied by the ruler of Nepal, 1,200 picked men supplied by the king of Tibet, and with abundant supply of cattle, and other accoutrements supplied by the king of Kamarupa. He then infested and stormed the chief fort of Tirhut. Three thousand of the garrison were beheaded, and ten thousand drowned in the neighbouring river. Though Arjuna escaped for a time, eventually he was taken prisoner and sent to China in captivity. Finally the victorious envoy took the entire family of Harsha as prisoners of war, which may indicate that they were not supporters of Buddhism. Thus the last empire in the north met with an unparalleled ruin, through the religious bigotry of its own founder.

CHAPTER XI

STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN THE SOUTH

The Satavahana occupation of the North brought the North and the South closer together. As stated before it took the Vedic religion beyond the confines of Aryavarta. But it took about a thousand years before the Brahmans of South India began to take serious notice of it. First Nath Muni and later on Ramanuja were the early exponents of the Vedic religion in the South. The contact between the North and the South brought benefits to both. As shown before, from the days of Satavahana kings the ideals of South Indian astronomy began to gain ground in the North.

From the days of the Guptas Vaishnavism began to spread towards the South. The Chalukyas who ruled over the northern regions of the Deccan, from the middle of the fifth century A. D. were Vaishnavites of the northern variety. They were of northern origin. They had Varaha, or the bear Avatar of Vishnu, for their crescent. Buddha Gupta (c. 495-545) of the Gupta dynasty dedicated a huge image of Varaha at Eran, in the southern district of Saugor (Madhya Pradesh). According to some scholars the Chalukyas were a branch of the Guptas. According to Banerji, when they spread all over the Deccan "the Brahmans invented a special genealogy for them."

Their chief opponents in the South at first were

the Pallavas. Some historians trace Pallava origin to the Pahalavas of the North. But they would appear to have missed one salient point. Pallava inscriptions show they spelt their name with double l with one dot below. The letter l with one and two dots below are purely Dravidian, and language of the Indo-Germanic group has these letters. Therefore the Pallavas should deserve a purely South Indian origin.

The Pallavas would appear to have come to prominence during the days of the Satavahanas. Jouveau-Dubreuil is of opinion that the Pallavas obtained their kingdom by intermarriage with the Satavahana kings about 236 A. D. Their capital was at Kanchi, the famous Kanchipuram of later days. The expansion of the Pallavas disturbed the Chalukyas, who had their original seat at Indurmani, south of the river Krishna, and they migrated to Badami, in the southern district of Bijapur. This became the cause of a long feud between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas.

The first Pallava king was Sivaskandavarman, a name that indicates he was a worshipper of Siva and a non-Brahman, while Satavahanas were Vedic Brahmans. As Sivaskandavarman obtained his kingdom by marrying a Satavahana princess, it will indicate that in the third century A. D., as it was in the 5th century B. C. (*e. g.* Udayana's marriage with a Brahman bride) there was no restriction that a non-Brahman should not marry even a Brahman girl of princely rank.

The Pallava king who stopped the progress

of Samudra Gupta towards the South was Vishnugopa. He was third in succession to Sivasakanda, his predecessor being Vijayaskandavarman. The names of these two kings will indicate that they worshipped or paid allegiance to Vishnu. But in the South, as it is even to-day, they worship Vishnu and Siva alike. The trouble between the followers of Vishnu and Siva does not appear to have been in existence before the days of the Vaishnava Acharyas.

The Chalukyas, who migrated to Badami, would appear to have been well established there under Pulikesin I, who performed a horse sacrifice to celebrate his victory. He was succeeded by his son Kirtivarman I, in 566 A. D. He could be classed among the great conquerors of the world, among Napoleon and Alexander. But it seems that he had no Sutas to sing his praise, or the records kept by them were lost, or nobody cared to have them translated into Sanskrit, when it became the language of the elites in India. His conquests were most colossal. He overran the whole of Southern India beyond the Vindhya and the countries on the east of them as far north as Magadha (Bihar). The kingdoms he marched through and the kings he received homage from were those of Chola, Pandya, Mushika (South Travancore), Kerala, Nalas (Bellary and Karnul), Mauryas (Kokan), Kadambas (Belgaum and Dharwar), Kalinga, Anga, Vanga and Magadha. After these exploits, he could have performed the horse sacrifice like Rama of Ayodhya; but so far there is no evidence, that he did it.

Pulikesin had two sons, Kirtivarman and Mangalesa. Kirtivarman succeeded his father. Mangalesa probably was sent by his brother to subdue the Kalachuris of the Deccan plateau, which he did. He also succeeded in consolidating the Chalukya possessions on the east and west. In India, time after time, it happened that when a powerful king died, his feudatories or those who had been subdued by him showed a tendency to revolt. Mangalesa's exploits appear to have been to bring to submission some of those who thus revolted. However, it enabled him to occupy the throne after his brother. Even before he came to the throne, he was responsible for excavating a large temple for Vishnu and a large hall on the hillside below the citadel of Badami, which was then called Vatapi.

Mangalesa then tried to secure the succession to the throne for his son, which was strongly resented by Pulikesin, the son of Kirtivarman. A battle took place between the uncle and nephew in which Mangalesa was killed and the nephew occupied the throne as Pulikesin II in A. D. 608. For the next twenty years, this able king devoted himself to consolidating his possessions and aggressive actions towards his neighbours. On the west coast Konkan, Lata and Gujarat, in the north Rajputana and Malwa felt the weight of his arms. In the east he established a kingdom between the Godavari and Krishna with its capital at the stronghold of Pishtapura (Pithapuram), under the Viceroyalty of his brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana.

A few years later (615 A. D.), it became the independent kingdom of Eastern Chalukya.

He then emulated his grandsire and subdued Pallava, Chola, and Kerala. On the Pallavas he inflicted a crushing defeat and captured their capital Kanchi. He then extended his kingdom towards the Narmada in A. D. 1630. Thus he happened to encounter Harsha, king of Kanauj when he invaded Kathiawad in A. D., 636. Pulikesan II formed an alliance with Sasanka, king of Bengal in the east, and with the assistance of the kings of Valabhi and Broach on the west, stemmed the invasion of Harsha and drove him back, to devote the rest of his life to literary pursuits and propagation of Buddhism. The fight with Harsha lasted till A. D., 638. Even before this in A. D. 635, he established diplomatic relation with Khusru, king of Persia.

However, the Chalukyan supremacy was not to be left undisturbed. The Pallavas of Kanchi under Narasimhavarman I took up arms against Pulikesin, defeated him successively in the battles of Pariyala, Manimangala and Suramara and finally attacked him at Badami. Pulikesin died during the battle and the Pallavas sacked the Chalukya capital. But the Chalukyas soon rallied under Vikramaditya I, son of Pulikesin, attacked the Pallavas and captured their capital Kanchi. Still the struggle continued; during the long period of 642 to 670 A. D., he had to fight against the three Pallava kings, Narasimha Varman I, Mahendra Varman II and Paramesvara Varman II. After the defeat of the Pallavas, he humbled the pride of the Cho-

las, Pandyas and Keralas. Vikramaditya was succeeded by his son Vindiyaditya. They would appear to have led a campaign towards the north as far as the rivers Yamuna and Ganga. During the time of Vikramaditya II, the Pallavas rose up again under Narasimha Varman ; he was defeated and Kanchi was sacked again. The struggle with the Pallavas kept the Chalukyas busy. Had it not been for this the Chalukyas might have gone to the rescue of Sindh from the Arab invader Muhammad bin Qassim A. D., 712, as they had already established a branch family in Gujrat from the time of Pulikesin II. Whether it was in the north or south the strife between the neighbours had always been the main factor that contributed to the success of the invaders.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE EVE OF THE MOHAMMEDAN CONQUEST

India had never been a political unit before the days of the British. But she had never been so disunited politically and socially as she was on the eve of the Mohammedan conquest. The Mohammedan conquest of North India began during the early part of the eighth century A. D. "Want of unity and coherence among the Hindus", says Banerji, "was one of the principal causes of their downfall." Another historian, Ishwari Prasad, says what India lacked at this time was political unity and social solidarity. She was not lacking in leaders. "Her leaders counted by hundreds, her energy was frittered away in petty squabbles between various states."

Who were the leaders? General impression is that they were Rajputs or Kshatriyas. This is only partly true. How their kings were dependent on the priests has already been indicated. When the invasion took place, the Mohammedans could have come only through Baluchistan and Afghanistan; at both these vulnerable points the Brahmans were the rulers. When the Arabs invaded Sindh, a Brahman family was ruling there. When the Turks invaded Afghanistan, a Brahman family was ruling there.

Sindh was once strong. The first naval expedition against Sindh took place during the time

of Khalif Umar in the year 636-37 A. D., though it was only a raid for plunder, the Arab navy was defeated, and the Khalif forbade any further attempt. Then Sindh was under non-Brahman rule. When Hiuen Tsang visited Sindh in the seventh century A. D., Sindh and Makran (Baluchistan) were under a Sudra king who was a Buddhist. It was from his dynasty that the realm had passed into the hands of a Brahman minister, Chah.

When the Turkish leader, Subuktgin invaded Gandhara (Afghanistan), it was under another Brahman ruler, Jayapala, after it had been usurped by Lalliya, a Brahman minister, from Turki Shahi dynasty, whose kingdom extended from Sarhind to Laghan, and from Kashmir to Multan.

Though much about the Brahman rule in these regions is not available, a great deal about it in Sindh and Makran, at the invasion of the Arabs, is known from the writings of the Arab historians.

When Mohammad bin Qasim, undertook the invasion of Sindh in A. D. 712, he had a combined force of only 6000 Syrians and Turanians under his command. Yet within a short period of about two years, he took the Brahman stronghold of Debal, then Dahir where the Rajputs made a strong resistance, and then in quick succession, he took Brahmanabad, Aror and Multan, from where he sent a cavalry of 10,000 strong to Kanauj demanding submission from its Rajput king. How did he manage to do all this? Though he may have received some reinforcement from Mohammad

Harun, the Governor of Makran, he must have had casualties in his forces, he must have left sufficient number of men at each of the places he had taken for garrison duty, and he must have had a competent force left with him.

The secret of his success may be seen from what has been stated by Ishwari Prasad. He says, "Mohammad bin Qasim enlisted under his banner a large number of discontented Jats and Medes, who had old accounts to settle with the intolerant Hindu Government, which had inflicted great humiliation upon them. They had been forbidden to ride in saddles, wear fine clothes, to uncover the head, and this condemnation to the position of mere hewers of wood and drawers of water had embittered animosities to such an extent, that they readily threw in their lot with the foreigners." At Debal, the nobility that consisted of the Buddhists did not join the Brahmans against the invader. Debal does not appear to have been an exception. When Multan was taken "the people, merchants, traders and artisans, together with Jats and Medes of the surrounding country, whom the native Government has persecuted, waited upon the conqueror and paid him homage". Is it not what happened at every successive invasion in India, whether by Muslims or Christians?

The administration of the other states, which were not directly under the Brahmans, does not appear to have been different. Where the king was not a Brahman, he had to leave the administration in the hands of Brahman ministers and coun-

cillors. "To learned Brahman, distinguished among them all," says *Manu Smriti*, "let the king import his momentous council.....To him, with full confidence, let him entrust all transactions" (M-D : VII. 58 & 59).

The historians deal little with the cause of lackness in social solidarity. But texts like *Manu Smriti* do supply the reason. It was religion, later developments in Hinduism, in which caste distinctions were brought to the fore, presumptions by higher castes enforced by political power, and denial of equality to the lower castes, who were the producers, artisans and craftsmen. Was it likely that they would put their heart and soul in a fight against an invader, whose defeat would only forge more links in the chain of their serfdom? Of course there was the question of remuneration, but it was quite immaterial whether it came from A or B, from a Hindu or Muslim. People resent oppression more from their own kind than from an outsider. The English in India scored tremendously on this point.

But the country was not without men of vision. Sankara came as a redeemer, to get rid of caste, to remove religious squabbles and to preach a universal religion.

He hailed from Kerala, where the Brahman arrogance and caste restrictions attained the greatest height. There no one was to raise a finger against a Brahman, even to touch his feet unless one was prepared for purgatory. There the people were graded untouchables and unapproachables

with different degrees of unapproachability, which varied from four steps to sixty four steps. There for a Brahman even the king was an untouchable and different grades of Brahmans kept untouchability between themselves. Untouchability had been observed to such an extent that one's own left hand was untouchable to the right hand. The unapproachables were not allowed the use of public thoroughfares unless they indicated their approach by constant shouts of humiliation.

It was in this land that Sankara was born. He was born in Kalladi in 788 A. D. About his birth and bringing up various stories are current. One that is often repeated is this. His father was a pious, old and conscientious Brahman, with a young wife. He was a priest in a local temple. His wife became pregnant. He became suspicious. He took the suspicion to the elders of his community. As was the usual practice among them, the elders conducted an enquiry, and the poor pregnant lady was outcasted. As an outcaste she was not accessible even to the lowest Paraya.

However, the child was born, and he was called Sankara. As the mother was a lady of culture and learning, she brought him up in the best way possible, and educated him. At the age of sixteen, he left his mother, went to Kasi and studied under a teacher called Govinda. He studied the Upanishads, Purva-Mimansa, Gita and other religious texts. He became a profound scholar, a great logician and conversationalist. From Kasi he went to Magadha, which was then under the rule of one king, Hala, and a great centre of learn-

ing. It was during the days of Kumarila Bhatta, a famous exponent of Mimansa doctrine that Sankara had many interviews and discussions with the great scholar, who was finally defeated in argument. Henceforth he became a disciple of Sankara, and accepted the Vedanta doctrine, which he was then advocating.

From there Sankara proceeded to Prayag (Allahabad), where he converted the great scholar Mandana Misra to Vedanta. His next trip was to Badrinath, which was also a centre of great learning where he met the great teacher Gaudapada. Then he paid a visit to Kailasa, whence he returned to South India, with five Siva-lingams, which he set up at five centres of studies he established later. While he was sojourning in the mountains of the Himalayas, he is said to have had the 'vision splendid', which made him dedicate his life to the cause of humanity. Henceforth he became a preacher and teacher. During his long trek to the south, he visited many holy places and made converts. At Kasi, which was even then a stronghold of orthodoxy, he made a long stay, and made many converts. Raja Ratan Singh, king of Kasi, urged him to stay on. He left the place with the parting words. "My guru (monitor) meant me to be an itinerant teacher ; my mission is to travel and teach all over this land". He visited Dwaraka (Gujarat), Puri (Orissa), Kanchi, Rameshwar, and many other sacred places which were the main centres of religion and orthodoxy. He was about twenty-six at this time. He paid a visit to Kerala to see his aging mother, who died

while he was with her. Disgusted with the treatment he received in his own country from the Brahmans, he repaired to Kanchi, which he made his headquarters for the future.

He launched himself on a vigorous missionary propaganda campaign. He established five centres for the propagation, of the new doctrine of Vedanta. one at his headquarters at Kanchi, one in Puri, hallowed by the worship of Jagannath, one in Dwaraka, hallowed by the name of Krishna ; one at Sringeri, Mysore, whence came the Rishi Sringeri, whose sacrifices brought about the birth of Rama and finally one at Badrinath, the place of his enlightenment. The selection of these sites itself will indicate that his mission was an integration of various views and sects. To unite them all in the name of Vedanta, missionaries were recruited who could emerge from these centres, scour the country, preach and teach the new doctrine. He integrated all gods, Vedic and non-Vedic, he conceived the theme of Para-Brahman, from whom all gods and goddesses have received their essence and powers. He aimed at a universal religion. But he was too early for his time. His scheme was upset by others. Ramanuja Acharya's Visisht Advaitam gained ground, which again established caste superiority.

Sankara was for the abolition of caste. His followers were recruited from every caste, as it is even today. He made the Brahmans and other twice-born break their sacred-thread at their initiation. He made them all clean-shaven, as differences in the ways of keeping the hair on the head and face emphasise local differences. He made them

eat whatever food was given to them irrespective of the caste or creed of the host ; and to make the rule more rigorous he made it compulsory that no one of his followers should leave anything in the plate after the repast. He abolished the custom of burning the dead body among his followers, as the privilege of burning the dead body was at that time exclusively for the Brahmans. He forbade after-death ceremonies which is the main string on which the caste is held up. He preached against animal sacrifice and forbade the sacrifice of cows. He forbade 'Sati' or the custom of widows being burnt with the dead body of their husbands.

Social and religious reforms that stand in the name of Sankara are many. Kerala traditions give sixty-four tems. But some of them are interpolations placed in the mouth of Sankara to emphasise and maintain caste distinctions. Sankara's reaction to Sati has had its meritorious effect in South India, where Sati practically ceased to exist. But North India had to wait for Lord William Bentinck a thousand years later to abolish Sati. Though Sankara did not advocate widow marriage, he asked widows to dedicate their lives to religious pursuits, which at the present time has become semi-starvation and drudgery in a relation's house for many a widow. Sankara preached that there should be no difference between the Saivites and Vaishnavites. Though Kerala followed his teaching in this respect, elsewhere in the south they overlooked this and the strife between the two sects became more acute since the days of Ramanuja Acharya which made them go for each other's

throat instead of uniting to withstand the Muslim invasions of the South. Gotra distinctions and ideological differences undermined unity in the North, while Saiva-Vaishnava disputes in the South arrayed the people in two groups, which undermined unity of action and unity of purpose.

India is a land of religion and religions. By wise administration and equal treatment Britain made India into a nation, but separatist tendencies are pulling her apart. What will be the consequence is for the future historians to write.

APPENDIX I

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

Genera- tions	Iksvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
98. B. A.	Iksvaku	Ila or Ili	Saryati of Saryata kingdom, Nabhan- distha of Vaisali.
97. B. A.	Vikusi-Sasada	Pururavas	Nimi of Videha.
96. B. A.	Kakustha	Ayu	Amavasus of Kanya- kubhja. Anarta of Anarta.
95. B. A.	Anenas	Nahusha	Sukra and Brihaspati of Deva and Asura fight. Vena who con- ceived Brahman first.
94. B. A.	Vena Prithu vainya	Yayati	Bhalandana of Vaisa- li. Kshatravrdha of Kasi. Rochamana of Anarta.
93. B. A.	Vistarasva	Puru	Yadu, Druhyu, Tur- vasu, Reva of Anarta.
92. B. A.	Ardra	Janamejaya I.	Kroantu and Raivata of Anarta. Sons of Ya- du. Vatsapri of Vai- sali, author of RV : X 45 in praise of Agni.
91. B. A.	Yuvanasva I.	Pracinavant	Sunahotra of Kasi.
90. B. A.	Sravasta	Pravira	
89. B. A.	Brahadasva	Manasyu	
88. B. A.	Kuvalasva	Abhayada	Kasa of Kasi.

Genera- tions	Ikshvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
87. B. A. Drdhasva		Sudhanvan	
86. B. A. Pramoda		Bahugava	Haihaya of the Hai- hayas, descendant of Sahasrajit.
85. B. A. Haryasva I.		Samyati	
84. B. A. Nikumbha		Abamyati	
83. B. A. Samhastasva		Raudrasva	
82. B. A. Akrasva		Rceyu	
81. B. A. Prasanajit		Matinara	Citraratha of the Yadavas.
80. B. A. Yuvanasva II.		Tamsu	Sasabindu of the Yadavas, who drove Druhyus to the North- West.
79. B. A. Mandhatr			Who drove Druhyus to Gandhara. Sahnja of Haihaya.
78. B. A. Purukutsa			Jahu of Kanyakubja; Mahismant of Haihaya, Gandhara of Druhyus.
77. B. A. Trasadasyu			Mahamanas of Ana- va.
76. B. A. Sambhuta			Bhadrasenya of Hai- hyas.
75. B. A. Anaranya			Usinara of Anava.
74. B. A. Trasadasva			Sivi of Anava.
73. B. A. Haryasva II.			Kusa of Kanyakub- ja.
72. B. A. Vasumata.			Kusasua Kusika of Kanyakubja. Kekya son of Sivi.
71. B. A. Tridhanvan			

Genera- tions	Ikshvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
70. B. A. Trayyaruna			Kritavirya of Haiha- yas. Gadhi of Kanya- kubja.
69. B. A. (Vasistha rule)			Arjuna of Haihayas.
68. B. A. Satyavrata- Trisanku			Visvamitra of Kanya- kubja. Vasistha of Ayodhya.
67. B. A. Harischandra.			
66. B. A. Rohita			Madhuchandas. De- vatata or Sunahsepa, First of two Rig Ve- dic Rishis.
65. B. A. Harita			Talajangha of Haiha- yas. Astaka of Kanya- kubja.
64. B. A. Vijaya			Vitihotra of Haiha- yas.
63. B. A. Ruruka			
62. B. A. Vrika			Karandhama of Vai- sali. Haryasvu of Kasi.
61. B. A. Bahu (Asita).			Aviksit of Vaisali.
60. B. A. (Tala jangha rule)			Marutta of Vaisali and Brihasapati who refused to do sacri- fices for him.
			Divodas II of Kasi.
			Vidarbha the Yada- va King of Berar.
59. B. A. Sagara			Pratardana of Kasi, Bali of the Anavas.

Genera- tions	Ikshvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
58. B. A. Asamjas			Visvamitra father of Sakuntala and Kanva her foster father. Anga of the Anavas.
57. B. A. Amsumant		Dusyanta	
56. B. A. Dilipa I.		Bharata	
55. B. A. Bhagiratha		"	
54. B. A. Sruta		Bharadvaja	
53. B. A. Nabhaga		Vitatha	
52. B. A. Ambarisa		Bhuvamanyu	
51. B. A. Sindhuvipa		Brihatksatra	
50. B. A. Avutayus		Suhotra	
49. B. A. Rituparna		Hastin	
48. B. A. Sarvakama			
47. B. A. Sudasa		Ajamidha	Dvimidha, Founder of Dvimidha dynasty. Visala, who built Vaisali.
46. B. A. Mitrasaha- Kalmasapada			Brihadvasu of South Pancala. Nila of N. Pancala.
45. B. A. Amasaka			Brihadisu of S. Pan- cala. Susanti of N. Pancala.
44. B. A. Mulaka			Puru Janu of N. Pan- cala.
43. B. A. Sataratha			Riksa of N. Pancala.
42. B. A. Aidavida- Vrddhasarman			
41. B. A. Visvasaha I.			Bhrimyasva of N. Pancala.
40. B. A. Dilipa (II) Khatvanga.			Mudgala of North Pancala.
39. B. A. Dirghabahu			Brahmashttha of N. Pancala.

Genera- tions	Iksvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
38. B. A. Raghu			Vidhryasva of North Pancala
37. B. A. Aja		Rksa I.	Divodasa „ „
36. B. A. Dasaratha.			Mitrayu „ „
			Pramati of Vaisali, Rishi Sringa.
35. B. A. Rama			Mitreya Soma of North Pancala.
34. B. A. Rama			Srnjaya of North Pancala
33. B. A. Kusa			Cyavana „ „ Vriani and Andhaka of Yadavas
32. B. A. Atithi			Sudasa of North Pancala. Visvamitra, Vasistha.
31. B. A. Nishadha		Samvarana	Sahadeva of North Pancala.
30. B. A. Nala			Somaka „ „
29. B. A. Nabhas		Kuru	Rantideva Jantu of North Pan- cala, last of the line.
28. B. A. Pundarika		„	
27. B. A. Ksemadhanvan		Pariksit I	Vrani of the Yadavas.
26. B. A. Devanika		Janamejaya II	
25. B. A. Abhinagu			
24. B. A. Paripatra		Viduratha	
23. B. A. Bala		Sarvabhauma	
22. B. A. Uktha		Jayatsena	Vasu Caidya of Cedi.
21. B. A. Vajranabha		Aradhin	Brihadratha of Maga- dha.

Genera- tions	Iksvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
20. B. A. Sankhana		Mahabhauma	Kusagra of Magdha
19. B. A. Vyusitasva		Ayutayus	
18. B. A. Visvasaha II		Akrodhana	
17. B. A. Hiranyanabha		Devatithi	
16. B. A. Pusya		Rksa II	
15. B. A. Dhruvasanti		Bhimasena	
14. B. A. Sudarsana		Dilipa	
13. B. A. Agnivarna		Pratipa	
12. B. A. Sighra			
11. B. A. Maru			
10. B. A. Prasusruta		Santanu	Devapi, author of RV : X 98.
9. B. A. Susadhi	(Bhisma)		Asita
8. B. A. Amarsha and Sahasvant	Vicitravirya		Vyasa. Damaghosa of Cedi.
7. B. A. Visrutavant	Pandu		Jarasandha of Mag- dha.
6. B. A. Brihadbala	Suyodhana		Krishna. Vaisampa- yana Sahadeva of Magdha, Sisupala of Cedi, Karna of Anga. Devala Dhaumya.
5. B. A. Brihatkasya	Yudhishtar		Somapi of Magadha
4. B. A. Guruksepa	Pariksit II		Srulavan of Magadha <i>Yajnavalkya</i>
3. B. A. Vatsa	Janamejaya III		Ayutayu of Magadha <i>Asuri</i> .
2. B. A. Vastubhuva	Satanika		Niramitra of Magadha <i>Asurayana</i>
1. B. A. Prativyama	Asvamedha- Datta		Suksetra, o' Maga- dha.
0. B. A. Divakara	Adhisima-		<i>Brihatkarmau</i>

Genera- tions	Ikshvaku- Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
1. A. A. Sahadeva	Krishna Nikaksu	(Senajit of Magadha) Srutanjaya of Magadha.	
2. A. A. Brihadasva	Usna	Virpa " "	
3. A. A. Brahmaratha	Chitraratha	Suchi " "	
4. A. A. Supratika	Sucidratha	Ksemya " "	
5. A. A. Marudeva	Vrishiman	Suvrata " "	
6. A. A. Sunaksetra	Sushena	Dharma " "	
7. A. A. Kinnara	Sunitha	Susarma " "	
8. A. A. Antariksa	Rica	Drirsena " "	
9. A. A. Suvarna	Nricaksu	Sumati " "	
10. A. A. Amritajit	Sukhabala	Subala " "	
11. A. A. Brihadvaja	Pariplava	Satyajit " "	
12. A. A. Dharma	Sunaya	Ripunjaya " "	
13. A. A. Kritanjaya	Medhavi	Pradyota	
14. A. A. Nripanjaya	Visaka	Palaka	
14. A. A. Ranjaya	Nripanjaya	Visakayupa of Magadha.	
15. A. A. Sanjaya	Mridu	Janaka " "	
16. A. A. Sakya	Tigma	Sisunaga	
17. A. A. Krudrodana	Trihadratha	Kakavarman "	
18. A. A. Kundaka	Vesdana	Ksemadharman "	
19. A. A. Prasana-jit	Satanika II	Kshatrayuja	
20. A. A. Vidabha	Udayana	Bimbisara of Magadha.	
21. A. A. Ksudaka	Ahinara	Ajatasatru " "	
22. A. A. Kundaka	Khandapani	Darvaka " "	
23. A. A. Suratha	Niramitra	Udayasva " "	
24. A. A. Sumitra	Ksemaka	Nandivardhana "	
25. A. A.		Mahanandi " "	
26. A. A.		Mahapadma Nanda "	
		" " "	

Genera- tions	Iksvaku Line of Ayodhya	Puru Line	Contemporaries
27. A. A.			Mahapadma Nanda „
28. A. A.			Sumatya „
29. A. A.			„ „
30. A. A.			Chandra Gupta „
31. A. A.			Bindusara „
32. A. A.			Asoka „
33. A. A.			Sujases and Sampra- ti Magadha
34. A. A.			Dasaratha and Bri- haspati
35. A. A.			Sangata and Vrisha- sena,
36. A. A.			Salisuka and Pushya Dharama.
37. A. A.			<i>Brihadratha</i> Pushya Mitra

APPENDIX II

Numerical value of the letters of the Alphabet.

1.	Ka	Ta	Pa	Ya	Kya.
2.	Kha	Tha	Pha	Ra	Kra.
3.	Ga	Da	Ba	La	Kla.
4.	Gha	Dha	Bha	Va	Kva.
5.	Nga	Na	Ma	Sa	Kma.
6.	C	Tha		Sha	Ksha.
7.	Cha	Thha		Sa	Ksa.
8.	Ga	Da		Ha	
9.	Gha	Dha		La	
0.	Nja	Na		Gnja	Sva.

N. B. The value of vowels is zero.

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