over thought. Its fickle waywardness must be bound like a young elephant with the rope of remembrance, the great tradition of the Master's teaching. Otherwise the thief Heedlessness, on the look-out to plunder Memory, will rob men of the merit they have gathered. But when Memory stands on guard at the portal of the soul, then Watchfulness arrives and departs not again.[1] To watchfulness must be added patience or long-suffering, and to patience strength, for "without strength there is no work of merit, as without wind there is no motion."[2]

The Bodhisattva, however, is not left unaided. The troops of an army are at his command. Among them are devoted heed and self-submission, love of right, firmness (or pride), joy, and abandonment. Two others sum up his whole endeavour, *parâtma-samatâ* and *parâtma-parivartana*, "equality of self and others" and "turning round of self for others" (*i.e.* substitution of others for self).[3] As he communes with himself, he must remember:

"All have the same sorrows, the same joys, as I, and I must guard them like myself. The body, manifold of parts in its division of members, must be preserved as a whole; and so likewise this manifold universe has its sorrow and its joy in common. Although my pain may bring no hurt to other bodies, nevertheless it is a pain to me, which I cannot bear because of the love of self: and though I cannot in myself feel the pain of another, it is a pain to him which he cannot bear because of the love of self. I must destroy the pain of another because it is a pain; I must show kindness to others, for they are creatures as I am myself. . . . Then, as I would guard myself from evil repute, so I will frame a spirit of helpfulness and tenderness towards others."[4]

Such a doctrine led straight to the paradoxical warning, "If thou lovest thyself, thou must have no love of self; if thou wouldst save thyself, thou dost not well to be saving of self."[5] The Bodhisattva, then, must be ever ready to transfer to others

[1] Poussin, v. 3, 27, 33. [2] Poussin, vii. 1.

[3] Poussin, vii. 16, 31. On this principle the Hīna-Yāna is of inferior quality, p. 29.

[4] Barnett, p. 88. This may even require him to plunge into hell like a swan into a lotus-grove (Poussin, viii. 107).

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 90; Poussin, vii. 93. Cp. *Mark* x. 35.

the merits which he had himself acquired, and thus lift them out of the suffering which they had brought upon themselves. This involved a complete contradiction of the early teaching, in which the dying Gotama bade men be "their own lamps, their own refuge,"[1] and laid on each the whole burden of his own deliverance. Prof. Poussin has pointed out indications in old India, even within Buddhist circles, of the belief "that merit, together with its reward, is something that can be given by one individual to another."[2] The new conception which made it possible was the unity of the Buddha-nature through all manifestations and forms of existence. The wondrous rain-cloud in the Lotus-parable, quickening herb and shrub and tree of every kind with new life, was a symbol of the pervading energy which set all beings in possible communion with each other, and enabled the achievements of one to be applied for the good of all. The process of deliverance was indeed perpetual. No fixed term could be set to it. It was as endless in the future as it was without beginning in the past. Unlike the Greek imagination, the Hindu rebelled against all limits. Demands for measure and proportion did not appeal to it. Time and space must be presented without bounds. Philosophy could conceive its *dharma-kāya*, the abiding ground of all existence, as always and everywhere identical; and within its scope the wisdom and love which flowed forth as part of its essence into the hearts prepared to receive it, were of no private possession, they could be turned to universal benefit, and made available for all. All individual souls sprang from a common source and possessed a common nature. They were not independent of each other. They had travelled together along the great road of the Samsāra; they were all alike the subjects of the Law of the Deed; and just as the powers of evil might contaminate and depress, so the influences of good (interpreted, doubtless, in semi-material shape) could be diffused to elevate and save. And along these lines of the communion of all beings, the perpetual teaching of the Truth, and the purpose of untiring helpfulness, some of the Buddhist schools were led on to the doctrine of "universal salvation."

[1] *Ante*, p. 54.

[2] *The Way to Nirvāṇa* (1917), p. 33. Cp in Brahmanism, Lect. III., p. 167[2].

IX

This was developed especially in the worship of *Amitâbha*, the Buddha of Boundless Light.[1] And as "light" and "life" are everywhere associated in religious imagination as attributes of Deity, he could be designated also *Amitâyus*, the Buddha of "Boundless Life."[2] Early in our era this gracious figure appears in Buddhist devotional literature. His wondrous "Vow" or prayer, and the Western Paradise to which the believer was admitted after death by faith in him, are the theme of glowing description in a Sanskrit book bearing the name of *Sukhâvatî Vyûha*, the "Exposition of the Land of Bliss." Its author is unknown and its date is uncertain. It was translated into Chinese between A.D. 148 and 170;[3] and its popularity is indicated by the fact that no less than eleven more versions can be traced in the next five hundred years.[4] A smaller work of the same kind followed, which in its turn was reproduced in Chinese in 402.[5] The two books became the chief Scriptures of a special cultus, which acquired immense vogue in China and Mongolia, and retains considerable popularity at the present day.[6] Further developments took place in Japan, where it begot forms of religious experience presenting remarkable correspondence with well-known types of Christian belief.[7]

The *Lotus* presents Amitâbha as the *Nâyaka*, the "Leader" or Chief of the world, throned in the pure land of the West, with Avalokiteçvara now on his right hand, now on his left; the corresponding Bodhisattva to complete the triple group being Mahâsthânaprâpta, whose functions are entirely undefined.[8] He appears in the caves at Elurâ, in the territory of the Nizam,

[1] *Amita*, "unmeasured" and so immeasurable, infinite (*mâ*, to measure); *âbhâ*, "light."

[2] I here use some paragraphs from an article on "Religion in the Far East," in *The Quest* (April, 1910).

[3] A century before the *Lotus* was translated, where Amitâyus appears, xxiv. 20.

[4] Nanjio, *Catalogue*, p. 10, Class II., 23 (5).

[5] Cp. Max Muller's translations, *SBE*, xlix. (pt. ii).

[6] Cp. R. F. Johnston, *Buddhist China* (1913), p. 95 ff.

[7] Cp. *Hibbert Journal*, iv. 523.

[8] *SBE*, xlix. (pt. ii.) 52; *Lotus*, pp. 4, 354 ff.

between the fourth and sixth centuries; in the seventh he may be seen at Ajanta;[1] he may be found among the Nepalese miniatures, or among the ruins of mediæval temples in mid-India.[2] Neither Fah Hien nor Yuan Chwang mentions him, but I-Ching piously records the devotion of his teacher, Shan Yü.

"As regards the practice of the meritorious deeds necessary for entrance into the Pure Land (Sukhāvatī), he used to exert himself day and night, purifying the ground where the images of the Buddhas were kept, and where the priests abode. He was rarely seen idle during his life. He generally walked barefooted, fearing lest he should injure any insects. Training his thought and directing his heart, as he did, he was hardly ever seen inactive and remiss. The stands of incense dusted and cleaned by him were beautiful, like the lotus flowers of Sukhāvatī that unfolded for the nine classes of saved beings. . . .[3] One could not but praise his religious merit when one saw his work in the sanctuary. He was personally never conscious of getting tired; he expected the end of his life to be the end of his work. His leisure from reading he devoted to the worship of the Buddha Amitâyus. The four signs of dignity were never wanting in him. The sun's shadow never fell upon him idle (*i.e.* 'he never wasted a minute of time marked by the sun's course'). The smallest grains of sand, when accumulated, would fill up heaven and earth. The deeds which make up salvation are of various kinds."[4]

Seated (as in the *Lotus*) upon the Vulture's Peak, Çākya Mūni relates the early history of Amitâbha. Many ages before he had been a mendicant named Dharmâkara (the "Source of Truth"), who after long prayer and meditation attained the holiness of a Buddha-to-be. He might have entered at once into the joy and peace of Nirvāna. But he looked back upon the world and saw his fellow-men lying in their ignorance and sin. He thought of the long and arduous journey by which he had climbed the ascent to Enlightenment; he felt it impossible to lay this burden of obligation upon all; and he made a series of vows that unless he could discover some simpler way of salvation for others, he would not pass into the final rest. The

[1] Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples* (1880), pp. 370, 337.
[2] Foucher, *Iconogr. Bouddhique*, p. 98; Waddell, in *ERE*, i. 386.
[3] Cp. *SBE*, xlix. (pt. ii.) 188 ff.
[4] Tr. Takakusu, p. 202.

eighteenth of these vows became the foundation of the whole doctrine, and is thus translated by Max Müller :—

"O Bhagavat, if those beings who have directed their thought towards the highest perfect knowledge in other worlds, and who, having heard my name when I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge), have meditated on me with serene thoughts,—if, at the moment of death, after having approached them, surrounded by an assembly of bhikshus, I should not stand before them, worshipped by them (that is, so that their thoughts should not be troubled)—then may I not attain the highest Perfect Knowledge."[1]

As his prayers ended the earth trembled in assent, flowers fell from the sky, the air was full of music and of sweet perfumes, and a voice was heard saying, "Thou wilt be a Buddha in the world."

This solemn vow, with the long passion following it by which Supreme Enlightenment and Holiness were finally attained, was destined to become the central element of a new Buddhism; and it took the place in the worship of Amitâbha which the Christian Evangelical has often assigned to the Cross of Christ.[2] By a protracted series of self-denials, austerities, labours, and penances, Dharmâkara gave himself for the deliverance of the world, and at length became thereby the Buddha Amitâbha. Indian arithmetic again piles up colossal figures to impress the sluggish imagination. At last, after an inconceivable multitude of years, during which no thought of lust, malevolence, or cruelty ever entered his mind, walking in the highest perfections of knowledge, meditation, strength, patience, and virtue, and rousing others to walk therein also, he became the Lord of Infinite Light. In the power of his immeasurable splendour he founded a Paradise in the West which all might enter who had faith to believe what he had done for them, and call with lowly trust upon his name. The disciple must meditate on him with serene thought; he must again and again dwell on him with reverence; he must direct his mind towards the *Bodhi*; he must make the stock of good works grow, and pray for rebirth in the Land of Bliss; and then as death drew nigh

[1] *SBE*, xlix. (pt. ii.) 15. For the Chinese version, cp. Nanjio, *ibid.*, p. 73.

[2] The date of the first Chinese version at once disposes of the unlucky suggestion that the worship of Amitâbha was prompted by Nestorianism.

Amitâbha would draw nigh also with an escort of saints, and full of joy the believer would be borne away in their care to the Western heaven.

A gorgeous Apocalypse follows. From that land all evil is banished for ever. No hapless ghosts, no savage beasts, no cruel demons, haunt its lovely scenes. No mountains bar the way to intercourse by wastes of rock and snow. It is a realm of fragrant flowers, of sweet-voiced birds, jewelled trees and luscious fruits. The soft-flowing rivers are full of perfume; the air resounds with heavenly music. No sin or misfortune can enter there; sickness and distress, accident and destruction, are unknown. The very food is consumed simply by desire. The dwellers in this heavenly land are not grasping or eager for gain. There is no idea of "self or others." No one requires property, and hence there is no inequality. Strife, dispute, and oppression have all ceased. Full of equanimity, the saints live in the enjoyment of benevolent, serene, and tender thought. By the light of wisdom and purity of knowledge they shine more brightly than the sun.[1] They are free alike from doubt and from self-confidence. With love unlimited they resemble the all-embracing sky. By patiently bearing the good and evil deeds of all beings, they are like the enduring earth. Without attachment to personal ends, they are free as the wind. Devoid of envy, they do not hanker after the happiness of others. They abide in the presence of Boundless Light and Life. They have reached the goal, and "enjoy God for ever."

The devotion to Amitâbha became exceedingly popular.[2] But it was still attached to the older ethical disciplines by a demand for righteous conduct as well as for pious affections. The doctrine of the Deed, with its conceptions of merit and requital, still kept its powerful hold on Buddhist thought. The author of the smaller Sūtra on the same theme, however, took a further step. Faith and prayer were indeed needful; but rebirth in the Land of Bliss was not the fruit of good works in

[1] Cp. *Matt.* xiv. 43.

[2] It is perhaps an indication of the influence of Buddhism on Hinduism that the Vishnu Purāna (Wilson, tr., iii. 9, 23) mentions a whole class of gods named Amitâbha. Cp. Virochana (*ib.*, p. 23) and the Buddha Vairochana.

this world. No one could earn admission to the happy realm by so much merit. The joy of communion with the heavenly Light and Life depended on spiritual conditions. These belonged to another plane of thought and feeling, where time and the external world entered no more; the Lord looked only on the dispositions of the heart. "In the great sea of the Law of Buddha," said the famous teacher Nāgârjuna,[1] "Faith is the only means to enter."[2] The ancient formula of "refuge" in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, was founded upon this trust for those in whom the "Eye of the Truth" did not at once arise.[3] With all the warmth of a convert Sāriputta declared his ecstatic conviction that neither past, present, nor future could show any teacher of the higher wisdom greater than the Bhagavat.[4] In the analysis of the conditions which would determine the next birth, special importance came to be attached to the moral dispositions at the hour of death.[5] And among these an act of faith might have supreme value. King Menander found this a serious difficulty. "Your people say," he objected to the venerable Nāgasena, "that though a man should have lived a hundred years an evil life, yet if, at the moment of death, thoughts of the Buddha should enter his mind, he will be reborn among the gods."[6] Nāgasena's reply sounds slightly inadequate, though the monarch was satisfied. Later speculation occupied itself with establishing the continuity of the consciousness in the new birth with that preceding dissolution. The imaginative form assumed by this belief in the later Amitâbha cultus was that a few nights, seven—six—five—four—three—two—even one, of undistracted true and lowly thought, sent forth to the Lord of Boundless Light and Life, would secure his advent with the host of the delivered to guide

[1] Founder of the Mādhyamaka school, *ante*, p. 87.

[2] Nanjio, *Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects*, p. 113.

[3] Cp. *ante*, Lect. I., p. 21.

[4] Rhys Davids, *Dialogues*, ii. 87.

[5] Cp. Poussin, *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 86.

[6] "Questions of Milinda," in *SBE*, xxxv. 123 f. The importance of the thoughts at the hour of death in determining the subsequent lot appears in the teaching of the Upanishads, *e.g. Praçña Up.*, iii. 10, *SBE*, xv. 278. Cp. Çaṅkara, on the Vedânta Sūtras, iv. 1, 12, *SBE*, xxxviii. 352.

the dying sinner to the Pure Land of the West. Here was the germ of a doctrine which was afterwards developed in Japan under the teaching of Honen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262) into a complete scheme of "Salvation by Faith."[1]

X

Such were some of the religious aspects of Buddhism in the seventh century, when Yuan Chwang visited India. It had made its way among the multitudinous peoples from the Himâlaya to Ceylon, from the mouths of the Ganges to the Western Sea. It had been carried into Burma and Siam; it was at home in China and Corea; it was being preached in Japan. Students from Tibet were studying it at Nālandā while Yuan Chwang was in residence there, and it had been planted in the highlands of Parthia. The fame of the founder had reached the lands around the Mediterranean, and the name of Buddha was known to men of learning like Clement of Alexandria and the Latin Jerome.

The most powerful sovereign in India during Yuan Chwang's travels was the brilliant monarch Harsha-Vardhana (606–648).[2] The long years of his warfare (which had gained him the title of Conqueror of the Five Indies) were drawing to a close when the Chinese Master of the Law was summoned to attend him. Yuan Chwang had already been designated by the President of Nālandā to take part in a great debate with the doctors of the Hīna-Yāna in King Harsha's presence. From the court of Kumāra, one of the kings of Eastern India, he proceeded with his host to attend the imperial durbar. With a magnificent retinue Kumāra sailed up the Ganges to meet Çīlâditya, and after complimentary conversations with Yuan Chwang Çīlâditya led the way on the south bank to Kanyakubjā (Kanauj), where an immense convocation was gathered, Kumāra following on the north. Twenty kings were present, with all the pomp of elephants and chariots. The two monarchs, wearing the emblems of Çakra and Brahmā, escorted a golden statue of the Buddha. Three thousand members of the Order belonging to

[1] Cp. Troup, *Hibbert Journal*, iv. 281 ff.; J.E.C. in *The Quest*, vol. i.

[2] The royal name of Prince Çīlâditya.

both Vehicles had assembled. Brāhmans and Jains also attended, making three thousand more, and about a thousand brethren besides came over from Nālandā. The festivities and debates lasted many days, Yuan Chwang being of course victorious. Jealousy of the Buddhists (according to Yuan Chwang's narrative[1]) led the Brāhmans to destroy the tower in which the golden image of the Buddha had been placed, and they even attempted to compass the assassination of Çīlâditya. (The biographers of Yuan Chwang do not mention the incident; but they relate instead that the defeated supporters of the Little Vehicle plotted to take *his* life.)[2] The leaders were punished. Five hundred were banished to the frontiers of India; the rest were pardoned. From Kanauj the royal cavalcades moved on to Prayāga (now Allahabad), at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna. Between the two streams lay an extensive plain, the immemorial scene of donations of largesse, so that it bore the name of the great "Plain of Charity." There Harsha held the sixth "Quinquennial Assembly" of his reign.[3] The summons had previously gone forth through the Five Indies, and drew together a vast concourse, estimated at half a million.[4] The first three days were occupied with ceremonial installations of images of the Buddha, Vishnu, and Çiva.[5] On the fourth day gifts were distributed to ten thousand members of the Order. The distribution to the Brāhmans occupied no less than twenty days, and to the heretics ten. Pilgrims from distant regions received alms for ten days, and the poor, the orphans, and the destitute for a month. Stripping himself of

[1] Beal, *Records*, i. 219–221. [2] Beal, *Life*, p 179

[3] This practice was traditionally ascribed to Asoka (Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, i. 98). Yuan Chwang had been present at a similar celebration on a smaller scale in Kuchih (in what is now the Chinese province of Kansu), Watters, i. 58, 63; Beal, i. 21. There were meetings of clergy and laity, processions in honour of sacred images, holidays, fasts, and religious discourses. In Bamian on these occasions the king was wont to bestow all his possessions on the Order from the queen down. The valuables were afterwards redeemed by his officials from the monks. Watters, i. 119; Beal, i. 52.

[4] Beal, *Life*, p. 185.

[5] Buddha here takes the place of Brahmā. Cp. the doctrine of the Trimūrti, below, Lect. V., p. 276.

his robes and jewels, Çîlâditya borrowed from his sister a second-hand garment, and clasping his hands in adoration prayed that in his future births he might act with like charity to mankind, and thus win the Ten Powers of a Buddha. "In amassing all this wealth and treasure I ever feared that it was not safely stored in a strong place; but now, having bestowed this treasure in the field of religious merit, I can safely say it is well bestowed."

Such are some aspects of Buddhist teaching and practice in the seventh century A.D. A contemporary Brâhman, Bâna, author of the famous historical romance, the *Harsha-charita*, has left a singular picture of its relation to the general culture of the time. He describes a visit paid by the king to a Buddhist recluse, named Divâkara-Mitra."[1] Brâhman by birth and education, he had embraced the religion of the Çâkyan, and made his home in the forest of the Vindhya. There Harsha sought him with a royal retinue. Dismounting from his chariot when it could advance no further, he left his suite behind, and proceeded with a few attendants to the hermitage. Numbers of Buddhists were there from various provinces, perched upon pillars,[2] dwelling in bowers of creepers, lying in thickets or in the shadow of great boughs, or squatting on the roots of trees. There, too, were Jains in white robes, and worshippers of Krishna. The singular assembly included mendicants of various orders, and religious students of all kinds; disciples of Kapila (adherents of the great Sânkhyan school), Lokâyatikas (materialists), students of the Upanishads (Vedântins), followers of Kanâda (the reputed author of the Vaiçeshika philosophy), believers in God as a Creator (the Nyâya school), students of the Institutes of Law, students of the Purânas, adepts in sacrifices and in grammar, and others beside—all diligently following their own tenets, pondering, urging objections, raising doubts and resolving them, discussing and explaining moot points of doctrine, in perfect harmony. The satirist gravely adds that lions couched peacefully near the sage's seat; tigers had abandoned their carnivorous diet under Buddhist teaching; monkeys were performing the ritual of the memorial shrine;

[1] Tr. Cowell and Thomas (1897), p. 233.

[2] Was this after the fashion of Simeon Stylites?

and parrots were devoutly explaining the *Koça*, a Buddhist exposition by Vasubandhu. Here is a picture of mutual independence and good-will on a still wider scale than that at Nālandā. But the poet's mockery would have been unmeaning had there been no basis for it in fact. These forest instructions were far older than Buddhism itself. By such means was the intellectual life of India continuously upheld. Far, far back the student of Indian thought pursues his way till he finds the earliest efforts to state the chief problems of existence in the discussions reported in the Upanishads and the philosophic hymns which preceded them. Brahmanical orthodoxy contrived to accommodate both atheistic (*nirīçvara*) and theistic (*seçvara*) schemes of thought within its cultus. But we have no account of any great centre of teaching where these opposite lines were pursued without antagonism under the sanction of a common life save in the great Buddhist university of Nālandā.

Surrounded by the complex mythology and the different philosophical schools of Hinduism, it was inevitable that Buddhism should be exposed to constant pressure from its religious environment, and that there should be continuous action and reaction between the various systems of thought and practice. The great sectarian deities, as they are sometimes called, Vishnu and Çiva, had long been (in the seventh century) well established, with their consorts, who came to be regarded as embodiments of their *çakti* or divine energy.[1] The tendency was not without influence in Buddhism. When Yuan Chwang was in India he noted at a monastery some twenty miles west of Nālandā, a "rendezvous of eminent scholars who flocked to it from all regions," three temples on the road through the middle gate. The central shrine held a stone statue of the Buddha thirty feet in height. Upon the right hand was an image of Avalokiteçvara; upon the left, of the Bodhisattva Tāra.[2] The

[1] Cp. below, Lect. V., p. 278.

[2] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, i. 105; Beal, ii. 103; cp. p. 174, where Yuan Chwang mentions a large image of the same Bodhisattva very near Nālandā itself, and describes the popular worship offered to it. Poussin doubts that there ever was a masculine Tāra (as the word Tārā, "star," is feminine), and suspects some confusion on the part of the Chinese pilgrim.

origin of this figure is unknown. But before long he is converted into a goddess, and becomes the wife of Avalokiteçvara, a "Holy Mother" and Saviour deity. She may be traced in art all over India, from Orissa in the East to Bombay in the West, from Nepal under the shadow of the Himâlaya to Potalaka on the coast fronting Ceylon.[1] In the cave temples of various localities, at Nasīk, Ajanta, Aurangabad, Elurā, she appears associated with similar figures, Locanā and Māmukī, consorts of other Bodhisattvas.[2] Her worship becomes popular for centuries, and her inscribed images are still found at old Buddhist sites in the classic land of Magadha [3]—on the last night of his life Gotama had bidden Ānanda to conduct himself to womankind as not seeing them [4]—and far beyond. Even in the thirteenth or fourteenth century devout Burmese built a temple to her at Buddha Gayā itself.[5] Her cult acquired especial popularity in Tibet,[6] where it was blended with magic and spells, but it really added nothing to the essential religious ideas of the Great Vehicle out of which it sprang, and it passed ultimately into the degraded forms of Tantric belief and practice which accompanied the decline of Buddhism in India.

A significant difference marked the development of the theistic conception of *īçvara* in the schools of Nepāl. There, nearly a century ago, the young British Resident, Bryan Hodgson, discovered an extensive religious literature founded on the doctrine of *Ādi-Buddha*, the Primeval Source of all existence.[7] The intellectual demand for unity required the clearer formulation of the ultimate fount of Being for all the Buddhas with which religious imagination had filled the innumerable worlds. The

[1] Foucher, *Iconographie Bouddhique*, i. (1900), 100, 228.

[2] Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples*, pp. 278, 298, 371, 384, 391.

[3] Waddell, *JRAS* (1894), p. 63.

[4] *Dialogues*, ii. 154.

[5] *Cave Temples*, p. 133.

[6] Cp. Waddell, *Buddhism in Tibet* (1895), p. 358.

[7] *Essays on the Languages, Literature, and Religion of Nepāl and Tibet* (London, 1874). Cp. the elaborate article of Prof. Poussin in Hastings' *ERE*, vol. i. The doctrine did not arise in Nepāl. It was already known to Asanga in North-West India about A.D. 400. Poussin, in a letter to Prof. Garbe, *Indien und das Christenthum* (1914), p. 182.

movement of thought culminated in the establishment of a true Absolute or Self-Existent (*svayambhū*) at the head of the whole hierarchy of the world's powers. He is the counterpart of the ancient Brahman. From all eternity he had existed in sublime and undivided unity when Time was not; but there arose within him the mysterious desire from one to become many,[1] identified with the wondrous *Prajñā* or "Wisdom" which played so large a part in other schools.[2] Figured under the form of light (*jyoti-rūpa*), a simple flame, but the fundamental reality of all forms (*viçva-rūpa*),[3] he produced by intense energy of meditation (*dhyāna*[4]) five Buddhas of meditation (*dhyāni-Buddhas*[5]), Amitâbha being the fourth. These in their turn by similar powers of wisdom and meditation brought five *Dhyāni Bodhisattvas* into being, *Avalokiteçvara* being the spiritual offspring of Amitâbha. These Bodhisattvas became the creators of successive universes; the first three have passed away, and we live in the fourth under the care of the "Lord of Great Compassion," who is its guardian and deliverer, beneath the sovereignty of its Protector (*nātha*) and Conqueror (*jina*), the "Buddha of Boundless Light."

Behind these derived powers is their eternal Source. Metaphysically the ultimate reality is Ādi-Buddha, the sum of all perfections. As in the "negative theology" which Christian speculative philosophy borrowed from Neo-Platonism, considered in his intrinsic being he could only be designated in terms of the Void. He is a point, without parts or passions, yet he manifests himself in the visible universe, and the Three Strands which constitute its physical basis have their ground in him.[6] But for religion he has a new value. "He delights in making all creatures happy"; "he tenderly loves those who serve him"; "he assuages pain and grief." Fountain of virtue, he is known by

[1] Cp. *Chhāndog. Up.*, vi. 2, 3, in *SBE*, i. 93.

[2] So the *Guṇa Kāraṇḍā Vyuhā*, Hodgson, *Essays*, p. 42.

[3] He possessed the *Dharma kāya* and the thirty-two marks.

[4] The Pāli *jhāna*.

[5] So in Hodgson's nomenclature, but cp. Poussin's note, *ERE*, i. 94b. According to Hodgson, p. 77, they are produced out of five kinds of *jñāna* or mystic knowledge.

[6] On the Three Strands of the Sāṅkhyan system which appear in the different Hindu philosophies, cp. Lect. IV., p. 206.

spiritual wisdom, which includes observance of the commandments, pious meditation, release from the world's bondage, and the higher knowledge. This perfect "Enlightenment" is his divine gift, and will at length be bestowed on all. Here is the promise of universal salvation, transcending all differences of sex, rank, or caste.[1] Cognate with this sublime Deity was the mysterious figure of the divine Prajñā. The wise, indeed, "made no distinction between them"; but under the influence of Hinduism she was conceived sometimes as Ādi-Buddha's *çakti* or Energy;[2] intellectually she was (like the Greek Sophia or Logos) the "Wisdom of absolute truth." She might even be represented as the universal Mother. As the Hindu Brahmā was the Grandfather of the world (*Pitā-maha*), she could be quaintly designated in feminine form *Pitā-mahi*! The merciful Buddhas were her children, for she was merciful to all her worshippers. Thus the believer lived encompassed by the divine Wisdom and Love, and in homage to this eternal Reality the men of good will, voyaging over the ocean of existence, were secure at last of perfect happiness.[3]

A simpler scheme, of a less philosophical or Gnostic character, is presented in the *Vaṃsāvalī* or "Genealogical History of Nepal," brought to this country by Dr Wright, and founded on traditional Buddhist material.[4] Here the Buddha "who was first of all" bears the title *Sach-chit*, "Being and Intelligence," the first two terms of the summary of the characteristics of Brahman, *Sach-chid-ānanda*, "Being, Intelligence, and Bliss."[5] From him sprang the first Buddha Maheçvara (the "Great Lord," the well-known title of Çiva), and from him came Içvara, who created the valley of Nepal.[6] In distant ages the *Svayambhū*-light was sometimes seen, and once at least he was

[1] Hodgson, *Essays*, pp. 37, 83 f.

[2] Cp. Lect. V., p. 278.

[3] Hodgson, *ibid.*, p. 85 f. On Ādi Buddha, cp. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal* (1880), ii. 89; temples, ii. 206, 218 ff.

[4] *History of Nepal* (1877).

[5] Wright, *History*, p. 77.

[6] For the syncretism which identified the Buddha with both Çiva and Vishnu, cp. Sylvain Lévi, *Le Népal*, i. (1905), 375; Buddhist images in Çiva temples, and shrines to Hindu deities in Buddhist temples (Oldfield, *Sketches*, ii. 284 f.).

beheld by Mañjuçrī as *Viçva-rūpa*, but he was never visible to mortal eye. The great temple near Kāthmandu dedicated to his worship is of uncertain date, and not the oldest in the valley.[1] There simple prayers are offered, such as that ascribed in legendary antiquity to Prince Māndeva, and still "repeated by every Buddhist when performing *pūjā* in holy places,"—

> "Reverence to the Three Jewels!
> I bow to thy lotus-like feet, O Lord!
> Thou art Buddha—thine asylum I seek.
> There are countless merits in worshipping Buddha.
> Thou art the Master of Religion." [2]

In spite of the brilliant patronage of Çîlâditya, the Buddhism of the seventh century was already stricken with decline in India. Where Fah Hien had sometimes found flourishing communities, Yuan Chwang saw ruined monasteries and deserted shrines. Legends of persecution gathered around the names of Kumārila Bhatta and Çankarâcārya in the eighth and ninth centuries. Hostile kings may sometimes have attacked particular religious establishments; whole provinces may have suffered from Mohammedan inroads;[3] outbreaks of sectarian animosity may occasionally have tarnished the good name of Brāhmans. There was certainly much debate and philosophical argument. But the main cause of the gradual disappearance of Buddhism from India was, after all, its own internal weakness. The spirit of its missionary energy was exhausted. It was surrounded by immense developments of poetry, philosophy, and law, which were most intimately connected with the whole fabric of the national life.[4] Buddhism might elaborate the imaginary

[1] Wright, pl. iv.; Fergusson, *Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1891), p. 302.

[2] Wright, p. 101. At this point the native translators unfortunately break off with "etc."

[3] In 647, fifteen years after Mohammed's death and two after Yuan Chwang left India, Osman raided the Bombay coast, and the long series of Mohammedan invasions began. Nālandā was destroyed by them, cp. Rhys Davids, *Journal PTS* (1896), p. 91.

[4] For the influence of Buddhism on the later Indian philosophy, cp. below, Lect. VI., p. 303.

biographies of its "Conquerors" (*Jinas*), but it produced no poetry like the great epics, the story of Rāma and Sītā, or the tale of the Five Pāndava brothers which grew into the colossal aggregate of the Mahābhārata, a veritable cyclopædia of tradition, mythology, philosophy, and religion. Here were the exploits of heroes, the genealogies of kings, the wisdom of sages, the loves of the gods, and the pieties of the devout—a mirror in song of the complex life of the world, to which Buddhism could offer no parallel. Secluded in their *vihāras*, the members of the Order could not secure the same interest in the moving narrative of Gotama's renunciation of home and wife and child, or even in the folk-tales of old time, in which the hero was always the same whatever part he played. These had nothing to tell of the splendour of courts, the glories and dangers of battle, the loss and gain of kingdoms, the wonders wrought by ascetics, the sports of Krishna, the beneficence of Vishnu, the might of Çiva. The cloistered virtue of the Sangha, even if it had been always maintained at the high tension of the first days, could not hold its own beside these more robust types. The forces of Hinduism were rooted in a remoter past, they were intertwined more closely even with the localities as well as with the habits of the popular religion, they sprang more directly out of the common heart, they appealed more directly to the common mind. The Jains do not seem to have drawn down upon themselves so much criticism; they took little part in the great philosophical debate; and they held their own, though probably in diminished numbers, against the influences which gradually drove Buddhism off the field.

The religious forces of Hinduism embodied in the two great deities Vishnu and Çiva, associated with the once popular Brahmā in a group of the Holy Three,[1] had the support of an immense tradition and a powerful priestly caste. Founded upon the ancient hymns, the codes of sacred law, the records of primitive speculation, the cults of Vishnu and Çiva were no fixed or rigid forms. They could adapt themselves to new modes of thought and take without difficulty the likeness of their rival. The "Descents" of Vishnu embodied the same

[1] Cp. Lect. V., p. 276.

motive as the manifestations of the Buddha, and Vishnu was at last installed in the temple first reared by Asoka in the hallowed precincts at Gayā. Prof. D. C. Sen has emphasised the influence of Buddhism on the conception of Çiva as he is presented in the Purānas, and finds him embodying all the elements of the Buddha's greatness.[1] In the obscurity of the history of Bengal after the death of Harsha-Vardhana the process cannot be traced in detail. The earlier kings of the great Pāla dynasty were zealous Buddhists of the Mahā-Yāna type. But the worship of Çiva began to gain a footing in Buddhist sanctuaries, and temples were built to Çiva, where his image wore the aspect of the Buddha Lokeçvara.[2] The followers of the two cults attended each others' festivals, and by the reign of Dharmapāla II. in the eleventh century the fusion was well advanced. Among the distinguished teachers who adorned his reign was Rāmāi Pandit, the reputed author of the *Çūnya Purāna*, or Purāna of the "Void." Here were sung the praises of the Void, without beginning or end, without form or image, sole Lord of all the worlds;[3] and from it sprang Dharma the Spotless (*Niranjana*), designated in another late poem the Son of Ādi-Buddha.[4] Rāmāi devoted himself to spreading the particular form of Dharma worship known as Dharma's Gājan.[5] He travelled widely, preaching it to all people independently of caste or creed, and these popular festivals are observed to this day in Western Bengal. "Who is there in these three worlds," still sings the Dharma priest, "that can know thee, who art Buddha, the protector of the meek and the poor. Travelling over the whole world, no one has ever found, O Formless Lord, thy beginning or thy end, thy hands or feet. Thou hast neither form nor figure, and thou art above all attributes."[6] In such pale and attenuated

[1] *History of the Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta, 1911), p. 63 ff.

[2] F. K. Sarkar, *The Folk Element in Hindu Culture* (1917), p. 169.

[3] Quoted by Nagendranath Vasu, *Archæol. Survey of Mayurabhanja* (1911), p. cxii.

[4] Sarkar, *ibid.*, pp 197, 94 f.

[5] The word means literally "Festivities in honour of Çiva," *ibid.*, p. 73.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 101. Cp. H. P. Çāstrī, "Buddhism in Bengal since the Mohammedan Conquest," *JASB* (1895), p. 55 ff.

form does folk-usage still preserve the memory of a once powerful philosophy.

The teachers of the Vedânta itself did not escape the reproach of "crypto-Buddhism,"[1] and the influence of the Buddhist schools on the development of the several systems founded on the ancient Brahmanical Scriptures is only now coming to be seriously studied. In Southern India an interesting picture of Buddhism is presented in the Tamil epic relating the romantic story of Mani-Mekhalai, but the uncertainty of its date prevents its definite use as evidence.[2] Çankara finds it needful in the ninth century to array his critical objections against the Buddhist schools, and in his survey of philosophical systems Mâdhava, four hundred years later, still includes Buddhism.[3] Travelling preachers or professors of philosophy still encountered members of the Order, as Govinda Dâs relates of his master Chaitanya, who converted their leader at Trimanda in 1509, on his missionary journey to South India, and pressed the learning of the monks into the service of Vaishnavism.[4] In its early home Buddhism suffered severely from the Mohammedan conquest of Bihâr, probably in 1197. Large numbers of the "shaven-headed" were mercilessly slaughtered. Monasteries were destroyed, images were shattered, a great library was burnt. Some of the brethren escaped and found refuge in Nêpal, Tibet, or the South.[5] The pilgrims came no more to Buddha Gayâ, though an inscription of a king of Arakan records pious gifts and repairs to the Mahâ-Bodhi temple as late as A.D. 1298.[6] In the next century Râmânanda is said to have disputed with Buddhists, apparently in the Ganges valley; and a Buddhist *Tantra*, written in Magadha in A.D. 1446, shows that in Eastern India Buddhism had still some interest for the

[1] Cp. Lect. VI., p. 303.

[2] See the account by Dr Pope in the *Siddhânta-Dîpikâ*, Madras, xi. 305 ff. Dr Pope places it very late, while a modern native scholar, Mr M. S. Aiyangar, attributes it to the third century A.D. (*Tamil Studies*, 1914, p. 208).

[3] *Sarva-Darçana-Saṃgraha*, tr. Cowell and Gough (1882).

[4] "Diary of Govinda Dâs," *Calcutta Review* (1898), cvi. 91. On Trimanda, cvii. 197. For Buddhists in Orissa in the sixteenth century, cp. Lect. VII., p. 447.

[5] V. A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India* (1919), p. 221.

[6] *Epigr. Ind.*, xi. (1911), 118

educated.[1] The more secluded parts of the Peninsula, the sub-Himâlayan highlands, Orissa, Central India, the Deccan, still held sanctuaries for pious pilgrimage. A Tibetan text gives an account of the travels of an Indian Buddhist Yogin in the sixteenth century. The youngest of eight sons of a merchant on the sea-coast in the South, he came under the influence of a Buddhist teacher named Tirthinātha, who gave him the religious name of Buddhanātha. For several years he accompanied his master, visiting Buddhist shrines and receiving instruction in Yoga; and he afterwards spent his whole life in wandering through India and the adjoining countries, finding his way even to the Eastern Archipelago.[2]

The decline was grievous. The days of enthusiastic literary and religious activity were over. No one could emulate the ardent labours of the past. But here and there the authentic note of faith and love was still sounded. A learned Brāhman convert, Rām Chandra Kavibhārati from Bengal, who had found a refuge in Ceylon during the reign of Parākramabāhu (1153–1186), poured out his trust in a century of verse with passionate piety.[3] His devotional idiom is different from ours, but his needs are the same. "Have mercy on me," he cries, "I have lost my way!" "Thy mercy in this world makes no distinction. O Conqueror, by means of that mercy sanctify me, so full of sin." "Thou art the way that leads me to all that is good, thou art my Father, thou art my Salvation." He who keeps the commandments is a member of the Buddha's family: "O Buddha, thy worship consists in doing good to the world. O Lord of the world, doing evil to the world is doing injury to thee."

"Let kings punish, let wicked *pandits* deride, let relations forsake me; O Father Jina, I cannot live without thee.

Whether I live in heaven or in hell, in the city of ghosts or of men, or elsewhere according to my *karma*, from that place let my mind take shelter with thy good qualities.

---

[1] Bendall, *Buddhist Sanskrit MSS. in Cambridge* (1883), p. iv.

[2] Dr Waddell, in the *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Feb. 1893), p. 55.

[3] *Bhakti-Çataka*, tr. H. P. Çāstrī, in the *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society*, Calcutta, vol. i. (1893), pt. ii. p. 21.

I am thy servant, purchased by thee at the price of thy good qualities; I am thy disciple, disciplined by thee with thy precepts; I am thy son, I feel pleasure in remembering thee; and I go the way that thou hast gone.

Thou art my father, mother, brother, sister; thou art my fast friend in danger; thou art my Lord, my Preceptor, who impartest to me knowledge sweet as nectar. Thou art my wealth, my enjoyment, my pleasure, my affluence, my greatness, my reputation, my knowledge, and my life.

Thou art my all, O all-knowing Buddha."

LECTURE III

POPULAR THEISM : THE BRAHMAN

When Yuan Chwang attended King Harsha-Vardhana in his progress along the Ganges in A.D. 643,[1] he witnessed at Kanya-kubja (Kanauj) the solemn installation of a golden statue of the Buddha.[2] A special hall had been erected to receive it. A long procession of more than three hundred elephants followed King Harsha and the royal companion of his journey, Kumāra-rājā. Yuan Chwang was in immediate attendance on the sovereign, and led his personal retinue. The princes, ministers, and chief priests of eighteen countries rode in double file, chanting hymns of praise. Costly offerings were made to the Buddha in the presence of a great assembly of the princes, the most distinguished clergy of the Buddhist Order, Brāhmans renowned for learning, followers of heretical doctrine, and ministers of state. The two monarchs wore tiaras like the gods; Harsha assumed the insignia of the Lord Çakra,[3] while Kumāra impersonated Brahmā. Three weeks later Harsha, still accompanied by Yuan Chwang and the princes of the eighteen countries, proceeded to Prayāga, at the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges,[4] to attend his sixth Quinquennial Convocation on the field of charity. Some half million of people had arrived in response to the royal proclamation. On the first day an image of the Buddha was installed upon the broad arena, and gifts and sweet food were distributed amid the scattering of flowers and the sound of music. The ceremonies were repeated the next day on behalf of an image of Āditya-deva (Vishnu), and on the

[1] So Mr V. A. Smith, in Watters' *On Yuan Chwang*, ii. 336.
[2] *Life*, tr. Beal, p. 177.
[3] The ancient deity Indra.
[4] The modern Allahabad.

third day for an image of Īçvara-deva (Çiva), though on these occasions only half the amount of precious articles and clothing was given away.[1] How came it that the cultus of the Buddha could be thus combined with homage to other deities? Kings were no doubt regarded as divine; even an infant monarch must be treated as a great deity in human form.[2] But why should they choose the characters of Çakra and Brahmā in which to celebrate the glory of the Buddha; or why should they dedicate on the same hallowed ground the images of rival gods?

I

Such incidents belong to modes of religious life so different from those of the West that the student of the complex elements of what is commonly known as Hinduism has great difficulty in comprehending them. Founded upon the ancient literature of ritual, philosophy, and law, dependent on the Veda, the medieval theism of India presents an extraordinary variety of deities, at the head of which stands the sacred Triad, Brahman, Vishnu, Çiva. Of these Holy Three each is in turn described as infinite, eternal, self-existent, absolute. In the economy of the universe they have their own shares, yet each is apparently capable of discharging the functions of the others, and in solitary majesty conducting the whole process of the world alone. How are such incompatible conceptions to be reconciled? The figures of popular devotion are strangely elusive. With the aid of mythology they can for ever shift and change; they pass into each other with mystical identifications; they proceed from each other into distinct individualities; imagination is ever at hand to elevate their personal forms into supremacy; it remains for philosophy to reunite them in thought, and for the practice of piety to realise a fellowship of spirit with the One Supreme.

The fact is that the conception of religion which underlies the mass of beliefs and usages embraced in the term Hinduism, rests upon social habits wholly unlike the European. For such immense historic generalisations as Brahmanism or Christianity

[1] *Life*, p. 186.

[2] *Laws of Manu*, tr. Buhler, *SBE*, xxv. (1886), vii. 5–8.

the Indian languages have no single word. Nor have they any exact equivalent for the yet wider idea of religion which transcends and includes the multitudinous varieties of the world's faiths.[1] Hinduism had no founder, and it has created no creed. It is centred in no ecclesiastical authority; its worship has no unity; its cults are constantly taking fresh forms; its local interests frequently produce new gods; it has an astonishing power of generating additional devotions and creating multitudinous sects. It presents the strangest contrasts of practical magic and transcendental metaphysics; universal idolatry and the most subtle spirituality; the most rigid asceticism and promiscuous debauchery; a lofty personal morality and an undisguised antinomianism. What bond can hold all these different modes of thought and feeling and action together? The most comprehensive term which Sanskrit contributed to the various languages founded upon it is *Dharma*, often vaguely translated by such words as law, teaching, truth, religion, morality, righteousness, duty. It also has the meaning of quality or characteristic, the attribute of a genus, the mark of a species. The *dharma* of gold is its colour and its glitter; of a tiger its carnivorous ferocity; of a man his endowments and powers, and the conduct appropriate to them. The rules of human behaviour which everyone is expected to follow constitute man's *dharma* (*mānava-dharma*). For each individual there are particular *dharmas* arising from his civil status, his caste, his rank, his occupation, and the stages of his life from youth to age. Following the earlier law-books, Manu defined the general duties obligatory on all the four castes as "abstention from injuring others, veracity, abstention from unlawfully appropriating others' goods, purity, and self-control."[2] This is a summary of universal *dharma*. How, then, shall the householder or the hermit, the cattle-owner or the herdsman, know his own? Manu answers: "The whole Veda is the first source of *dharma*; next the *smritis* (the traditions embodied in the law-books), and the *çīla* (the rules of virtue or morality) of those who know the Veda; also the customs of holy men" (*e.g.*

[1] Cp. Dr S. V. Ketkar's *History of Caste in India*, ii. (1911), "An Essay on Hinduism."

[2] x. 63. Cp. the first five commandments of Buddhism.

certain rites at marriage, or special ascetic habits such as the wearing of bark-clothes). But in the impossibility of foreseeing every contingency room must be left for the varying application of fundamental principles, and the scheme of guidance accordingly concludes with what is curiously termed "self-satisfaction,"[1] the independent judgment or option of the virtuous, where no definite rule has been laid down.

When, therefore, the word Christianity is translated into a modern language like Marathi, for instance, by such a combination as "Khristi-dharma," the meaning for the native mind is the duty of observing the customs and ceremonies required from the followers of Christ, such as baptism and confirmation. They must also walk along the "Khristi-mārga," the path or way,[2] the conduct prescribed for attaining salvation, just as a Hindu must tread one of the three ways of works, of knowledge, and ascetic devotion.[3] Such paths are sometimes based on the *mata* or teaching[4] of the founders of sects, such as *Bauddha-mata*, the doctrines of the Buddha. Under *Khristi-mata* are included such beliefs as the following:—

(i) All men and possibly women are possessed of an object called "soul," while no other creatures have any soul. (ii) Salvation can be attained through faith in Christ. (iii) There is a personal God. (iv) The world is created and ruled by two distinct individuals, God and the Devil.[5]

Hinduism thus employs three terms to express different elements or aspects of religion, *dharma*, *mārga*, *mata*. Modern writers are beginning to speak of "Hindu-dharma" or "Ārya-dharma," in contrast with foreign systems, "Mleccha-dharma," such as Christianity or Islam. The ancient Mleccha was a "barbarian," speaking another tongue, with alien customs as well as unintelligible speech. Such a designation implied that Hinduism is much more than the group of beliefs and rites commonly gathered under the description "religious." It is

[1] ii. 6. On the Law-book of Manu, see below, p. 129, and on Brahman's creation of *Dharma*, p. 150.

[2] Cp. *Acts* ix. 2, and the well-known Eightfold Noble Path (*magga*) of Buddhism.

[3] *Karma-mārga*, *jnāna-mārga*, and *bhakti-mārga*. See below, p. 244 f.

[4] Literally "thought," from the root *man*.

[5] Ketkar, *History of Caste in India*, ii. 14.

inextricably bound up with the ideas of race and caste. Derived ultimately from the great tradition embodied in the Veda and the many branches of its literature, it is the faith and practice of the majority of the peoples of India, who adore more or less distinctly the Brahmanic gods, worship their chief incarnations or symbols, venerate the cow, observe certain caste-rules about marriage and the sharing of food, follow a simple ritual prescribed by the Brāhmans, and resort to them for all the appropriate ceremonies of family life from birth to death.

Such was the general judgment of English students a generation ago, represented, for example, by Sir Alfred Lyall.[1] In the very valuable Report on the great Census of 1901, Sir Herbert Risley wrote: "In belief, though seldom perhaps in practice, most Hindus recognise the existence of One Supreme God (*Parames'var*)."[2] This statement was confirmed by Mr Burns with the remark: "The general result of my inquiries is that the great majority of Hindus have a firm belief in One Supreme God, Bhagwan, Parameshwar, Ishwar, or Narain."[3] Ten years later the British Indian civilian is a little more definitely anthropological. Writing of the Bombay Presidency, Messrs Mead and Macgregor, after describing the elasticity of a system which permits men of various castes to flock to the tomb of S. Francis Xavier at Goa whenever an exposition of the saint's body takes place, or to deny the supremacy of the Brāhmans, lay it down broadly that in the religion of the unlettered masses sectarian distinctions have no place. "If a coolie or a cartman were asked if he were a Vaishnava or a Çaiva, he would not understand the question."[4] The ordinary villager is content to worship the local "godlings," to whom he looks for rain, bountiful harvests, and escape from plague, cholera, and smallpox.[5] There are in reality two religions, one which has been rooted in the soil from immemorial antiquity and contains innumerable survivals of aboriginal usages, transmitted through whole millenniums with immense tenacity of

[1] Cp. *Asiatic Studies*, ii. (1899), 288.
[2] *Report*, part i., p. 362.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 63. On Bhagavat, see below, p. 244; and on Nārâyana, p. 265.
[4] *Report*, p. 66.
[5] Cp. Dr Whitehead, Bishop of Madras, on *The Village Gods of South India* (1916).

habit; the other superimposed by the Brāhmans, of very various degrees of refinement, but still capable of soaring into heights of lofty spirituality, which the average man makes no pretence to understand, though he may vaguely revere its manifestation in the austerities or devotion of the saint. The Report on the Punjab (1912), by a distinguished native scholar, Pandit Harikishan Kaul, is marked (as is natural) by more minute and intimate knowledge. His definition of the Hindu requires that "he should be born of parents not belonging to some recognised religion other than Hinduism, marry within the same limits, believe in God, respect the cow, and cremate the dead,"[1] but he adds that the word Hindu as now used is based upon no principle. The term is neither geographical, religious, nor racial. The daily practice is extremely simple. The ordinary villager, not belonging to the Brāhman or other higher castes, unversed in sacred literature or ceremonial ritual, will (except under special disabilities) bathe every morning. The elderly men and women will visit a temple of Vishnu or Çiva, of a goddess or some saint, if one happens to be within reach. In the early hours or after the bath they will recite the name of God, Parmeshvar, Bhagwan, Rām-Rām, Krishna, or his consort Rādhā, an elementary form of daily worship The uneducated masses do not understand the philosophic differences which divide the religious orders. But they maintain with great tenacity, though often with curious fresh applications, the traditional outlook of centuries past; and beneath the colossal productions of poetry, the commentaries of the learned, the debates of the schools, and the hymns of the devout, the vast and varied mass of usages founded on the conception of a vague energy, lodged in specific objects and responding in different ways to human needs, still controls the imagination, and claims its annual dues.[2]

[1] *Report*, p. 109.

[2] See, for example, the description by Sir Herbert Risley of the festival at the spring equinox, "when it is incumbent on every religious-minded person to worship the implements or insignia of the vocation by which he lives." The student of the Rig Veda recalls the invocation of the arrow and the drum, the praise of armour and bow, the homage to agricultural implements, probably the ploughshare and the plough. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* (1897, Buhler's *Grundriss*), p. 155. Similarly to-day, "the

II

The higher thought of Hinduism must, of course, be sought in its literature; and while Buddhism was actively at work in producing its long series of sacred books to embody the teachings of its numerous sects, the rising forces of Hinduism took the national traditions in hand, and under different influences of philosophy and devotion endeavoured to organise the immense collections of mythology, religion, and law. In spite of the enormous difficulties surrounding their origin and history, a few words must be said about the Law-book of Manu and the great epic known as the Mahābhārata, which reflect the development of Hindu thought and life during the period when Buddhism was rising into power, and organising its great foreign missions.

The religious and literary processes by which the sacred hymns of the sacrificial formulæ of the immigrant Aryans were finally gathered into four great collections under the name of Vedas, can no longer be traced with any certainty or assigned to any definite dates. But the necessity of maintaining the text (for example, of the chief group, the Rig Veda) when it was still transmitted only by memory, early led to the development of various subsidiary studies which were finally embodied in six *Aṅgas* or "limbs" of the Vedic corpus, and constituted different branches of Vedic science. Beside the ritual treatises known as Brāhmanas, and the philosophical tracts designated Upanishads, these works were concerned with phonetics,[1] metre, grammar, etymology, astronomy (for the regulation of the

soldier worships his sword; the cultivator his plough; the money-lender his ledger; . . . and to take the most modern instance, the operatives in the jute mills near Calcutta bow down to the Glasgow-made engines which drive their looms." A group of Government clerks set up an office despatch box as a kind of altar, placed an inkpot and all kinds of stationery upon and around it, draped the whole with festoons of red tape, and under the direction of a Punjabi Brāhman (a clerk like themselves) made their offerings of rice, turmeric, spices, pepper, etc. Risley, *The People of India*[2] (1915), p. 235. Contrast with this the *Daily Practice of the Hindus*[2] (1919, Allahabad), by Srīsa Chandra Vasu, with offerings and prayers to Brahmā, Vishnu, Rudrā, Prajāpati, and others.

[1] *Sikshā*, cp. *Taittirīya Upanish.*, i. 2, *SBE*, xv. 146.

calendar and times of sacrifice), and ceremonial (*kalpa*).[1] These works assumed the form of short summaries condensed into the utmost brevity, embodying rules which were expounded orally by the teachers of the hallowed lore. The production of such *sūtras* (or "threads") needed long experience and patient effort, so that the famous grammarian Patañjali (in the second century B.C.) could affirm that a Sūtra-composer rejoiced more over saving half a vowel than over the birth of a son.[2] The ceremonial Sūtras fell into two groups: one possessing the authority of revelation, concerned with three great groups of sacrificial ritual; the other based upon established tradition. To this latter branch belonged the treatises of household law, regulating the domestic usages and daily sacrifices, with their appropriate ceremonies from birth to death; while a second series, known as *Dharma-Sūtras*, dealt with religious and secular law, inseparable parts of one great system. Out of these Dharma-Sūtras, compiled in different schools of Brahmanical teaching, came longer works in verse, expanding and illustrating the peremptory sternness of the dogmatic rules, under the name of *Dharma-Çāstras*. Large numbers of such works are known to have been composed in the centuries reaching from our era to the Mohammedan conquest; and the most famous by common consent throughout India is the *Mānava-Dharma-Çāstra*, or Law-book of Manu.[3]

In Vedic mythology Manu is the son of the Āditya Vivasvat, the "Shining One," the sun. He is even the offspring of the Self-Existent Brahman, and may be equated with Prajāpati, the "lord of creatures." The Rig Veda calls him "Father Manu," and he becomes the eponymous hero of the human race,

[1] How these studies grew up, and what period of time was needed for their development, is obscure. The list of items in a Brāhman's training in an early Buddhist text (*Ambaṭṭha S.*, i. 3: Rhys Davids, *SBE*, i. 109) is rather scantier than that in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upan.*, ii. 4, 10; iv. 1, 2: *SBE*, xv. 111, 153. On the *itihāsas* (legends) and *purāṇas* (cosmogonies), see below, pp. 133, 280.

[2] Winternitz, *Gesch. der Indischen Literatur*, i. 230.

[3] Buhler succeeded in demonstrating that a prior work of the Dharma-Sūtra class had once existed under Manu's name. But beyond one or two quotations no manuscript of such a text has been discovered. Cp. his translation, *SBE*, xv., Introd., p. lxiii.

part god, part man.[1] He founded the moral order and the institutions in which it was embodied; crowned himself, he was the progenitor of kings; he kindled the sacred fire, invented the sacrificial rites, devised the funeral offerings, and revealed the sacred verses. The twelve chapters open with an account of the creation of the world, and close with the principles governing the sequences of transmigration and the attainment of union with the eternal Brahman. The actual laws are concerned with the holy rites which must be performed for the "twice-born," which sanctify the body and purify from sin.[2] Here are the rules of studentship, the duties of the householder, the laws of food and purity, the ordinances of behaviour proper for women, for forest hermits, and wandering ascetics, the obligations and responsibilities of kings, and maxims for the administration of justice. So ignorant are we, however, concerning the development of Indian social organisation, that it has been impossible to fix its date by any comparisons with secular history. No such history exists.[3] When the work first became known, Sir William Jones, impressed by the Hindu belief in its antiquity, proposed to ascribe it to the age of Moses. In the last generation Sir Monier Williams brought it down to the sixth or fifth century B.C. Arguing from its metrical form, Max Müller assigned it to a date following the year A.D. 300;[4] while the researches of Buhler and Jolly[5] place it within the two preceding centuries. Its legal materials may, of course, be of far greater antiquity; but its theological and philosophical implications show it to be much later than the earlier forms of Buddhism; and its proverbial wisdom seems to

[1] Buhler, p. lvii. [2] ii. 36.

[3] The earliest attempt at a historical work, the *Rājataraṅginī* (or "River of Kings"), a history of Kashmir, by Kalhana, was not composed till the twelfth century of our era, A.D. 1148–49 (Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, 1900, p. 430). The help which the modern student of the Pentateuch derives from the historical books of the Old Testament in tracing the development of the sacred Law, is not available for similar investigation in India. Nor does geography provide any clues to the locality of its origin.

[4] *India* (1883), pp. 91, 366.

[5] *Recht und Sitte* (1896, in Buhler's *Grundriss*), p. 16. Cp. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, p. 428, not much later than A.D. 200. Eggeling, *Ency. Brit.*[11], xxiv. 175, thinks the question cannot be answered.

run in streams parallel with those of the great epic, the *Mahābhārata.*[1]

The national epic of India doubtless had its roots in the distant past, but the two poems in which it was subsequently embodied, the Mahābhārata and the Rāmâyana, cannot be dated in their present form before our era.[2] Like the bards of Greece who chanted the deeds of heroes, the ancient singers of the immigrant Aryan tribes celebrated the prowess of their warrior-kings. The Bharatas, whose "Great Conflict" is related in the poem named after them, appear in the Rig Veda as a military tribe. Their settlements extended between the Upper Ganges and the Jumna, and their fame was such that *Bhārata-varsha*, or "Bharata-land," was at last employed by Sanskrit writers to cover the whole peninsula of India.[3] Among the Bharata princes a king named Kuru gained sufficient eminence to give his name to a whole district, or *Kuru-kshetra*,[4] and his descendants were known as Kauravas. The centre of their power was at Hastināpura (the modern Delhi), and there a fierce struggle arose between the families of two brothers in the royal house, the blind Dhritarāshtra and Pāndu. To Dhritarāshtra are born one hundred sons; Pāndu is content with five, known by their father's name as Pāndavas. Third among these was Arjuna, who won the lovely Draupadī as his bride by his skill in archery; but in the antique usage of the poem she becomes the wife of all five brothers. The prosperity of the Pāndavas is suddenly marred by the folly of the eldest, Yudhishthira,[5] who loses everything to his Kaurava cousin Duryodhana[6] in a game of dice. The brothers, accompanied by the faithful Draupadī, are sent into exile and retire into the forest; and the story of the "Great Contest" really ended originally with the eighteen days' battle between the Kauravas and the King of Matsya, with whom they had taken service.

[1] Jolly, p. 15.

[2] On the Rāmâyana ("Rāma's Adventures"), see below, Lect. VII., p. 424.

[3] "India" comes through Greek and Persian from the Sanskrit *Sindhu*, "river," applied especially to the Indus.

[4] Already named in the Yajur Veda, and the Brāhmaṇas; cp. Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Literatur*, i. 264.

[5] "Steadfast in battle."

[6] "Hard to be overcome."

The Kaurava forces are annihilated, and the Sons of Pāndu return to their old home.

The tale was doubtless sung throughout Kuru-land by the minstrels who were to be found among the households of the nobles. These gradually formed a special class, who chanted the deeds of the warriors and recited the dignity of their lineage. They were the depositaries of local traditions as yet unwritten, and transmitted them with gathering embellishments from generation to generation.[1] Such poems were recited at family festivals duly celebrated with sacrifice and rite. They took up into themselves the homage offered to the gods, and the bard consequently began to approach the priest.[2] Mingled with the tales of valiant deeds and heroic endurance were schemes of the creation, the four ages, and the dissolution of the world, pedigrees and genealogies from sun and moon, stories of ancient sages, conflicts with demons, marvels of primeval antiquity, wars amid the powers of heaven, the wondrous churning of the ocean to produce the drink of immortality, the wisdom of seers, the feats of ascetics, the curses of holy men, the teaching of Brāhmans, the shrewdness of animals, ethics, philosophy, and sacred law. By what steps the original tale of the Five Pāndavas was finally converted into a sort of national encyclopædia of tradition, morals, and religion, it is no longer possible to ascertain. It was emphatically a layman's story, and however it might be handled in the interests of religion, it never fell into the keeping of one of the great Vedic schools of technical learning or specific ritual. Its authors drew their materials from the life they knew, where kings were charged with the responsibilities not only of their people's welfare, but even of the world-order for their age; where custom might still

[1] These *sūtas* are already mentioned in the Brāhmanas, *e.g. Çatap. Br.*, in *SBE*, xli. 60, 111. The earliest extant Law-book, *Gautama*, iv. 18, *SBE*, ii. 196, describes them as the offspring of a Kshatriya father and a Brāhman mother; cp. *Vasishṭha*, xviii. 6, *SBE*, xiv. 94. According to *Manu*, x. 11, 17, 47, they also managed horses and chariots (*SBE*, xxv. 404, 413).

[2] Cp. the figure of Viçvāmitra ("a friend to all"), the traditional author of a large number of hymns in *R.V.*, iii., in the service of a Bharata king, by birth a Kshatriya. Legend ascribed to him the power to make the waters of two rivers give way for the Bharata troops to cross over in the war with Su-dās, king of the Tritsus (*R.V.*, iii. 33).

be more potent than legal enactment, and on the other hand the demands of ceremonialism might be set below those of knowledge, of strenuous self-discipline, of fervent love.

In some parts of the poem all action is suspended for religious edification or long discourses of morality. As the troops of the contending cousins confront each other in battle array there is a solemn pause, in order that Arjuna's charioteer, the incarnate Krishna, may chant the famous "Song of the Lord," the classic poem of Indian mysticism.[1] And when the victory is won, and the eldest of the Five Brothers is installed upon the throne, he is divinely told to repair for instruction to a venerable hero of the royal house, Bhīshma (the "Terrible"), now waiting for death upon a bed of arrows. There through hundreds of cantos and many thousands of couplets[2] the dying warrior pours forth recitals of antique experience, maxims of conduct, principles of law, which serve as a framework to hold interpolated disquisitions on philosophy and strange discourses on religion. In the long history of the poem old gods arose into new eminence. Vishnu first claimed recognition in it, and large additions were made in his interest. Then Çiva would not be denied entry, and there are similar traces of handling in his favour. Of these processes no definite chronology can be constructed. At what date the tale of the Five Brothers first took shape there is no clear evidence. Both Vedic and early Buddhist literature recognise the existence of *itihāsas* or narratives of the epic class,[3] yet nothing is known of the great battle in Kuru-land, though this is often mentioned as a region of important sacrificial feasts for gods and men.[4] The first distinct allusions meet us in the Household Laws of Āçvalāyana,[5] placed by Lassen about 350 B.C.[6] The grammarian Pāṇini, probably in the same century, was acquainted with many of the leading names of the great story, and his commentator Patañjali (about 150 B.C.) knew it as a poem. But it is highly unlikely that it had then attained its present size. The scholar detects diversities of language, style, and metre. The poem itself suggests its own growth from more

[1] Cp. Lect. V., p. 250.
[2] xii. 52 to xiii. 167.
[3] See above, p. 129[1]. Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Lit.*, i. 399.
[4] iii. 44, *SBE*, xxix. 220.
[5] Cp. Eggeling, *Ency. Brit.*[11], xxiv. 168*a*.

modest origins. Placed traditionally under the authorship of Vyāsa, the "arranger," it tells us that he and some of his disciples knew 8800 couplets, and again that he composed the *Bhārata-Saṃhitā* in 24,000.[1] Here are hints of growth in its opening exposition of its themes. The climax of the story is reached with the great victory at the end of the eleventh book. The lengthy additions to the protracted scene of Bhīshma's farewell counsels, and the final trials of the Five Brothers till their reunion in heaven, are no essentials of the ancient tale of the "Great Conflict," and belong to different deposits of edifying teaching. Once past the limit of our era, the evidence becomes more certain. Some passages show so much affinity with the style of the later Purāna literature that Holtzmann, in his elaborate work upon the poem, proposed to date its remodelling between A.D. 900 and 1100, still leaving room for additions some years later.[2] The recovery of inscriptions from different parts of India, however, enabled Bühler to show that by A.D. 500 the poem was already a sacred book of authoritative teaching and edification. Texts in Vyāsa's name forbidding the diversion of temple endowments to secular purposes are repeatedly quoted from the fifth and six centuries onwards out of the injunctions in Book xiii.[3] In Harsha Vardhana's reign (606–648) pious recitations were performed in the temples; and, at the same period, a distant Cambojan colony organised similar public readings of the poem, which was already preserved in written form.[4] This date does not, of course, exclude the possibility that

[1] i. 1, 81 ; 1, 101. The longest poem in the English language, Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, is said to contain approximately 22,000 lines. The first Calcutta edition of the *Mahābhārata* numbered the couplets of the eighteen books at 90,692. The appendix (known as the *Hari-vaṃsa*, the legend of Krishṇa) brings up the total to 106,466. Texts in different parts of India vary slightly in the omission and insertion of verses and cantos.

[2] A. Holtzmann, *Das Mahābhārata*, i. (1892), 172.

[3] The poem is even said to contain 100,000 verses; cp. i. 1, 107, obviously a round number.

[4] Cp. Buhler, *Indian Studies*, ii. 25 (in *Sitzungsberichte Akad. Wiss. in Wien*, Phil. Histor. Cl., cxxvii. 1892, xii. Abhandlung), quoting Barth, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, pp. 30–31. "Copies of the Mahābhārata, the Rāmâyana, and an unnamed Purāṇa, were presented to the temple of Veal Kantel, and the donor made arrangements to ensure their daily recitation in perpetuity." Buhler remarks that the spread of this custom over so wide

still later additions may have been made to it. But it enables us to treat this immense collection, with all its diversity of interest, as a witness to the complex religious life and thought of India during the first five or six centuries of our era.

III

What, then, is the foundation of the whole conception of man's place in the world, his nature and capacities, his duties, his opportunities, his destiny, which this amazing poem offers to the Western student? It unfolds an immense panorama of existence; it peoples the universe with multitudes of supernatural beings of every rank; it conceives the world as a perpetual process of creation and destruction filling eternity with an everlasting rhythm; and it places the entire scheme under the control of inexorable moral law, which secures that always and everywhere, from the highest heaven to the lowest hell, god, man, animal, or demon shall receive the precise equivalent of his deserts. It professes to deal with the whole duty of man in view of three great aims of human activity: spiritual merit, wealth or personal advantage, and pleasure;[1] and it undertakes to show the path to ultimate deliverance from the sorrows of transmigration into union with the Eternal.

The root of this gigantic claim lies, of course, in the vast literary and religious development embraced under the general term *Veda*. The Mahābhārata is not a text-book of theology; but the sages and teachers who are concerned with the problems of human conduct and experience, are constantly compelled to justify their exhortations by appeal to an authority beyond themselves. The sacred knowledge has the character in part of divine Revelation, and in part of consecrated Tradition. But it has the further peculiarity that while in one department

an area clearly indicates that in A.D. 600 it was not of recent origin. The poem had acquired the rank of Smṛiti (Memory or Recollection), *i.e.* sacred tradition, like the Law-book of Manu, the Vedâṅgas, and other works dependent on the Vedas (Revelation). Still earlier inscriptions in various parts of India in the middle and latter half of the fifth century quote imprecatory verses against the diversion of temple endowments "from the Mahābhārata."

[1] i. 1, 48, *Dharma*, *Artha*, and *Kāma*.

of life it possesses supreme control, in another it rejects its own demands and points the way to its supersession. Both these aspects are reflected in the poem, and need some brief illustration.

Veda and Upanishad are truth, and the virtue which they inculcate is the highest.[1] The four Vedas must be studied with the devout lore gathered round their words and syllables, for in them is the Exalted One established;[2] and those who are thus acquainted with the Supreme Soul behold the unchanging origin of all things.[3] The ancient Rishis were the agents or instruments of their compilation, but the words were those of God himself.[4] Yet the testimony of the Scriptures is conflicting; they proclaim different paths of life, the way of works, of ritual and sacrifice, and the abandonment of all outward action, the way of renunciation, of inward concentration, the conquest of selfish desire, of victory over the world.

When the Five Brothers stood round the bed of arrows on which the venerable Bhīshma lay dying, they shrank from questioning him until the incarnate Krishna had first approached him. Then Bhīshma recognised that by his grace[5] all pain and weariness had left him, he saw clearly the invisible links uniting the present with both past and future, and embraced in one view all the duties laid down in the Vedas and in the Vedântas.[6] These are of divine origin, and hence of universal obligation. For the due performance of the sacrifice, said Manu, the Lord Brahman drew forth the threefold eternal Veda (Rich, Yajus, and Sāman) from fire, wind, and sun.[7] A strange legend told how Brahman, engaged in creating the sacred Four,[8] was

[1] iii. 206, 67, 83; cp. xiii. 84, 20, *çāstra-prāmāṇya*; i. 37, *Veda-prāmāṇya-darçanāt*.

[2] *Bhagavān*.

[3] xii. 235, 1–2; cp. *Manu*. xii. 99 ff., *SBE*, xxv. 506.

[4] xii. 268, 10, the *Ātman* or Supreme Lord.

[5] xii. 55, 18, *prasāda*, the divine favour which not only overcame all physical disability, but enlightened the powers of the mind.

[6] This term does not yet seem applied as the designation of a system of philosophy. Here and elsewhere it denotes the Upanishads. Cp. Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India* (1901), p. 93.

[7] *Manu*, i. 23, *SBE*, xxv. 12.

[8] The Atharva Veda is here included, *Mbh.*, xii. 348, 28.

suddenly attacked by two mighty demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, constituted respectively out of Ignorance and Darkness.[1] They seized the Vedas, and dived into the primeval ocean. The stricken Brahman, complaining that he was robbed of his eyes, his strength, his refuge, addressed himself to Nārâyana (a form of Vishnu), who is here presented as the Supreme Lord and Creator of the world. The demons were outwitted and the Vedas restored to Brahman. The angry impersonations of Ignorance and Darkness presumptuously attacked the Most High, and were promptly slain. Brahman was then at liberty to proceed with his creative work, and, aided by Hari (Nārâyana-Vishnu) and the Vedas, produced the several worlds and their contents.[2] The tale belongs to the later sections in which Vishnu is exalted above Brahman,[3] and has a transparent allegorical meaning. Ignorance and Darkness are always brothers, and the enemies of Truth; they can only be conquered by the Lord of Light. The Vedas are thus the source of Morality and Duty;[4] they belong to the sphere of works or action; they lead to corresponding rewards; but above these, surpassing charity and sacrifice and Veda-study, rises the exalted virtue of Self-control.[5] This is the indispensable condition of that higher knowledge which finally secures union with Brahman: "Self-control, renunciation, and vigilance—in these is centred immortality."[6]

To this higher knowledge two elements contribute: the first is inference (*anumāna*), and the second direct perception (*pratyaksha*). There are three grounds of belief: common practice or inferences drawn from the direct evidence of the senses, the Scriptures, and the arguments of reason.[7] The path of approach to Brahman for the purified soul lies through austerity and inference, through the duties of one's order and obedience to Revelation.[8] By inference do men know the oneness of Purusha

[1] *Tamas*, "darkness," is used also of *avidyā*, "ignorance." *Rajas*, which acquires the meaning of "passion," is also a term of "gloom."

[2] xii. 348, 70.

[3] For an older version of Vishnu's title "Madhu-slayer," see below, p. 238.

[4] xii. 121, 57, *dharma* and *sat-patha*, "the path of right." Their authority is eternal; cp. xiii. 84, 37; xii. 306, 7.

[5] xii. 160, 8.

[6] v. 43, 22.

[7] xii. 210, 22, *hetvāgama-samāchārair yad uktam.*

[8] xii. 205, 19

(the ultimate Spirit) with goodness, for among its manifestations are forgiveness, courage, abstention from injury, equability, truth, renunciation. These are no mere human qualities, they are the issue of that fundamental element of *Sattva* or "goodness" which philosophy recognised as one of the three potencies wrapped in the constitution of the external world.[1] In the section known as the *Sanatsujātīya*, or conversations of the ancient sage Sanatsujāta with the blind old Kaurava king Dhritarāshtra, the numerous Vedas were said to have been composed through ignorance of the one Veda, here apparently equated with *Satya*, Truth; for it is immediately affirmed that through ignorance of the Truth ceremonies became amplified.[2] When Truth was weighed in a scale against all religious observances (*dharma*), it proved the heavier.[3] The sages are never weary of extolling its majesty. It is the inner might of creation, and sustains the world.[4] There is nothing higher or more sacred; it is eternal duty; it is the secret of immortality; it is Brahman himself.[5] The religion of Truth is thus superior to that of sacrifice and the slaughter of animals.[6] Here are mysteries beyond the power of logic to explain. When Yudhishthira inquires of his venerable counsellor Bhīshma who is the God of the gods and the Father of the fathers, he is told that reasoning (*tarka*) might try to answer for a hundred years without success.[7] But there is a higher path of knowledge, and its name is insight (*pratyaksha*). The materialist, indeed, will limit its application to perception by the senses;[8] but the

[1] xiii. 48, 7-9; = *Anugītā*, xxxiii., *SBE*, viii. 373. *Kshamā* is constantly rendered "forgiveness" by Indian scholars; perhaps "forbearance," the Biblical "long-suffering," is more exact.

[2] v. 43, 43; *SBE*, viii. 171.

[3] xii. 199, 68.

[4] xii. 190, 1.

[5] xii. 109, 4; 300, 29, 30; 162, 5; 175, 28; 190, 1.

[6] See the story of Dharma (Morality), who became incarnate in a deer, and begged a Brāhman named Satya (Truth), living in the forest, to offer him in sacrifice, that he might go to heaven. The Brāhman nearly yields to the temptation, but is finally faithful to the principle of *ahiṃsā*, abstention from taking life (xii. 272).

[7] xii. 335, 4, 5.

[8] xiii. 162, 4, 5; the view of the *haitukas* or rationalists.

philosophic mind long trained in self-control reaches a point of view beyond all reasons, illumined by the effulgence of Brahman. There in solemn concentration, like the flame of a lamp that is full of oil in windless air, undisturbed by sight or sound, he gazes on Brahman, the Supreme and Unchanging, like a burning fire in thick darkness.[1] That is the last attainment of wisdom and discipline, the liberation from the bonds of flesh and time, the union of the human and the divine, the blending of the temporal with the Eternal.[2]

Over against these different sources of belief and practice stand the *Nâstikas*,[3] the sceptics who deny the authority of Scripture, the existence of a soul, the continuity of life under the Moral Law from world to world.[4] An ancient king Janamejaya, who had killed a Brāhman, is warned by the sage Indrota that if he thinks that this world does not exist and there is none beyond, Yama's messengers in hell will soon remind him.[5] Men of learning and logic travel over the land speaking at meetings, declaring that there is no soul, and contemptuous of immortality.[6] The Buddhist doctrine of ignorance and thirst (*avidyā* and *trishnā*) appears to be repudiated (xii. 218, 32, 33), while the parallelism of Buddhist and Brahmanical ethics is illustrated by the appearance of verses from the Dhammapada in a Hindu setting.[7] The picture of social decline in the last of the Four Ages points to the multiplication of Buddhist relic-shrines and consequent neglect of the temples of the gods.[8] When a wealthy Vaiçya, driving rapidly in his car, rudely ran over an ascetic young Brāhman, and left him moaning in the road and longing to die, Indra appeared to him in the form of a jackal. Comparing the in-

[1] xii. 317, 19, 25.

[2] On the Yoga disciplines, see below, Lect. IV., p. 211.

[3] From *na asti*, "it is not," *ante*, p 17.

[4] A long list of doubts on various subjects is enumerated in xiv. 49.

[5] xii. 150, 19.

[6] xii. 19, 23, 24.

[7] Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India*, p. 147 [3].

[8] Cp. iii. 190, 65, 67 It may, however, be doubted whether Hopkins is right (p. 88) in identifying certain yellow-robed mendicants who rejected the Veda (xii. 18, 32) with Buddhists, as they are said to carry the triple staff which was the mark of Brāhman ascetics.

conveniences of his own lot, without hands, with the Brāhman's privileges, he bids him rise and practise virtue. His own animal form was the punishment for unbelief in his previous birth. He had been a rationalist with little faith, he abused the Vedas, he talked about arguments in meetings, he was a sceptic, proud of his learning while really ignorant. The young Brāhman accepted the lesson and recognised the god.[1] The gatherings at which such displays of reasoning took place were sometimes connected with great festivals. When Yudhishthira celebrated the costly and elaborate Horse-Sacrifice in expiation of his sins, amid a splendid concourse of kings, the debates of eloquent reasoners formed an attractive part of their entertainment.[2] The intellectual activity implied in court and camp, in the palace and the forest, among women as well as men, is no less keen than in the early days of Buddhism; its range is perhaps wider; its philosophies are more clearly defined; their effort to conceive the world-order is more strenuous and more subtle. What, then, became of the religion of the Vedas, and how was Brahman related to the ancient gods?

IV

The Brahman of popular theology, as he is described by the Buddha, was, as we have seen, conceived in the most vivid terms of personality. He was "the Mighty, the All-seeing, the Ruler, the Lord of all, the Maker, the Chief of all, appointing to each his place, the Ancient of Days, the Father of all that are and are to be."[3] After a brief preface introducing the *Bhārata* as the composition of the great Vyāsa, the poem opens with homage to "the Primeval Spirit (*Purusha*), the True, the One Unchanging Brahman, both Manifest and Unmanifest, the Everlasting. He is both Non-existent and Existent-nonexistent,[4] Transcending all existent-nonexistent, Creator of the lofty and the low, Past, Future, Undecaying." Here, indeed, are riddles, first formulated when the ancient Vedic poet projected imagination into a dim and distant past when there was neither *sat* nor *asat*, "being nor non-being."[5] The solemn terms play their

[1] xii. 180.
[2] xiv. 85, 27.
[3] Cp. *ante*, p. 10.
[4] i. 1, 23, *asachcha sad-asachchaiva*.
[5] *Rig Veda*, x. 129.

part in early speculation with meanings often difficult to define.[1] They pointed the language of devotion, and the worshipper prayed—"Lead me from the unreal (*asat*) to the real (*sat*)! Lead me from darkness to light! Lead me from death to the Deathless."[2] This world of change and dissolution has no permanent existence; only the realm of light and truth undying can be said to *be*. So early was the great antithesis apprehended by Indian thought which Plato afterwards unfolded to the Western mind. It dominated all later Indian philosophy.[3] The medieval commentators on the traditional texts had their own explanations. Thus in Manu's account of the creation the same terms designate the Self-existent as both Unmanifest and Manifest, *sat* and *asat*.[4] Some of the native interpreters assumed that he is "existent or real because he can be known through the Veda and Vedânta, but non-existent or unreal as it were, because he cannot be perceived by the senses." The exposition of Nandana seems nearer the mark, "who is both the real, the efficient cause, and the unreal, the products, matter and the rest."[5] Leaving philosophy upon one side for the present, and ignoring the poet's subsequent identification of Brahman with Vishnu, let us inquire into the significance of this Supreme Being in his relation to the world, to the *devas*, and to man.

A poem like a jungle, vast, intricate, confused, with interlacing thickets and sweet open glades, full of varied life, yet with its dangers and decay, cannot maintain any strict consistency of presentation. On the relatively small scale of *Paradise Lost*, Milton could draw the figure of the Most High in solemn lines of rigid grandeur. The sacred text which furnished his sources was not, indeed, as we know now, of unitary authorship or homogeneous in its materials. But it was incomparably more compact than the Vedas and the immense mass of myth and legend which formed the sacred deposit on which the

[1] *Chhândog. Up.*, III. 19, 1; VI. 2, 1; *SBE*, I. 54, 93.

[2] *Brihad. Up.*, I. 3, 27; *SBE*, XV. 83.

[3] Cp. below, p. 174, and more fully, Lect. IV.

[4] I. 6, 11.

[5] So Buhler, *SBE*, XXV. 6. The world of the senses, of phenomena, of change, is unreal, because it is not permanent. In *Mbh.*, XIV. 54, 7, Krishna declares that *sat* and *asat*, and "whatever is above *sat* and *asat*, are from him."

Mahābhārata was slowly reared. All kinds of contradictions lie unreconciled beneath its verse, and baffle the expositor who seeks to reduce them to some harmony.

Ostensibly based upon the Vedas, the whole scheme of life has been completely changed by the assimilation of the doctrine of the Deed. How fully this was recognised by early Buddhism has been already pointed out.[1] Five hundred years before our era the doctrine of periodic destructions and renewals of the universe was already well established. For the chronology of these rhythmic alternations Gotama apparently made no suggestions. The duration of the world-ages was left undetermined. Brahmanical speculation, however, found here a fertile field for exercise. Unlike Buddhism, which easily multiplied world-systems in space and rapidly mounted to a scheme of ten thousand which could all be illuminated by a Buddha-ray, Brahmanical tradition remained faithful to the simple cosmos of the Rig Veda, with its triple division of earth, atmosphere, and heaven. It was no doubt conceived on a larger scale in the realms above. But while imagination made no further adventures into space, it ranged freely through immense reaches of time. Starting from the Scripture doctrine of the creation of the world by Brahman, it boldly asked how long it would last? And when it perished what time would elapse before it was renewed? The poets sang of "the wheel (*chakra*) which causes the destruction of all beings, revolving for ever in the universe without a beginning and without an end."[2] The final answer was shaped out of the combination of different elements, which were not always coherently united.

Within the general framework of periodic origin and dissolution the history of humanity was conceived as a succession of Four Ages (*yugas*). They bore the names of the marks upon a die, representing the figures 4, 3, 2, and 1, and they witnessed the slow deterioration of the race from a condition of innocence and happiness through diminishing length of life to social disorder of every kind. The duration of these ages was definitely fixed. Each had its corresponding number of thousands of human years, with a morning and an evening in hundreds to

[1] Cp. *ante*, p. 20. [2] *Mbh.*, i. 1, 40.

match, the total of the four being 12,000.[1] At the close of the last age the great conflagration breaks out. As in the early Buddhist eschatology, seven suns successively appear,[2] and the three worlds (189, 33) with all their inhabitants are consumed in the fierce flame. Twelve years of deluge follow, till a mighty wind disperses the clouds; nothing is left but darkness and waters; and at last the Self-Created absorbs the wind, and goes to sleep.[3]

When would he awake? Later imagination occupied itself with prodigious extensions. Twelve thousand years seemed all too brief for a world-day. The four ages were combined into a Great Yuga, and the Dissolution (*pralaya*) was postponed till they had been repeated a thousand times.[4] How the transition was effected in this recurring series from the decrepitude and wickedness of the last age to the glory and bliss of the first, is not explained. But one Brahma day now amounts to 12,000,000 human years, and the following night is of the same portentous length.[5] Unsatisfied imagination, however, still demanded more. Manu reproduces the old scheme which spread one Brahma day over a thousand Great Ages of the gods, each of 12,000 years. But the years were now reckoned on a divine scale; and a divine year seems to have been constituted out of 360 divine days (the number in the human calendar), a divine day (and night) lasting a year of our experience. The Brahma

[1] III. 188, 17 ff They are placed under the direction of the Self-Existent The reckoning is simple, 400+4000+400+300+3000+300 +200+2000+200+100+1000+100=12,000

[2] Ver. 67; cp *ante*, p 17.

[3] The Four Ages have often been compared with the Hesiodic scheme of gold, silver, bronze, and iron, which does not, however, reach the same disastrous close Avestan theology also contemplated a succession of four periods of 3000 years each, 12,000 in all, completed by the great world-conflagration and the Renovation of the earth for ever.

[4] XII. 48, 56; cp. III. 189, 40.

[5] A curious modification occurs in XII. 312, 1, where the day of the Supreme Purusha is reckoned at 10,000 Kalpas, but a day of Brahman is only threequarters as long, and lasts for 7500 Kalpas. The length of a Kalpa is not specified. If it was the equivalent of the Great Yuga, a Purusha day would include 120 million human years Hopkins, *Epic Mythol.*, p. 196, has a different reckoning, the basis of which he does not explain.

day, therefore, extended over 4320 million human years.[1] At the close of this gigantic period the universe relapsed into abysmal darkness and ceased to support conscious existence. Brahman slept. Indian imagination was undaunted by these colossal alternations of activity and somnolence.[2] They fit in ill with the philosophy of the Eternal. No Greek could have endured them. When Philo is confronted with the Hebrew statement that God "rested on the seventh day" after the labours of creation, he takes great pains to explain the nature of the divine repose. It does not consist in cessation from all activity (ἀπραξία), for God, eternal, immutable, source of all energy and cause of all, can never cease from producing what is fairest. Yet among all beings he alone can be truly said to "rest." The sun and moon, the heavens, the whole world, continually moved without free-will of their own, may legitimately be said to suffer; the changing seasons show their weariness. But God changes not, he is by nature tireless. That which is free from weakness can never cease to rest though it be for ever creating. So rest is, in the strictest sense, the attribute of God alone.[3]

The scheme of cosmic rhythms of evolution and involution is not without analogies with some modern speculations on the effects of the dissipation of energy. But when the time came for picturing the great renewal, it was difficult to combine the conceptions of ancient religious tradition with the later doctrine of the Moral Order under the Law of the Deed. With the aid of this hidden power Buddhism could evolve a world complete from heaven to hell, and people it with beings of every rank to match the unexhausted guilt or merit of their previous lives. But the ancient idea of creation was not thus regulated. It was under no compulsion to provide a fitting scene for working out the long-suspended issue of prior good or evil. It had no antecedents; the Creator was at liberty to work out his own

[1] *Manu*, i. 67 ff. The figure is, of course, the product of 12,000,000 × 360.

[2] With the same pleasure in the grandiose which Buddhist writers showed in piling up their *asaṅkheyyas*, Manu elaborates a period known as a Manvantara, i. 80, consisting of seventy-one Great Yugas. Later figures in the Purāṇas mount still higher.

[3] *De Cherubim*, 26, ed. Cohn, i. 191.

ideas, unembarrassed by the necessity of taking up the threads of innumerable previous lives just as they had been severed at the last great Dissolution. The consequence is that in the opening of a new world-age Brahman appears to stand at the commencement of all existence. He acts with a delightful freedom as he produces beings of all kinds. With genial irresponsibility,[1] but occasionally with incomplete foresight, he peoples his world, and only discovers too late that his superabundant activity has done too much. One or two illustrations from different aspects of the creative process will perhaps best illustrate the contrast between the simplicity of the older faith and the adaptations and supplements of later thought.

In general terms the supremacy of Brahman as Creator is indicated by a variety of titles. He is the Self-Born or Self-Existent; the Primeval God;[2] the Lord of Creatures; Maker, Creator, and Lord of the World. He is the First-Born and withal Unborn,[3] the Grandsire (*pitāmaha*) of the whole universe.[4] When he has saved Manu and the seven Rishis from the great Deluge, he can reveal himself through his fish-form and declare "I am Brahma, none is greater than I."[5] In the beginning darkness and silence brooded over the primeval waters.[6] Brahman, eternal, divine, and self-created, dwelt alone.[7] Then the Grandsire was born, and created three great world-forces, wind, fire, and sun. He established the heavens, the earth, and the realms below; in the firmament he set the moon and stars; he arranged the year, the seasons, and the months. Then, assuming a material body, he begot sons of great energy, the Seven Sages. From them, through Daksha (offspring of the seventh) and his sixty daughters, came all the beings of the universe, devas and fathers, spirits and demons of every degree, animals and plants, the moving and the moveless in earth and air and water. The whole process was completed by

[1] The Supreme Soul creates "for play," *krīḍârtham*, xii. 309, 11. This motive of divine sport will be heard of later. Cp. pp. 331, 468, 477.

[2] *Ādi-deva*, xii. 188, 20; cp. v. 97, 2.

[3] *Pūrva-ja* and *aja*. So he is *Deveça*, "Lord of the gods," but this title is also applied (like others) not only to Vishnu and Çiva, but also to other deities such as Indra and Yama.

[4] See this title also in *Manu*, i. 9.

[5] iii. 187, 52.

[6] xii. 166, 11 ff.

[7] xii. 208, 3.

the proclamation of the eternal religion (*dharma*) of the Veda, and its solemn acceptance by the gods with their great teachers and domestic priests.

Ancient revelation, however, had told of Brahman's birth from a wondrous egg, and this story could not be neglected. It is boldly placed at the opening of the poem.[1] In the primeval darkness everywhere encompassing the world a mighty Egg came into being, the undecaying seed of creatures. In it was the True Light, Brahman, the Eternal. The poet wrestles bravely with the difficulty; here was the Omnipresent, the Unmanifest, the Cause, the Subtle, whose Self consisted of what is and what is not.[2] From this Egg was born the Grandsire, Brahman, the one only Prajāpati. The tale proceeds with the names of seven coadjutors, among them Manu, through whom in another story the actual creation is effected.[3] Or yet again he had six "mind-born sons,"[4] the eldest of whom through his son Kāçyapa became the progenitor of all creatures.[5] It is needless to recite the many variations of genealogical detail in the pedigrees of groups of divine and demonic beings. The story of the primeval Egg became too crude for later thought, and was indignantly repudiated as the invention of ignorance. No one had seen this origin of creation, and how should the Unborn take birth from an Egg! The ugly tale was not mended by interpreting the Egg as uncreated space, for what was there in its immensity on which the Grandsire might rest? One brave affirmation drives the figure of the Grandsire, from whose forehead, side, or toe all sorts of beings might spring forth, out of the void which offers him no support: "There is a Being named Consciousness, endowed with great energy. There is no Egg. Brahman exists, Creator of the universe and its King."[6]

[1] i. 1, 29 ff. Cp. *Çatap. Brāhmaṇa*, xi. 1, 6, 1, *SBE*, xliv. 12; *Chhānd. Up.*, iii. 19, *SBE*, i. 54. The same symbol appears in Egyptian, Orphic, and Polynesian cosmogonic speculation. *Manu*, i. 13, 14, keeps Brahman a year in the egg, and he then makes heaven and earth out of the two halves.

[2] The *sat* and *asat* which recur in all philosophical enumerations. See above, p. 141.

[3] iii. 187, 52.

[4] i. 65, 10, *mānasāḥ putrā*.

[5] In xiii. 31, 25, the Rishis are named as the creators of the world.

[6] xiii. 153, 16–19.

Throned in supreme sovereignty, Brahman with fourfold face, looking in all directions, possesses all knowledge and surveys all time.[1] Past, present, future are alike open to his gaze. As the Creator he is also the Ordainer,[2] and the ultimate loss and destinies of various ranks of beings are in his hands. Even the two chief powers who are ultimately conceived as his equals and even his superiors, Vishnu and Çiva, are at first under his sovereignty and obedient to his commands. Vishnu is the youngest of the twelve sons of Aditi; Çiva is born (like Athena from Zeus) out of Brahmā's forehead. In the strange myth of the churning of the ocean to produce the mysterious drink of immortality, Vishnu (in the form of Nārâyana) by Brahmā's order imparts strength to the celestial powers exhausted by the task; and at a similar command Çiva swallows the deadly poison suddenly generated by the process, to save the three worlds.[3] But the old Vedic deities had their own claims to recognition, and in the immense multitudes which fill the background of successive scenes in the three worlds the Thirty-Three, ranged under Indra as their chief, are not forgotten. Here are great Nature-powers like Fire, Sun, and Wind;[4] Varuna degraded from his high estate and retaining only his connection with the waters; Yama, the King of Righteousness and Lord of the worlds below; Kubēra, once a demon, now the God of Wealth. Among these the Sun is the object of special homage.[5] He is the eye of the world, soul of all bodies, lord of light. He contains the elements, he is knowledge and ascetic powers. With the usual facility of identification he is equated with Indra, Vishnu, Çiva, Prajāpati, Agni, the Subtle Mind, the Lord and the Eternal Brahman. His worship saves from dangers and afflictions; believers are freed from all disease and sin.[6] Here are plain traces of an important solar cult. No such attempt is made to bring Indra into the sphere of

[1] *Bhūta-bhava-bhavishyavid*, VII. 54, 32.

[2] *Dhātri* and *Vidhātri*, in frequent combination.

[3] i. 18, 31, 33.

[4] These three are said to dwell in man's person, and as spectators of his conduct become his witnesses (xii. 322, 55).

[5] See the hymn, iii. 3, 36.

[6] *Ibid.* 60, 65.

Brahman. In a meeting in the Hall of Good Counsel, when Indra has gathered the Thirty-Three with a great array of lesser powers, according to an early Buddhist tale,[1] a wondrous radiance from the north indicates the advent of Brahmā. He comes in a form especially created to render him visible; so far was his transcendent might above the perception of the gods of old. Between Indra and Brahmā there is, accordingly, no community of nature. Indra is lord, king, chief of the gods, but he is not eternal. He is, indeed, called "undying" (*amara*), but he is not truly immortal. He has been invested with royalty over the *devas* by Brahmā's decree.[2] But such sovereignty only lasts till its destined end, and a successor is ready to take his place.[3]

Indra, then, though in some respects a counterpart to Zeus, could never become a symbol of the unity of the world, or the upholder of its power. He is the wielder of the thunderbolt, the champion of the gods against Titans and giants, the slayer of many demons, the destroyer of the fortresses in which the enemies of the celestials defied them. He possesses a thousand eyes, but he is not omniscient or omnipresent, though one epithet credits him with lordship over past and future.[4] Like Zeus he is physically connected with the rain, and in one aspect is identical with the old rain-god Parjanya.[5] Like Zeus, too, he has his earthly loves. Arjuna, the winner of the lovely Draupadī, is his son, a partial incarnation of his might. To arm him for the dreaded strife he takes the Pāndava prince to his own heaven, and bestows on him celestial weapons. He can condescend even to boyish tricks, transforms himself into a wind, mixes up the clothes of some bathing maidens, and stirs up a quarrel. Strangest of all, he lives in constant fear that some sage will acquire such power by persistent and severe austerities that he will be turned off his throne, and many are the devices of temptation which he contrives for averting

[1] *Dialogues*, ii. 244 [2] i. 31, 18.

[3] The Five Pāndava Brothers had all been Indras, i. 199, 34 ff. "Many thousands of Indras," xii. 224, 55.

[4] *Bhāṭa-bhavyeça*, xvii. 3, 7. Cp. the epithet of Brahman, above, p. 147[1].

[5] Cp., for instance, i. 26, 2; xiv. 92. 11–22.

the catastrophe.[1] At last a Daitya king Prahlāda[2] succeeded by his meritorious conduct in deposing him, and assumed the sovereignty of the three worlds. Taking counsel with the sage preceptor of the Daityas, Indra assumed the form of a Brāhman and humbly asked the new king for instruction. He was told to bear no malice, to conquer anger, to restrain his senses, and practise self-control. The pupil finally absorbs the attainments of his teacher. One after another mysterious flames like shadowy forms issue from Prahlāda's person, and convey his past merits, righteousness, truth, good works, power, prosperity, into his rival's body, and Indra recovers the sovereignty he had temporarily lost.[3] Such moral apologues, however, are rare. Indra is no ethical personality. Philosophy and morals might hang some of their trappings on him, but he could never acquire a consistent character. He is, however, *puruhūta*, "invoked by many." But the traces of worship are scanty. In the records of royal reigns inscribed in the dedicatory poems of later temples, he serves to supply a model for court-praise. He was the god of kings, who planted bamboo-sticks in his honour, swathed them in golden cloths, perfumed them with scents, wreathed them in garlands, and instituted festivals in his honour.[4] But in spite of his prominence in the Mahābhārata the later religion of India had no use for him or for the gods he ruled, and the vast mythologic phantasmagoria in which he was the leading power gradually faded away.

There were, however, other problems besides that of dealing with the ancient figures of Vedic imagination. The ethical nature of Brahman was sufficiently attested by his distribution of society into the four great castes, and his revelation of the duties attendant upon each. But how was it that these laws were so often set at nought; or, again, how was it that the primeval state of happiness and innocence, such as befitted

[1] Cp. the story of the long warfare with Vṛtra, which has its origin in this apprehension.

[2] The Daityas were associated with the Asuras, Dānavas, and others in constant warfare with the gods.

[3] xii. 124, 20 ff. For specimens of Prahlāda's instructions, see 222, 3 ff., iii. 28.

[4] i. 63, 17–26.

creatures fresh from their Maker's hands, was impaired by death? In one figure, at least, there is a dim hint of an original antagonism between the forces of good and evil resembling the Iranian dualism of the spirits of Right and the Lie.[1] Out of the primeval darkness comes the demon Madhu. Like Brahman himself he has no origin, he is *purva-ja*, first-born, in the sense of having no progenitor.[2] The whole significance of his existence was to slay Brahman; but as he strove he was himself killed by Krishna (Vishnu), who bore in consequence the proud title "Madhu-Slayer." Among the offspring of Brahman, issuing from his right breast, was Dharma, the impersonation of religion and morality, "the dispenser of all happiness."[3] He embodied the righteous order of the world; he bound the Asuras with his nooses and delivered them to Varuna; he distributed the issues of virtue and of sin.[4] But his awards were sometimes contested. An eminent sage who was impaled after being falsely accused of theft, continued in the practise of austerities for many years upon his stake, even without food. He could only remember one little sin. In his childhood he had pierced a tiny fly with a blade of grass. The holy man felt himself justified in retaliating upon Dharma for inflicting on him so severe a punishment. He cursed him to be born on earth as a Çūdra, and such was the power of a Brāhman's curse that the offspring of the Eternal must needs submit.[5] For the purpose of testing Brāhmans and others he assumes different shapes, human and animal. He appears as a demon tall as a palm-tree, blazing like the sun, to the eldest of the Five Brothers whom he had himself begotten; and after a long catechism in which Yudhishthira's answers satisfy his terrible questioner, he declares that truth and self-control, purity and simplicity, steadfastness and charity, are his limbs, and Yudhishthira recognises him as "God of gods."[6]

[1] Cp. *Yasna*, 30, tr. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism* (1913), p. 349. Similar opposites occur in xii. 190, truth and falsehood, righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, pleasure and pain, heaven and hell.

[2] xii. 207, 14. Another story ascribes his origin to the secretion of Vāsudeva's ears, vi. 67, 12–13. A third tale gives him a brother, see above, p. 137.

[3] i. 66, 32.

[4] v. 128; iii. 311, 1.

[5] i. 63, 93–96; *ib.*, 107–8; xv. 28, 12.

[6] iii. 292, 23.

But the God of Righteousness had a counterpart of evil, Adharma, Unrighteousness, grandson of Varuna, born of his daughter, when from lust of food creatures began to devour one another. He took to wife Nirriti or Ruin; and their offspring were Fear, Terror, and Death.[1] That is a genealogical version; another tale throws a strange light on Brahman's character.[2] In the beginning the creatures that were produced multiplied greatly, but none died. All parts of the three worlds became overcrowded, the Earth complained that she could not bear the burden, and the Grandsire could not decide on measures of relief. At length his anger broke out in flame and began to consume the universe and its inhabitants. Vishnu (and according to vii. 53, 6, Çiva also) ventured to remonstrate; Brahman suppressed the fire; and out of his person came a woman's form, robed in black and red, whom he saluted with the command, "O Death, slay these creatures." Long did she shrink from the horror of killing infants, youths, old people, who had done her no wrong. She fled from the Presence to purge herself by incredible austerities from future guilt. She stood upon one leg for sixteen times ten billions of years. She roved in the forest, she immersed herself in the waters, she lived upon air, she balanced herself on her toes on the top of the Himâlaya (for a hundred billions of years), till the Creator and Destroyer of the universe impatiently inquired what she was doing, and peremptorily bade her fulfil his command. Dreading her Maker's curse, and assured that Eternal Virtue[3] should dwell in her, she at last undertook the appalling task. The tears she shed as she went forth were turned into diseases, and she became the solemn agent of the Moral Order of the world.[4]

[1] i. 66, 54–56.

[2] It is twice told, vii 52, 38 ff, and xii. 206, 13 ff. The story in vii. has some signs of being the later.

[3] xii. 258, 29

[4] Cp. the presentation of *Daṇḍa* or Punishment (literally "the rod") in xii. 121–122. After the usual fashion of identification, Punishment is designated as Îçvara (God), Man, Vital Breath, Goodness, Heart, Prajâpati (Lord of creatures), Soul of beings, and Life (122, 41). He is the Scriptures, Vishṇu, the Undecaying, Brahman, and so forth. And in the next canto a grotesque origin is assigned to him from Brahman's brain when he comes

Thus did Brahman administer the affairs of gods and men through delegated powers. Day after day he made the sun rise, the *devas* guarded his course, Dharma made him set, like the Erinyes under whose watch Heracleitus declared that he trod his path across the skies; and thus he was established in that Truth which was one aspect of Brahman's relation to the world.[1] When the gods were endangered by the terrible Dānavas under Vritra's leadership, and with Indra at their head presented themselves humbly before him, Brahman knew their desires and proclaimed the remedy.[2] He inflicts curses, he bestows boons, he watches battles, he advises sages.[3] After Arjuna had learned from Indra firmness of grasp in handling his weapons, it was Brahman who taught him successful aim. But even the demons might win his favour by the asceticism which he loved.[4] To Suras and to Asuras he was equally well disposed.[5] This impartiality towards all beings, in his character of Prajāpati or Lord of creatures, is the moral characteristic of his sovereignty,[6] and is emphasised again and again as the duty of kings. If the Brāhmans, learned and beneficent, look upon all beings equally, and thus resemble their Maker,[7] the king who holds the rod of punishment without anger, and protects all creatures, thus preserving and supporting everything, combines on earth the attributes of power, justice, and morality, the dignities of Indra, Yama, and Dharma.[8]

The functions of the creation and preservation or maintenance of the world do not, however, exhaust Brahman's relation to it. The dissolution which follows the decline of the Kali age, and

forth in a sneeze. But he too, like Death, is an organ of Dharma. Cp. *Manu*, vii. 14 ff., where Punishment is created as Brahman's son, and is equated with Dharma as the ruling power of the world. In the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, i. 7, 27, he is made his son.

[1] iii. 312, 46.

[2] iii. 100, 6; cp. 107, 7; xiii. 85.

[3] See the curious story of his command to Viçvakarman (another form of the Creator, the "All-Maker") to create Tilottamā to bring the brothers Sanda and Upasanda to ruin (i. 213, 7 ff.).

[4] Cp. iii. 172, 29.

[5] v. 78, 7. The Suras seem to be the celestials, after the interpretation of Asuras as "not-Suras."

[6] i. 49, 10; xiii. 85, 3.

[7] xii. 76, 2.

[8] xii. 72, 25.

the completion of a cycle of twelve thousand years,[1] is his work also. He bears in consequence the title "Lord of the World's Beginning and Destruction."[2] And thus the whole cycle of existence is comprised in him. Later theology will associate with him two partners in these great activities. When Brahman has created the universe, Vishnu will uphold it, and Çiva will end it; and the three personalities will be combined in the Trimūrti, or the Triple Form.[3] But before introducing these associates in the divine process, it may be well to inquire whether the conception of the Eternal Brahman as universal cause remained unchallenged, and what place was found within it for the activity of the human will.

V

Mysterious, indeed, are the powers encompassing man's lot. Five hundred years before our era, one of the wandering teachers in the days of the Buddha, Makkhali of the Cow-pen, founder of a sect known as the Ājīvikas, which can be traced by inscriptions into the thirteenth century,[4] had laid it down that creatures had no force or power or energy of their own.[5] They were in the grip of fate (*niyati*); they were determined by the conditions of the *gati* or class to which they belonged (*saṅgati*), and by their individual nature (*bhāva*). The author of a later tract, the Çvetâçvatara Upanishad,[6] opens his exposition with

[1] iii. 188, 27 f., *ante*, p. 143.

[2] *Lokâdinidhaneçvara*, vii. 53, 20. Prof. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 196, is apparently inclined to limit this epithet to the conflagration produced by Brahman's anger at the multiplication of beings beyond the power of Earth to sustain them, as though it were a single incident: "The world-destruction caused by his falling asleep is only a phase in the world's life." But the inclusion of the "beginning" as well as the end in the title favours the other interpretation. The destruction originally took place at the close of the Kali age (iii. 188, 80); before the repetition of the cycle a thousand times had been invented. In this multiplication the chronologers forgot to account for the passage from the disorder of the Kali age to the brilliance of the Krita, the age of accomplishment (or *Satya*, the Truth).

[3] See below, Lect. V., p. 276.

[4] Cp. Hoernle, in Hastings' *ERE*, i. 266; *ante*, p. 16.

[5] Rh. Davids, *Dialogues*, i. 71, *ante*, p. 16.

[6] In the interests of Çiva, see Lect. VI., p. 227.

students' questions: "Is Brahman the cause? Whence are we born, whereby do we live, and whither do we go?" There were various answers from the sceptic's side, time and nature (*svabhāva*, "self-being"), necessity or chance, the elements and their union.[1] All through the Epic runs the sense of inexorable law, sometimes embodied in powers and agencies more or less personalised, sometimes distinctly incorporated in Brahman's administration of the world, but always connected more or less clearly with the doctrine of "fruits" and the principle of the Deed.

In the palace of Brahman where the Grandsire dwells surrounded by the creations of his own mystic might,[2] he is served by *Niyati* (Fate), by Hope and Accomplishment, by Creation and Joy.[3] Around the throne are also Day and Night, the Months, the Seasons, the Years and the Ages, and the eternal, indestructible, and undecaying Wheel of Time. Time may act under the ordinance of the Great Disposer who has made man subject to his course.[4] He may be provided with a sire in Dhruva, the Pole-star;[5] but others regard him as without father or mother,[6] like Melchizedek. Yet he may be identified with Brahman himself.[7] Merciless and destructive, he is the real author of every deed; all creatures act under his influence; Time's power is irresistible. The fallen Asura Namuchi endures his lot without impatience; Time had borne him on like water running down hill: "Doing virtuous and sinful acts, I go on as he moves me; one gets only what has been ordained; that which is to happen actually takes place."[8] Namuchi may be uncertain whether *bhavitavya*, "that which is to be,"[9] is the product of one Ordainer or (like Dolly Winthrop's respectful "Them above") of many.[10] What is certain is that the ordinance (*vidhāna*) follows the agent, though he may do his best to leave it behind. It lies down with him in bed, moves like his

[1] i. 1, 2: *SBE*, xv. 231.
[2] *Māyā* see below, p. 301.
[3] ii. 11, 42. On Brahman's *Sabhā*, see below, p. 170.
[4] xii. 25, 5.
[5] i. 66, 22.
[6] xii. 33, 17.
[7] xii. 224, 46, 51, 54; cp. below, p. 255.
[8] xii. 236, 8 ff.
[9] Cp. xii. 22, 15.
[10] xii. 226, 21. Cp. *bhavitṛi*, under the sway of Çiva, vii. 202, 77.

shadow when he moves, acts when he acts.[1] Past, present, and future are thus bound together in indissoluble sequence under the solemn law, "Whatever acts a man does, of these he must reap the fruits."[2] Time, it is said, "ripens all things, but no one knows that in which Time itself is ripened."[3]

There is an alternative conception in Nature (*sva-bhāva*), which some hold to be supreme, contrasted alike with Time, with human initiative (*paurusha*), or divine intent (*daiva*),[4] or some combination of these agencies. But piety falls back again and again on the recognition of a power from above, *dishṭa*, "what is appointed," equivalent to heaven's decree.[5] (*Daiva-vidhi*, the ordinance from on high, supports Krishna himself as he prepares for the battle on behalf of the Five Brothers.[6] It was *vidhi* no less which drove Yudhishthira into the fatal game of dice, and cost him the loss of all his possessions.[7] Man, says King Dhritarāshtra, is no lord of his own lot; he is made subject to the Ordainer's decree, like a wooden doll strung on a string.[8] But the venerable Bhīshma, lying on his bed of arrows and gathering up his life's experience, is constrained to recognise that *daiva* and *paurusha* are equal partners, and the human responsibility cannot be ignored.[9] This is, of course, implied in the lengthy discourses on morality, the duties of persons of all castes and ranks, and the constant insistence on energy, action,

[1] xii. 181, 8–9; 28, 23 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, 10.

[3] xii. 239, 25; 322, 92. In xiii. 1, Kāla accounts for himself. A snake bites a boy, who dies in consequence. An indignant fowler brings the snake to the mother for her to choose how it shall be killed. She wishes it released, as its death will not restore her son to life. The snake pleads that he was not an independent cause, but only the instrument of Death, who intervenes in the discussion, and declares that like a cloud driven by the wind he had been impelled by Kāla. Finally, Kāla argues that neither the snake nor Death nor himself was responsible. The sole cause was Karma. So the snake was set free.

[4] xii. 232, 19 ff.; 237, 4 ff.; 238, 5 ff.

[5] *Daivādishṭa.*

[6] v. 82, 46.

[7] ii. 59, 18. Cp. the Creator's *niyoga*, 76, 3.

[8] v. 39, 1, cp. Draupadī's complaint, *ante*, p. 50.

[9] *Daiva* is the divinely appointed issue of *paurusha*, which is therefore of the higher consequence, xii. 10 (between 56 and 57, Dutt, Calcutta ed. 56), 15

effort, and self-control. The demands of sacred law on the one hand, and the praises of austerity and asceticism on the other, are alike founded on the recognition of human freedom. Events like birth and death, defeat at play or in the field, may in one aspect be set down to Karma, or (if the whole sphere of action be incorporated in Brahman's administration of the world) to *daiva*, or any similar half-personalised conception. Such, for example, was *Bhāgya* (or *Bhāgadheya*), the share or portion allotted by heaven to man.[1] How much, after all, did that allotment comprise? All the conditions of existence, sex, caste, rank, occupation, beauty or deformity of person (to speak only of the human sphere), the vicissitudes of circumstance, success and failure, prosperity or disaster, disease and death, belonged to the divine Ordinance. So, too, did the whole group of inward dispositions and capacities. A wise mind, a sound character, was as much a product of the past as a well-made figure or a princely inheritance.[2] But did the Supreme Disposer so completely rule man's inner realm of thoughts and purposes, feelings and desires, that all options were effectively closed, and action followed the line of least resistance as certainly as water runs down hill?

When the great battle was over and the Five Brothers were victorious, Yudhishthira, overwhelmed with distress at the slaughter and bowed to the earth by the memory of his sins, proposed to starve himself to death. The sage Vyāsa pleaded that he had loyally fulfilled his kingly duty in punishing transgressors. Who is the real agent, he asked, God (*Īçvara*) or Man? Is necessity (*haṭha*) the source of everything, or the

[1] ix. 2, 30 ff. Bhaga was one of the twelve Ādityas of the Rig Veda (enumerated in *Mbh.*, i. 65, 15), the "dispenser," bestowing wealth and presiding over love and marriage. He was the giver of good fortune; and the derivatives acquired the significance of luck or fate. Cp. the Greek *μοῖρα* and *μέρος* (Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, 1912, p. 12 ff.). The various epic equivalents do not, however, place destiny above Brahman. The *Dhātri* or *Vidhātri* moves the world, and Fate (*niyati*) is only another aspect of his will. The Law of the Deed is the method of his operation. That acts should have their inevitable consequences is his *vidhāna*. Cp. ii. 57, 4; 58, 14.

[2] Cp. xii. 232, 17, where the continuity of character from one creation to another is expressly affirmed.