For Consultation only

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A HISTORY

OF

ANCIENT SANSKRIT LITERATURE

SO FAR AS IT ILLUSTRATES

THE PRIMITIVE RELIGION OF THE BRAHMANS.

BY MAX MÜLLER, M.A.

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TO

HORACE HAYMAN WILSON, ESQ.

BODEN PROFESSOR OF SANSKRIT, ASSOCIATE OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, ETC.

This Work is Inscribed

AS A TOKEN OF ADMIRATION AND GRATITUDE

BY HIS PUPIL AND FRIEND

MAX MÜLLER.

a greater amount of leisure on the prosecution of Sanskrit studies, I felt that I should better serve the interests of Sanskrit Philology by devoting all my spare time to editing the text and commentary of the Veda, than by publishing the results, more or less fragmentary, of my own researches into the language, literature, and religion of the ancient Brahmans.

In resuming now, after the lapse of nearly ten years, the publication of these Essays, I may regret that on many points I have been anticipated by others, who during the interval have made the Veda the special subject of their studies. But this regret is fully balanced by the satisfaction I feel in finding that, in the main, my original views on the literature and religion of the Vedic age have not been shaken, either by my own continued researches or by the researches of others; and that the greater part of this work could be printed, as it now stands, from the original manuscript. It will be seen, however, that in the notes, as well as in the body of the work, I have availed myself, to the best of my ability, of all the really important and solid information that could be gathered from the latest works of Sanskrit philologists. The frequent references to the works of Wilson, Burnouf, Lassen, Benfey, Roth, Boehtlingk, Kuhn, Regnier, Weber, Aufrecht, Whitney, and others, will show where I have either derived new light from the labours of these eminent scholars, or found my own conclusions confirmed by their independent testimony. Believing, as I do, that literary controversy is more apt to impede than to advance the cause of truth, I

have throughout carefully abstained from it. Where it seemed necessary to controvert unfounded statements or hasty conclusions, I have endeavoured to do so by stating the true facts of the case, and the legitimate conclusions that may be drawn from these facts.

My readers have to thank Dr. Bühler, a pupil of Professor Benfey of Göttingen, for the alphabetical index at the end of this volume. The same industrious scholar has supplied me with a list of errata, to which some remarks of his own are appended.

MAX MÜLLER.

Ray Lodge, Maidenhead,
Aug. 3, 1859.

ERRATA.

Page	36.	line 26.	*read*	Sakuntalâ.
„	45.	line 37.	„	Dvâraka.
„	110.	line 21.	„	Purâṇa.
„	160.	line 28.	„	ûshman.
„	181.	line 24.	„	Dhânanjayya.
„	200.	line 30.	„	*ἀπὸ*.
„	227.	line 26.	„	यत्तु line 30. त्रि Ibid. एवेद.
„	247.	line 27.	„	kṛipîṭam, kirîṭam.
„	284.	line 2.	„	tirîṭa.
„	364.	line 27.	„	Śaunakins.
„	382.	line 14.	„	Kâkshîvateti; line 16., Dîrgha.
„	499.	line 4.	„	*σήματα*.
„	573.	line 9.	„	नारदं.
„	576.	line 10.	„	निर्दग्.
„	585.	line 5.	„	गौद्राव्याचाद.

Page 252. line 26. The Kratusangraha is frequently quoted by Sâyaṇa, in his Commentary on the Tândya-brâhmaṇa in elucidation of obscure passages. P. 252. l. 27. The Viniyoga-sangraha is likewise quoted by Sâyaṇa as containing explanations of the Mantras employed in the Tândya-brâhmaṇa.

Page 325. line 22. There was no space left for printing the list of the Upanishads; it will be published in one of the Oriental Journals.

Page 580. line 3. The statement of Ajîgarta intending to devour his own son is clearly a modern addition of the Sânkhâyanas.

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INTRODUCTION.

FULL seventy years have passed since Sir William Jones published his translation of Śakuntala[1], a work which may fairly be considered as the starting point of Sanskrit philology. The first appearance of this beautiful specimen of dramatic art created at the time a sensation throughout Europe, and the most rapturous praise was bestowed upon it by men of high authority in matters of taste.[2] At the same time the attention of the historian, the philologist, and the philosopher was roused to the fact that

[1] "Sacontala or the Fatal Ring, an Indian drama, translated from the original Sanskrit and Prakrit. Calcutta, 1789." There have since appeared three editions of the Sanskrit text, and translations in French, German, Italian, Danish, and Swedish.

A new and very elegant English version has lately been published by Professor Williams. Hertford, 1856.

[2] Goethe was one of the greatest admirers of Śakuntala, as may be seen from the lines written in his Italian Travels at Naples, and from his well-known Epigram:

"Willt Du die Blüthe des frühen, die Früchte des späteren Jahres,
Willt Du, was reizt und entzückt, willt Du was sättigt und nährt,
Willt Du den Himmel, die Erde mit einem Namen begreifen,
Nenn ich, Sacontala, Dich, und so ist Alles gesagt."

"Wilt thou the blossoms of spring and the fruits that are later in season,
Wilt thou have charms and delights, wilt thou have strength and support,
Wilt thou with one short word encompass the earth and the heaven,
All is said if I name only, Sacontala, thee."

a complete literature had been preserved in India, which promised to open a new leaf in the ancient history of mankind, and deserved to become the object of serious study. And although the enthusiasm with which works like Śakuntala were at first received by all who took an interest in literary curiosities could scarcely be expected to last, the real and scientific interest excited by the language, the literature, the philosophy, and antiquities of India has lasted, and has been increasing ever since. England, France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and Greece have each contributed their share towards the advancement of Sanskrit philology, and names like those of Sir W. Jones, Colebrooke, Wilson, in England, Burnouf in France, the two Schlegels, W. von Humboldt, Bopp, and Lassen, in Germany, have secured to this branch of modern scholarship a firm standing and a universal reputation. The number of books that have been published by Sanskrit scholars in the course of the last seventy years is but small.[1] Those works, however, represent large and definite results, important not only in their bearing on Indian antiquities, but, as giving birth to a new system of Comparative Philology, of the highest possible importance to philology in general.[2] In little more than half a

[1] Professor Gildemeister in his most laborious and accurate work, "Bibliothecæ Sanscritæ Specimen, Bonnæ, 1847," brings the number of books that have been published up to that time in Sanskrit philology to 603, exclusive of all works on Indian antiquities and Comparative Philology. During the last twelve years that number has been considerably raised.

[2] Professor Lassen, in his work on Indian Antiquities, now in course of publication, is giving a resumé of the combined labours of Indian philologists during the last seventy years, sifted critically

century, Sanskrit has gained its proper place in the republic of learning, side by side with Greek and Latin. The privileges which these two languages enjoy in the educational system of modern Europe will scarcely ever be shared by Sanskrit. But no one who wishes to acquire a thorough knowledge of these or any other of the Indo-European languages, — no one who takes an interest in the philosophy and the historical growth of human speech, — no one who desires to study the history of that branch of mankind to which we ourselves belong, and to discover in the first germs of the language, religion, and mythology of our forefathers, the wisdom of Him who is not the God of the Jews only, — can, for the future, dispense with some knowledge of the language and ancient literature of India.

And yet Indian philology is still in its infancy, and the difficulties with which it has had to contend have been great, much greater, indeed, than those which lay in the way of Greek philology after its revival in the fifteenth century. Seventy years after the fall of Constantinople, the classical works of Greek literature were not only studied from manuscripts: they had been edited and printed. There were men like Reuchlin, Erasmus, and Melanchthon, who had investigated the most important documents in the different periods of Greek literature, and possessed a general knowledge of the historical growth of the Greek

and arranged scientifically by a man of the most extensive learning, and of the soundest principles of criticism. His work may indeed be considered as bringing to its conclusion an important period of Sanskrit philology, which had taken its beginning with Sir W. Jones's translation of Śakuntala. Indische Alterthums-Kunde, von Christian Lassen. Bonn, 1847—1858.

mind. Learned Greeks who were taking refuge in the west of Europe, particularly in Italy, had brought with them a sufficient knowledge to teach their language and literature; and they were able and ready to guide the studies of those who were afterwards to contribute to the revival of classical learning in Europe. Men began where they ought to begin, namely, with Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides, and not with Anacreontic poetry or Neo-Platonist philosophy. But when our earliest Sanskrit scholars directed their attention to Indian literature, the difficulties they had to struggle with were far greater. Not to mention the burning and enervating sky of India, and the burden of their official occupations, men like Halhed, Wilkins, and Sir W. Jones could hardly find a single Brahman who would undertake to teach them his sacred idiom. When, after some time, learned Pandits became more willing to impart their knowledge to Europeans, their own views of Indian history and literature were more apt to mislead their pupils than to guide them, in a truly historical direction. Thus it happened that, at the beginning of Sanskrit philology, preference was given either to works which still enjoyed amongst the Hindus themselves a great, but frequently undeserved, popularity, or to those which by their poetical beauty attracted the attention of men of taste. Everything Indian, whether Manu's Code of Laws, the Bhagavadgîtâ, Śakuntala, or the Hitopadeśa, was at that time considered to be of great and extravagant antiquity, and it was extremely difficult for European scholars to form a right opinion on the real merits of Indian literature. The literary specimens received from India were generally fragments only of larger works:

or if not, they had been chosen so indiscriminately from different and widely distant periods, that it was impossible to derive from them an adequate knowledge of the rise and fall of the national literature of India.

Herder, in other respects an excellent judge of ancient national poetry, committed himself to some extraordinary remarks on Indian literature. In his criticism on Śakuntala, written in the form of letters to a friend, he says: "Do you not wish with me, that instead of these endless religious books of the Vedas, Upavedas, and Upangas, they would give us the more useful and more agreeable works of the Indians, and especially their best poetry of every kind? It is here the mind and character of a nation is best brought to life before us, and I gladly admit, that I have received a truer and more real notion of the manner of thinking among the ancient Indians from this one Śakuntala, than from all their Upnekats and Bagavedams."[1] The fact is that at that time Herder's view on the endless religious books of the Vedas, could only have been formed from a wretched translation of the Bagavedam, as he calls it, — that is, the Bhâgavatapurâṇa, — a Sanskrit work composed as many centuries after as the Vedas were before Christ; or from the Ezour-vedam, a very coarse forgery, if, indeed, it was intended as such, written, as it appears, by a native servant, for the use of the famous Jesuit missionary in India, Roberto de Nobilibus.[2]

[1] Herder's Schriften, vol. ix. p. 226, Zur schönen Literatur und Kunst. Tübingen, 1807.

[2] Cf. Account of a Discovery of a Modern Imitation of the.

Even at a much later time, men who possessed the true tact of an historian, like Niebuhr, have abstained from passing sentence on the history of a nation whose literature had only just been recovered, and had not yet passed through the ordeal of philological criticism. In his Lectures on Ancient History, Niebuhr leaves a place open for India, to be filled up when the pure metal of history should have been extracted from the ore of Brahmanic exaggeration and superstition.

Other historians, however, thought they could do what Niebuhr had left undone; and after perusing some poems of Kâlidâsa, some fables of the Hitopadeśa, some verses of the Ânanda-lahari, or the mystic poetry of the Bhagavadgîtâ, they gave, with the aid of Megasthenes and Apollonius of Tyana, a so-called historical account of the Indian nation, without being aware that they were using as contemporary witnesses, authors as distant from each other as Dante and Virgil. No nation has, in this respect, been more unjustly treated than the Indian. Not only have general conclusions been drawn from the most scanty materials, but the most questionable and spurious authorities have been employed without the least historical investigation or the exercise of that critical ingenuity, which, from its peculiar character, Indian literature requires more than any other.[1]

Vedas, with Remarks on the genuine works, by Fr. Ellis; Asiatic Researches, xiv. p. 1—59: Calcutta, 1822.

[1] Professor H. H. Wilson, in the preface to his translation of the Vishṇu-Purâṇa, remarks: "It is the boast of inductive philosophy that it draws its conclusions from the careful observation and accumulation of facts; and it is equally the business of all philosophical research to determine its facts before it ventures

There is another circumstance which has retarded the progress of Sanskrit philology: an affectation of that learned pedantry which has done so much mischief to Greek and Latin scholarship. We have much to learn, no doubt, from classical scholars, and nothing can be a better preparation for a Sanskrit student than to have passed through the school of a Bentley or a Hermann. But in Greek and Latin scholarship the distinction between useful and useless knowledge has almost disappeared, and the real objects of the study of these ancient languages have been well nigh forgotten. More than half of the publications of classical scholars have tended only to impede our access to the master-works of the ancients; and a sanction has been given to a kind of learning, which, however creditable to the individual, is of no benefit to the public at large. A similar spirit has infected Sanskrit philology. Sanskrit texts have been edited, on which no rational man ought to waste his time. Essays have been written on subjects on which it is folly to be wise. These remarks are not intended to disparage critical scholarship or to depreciate the results which have been obtained by minute and abstruse erudition. But scholars who devote all their time to critical niceties and recondite subtleties are apt to forget that these are but accessories. Knowledge which has no object beyond itself is, in most cases, but a pretext for vanity. It is so easy, even for the most superfi-

upon speculation. This procedure has not been observed in the investigation of the mythology and traditions of the Hindus. Impatience to generalise has availed itself greedily of whatever promised to afford materials for generalisation; and the most erroneous views have been confidently advocated, because the guides to which their authors trusted were ignorant or insufficient."

cial scholar, to bring together a vast mass of information, bearing more or less remotely on questions of no importance whatsoever. The test of a true scholar is to be able to find out what is really important, to state with precision and clearness the results of long and tedious researches, and to suppress altogether lucubrations, which, though they might display the laboriousness of the writer, would but encumber his subject with needless difficulty.

The object and aim of philology, in its highest sense, is but one, — to learn what man is, by learning what man has been. With this principle for our pole-star, we shall never lose ourselves, though engaged in the most minute and abstruse inquiries. Our own studies may seemingly refer to matters that are but secondary and preparatory, to the clearance, so to say, of the rubbish which passing ages have left on the monuments of the human mind. But we shall never mistake that rubbish for the monuments which it covers. And if, after years of tiresome labour, we do not arrive at the results which we expected, — if we find but spurious and unimportant fabrications of individuals, where we thought to place ourselves face to face with the heroes of an ancient world, and among ruins that should teach us the lessons of former ages, — we need not be discouraged nor ashamed, for in true science even a disappointment is a result.

If, then, it is the aim of Sanskrit philology to supply one of the earliest and most important links in the history of mankind, we must go to work historically; that is, we must begin, as far as we can, with the beginning, and then trace gradually the growth of the Indian mind, in its various manifestations, as far as the remaining literary monuments allow us to

follow this course. What has been said with regard to philosophy, that "we must acquire a knowledge of the beginning and first principles, because then we say that we understand any thing when we believe we know its real beginnings," applies with equal force to history. Now every one acquainted with Indian literature, must have observed how impossible it is to open any book on Indian subjects without being thrown back upon an earlier authority, which is generally acknowledged by the Indians as the basis of all their knowledge, whether sacred or profane. This earlier authority, which we find alluded to in theological and philosophical works, as well as in poetry, in codes of law, in astronomical, grammatical, metrical, and lexicographic compositions, is called by one comprehensive name, the *Veda*.

It is with the Veda, therefore, that Indian philology ought to begin if it is to follow a natural and historical course. So great an influence has the Vedic age (the historical period to which we are justified in referring the formation of the sacred texts) exercised upon all succeeding periods of Indian history, so closely is every branch of literature connected with Vedic traditions, so deeply have the religious and moral ideas of that primitive era taken root in the mind of the Indian nation, so minutely has almost every private and public act of Indian life been regulated by old traditionary precepts, that it is impossible to find the right point of view for judging of Indian religion, morals, and literature without a knowledge of the literary remains of the Vedic age. No one could fairly say that those men who first began to study Sanskrit, now seventy years ago, ought to have begun with reading the Veda. The difficulties connected

with the study of the Veda would have made such a course utterly impossible and useless. But since the combined labours of Sanskrit scholars have now rendered the study of that language of more easy access, since the terminology of Indian grammarians and commentators, which not long ago was considered unintelligible, has become more familiar to us, and manuscripts can be more readily procured at the principal public libraries of Europe, Sanskrit philology has no longer an excuse for ignoring the Vedic age.

It might be inferred from the very variety of subjects upon which, as has been just observed, the Veda is quoted as the last and highest authority, that by Veda must be understood something more than a single work. It would be, indeed, much nearer the truth to take "Veda" as a collective name for the sacred literature of the Vedic age, which forms, so to speak, the background of the whole Indian world. Many of the works which belonged to that period of literature have been irrecoverably lost. With regard to many of them, though their existence cannot be doubted, it is even uncertain whether they were ever committed to writing. A large number, however, of Vedic works does still exist; and it will require many years before they can be edited together with their commentaries. Till then it will be impossible to arrive at definite results on many questions connected with Vedic literature, and it would not be safe to take a comprehensive view of the whole Vedic age before all the sources have been exhausted from which its history and character can be studied. Nothing could be farther from the purpose of this historical essay than to attempt anything of this kind at present. What I have to offer are but Prolego-

mena to the Veda, or treatises on some preliminary questions connected with the history of the Vedic age. There are points which can be settled with complete certainty, though it may be impossible to bring, as yet, the whole weight of evidence to bear upon them; and the general question as to the authenticity, the antiquity, and the different periods of Vedic literature, ought to be answered even before beginning an edition of Vedic works. Again, there are many questions of special interest for Sanskrit literature, in which even now, with the materials that have been published, and with the help of manuscripts that are accessible in the public libraries of Europe, it is possible to arrive at certain results; while other points are such that even after the complete publication of all Vedic texts and commentaries, they will remain open to different views, and will necessarily become the subject of literary discussions. The principal object of the following essays will be to put the antiquity of the Veda in its proper light. By antiquity, however, is meant, not only the chronological distance of the Vedic age from our own, measured by the revolutions and the progress of the heavenly bodies, but also and still more, the distance between the intellectual, moral, and religious state of men as represented to us during the Vedic age, compared with that of other periods of history,—a distance which can only be measured by the revolutions and the progress of the human mind.

No one who is at all acquainted with the position which India occupies in the history of the world, would expect to find many synchronisms between the history of the Brahmans and that of other nations before the date of the origin of Buddhism in India. Al-

though the Brahmans of India belong to the same family, the Aryan or Indo-European family, which civilised the whole of Europe, the two great branches of that primitive race were kept asunder for centuries after their first separation. The main stream of the Aryan nations has always flowed towards the north-west. No historian can tell us by what impulse those adventurous Nomads were driven on through Asia towards the isles and shores of Europe. The first start of this world-wide migration belongs to a period far beyond the reach of documentary history; to times when the soil of Europe had not been trodden by either Celts, Germans, Slavonians, Romans, or Greeks. But whatever it was, the impulse was as irresistible as the spell which, in our own times, sends the Celtic tribes towards the prairies or the regions of gold across the Atlantic. It requires a strong will, or a great amount of inertness, to be able to withstand the impetus of such national, or rather ethnical movements. Few will stay behind when all are going. But to let one's friends depart, and then to set out ourselves — to take a road which, lead where it may, can never lead us to join those again who speak our language and worship our gods — is a course which only men of strong individuality and great self-dependence are capable of pursuing. It was the course adopted by the southern branch of the Aryan family, the Brahmanic Aryas of India and the Zoroastrians of Iran.

At the first dawn of traditional history we see these Aryan tribes migrating across the snow of the Himâlaya southward toward the "Seven Rivers" (the Indus, the five rivers of the Panjâb and the Sarasvatî), and ever since India has been called their

home. That before that time they had been living in more northern regions, within the same precincts with the ancestors of the Greeks, the Italians, Slavonians, Germans, and Celts, is a fact as firmly established as that the Normans of William the Conqueror were the Northmen of Scandinavia. The evidence of language is irrefragable, and it is the only evidence worth listening to with regard to ante-historical periods. It would have been next to impossible to discover any traces of relationship between the swarthy natives of India and their conquerors, whether Alexander or Clive, but for the testimony borne by language. What other evidence could have reached back to times when Greece was not peopled by Greeks, nor India by Hindus? Yet these are the times of which we are speaking. What authority would have been strong enough to persuade the Grecian army, that their gods and their hero ancestors were the same as those of King Porus, or to convince the English soldier that the same blood was running in his veins and in the veins of the dark Bengalese? And yet there is not an English jury now a days, which, after examining the hoary documents of language, would reject the claim of a common descent and a legitimate relationship between Hindu, Greek, and Teuton. Many words still live in India and in England, that have witnessed the first separation of the northern and southern Aryans, and these are witnesses not to be shaken by cross-examination. The terms for God, for house, for father, mother, son, daughter, for dog and cow, for heart and tears, for axe and tree, identical in all the Indo-European idioms, are like the watchwords of soldiers. We challenge the seeming stranger; and whether he

answer with the lips of a Greek, a German, or an Indian, we recognise him as one of ourselves. Though the historian may shake his head, though the physiologist may doubt, and the poet scorn the idea, all must yield before the facts furnished by language. There *was* a time when the ancestors of the Celts, the Germans, the Slavonians, the Greeks, and Italians, the Persians, and Hindus, were living together within the same fences, separate from the ancestors of the Semitic and Turanian races.

It is more difficult to prove that the Hindu was the last to leave this common home, that he saw his brothers all depart towards the setting sun, and that then, turning towards the south and the east, he started alone in search of a new world. But as in his language and in his grammar he has preserved something of what seems peculiar to each of the northern dialects singly, as he agrees with the Greek and the German where the Greek and the German seem to differ from all the rest, and as no other language has carried off so large a share of the common Aryan heirloom — whether roots, grammar, words, mythes, or legends — it is natural to suppose that, though perhaps the eldest brother, the Hindu was the last to leave the central home of the Aryan family.

The Aryan nations who pursued a north-westerly direction, stand before us in history as the principal nations of north-western Asia and Europe. They have been the prominent actors in the great drama of history, and have carried to their fullest growth all the elements of active life with which our nature is endowed. They have perfected society and morals, and we learn from their literature and works of art

the elements of science, the laws of art, and the principles of philosophy. In continual struggle with each other and with Semitic and Turanian races, these Aryan nations have become the rulers of history, and it seems to be their mission to link all parts of the world together by the chains of civilisation, commerce, and religion. In a word, they represent the Aryan man in his historical character.

But while most of the members of the Aryan family followed this glorious path, the southern tribes were slowly migrating towards the mountains which gird the north of India. After crossing the narrow passes of the Hindukush or the Himâlaya, they conquered or drove before them, as it seems without much effort, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Trans-Himalayan countries. They took for their guides the principal rivers of Northern India, and were led by them to new homes in their beautiful and fertile valleys. It seems as if the great mountains in the north had afterwards closed for centuries their Cyclopean gates against new immigrations, while, at the same time, the waves of the Indian Ocean kept watch over the southern borders of the peninsula. None of the great conquerors of antiquity — Sesostris, Semiramis, Nebuchadnezzar, or Cyrus, who waged a kind of half-nomadic warfare over Asia, Africa, and Europe, and whose names, traced in characters of blood, are still legible on the threshold of history[1], disturbed the

[1] Thus Strabo says, xv. 1. 6.: Ἡμῖν δὲ τίς ἂν δικαία γένοιτο πίστις περὶ τῶν Ἰνδικῶν ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης στρατείας τοῦ Κύρου ἢ τῆς Σεμιράμιδος; Συναποφαίνεται δέ πως καὶ Μεγασθένης τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ, κελεύων ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἀρχαίαις περὶ Ἰνδῶν ἱστορίαις· οὔτε γὰρ παρ' Ἰνδῶν ἔξω σταλῆναί ποτε στρατιὰν οὔτ' ἐπελθεῖν ἔξωθεν καὶ κρατῆσαι, πλὴν τῆς μεθ' Ἡρακλέους καὶ Διονύσου, καὶ τῆς νῦν μετὰ Μακεδόνων.

peaceful seats of these Aryan settlers. Left to themselves in a world of their own, without a past, and without a future before them, they had nothing but themselves to ponder on. Struggles there must have been in India also. Old dynasties were destroyed, whole families annihilated, and new empires founded. Yet the inward life of the Hindu was not changed by these convulsions. His mind was like the lotus leaf after a shower of rain has passed over it; his character remained the same, passive, meditative, quiet, and full of faith.

The chief elements of discord amongst the peaceful inhabitants of this rich country were, the struggle for supremacy between the different classes of society, the subjugation of the uncivilised inhabitants, particularly in the south of India, and the pressure of the latest comers in the north upon the possessors of the more fertile countries in the south.

These three struggles took place in India at an early period, and were sufficiently important to have called forth the active faculties of any but the Indian

Καίτοι Σέσωστριν μὲν τὸν Αἰγύπτιον καὶ Τεάρκωνα τὸν Αἰθίοπα ἕως Εὐρώπης προελθεῖν. Ναβοκοδρόσορον δὲ τὸν παρὰ Χαλδαίοις εὐδοκιμήσαντα Ἡρακλέους μᾶλλον καὶ ἕως Στηλῶν ἐλάσαι· μέχρι μὲν δὴ δεῦρο καὶ Τεάρκωνα ἀφικέσθαι· ἐκεῖνον δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἰβηρίας εἰς τὴν Θρᾴκην καὶ τὸν Πόντον ἀγαγεῖν τὴν στρατιάν. Ἰδάνθυρσον δὲ τὸν Σκύθην ἐπιδραμεῖν τῆς Ἀσίας μέχρι Αἰγύπτου· τῆς δὲ Ἰνδικῆς μηδένα τούτων ἅψασθαι. Καὶ Σεμίραμιν δ' ἀποθανεῖν πρὸ τῆς ἐπιχειρήσεως. Πέρσας δὲ μισθοφόρους μὲν ἐκ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς μεταπέμψασθαι Ὕδρακας· ἐκεῖ δὲ μὴ στρατεῦσαι, ἀλλ' ἐγγὺς ἐλθεῖν μόνον, ἡνίκα Κῦρος ἤλαυνεν ἐπὶ Μασσαγέτας. With regard to the expeditions of Herakles and Dionysos, Strabo adds: Καὶ τὰ περὶ Ἡρακλέους δὲ καὶ Διονύσου Μεγασθένης μὲν μετ' ὀλίγων πιστὰ ἡγεῖται· τῶν δ' ἄλλων οἱ πλείους, ὧν ἐστι καὶ Ἐρατοσθένης, ἄπιστα καὶ μυθώδη, καθάπερ καὶ τὰ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, κ.τ.λ. Cf. Megasthenis Indica, ed. Schwanbeck. Bonnæ, 1846.

nation. In these struggles we may recognise almost the same elements by which the Greek character was perfected and matured. But how different have been the results upon the Indian mind! The struggle for supremacy between the different classes, which in Greece ended with the downfall of the tyrannies and the rising of well-organised republics, has its counterpart in India in the extirpation of the Kshatriya race and the triumph of the Brahmans through Paraśu-Râma.[1]

The second struggle, or the war against the uncivilised inhabitants of the South, is represented by the Indian poet of the Râmâyaṇa as the battle of a divine hero against evil spirits and uncouth giants. What this is to India, the war of Persia was to Greece; the victory of patriotic valour over brute force. The Muses of Herodotus are the Râmâyaṇa of Hellas.

In the third of these parallel struggles the contrast is no less striking. We follow, with a mournful interest, the narrative of international jealousies between the different states of Greece; we see how one

[1] "Paraśu-Râma cleared the earth thrice seven times of the Kshatriya caste, and filled with their blood the five large lakes of Samanta-panchaka, from which he offered libations to the race of Bhṛigu. Offering a solemn sacrifice to the king of the gods, Paraśu-Râma presented the earth to the ministering priests. Having given the earth to Kaśyapa, the hero of immeasurable prowess retired to the Mahendra mountain, where he still resides; and in this manner was there enmity between him and the race of the Kshatriyas, and thus was the whole earth conquered by Paraśu-Râma." (Vishṇu-Purâṇa, p. 403.) In the Mahâbhârata the earth is made to say, "The fathers and grandfathers of these Kshatriyas have been killed by the remorseless Râma in warfare on my account."

tries to crush the power of the other, while all are preparing the common ruin of the country. But what characters are here presented to our analysis, what statesmanship, what eloquence, what bravery! In India the war of the Mahâbhârata was, perhaps, more bloody than the Peloponnesian war: but in the hands of the Brahmans the ancient epic has been changed into a didactic legend.

Greece and India are, indeed, the two opposite poles in the historical development of the Aryan man. To the Greek, existence is full of life and reality; to the Hindu it is a dream, an illusion. The Greek is at home where he is born; all his energies belong to his country: he stands and falls with his party, and is ready to sacrifice even his life to the glory and independence of Hellas. The Hindu enters this world as a stranger; all his thoughts are directed to another world; he takes no part even where he is driven to act; and when he sacrifices his life, it is but to be delivered from it.

No wonder that a nation like the Indian cared so little for history; no wonder that social and political virtues were little cultivated, and the ideas of the Useful and the Beautiful scarcely known to them. With all this, however, they had what the Greek was as little capable of imagining as they were of realising the elements of Grecian life. They shut their eyes to this world of outward seeming and activity, to open them full on the world of thought and rest. Their life was a yearning after eternity; their activity a struggle to return into that divine essence from which this life seemed to have severed them. Believing as they did in a divine and really existing eternal Being (τὸ ὄντως ὄν), they could not believe in the existence of this passing world. If the one existed, the other

could only seem to exist; if they lived in the one, they could not live in the other. Their existence on earth was to them a problem, their eternal life a certainty. The highest object of their religion was to restore that bond[1] by which their own self (âtman) was linked to the eternal Self (paramâtman); to recover that unity which had been clouded and obscured by the magical illusions of reality, by the so-called Mâyâ of creation. It scarcely entered their mind either to doubt or to affirm the immortality of the soul[2], except in later times, and then only for philosophical and controversial purposes.[3] Not only their religion and literature, but their very language, reminded them daily of that relation between the real

[1] In one of the old hymns of the Rig-veda this thought seems to weigh upon the mind of the poet, when he says:

सतो बंधुमसति निरविंदन् हृदि प्रतीष्य कवयो मनीषा

"Poets discovered in their heart, through meditation, the bond of the existing in the non-existing." Rv. x. 129. 4.

[2] In the Veda life after death is not frequently alluded to, and it is more for the goods of this world, for strength, long life, a large family, food, and cattle, that the favour of the gods is implored. One of the rewards for a pious life, however, consists in being admitted after death to the seat of the gods. Thus Kakshîvan says, Rv. i. 125. 5.: "He who gives alms goes and stands on the highest place in heaven, he goes to the gods." Thus Dîrghatamas (Rv. i. 150. 3.), after having rebuked those who are rich, and do not give alms, nor worship the gods, exclaims, "The kind mortal, O Sage, is greater than the great in heaven; let us worship thee, O Agni, for ever and ever!"

[3] The technical term "pretyabhâva," which occurs so frequently in Indian philosophy, and has generally been rendered by "condition of the soul after death," means really the state in which we are while living on earth. Our present life, according to Indian notions, is "bhâva," birth and growth, "pretya," after a previous death.

and the seeming world. The word *âtman*, for instance, which in the Veda occurs often as *tman*, means life, particularly animal life. Thus we read, Rv. i. 63. 8., "Increase, O bright Indra! this our manifold food, like water all over the earth; by which, O Hero! thou givest us *life*, like sap, to move every where." Here *tman* means the vital principle, and is compared with the juice that circulates in plants. In another hymn, addressed to the horse which is to be sacrificed (Rv. i. 162. 20.), the poet says, "Mâ tvâ tapat priya âtmâ-piyantam," literally, "Let not thy dear self burn or afflict thee as thou approachest the sacrifice." Here *priya âtmâ* corresponds to the Greek φίλον ἦτορ. But we find *âtman* used, also, in a higher sense in the Veda. For instance, Rv. i. 115. 1., "Sûrya âtmâ jagatas tasthushaś cha:" "the sun is the soul of all that moves and rests."[1] Most frequently, however, *tman* and *âtman* are employed for self, just as we say, My soul praises, rejoices, for I praise, I myself rejoice. This is the most usual signification of *âtman* in the later Sanskrit, where it is used like a pronoun. Yet *âtman* means there also the soul of the universe, the highest soul or Self (paramâtman) of which all other

[1] In the same sense the sun is called jîvo asuḥ, "the vital spirit," cf. Rv. i. 113. 16.:

उदीर्ध्वं जीवो असुर्न आगादप प्रागात्तम आ ज्योतिरेति

"Rise! our life, our spirit, came; the darkness went off; the light approaches!" Rv. ii. 3. 14.:

को ददर्श प्रथमं जायमानमस्थन्वंतं यदनस्था बिभर्ति।
भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्व स्विक्को विद्वांसमुप गात्प्रष्टुमेतत्॥

"Who has seen the first born, when he who has no bones (*i. e.* form) bore him who had bones? Where was the life, the blood, the soul (self) of the world? Who went to ask this from any that knew it?"

souls partake, from which all reality in this created world emanates, and into which every thing will return. Thus a Hindu speaking of himself (âtman) spoke also, though unconsciously, of the soul of the universe (âtman); and to know himself was to him to know both his own self and the universal Self, or to know himself in the divine Self. The Sanskrit, "âtmânam âtmanâ paśya," "see (thy) self by (thy) self," had a deeper signification than the Greek γνῶθι σεαυτόν[1], because it has not only a moral, but also a

[1] It is difficult to find a satisfactory etymology for *âtmâ* (nomin.), particularly in its older, and possibly more original, form, *tmâ*. Bopp (Comp. Grammar, i. § 140.) says, "if *âtmâ* stand for *âhmâ*, and be derived from a lost root, *âh*, to think (when it must be remembered that the root *nah* also changes its final *h* sometimes into *t*, upânah and upânat), it might be compared with the Gothic *ahma*, soul." This root, *âh*, is afterwards traced by Bopp in the Sanskrit *âha*, "he said;" and he observes that to speak and to think are in the Indo-European languages sometimes expressed by one and the same word. The last observation, however, is not quite proved by the example taken by Bopp from the Zend, *manthra*, speech. For although the Sanskrit *mantra* is derived from *man*, to think, it receives its causal meaning by the termination *tra*, and has therefore the signification of prayer, hymn, advice, speech (*i. e.* what makes us think). If *âtmâ* come from a root *ah*, the meaning of this root is more likely that of breathing, which would account for Gothic *ahma* (πνεῦμα), as well as for Sanskrit *âha*, Greek ἦ and ἠχώ, Latin *ajo* and *nego*, and similar words. If we derive *âtmâ*, spirit, soul, self, from this root *ah*, we may also derive from it *a-ham*, I (cuneiform inscript. *adam*, ego, ἐγώ, ich). But there always remains a difficulty as regards the elision of â in the old Vedic form *tmâ*, instead of *âtmâ*, and the Zend *thmanangh*, which, according to Prof. Burnouf's conjecture, is the Sansk. *tmanas* (Commentaire sur le Yaśna, p. 509.); a difficulty which neither European etymologists (Pott, Etymologische Forschungen, i. 196.; Benfey, Griechisches Wurzellexicon, i. 265.) nor Indian Aṇâdik scholars (Uṇâdi Sûtras, 4. 152.) have yet explained.

metaphysical meaning. How largely this idea of the Âtman, as the Divine Spirit, entered into the early religious and philosophical speculations of the Indians, may be seen from the following dialogue between Yâjnavalkya and Maitrêyî, which forms part of the Brihadarânyaka.

"Maitrêyî[1]," said Yâjnavalkya, "I am going away from this my house (into the forest). Forsooth, I must make a settlement between thee and my other wife Kâtyâyanî."

Maitrêyî said, "My Lord, if this whole earth full of wealth belonged to me, should I be immortal by it?"

"No," replied Yâjnavalkya; "like the happy life of rich people will be thy life. But there is no hope of immortality by wealth."

And Maitrêyî said, "What should I do with that by which I do not become immortal? What my Lord knoweth (of immortality) may he tell that to me."

Yâjnavalkya replied, "Thou, who art truly dear to me[2], thou speakest dear words. Sit down, I will explain it to thee, and listen well to what I say." And he said, "A husband is loved, not because you love the husband, but because you love (in him) the

[1] Brihadâranyaka, 2d Adhyâya, 4th Brâhmaṇa, p. 28. edit. Poley; 4th Prapâthaka, 4th Brâhmaṇa, p. 444. edit. Röer.

[2] Instead of प्रिया वतारे नः सती Dr. Poley reads प्रियावतारे नः सती which he may have meant for "thou Avatâr, or incarnation of our love." Not to speak, however, of the grammatical difficulties of this construction, the Commentary leaves no doubt that we ought to read, प्रिया (इष्टा) वत (इत्यनुकंप्याहे) अरे (मैत्रेयि).

Divine Spirit (âtmâ, the absolute Self). A wife is loved, not because we love the wife, but because we love (in her) the Divine Spirit. Children are loved, not because we love the children, but because we love the Divine Spirit in them. This spirit it is which we love when we (seem to) love wealth, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, this world, the gods, all beings, this universe. The Divine Spirit, O beloved wife, is to be seen, to be heard, to be perceived, and to be meditated upon. If we see, hear, perceive, and know him, O Maitrêyî, then this whole universe is known to us."

"Whosoever looks for Brahmahood elsewhere than in the Divine Spirit, should be abandoned by the Brahmans. Whosoever looks for the Kshatra-power elsewhere than in the Divine Spirit, should be abandoned by the Kshatras. Whosoever looks for this world, for the gods, for all beings, for this universe, elsewhere than in the Divine Spirit, should be abandoned by them all. This Brahmahood, this Kshatra-power, this world, these gods, these beings, this universe, all is the Divine Spirit."

"Now, as we cannot seize the sounds of a drum externally by themselves, but seize the sound by seizing the drum, or the beating of it, — as we cannot seize the sounds of a conch-shell by themselves, but seize the sound by seizing the conch-shell, or the shell-blower, — as we cannot seize the sounds of a lute by themselves, but seize the sound by seizing the lute, or the lutanist, — so is it with the Divine Spirit."

"As clouds of smoke rise out of a fire kindled with dry fuel, thus, O Maitrêyî, have all the holy words been breathed out of that Great Being."

"As all the waters find their centre in the sea,

so all sensations find their centre in the skin, all tastes in the tongue, all smells in the nose, all colours in the eye, all sounds in the ear, all thoughts in the mind, all knowledge in the heart, all actions in the hands, and all the Holy Scriptures in speech."

"It is with us, when we enter into the Divine Spirit, as if a lump of salt was thrown into the sea; it becomes dissolved into the water (from which it was produced), and is not to be taken out again. But wherever you take the water and taste it, it is salt. Thus is this great, endless, and boundless Being but one mass of knowledge. As the water becomes salt, and the salt becomes water again, thus has the Divine Spirit appeared from out the elements and disappears again into them. When we have passed away, there is no longer any name. This, I tell thee, my wife," said Yâjnavalkya.

Maitrêyî said, "My Lord, here thou hast bewildered me, saying that there is no longer any name when we have passed away."

And Yâjnavalkya replied, "My wife, what I say is not bewildering, it is sufficient for the highest knowledge. For if there be as it were two beings, then the one sees the other, the one hears, perceives, and knows the other. But if the one Divine Self be the whole of all this, whom or through whom should he see, hear, perceive, or know? How should he know (himself), by whom he knows every thing (himself)? How, my wife, should he know (himself) the knower?[1] Thus thou hast been taught, Maitrêyî;

[1] This last sentence is taken from the fifth Brâhmaṇa of the fourth Adhyâya, where the same story is told again with slight modifications and additions.

this is immortality." Having said this Yâjnavalkya left his wife for ever, and went into the solitude of the forests.

It must be observed that the work from which this dialogue is taken belongs to a later period of Vedic literature. In the earlier times which are represented to us in the hymns of the Veda, these mystic tendencies are not yet so strongly developed. In the songs of the Rig-veda we find but little of philosophy, but we do occasionally meet with wars of kings, with rivalries of ministers, with triumphs and defeats, with war-songs and imprecations. The active side of life is still prominent in the genuine poetry of the Rishis, and there still exists a certain equilibrium between the two scales of human nature. It is only after the Aryan tribes had advanced southward, and taken quiet possession of the rich plains and beautiful groves of Central India, that they seem to have turned all their energies and thoughts from the world without them to that more wonderful nature which they perceived within.

Such was their state when the Greeks first became acquainted with them after the discovery of India by Alexander. What did these men, according to Megasthenes, most think and speak about? Their most frequent conversations, he says, were about life and death. This life they considered as the life of an embryo in the womb; but death as the birth to a real and happy life for those who had thought, and had prepared themselves to be ready to die.[1] Good and

[1] Strabo, xv. 59.: Πλείστους δ' αὐτοῖς εἶναι λόγους περὶ τοῦ θανάτου· νομίζειν γὰρ δὴ τὸν μὲν ἐνθάδε βίον ὡς ἂν ἀκμὴν κυομένων εἶναι· τὸν δὲ θάνατον γένεσιν εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον καὶ τὸν εὐδαίμονα τοῖς φιλοσοφήσασι· διὸ τῇ ἀσκήσει πλείστῃ χρῆσθαι πρὸς τὸ ἑτοιμο-

bad was nothing to them; not that they denied the distinction between good and bad in a moral sense. They recognised law and virtue, as we see in their sacred poetry[1], as well as in their codes of law. But they denied that anything that happened to men in this life could be called either good or bad, and they maintained that philosophy consisted in removing the affections of pleasure as well as of pain. Liking pain and hating pleasure was what they considered the highest state of indifference that man could arrive at.[2]

θάνατον. "Nay, for aught we know of ourselves, of our present life, and of death; death may immediately, in the natural course of things, put us into a higher and more enlarged state of life, as our birth does."—*Bishop Butler.*

[1] The notion of sin is clearly expressed, for instance, in a song of Gṛitsamada's (Rv. ii. 28. 5.):

वि मच्छ्राय रशनामिवाग ऋध्मं ते वरुण खामृतस्य।
मा तंतुश्छेदि वयतो धियं मे मा मात्रा शार्यपसः पुर ऋतोः॥
अपो सु म्यक्ष वरुण भियसं मत्सम्राळवावोऽनु मा गृभाय।
दामेव वत्साद्विमुमुग्ध्यंहो न हि त्वदारे निमिषश्चनेशे॥

"Deliver me from sin, as from a rope; let us obtain thy path of righteousness. May the thread not be torn while I am weaving my prayer; may the form of my pious work not decay before its season.

"Varuṇa, take all fear away from me; be kind to me, O just king! Take away my sin like a rope from a calf; for afar from thee I am not the master even of a twinkling of the eye."

And again, Rv. ii. 29. 1.:

धृतव्रता आदित्या इषिरा आरे मत्कर्त रहसूरिवागः।

"You quick Âdityas, ye who never fail in your works, carry away from me all sin, as a woman does who has given birth to a child in secret."

[2] Strabo, xv. 59.: Ἀγαθὸν δὲ, ἢ κακὸν, μηδὲν εἶναι τῶν συμβαι-

We are told by the same author that the Indians did not communicate their metaphysical doctrines to women; thinking that, if their wives understood these doctrines, and learned to be indifferent to pleasure and pain, and to consider life and death as the same, they would no longer continue to be the slaves of others: or, if they failed to understand them, they would be talkative, and communicate their knowledge to those who had no right to it. This statement of the Greek author is fully borne out by the later Sanskrit authorities. We find, for instance, in the ceremonial Sûtras (śrauta and gṛihya-sûtras), that women were not allowed to learn the sacred songs of the Vedas, the knowledge of which constituted one of the principal requirements for a Brahman before he was admitted to the performance of the sacrifices. Indeed, the whole education of a Brahman consisted in learning the old sacred literature by heart, and many years were spent for this purpose by every Brahmachârin in the house and under the severe discipline of his Guru, or of an Âchârya. As it was necessary[1], however, for a husband to perform

νόντων ἀνθρώποις· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τοῖς αὐτοῖς τοῦς μὲν ἄχθεσθαι, τοῦς δὲ χαίρειν, ἐννυπνιώδεις ὑπολήψεις ἔχοντας, καὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς τοῖς αὐτοῖς τότε μὲν ἄχθεσθαι, τότε δ' αὖ χαίρειν μεταβαλλομένους. Ibid. xv. 65.: *Τὰ γοῦν λεχθέντα εἰς τοῦτ' ἔφη συντείνειν, ὡς εἴη λόγος ἄριστος ὃς ἡδονὴν καὶ λύπην ψυχῆς ἀφαιρήσεται· καὶ ὅτι λύπη καὶ πόνος διαφέρει· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πολέμιον, τὸ δὲ φίλον αὐτοῖς· τὰ δὲ σώματα ἀσκοῦσι πρὸς πόνον, ἵν' αἱ γνῶμαι ῥωννύοιντο, ἀφ' ὧν καὶ στάσεις παύοιεν, καὶ σύμβουλοι πᾶσιν ἀγαθῶν παρεῖεν, καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ.*

[1] Sâyaṇa, in his commentary on the Rig-veda, i. 131. 3., explaining the words वि त्वा ततस्रे मिथुना अवस्यवः "Couples wishing for protection have magnified thee, O Indra!" quotes passages from the Brâhmaṇas, the Sûtras, and the Smṛitis, in

sacrifices together with his lawful wife, and as passages of the hymns[1], as well as of the Brâhmaṇas, speak clearly of man and wife as performing sacrifices in common, it was laid down in the Sûtras that the husband or the priest should, at the sacrifice itself, make his wife recite those hymns which were necessary for the ceremony. But although women were thus allowed to participate in the sacrifices of their husbands, they were not initiated, still less were they admitted to the highest knowledge, the knowledge of the Âtman or the Brahman.[2] Cases like that of Maitrêyî were exceptions, not the rule.

Thus the account which Megasthenes gives of the Indians shows us the same abstract and passive

support of the law laid down in the Pûrvamîmânsâ, that man and wife should perform sacrifices in common. From the Brâhmaṇas he quotes the beginning of the Agnyâdhâna, where it is said that man and wife are to place the sacred fire in common: जायापती अग्निमादधीयीतां। From the Sûtras he quotes a rule, वेदं पत्यै प्रदाय वाचयेत्। This seems to mean, "Let him, after giving the Veda to his wife, make her recite it." The passage is taken from the Âśvalâyana Śrauta-sûtras, i. 11. If the word *veda*, used by Âśvalâyana, meant the Veda, this passage would be most important, as proving the existence of the Veda, as a written book, at the time of Âśvalâyana. *Veda*, however, is used here in the sense of "a bundle of grass," and is connected with *vedi*, an altar made of grass (Root *ve*, Lat. viere). Lastly, Sâyaṇa quotes from the Smṛitis, Manu, v. 155., "Women cannot sacrifice without their husbands:" नास्ति स्त्रीणां पृथग्यज्ञः।

[1] The piety and happiness of a married couple is well described in a hymn ascribed to Manu Vaivasoata, Rv. viii. 31. 5—9.

[2] Manu, ix. 18., translated by Sir W. Jones. "Women have no business with the texts of the Veda, thus is the law fully settled; having, therefore, no evidence of law, and no knowledge of expiatory texts, sinful women must be as foul as falsehood itself; and this is a fixed rule."

character which we find throughout the whole classical or post-vedic literature of the Brahmans, and which, to a great extent, explains the absence of anything like historical literature among this nation of philosophers.

A people of this peculiar stamp of mind was never destined to act a prominent part in what is called the history of the world. This exhausting atmosphere of transcendental ideas could not but exercise a detrimental influence on the active and moral character of the Indians. But if we admire in classical history even those heroes in whom the love of country was driven to the highest pitch of fanaticism, we have scarcely a right to despise a nation, in whom the love of a purer and higher life degenerated sometimes into reckless self-sacrifice. No people certainly made a more favourable impression upon the Greeks than the Indians. And when we read the account of their moral and intellectual condition at the time of Alexander, we are obliged to admit that if some of their good qualities are no longer to be met with among the Indians of later times, this is owing, not entirely to an original defect of character, but to that continual system of oppression exercised upon them by foreign conquerors, to whose physical power they submitted, while they could not help despising their masters as barbarians. Of the demoralising influence of a foreign occupation we have an instance in the time of Alexander, in the story of Kalânas (Kalyâna), who yielded to the flattering offers of the European conqueror, and left his sacred home to follow his royal master as a piece of curiosity. But Megasthenes was afterwards informed that the behaviour of Kalânas was strongly disapproved of by his friends, as ambitious and servile; while Man-

danis was praised for his manly answer to Alexander's messengers, not only by his countrymen, but by Alexander himself. It was not long before Kalânas repented his unworthy ambition, for he burnt himself soon after at Pasargada, in the same manner as the only other Brahman who reached Europe in ancient times, burned himself at Athens, to the astonishment of the Greeks, who erected a tomb to him, with the inscription, "Here lies the Indian Sarman Cheya (Śarman Âchârya?), from Barygaza, who sought immortality after the old custom of the Indians."

The genius of the Greek nation owes its happy and healthy growth to liberty and national independence. The Homeric songs were addressed to a people, proud of his heroes, whether real or legendary. If Persia had crushed the chivalry of Greece, we should never have heard the names of Herodotus, Æschylus, Sophocles, Phidias, and Pericles. Where the feeling of nationality has been roused, the poet is proud to be listened to by his nation, and a nation is proud to listen to her poet. But in times of national degradation the genius of great men turns away from the realities of life, and finds its only consolation in the search after truth, in science and philosophy. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle arose when the Greek nation began to decline; and, under the heavy grasp first of Macedonian sway, then of Roman tyranny, the life of the Greek genius ebbed away, while its immortal productions lived on in the memory of other and freer nations. The Indian never knew the feeling of nationality, and his heart never trembled in the expectation of national applause. There were no heroes to inspire a poet,—no history to call forth a historian. The only sphere

where the Indian mind found itself at liberty to act, to create, and to worship, was the sphere of religion and philosophy; and nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck roots so deep in the mind of a nation as in India. The Hindus were a nation of philosophers. Their struggles were the struggles of thought; their past, the problem of creation; their future, the problem of existence. The present alone, which is the real and living solution of the problems of the past and the future, seems never to have attracted their thoughts or to have called out their energies. The shape which metaphysical ideas take amongst the different classes of society, and at different periods of civilisation, naturally varies from coarse superstition to sublime spiritualism. But, taken as a whole, history supplies no second instance where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the practical faculties of a whole people, and, in fact, almost destroyed those qualities by which a nation gains its place in history.

It might therefore be justly said that India has no place in the political history of the world. While other nations, as the Egyptians, the Jews, the Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Teutonic races, have, during certain periods, culminated on the political horizon of the world, India has moved in such a small and degraded circle of political existence that it remained almost invisible to the eyes of other nations. An expedition like that of Alexander could never have been conceived by an Indian king, and the ambition of native conquerors, in those few cases where it existed, never went beyond the limits of India itself.

But if India has no place in the political history of the world, it certainly has a right to claim its

place in the intellectual history of mankind. The less the Indian nation has taken part in the political struggles of the world, and expended its energies in the exploits of war and the formation of empires, the more it has fitted itself and concentrated all its powers for the fulfilment of the important mission reserved to it in the history of the East. History seems to teach that the whole human race required a gradual education before, in the fulness of time, it could be admitted to the truths of Christianity. All the fallacies of human reason had to be exhausted, before the light of a higher truth could meet with ready acceptance. The ancient religions of the world were but the milk of nature, which was in due time to be succeeded by the bread of life. After the primeval physiolatry, which was common to all the members of the Aryan family, had, in the hands of a wily priesthood, been changed into an empty idolatry, the Indian alone, of all the Aryan nations, produced a new form of religion, which has well been called subjective, as opposed to the more objective worship of nature. That religion, the religion of Buddha, has spread, far beyond the limits of the Aryan world, and, to our limited vision, it may seem to have retarded the advent of Christianity among a large portion of the human race. But in the sight of Him with whom a thousand years are but as one day, that religion, like all the ancient religions of the world, may have but served to prepare the way of Christ, by helping, through its very errors, to strengthen and to deepen the ineradicable yearning of the human heart after the truth of God.

Though the religion of Buddha be of all religions the most hostile to the old belief of the Brahmans,—the Buddhists standing to the Brahmans in about the

same relation as the early Protestants to the Church of Rome,—yet the very bitterness of this opposition proves that Buddhism is peculiarly Indian. Similar ideas to those proclaimed by Buddha were current long before his time, and traces of them may be found even in other countries. But for the impressive manner in which these ideas were first proclaimed and preached throughout India, for the hold which they took on the Indian mind, for the readiness with which they were received, particularly by the lower classes, till at last they were adopted by the sovereign as the religion of state,—in a word, for the historical and universal character which this doctrine there assumed, the cause must be sought in the previous history of the Indian nation. There is something in the doctrines of Buddhism that is common to all systems of philosophy or religion, which break with the traditions of an effete idol-worship and a tyrannical hierarchy. There is some truth in Buddhism as there is in every one of the false religions of the world. But it was only in India, where people had been prepared by centuries of thought and meditation, as well as by the very corruption of the old Brahmanical system, to embrace and nurture the religious ideas of Buddha Śâkya Muni; it was only in India, that those new doctrines took an historical shape, and grew into a religion which, if truth depended on majorities, would be the truest of all forms of faith.

Up to the present day there is no religion of the world more extensively prevalent than the religion of Buddha[1]; and though it has been banished from

[1] M. Troyer, in his valuable edition of the Radjatarangini (ii. 399.), gives the following data as to the extent of the Buddhistic

the soil of India, and no living follower of this creed is now to be met with in that country [1], yet it has found a refuge and second home in Ceylon, Siam, Ava, Pegu, the Birman Empire, China, Tibet, Tatary, Mongolia and Siberia, and is, even in its present corruption, looked upon and practised as the only true system of faith and worship by many millions of human beings. Truly, then, the moment when this religious doctrine took its origin in India is an era in the intellectual history of the world; and, from an historical point of view, India may be considered, at that time, as passing through the meridian of history. The most accurate observers of the progress of the Indian mind have, therefore, chosen this moment as the most favourable for fixing, historically and chronologically, the position of India: Professor Wilson in his "Vishṇu-Purâṇa," Professor Burnouf in his "Introduction to the History of Buddhism," and Professor Lassen in his "Indian Antiquities."

It would be out of place to discuss at present all the arguments by which the historical origin of the Buddhistic religion has been fixed chronologically in the works here mentioned. The date of Buddha's

religion: "La population de la terre est évaluée par M. Hassel à 921 millions; par Malte-Brun, à 642 millions; par d'autres, à 737 millions d'habitants. Le Buddhisme est professé dans presque tout l'empire de la Chine, qui seul, d'après différents comptes, contient de 184 à 300 millions d'habitants. Ajoutons-y les Buddhistes de plusieurs îles de l'Est, de la Cochinchine, du Siam, du pays des Birmans, de l'Inde, du Nepal, du Tibet, et de la majeure partie de la Tartarie, etc., et l'on trouvera que je n'exagère pas trop le nombre des Buddhistes actuels."

[1] See J. Bird, Historical Researches on the Origin and Principles of the Buddha and Jaina Religion. Bombay, 1847.

death, in the middle of the sixth century B. C., and the beginning of the Ceylonese era, 543 B. C., will have to be considered hereafter. For the present it will be sufficient to keep in mind that the Buddhistic era divides the whole history of India into two parts, in the same manner as the Christian era divides the history of the world. It is therefore of the greatest importance, with regard to the history of Vedic literature. The rise of a new religion so hostile to the hierarchical system of the Brahmans is most likely to have produced a visible effect on their sacred and theological writings. If traces of this kind can be discovered in the ancient literature of India, an important point will be gained, and it will be possible perhaps to restore to this vast mass of Brahmanic lore a certain historical connection. After the rise of a new religious doctrine in the first centuries after Buddha, it could not be expected that the Brahmanic literature should cease at once. On the contrary, we should expect at first a powerful reaction and a last effort to counteract the influence of the rising doctrine. And, as in India the religion of Buddha addressed itself more especially to the lower classes of the people, and found its strongest support amongst those who had to suffer from the exclusiveness of the Brahmanic system, a period of transition would most likely be marked by a more popular style of literature,— by an attempt to simplify the old complicated system of the Brahmanic ceremonial, till at last the political ascendency, secured to the new doctrine through its adoption by the reigning princes, like Aśoka, would cause this effort also to slacken.

Before it can be shown, however, that this really

took place in India, and that traces of this religious crisis exist in the Vedic literature of the Brahmans, it seems necessary to point out what Sanskrit works can be included within that literature, and what other books are to be excluded altogether when we look for evidence with regard to the true history of the Vedic age.

Let us begin by the negative process, and endeavour to separate and reject those works which do not belong to the genuine Vedic cycle. If we examine the two epic poems of India, the Râmâyaṇa and Mahâbhârata, we shall find it impossible to use them as authorities for the Vedic age, because we are not yet able to decide critically which parts of these poems are ancient, and which are modern and post-Buddhistic, or at least retouched by the hands of late compilers and editors. There are certainly very ancient traditions and really Vedic legends in both of these poems. Some of their heroes are taken from the same epic cycle in which the Vedic poetry moves. These, however, only form subjects for episodes in the two poems, while their principal heroes are essentially different in their character and manners. In fact, though there are remains of the Vedic age to be found in the epic poems, like the stories of Urvaśî and Purûravas, of Śakuntala and Dushmanta, of Uddâlaka, Śunaḥśepha, Janaka Vaideha, and particularly of the Vedic Rishis, like Vasishṭha, Viśvâmitra, Yâjnavalkya, Dîrghatamas, Kakshîvat, Kavasha, and many others, yet this would only prove that the traditions of the Vedic age were still in the mouth of the people at the time when the epic poetry of the Hindus was first composed, or that they were not yet forgotten in after times, when the Brahmans

began to collect all the remains of epic songs into one large body, called the Mahâbhârata. If we compare the same legends as exhibited in the hymns and Brâhmaṇas of the Veda, and as related in the Mahâbhârata, Râmâyaṇa, or the Purâṇas, the Vedic version of them will mostly be found to be more simple, more primitive, and more intelligible than those of the epic and paurâṇic poems. This is not meant as a denial, that real epic poetry, that is to say, a mass of popular songs, celebrating the power and exploits of gods and heroes, existed at a very early period in India, as well as among the other Aryan nations; but it shows, that, if yet existing, it is not in the Mahâbhârata and Râmâyaṇa we have to look for these old songs, but rather in the Veda itself. In the collection of the Vedic hymns, there are some which may be called epic, and may be compared with the short hymns ascribed to Homer. In the Brâhmaṇas passages occur, in prose and verse, celebrating the actions of old kings.

The following extract from the Śânkhâyana-sûtras (xvi. 1.), throws some light on the literature which the Brahmans possessed, in addition to what we are accustomed to call the Veda[1]:—

"At the Horse-sacrifice, the Adhvaryu calls upon singers who sing to the lute (vîṇâgaṇaginas), and invites them to celebrate the king, who then performs the sacrifice, together with other virtuous kings of old. On the first day of the sacrifice, the priest tells the story which begins with *Manu Vaivasvata*. As the people of Manu were men, and there are men present at the sacrifice, the priest teaches these, the

[1] The same account is given in the Âśvalâyana-sûtras, x. 7, and in the Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa, xiii. 3, 1, 1.

householders, by telling this story. He then says, 'The Rich-verses are the Veda, this is the Veda,' and recites a hymn.

"On the second day he tells the story which begins with *Yama Vaivasvata* (from the Śatapatha). As the people of Yama were the fathers, and there are fathers present, he teaches the elders by this story. He then says, 'The Yajurveda is the Veda; this is the Veda,' and recites an Anuvâka (âśvamedhika) of the Yajush.

"On the third day he tells the story which begins with *Varuṇa Âditya*. As the people of Varuṇa were the Gandharvas, and as they are present, he teaches the young and fair youths by this story. He then says, 'The Atharva-veda is the Veda; this is the Veda,' and recites the Bhishaja[1], a work on medicine.

"On the fourth day he tells the story which begins with *Soma Vaishnava* (from the Śatapatha). As the people of Soma were the Apsaras, and as these are present, he teaches the young and fair maids by this story. He then says, 'The Âṅgirasa-veda is the Veda; this is the Veda,' and recites the Ghora[2], another work of the Âtharvaṇikas.

"On the fifth day he tells the story which begins

[1] The commentator insists on this being a distinct book of the Âtharvaṇikas, and not a hymn. या ओषधीरित्येतत्सूक्तं केचिदाहुः। तदयुक्तं। समाख्यानाद्भेषजयंथस्याथर्वणिकानां॥ The Śatapatha says अथर्वणामेकं पर्व॥ Âśvalâyana, यद्भेषजं निशांतं॥

[2] घोरमाथर्वणो ग्रंथः॥ The Śatapatha says अंगिरसामेकं पर्व॥

with *Arbuda Kâdraveya*. As the people of Arbuda were the Sarpas (snakes), and as these are present, he teaches the Sarpas, or the snake-charmers, by this story. He then says, 'The Sarpavidyâ is the Veda; this is the Veda,' and recites the Sarpavidyâ.[1]

"On the sixth day he tells the story which begins with *Kuvera Vaiśravana*. As the people of Kuvera were Rakshas, and as these are present, he teaches Selagas, or evil-doers, by this story. He then says, 'The Rakshovidyâ is the Veda, this is the Veda,' and recites the Rakshovidyâ.[2]

"On the seventh day he tells the story which begins with *Asita Dhânvana*.[3] As his men were the Asuras, and as these are present, he teaches the usurers (Kusîdin) by this story. He then says, 'The Asuravidyâ is the Veda, this is the Veda,' and performs a trick by slight of hand.[4]

"On the eighth day he tells the story which begins with *Matsya Sâmmada*. As his men were the creatures of the water, and as these are present, he teaches the Matsyas (fishes), or the fishermen by this

[1] गारुडं कंकनीयां वा॥ The Śatapatha: सर्पविद्याया एकं पर्व॥

[2] कुहुकरूपा रचोविद्या॥ According to the Śatapatha देवजनविद्याया एकं पर्व॥ according to Âśvalâyana, पिशाचविद्या॥

[3] Asita Dhânva, Śatapatha and Âśvalâyana.

[4] असुरविद्येंद्रजालादिना तन्निर्देशाम्नायामपि कांचित्कुर्यादंगुलिन्यासरूपां॥

story. He then says, 'The Itihâsa-veda is the Veda this is the Veda,' and recites an Itihâsa.[1]

"On the ninth day he tells the story which begins with *Târkshya Vaipaśyata*.[2] As his men were the birds, and as these are present, he teaches the birds, or the young students (brahmachârin)[3], by this story. He then says, 'The Purâṇa-veda is the Veda, this is the Veda,' and recites the Purâṇa.[4]

"On the tenth day he tells the story which begins with *Dharma Indra* (from the Śatapatha). As his men were the gods, and as these are present, he teaches the young, learned, and poor priests by this story.[5] He then says, 'The Sâmaveda is the Veda, this is the Veda,' and sings the Sâma.[6]"

This extract shows that epic poetry, traditional as well as improvised on the spur of the moment, existed during the Vedic age.

In several parts of the Brâhmaṇas and Âraṇyakas, when an account is given of the literature, known to the ancient Hindus, we meet with the names of Gâthâ, Nârâśansî, Itihâsa, and Âkhyâna[7] (songs, legends, epic poems, and stories) as parts

[1] इतिहासवेदस्य पृथग्भावेन दर्शनात्॥

[2] Vaipaśchita, according to Âśvalâyana.

[3] वायोर्विश्विकाः॥ Śatapatha.

[4] पुराणं वायुप्रोक्तमवाख्येयं। The Vâyu-purâṇa has a more ancient appearance than the other Purâṇas.

[5] यूनो ऽप्रतिग्राहकाञ्छ्रोत्रियान्॥

[6] साम्नां दृष्टं॥ Śatapatha.

[7] Cf. Taittirîya-Âraṇyaka, ii. 9.: ब्राह्मणानीतिहासान्पुराणानि कल्पान् गाथा नाराशंसीः॥ Bṛihadâraṇyaka, ii. 4. 10.:

of the Vedic literature. The occurrence of titles of literary works like these, has been made use of to prove the existence, at that early period, of the writings which afterwards were designated by the same names. But though the Mahâbhârata is called an *Itihâsa*, and the Râmâyaṇa an *Âkhyâna*, and though many works have in later times become famous under the name of *Purâṇas*, yet these enumerations of literary works in the Brâhmaṇas do not refer to them.[1] They contain only general names or

इतिहासः पुराणं विद्या उपनिषदः श्लोकाः सूत्राण्यनुव्याख्यानानि व्याख्यानानि॥ ibid. iv. 1, 2., iv. 5. 9.; Śatap. Brâhm. xi. 7. 1.; Âtharv. Sanhitâ, xv. 6.: इतिहासश्च पुराणं च गाथाश्च नाराशंसीश्च॥ Cf. Aufrecht, Indische Studien, p. 133. Sâyaṇa himself is sometimes doubtful, and in his Commentary on the Taittirîya-âraṇyaka, for instance, he says that, by purâṇa might be meant the Brahmâṇḍa, &c.; and by itihâsa, the Mahâbhârata. This, however, is a mistake, and it would bring Sâyaṇa into contradiction with himself. He has fully proved in his Introduction to the Rig-veda that in this passage of the Taittirîyâraṇyaka, no works separate from the Veda could be understood. Cf. Rig-veda sanhitâ, p. 23. Dr. Weber, in his extracts from Pâṇini (iv. 2. 60.), shows that vyâkhyâna, âkhyâna, kathâ, âkhyâyikâ, itihâsa, and purâṇa, were titles of literary works known at the time of Kâtyâyana. But he inclines to the opinion that Kâtyâyana did not mean the Mahâbhârata, Râmâyaṇa, and the Purâṇas, as we now possess them, by these general names. Cf. Indische Studien, i. p. 147.

[1] In the later literature also, names like Itihâsa, Âkhyâna, and Purâṇa are by no means restricted to the Mahâbhârata, Râmâyaṇa, and the Purâṇas. The Mahâbhârata is called Purâṇa, Âkhyâna, and Itihâsa. Cf. M. Bh. i. 17—19. Vyâsa himself calls his poem, the Mahâbhârata, a Kâvya; and Brahma sanctions this as its proper title. Cf. M. Bh. i. 72. This passage modifies Professor Lassen's opinion as to Kâvya being the distinctive title of the Râmâyaṇa. Cf. Indian Antiquities, i. 485. The Mahâbhârata

titles, which have been applied to certain parts of the sacred literature, containing either stories of gods or men, or cosmogonic traditions.[1] There is no allusion to any of the titles of the Purâṇas or to the Râmâyaṇa in Vedic works, whether Brâhmaṇas or Sûtras. But as in the Sûtras of Âśvalâyana[2] the name of the

is also called the fifth Veda, or the Kârshṇa-veda; that is, the Veda composed by Kṛishṇa Dvaipâyana Vyâsa. Cf. M. Bh. I. 2300. Burnouf, Bhâg. III. préf. XXI. Lassen, Ind. Antiq. I. 789.

[1] Cf. Sâyaṇa, Introduction to the Rig-veda sanhitâ, p. 23.

[2] Gṛihya-Sûtras, iii. 4. MS. 1978, E. I. H., reads, भारत-धर्माचार्याः instead of भारतमहाभारतधर्माचार्याः the reading adopted by Dr. Roth (Zur Literatur, p. 27). Unfortunately the Commentary to this passage is very scanty, which is so much the more to be regretted, as the text itself seems to contain spurious additions. According to the MSS. the passage reads, अथ ऋषयः शतर्चिनो माध्यमा गृत्समदो विश्वामित्रो वामदेवोऽत्रिर्भरद्वाजो वसिष्ठः प्रगाथाः पावमान्यः क्षुद्र-सूक्ता महासूक्ता इति। प्राचीनावीती सुमंतुजैमिनिवैशंपा-यनपैलसूत्रभाष्यभारतधर्माचार्या जानंतिबाह्विगार्ग्यगौत-मशाकल्यबाभ्रव्यमांडव्यमांडूकेया गार्गी वाचक्नवी वडवा प्रातीथेयी सुलभा मैत्रेयी कहोलं कौषीतकं महाकौषीतकं पैंग्यं महापैंग्यं सुयज्ञं शांखायनमैतरेयं महैतरेयं शाकलं बाष्कलं सुजातवक्त्रमौदवाहिं सौजामिं शौनकमाश्वलायनं ये चान्ये आचार्यास्ते सर्वे तृप्यंत्विति॥

According to the commentator we have first, 12 Ṛishis, who, as Ṛishis, are to be invoked, when the Brahmanical thread is suspended round the neck (nivîta). These are indeed the Ṛishis of the Rig-veda: first the Śatarchins, the common title of the poets of the first Maṇḍala; then Gṛitsamada (2d Maṇḍala), Viśvâmitra (3d M.), Vâmadeva (4th M.), Atri (5th M.), Bharadvâja (6th M.), Vasishṭha (7th M.); then follow the poets of the Pra-

Bhârata, and according to some MSS. even the name of the Mahâbhârata, is mentioned, this may be considered as the earliest trace, not merely of single epic poems, but of a collection of them. The age of Âśvalâyana, which will be approximately fixed afterwards, would, therefore, if we can rely on our MSS., furnish a limit below which the first attempt at a collection of a Bhârata or Mahâbhârata ought not to be placed. But there is no hope that we shall ever succeed by critical researches in restoring the Bhârata to that primitive form and shape in which it may have existed before or at the time of Âśvalâyana. Much has indeed been done by Professor Lassen, who, in his Indian Antiquities, has pointed out characteristic marks by which the modern parts of the Mahâbhârata can be distinguished from the more ancient; and we may soon expect to see his principles still farther carried out in a translation of the whole Mahâbhârata, which, with the help of all the Sanskrit commentaries, has been most carefully prepared by one of the most learned and laborious scholars of Germany. If it were possible to sift out from the huge mass of Indian epic poetry, as we now possess it in the Mahâbhârata and Râmâyaṇa, those old stories and songs

gâtha hymns (8th M.), the poets of the Pâvamânîs (9th M.), and finally, the authors of the 10th and last Maṇḍala, who are called Kshudrasûktas and Mahâsûktas, authors of short and long hymns. The next class comprises twenty-three invocations, according to the Commentary, and they are to be made, when the Brahmanical cord is suspended over the right shoulder (prâchînâvîtî). The text, however, contains more than twenty-three names, and it is likely that some of them have been added afterwards, while others are perhaps to be taken collectively. भारतधर्माचार्याः may also be taken as one word, in the sense of the legal authorities of the Bhâratas.

which must have been living for a long time in the mouth of the people before they were collected, enlarged, arranged, and dressed up by later hands, a rich mine of information would be opened for the ancient times of India, and very likely also for the Vedic age. But the whole frame of the two epic poems as they now stand, their language and metre, as well as the moral and religious system they contain, show that they were put together at a period when the world of the Veda was living by tradition only, and, moreover, partly misunderstood, and partly forgotten. The war between the Kurus and Pâṇḍavas, which forms the principal object of our Mahâbhârata, is unknown in the Veda. The names of the Kurus and Bhâratas are common in the Vedic literature, but the names of the Pâṇḍavas have never been met with. It has been observed [1], that even in Pâṇini's grammar the name Pâṇḍu or Pâṇḍava does not occur, while the Kurus and Bhâratas are frequently mentioned, particularly in rules treating of the formation of patronymics and similar words.[2] If, then, Âśvalâyana

[1] Dr. Weber, Indische Studien, p. 148. Kâtyâyana, however, the immediate successor of Pâṇini, knows not only Pâṇḍu, but also his descendants, the Pâṇḍyas.

[2] The names of the two wives of Pâṇḍu, *Kunti* and *Mâdrî*, occur in the commentary on Pâṇini. (Cf. i. 2. 49., iv. 1. 65., iv. 1. 176. (text) for Kuntî, and iv. 1. 177. for Mâdrî). But both these names are geographical appellatives, Kuntî signifying a woman from the country of the Kuntas, Mâdrî a Madra-woman. *Prithâ*, another name of Kuntî, stands in the Gaṇa śivâdi. As to the proper names of the Pâṇḍava princes, we find *Yudhishṭhira*, Pâṇ. vi. 1. 134., vi. 3. 9., viii. 3. 95. (text); *Arjuna*, Pâṇ. iii. 1. 119., iv. 3. 64., v. 4. 48., vi. 2. 131.; *Bhîma*, Pâṇ. vi. 1. 205.; *Nâkula*, Pâṇ. vi. 3. 75. The name of *Sahadeva* does not occur; but his descendants, the Sâhadevas, are mentioned as belonging to the race of Kuru, together with the Nâkulas, Pâṇ. iv. 1. 114. In the same

can be shown to have been a contemporary, or at least an immediate successor, of Pâṇini, the Bhârata which he is speaking of must have been very different from the epic poem which is known to us

way we find the descendants of Yudhishṭhira and Arjuna mentioned as members of the eastern Bhâratas, Pân. ii. 4. 66. *Draupadî*'s name does not occur in Pâṇini, but *Subhadrâ* the sister of Kṛishṇa and the wife of Arjuna, is distinctly mentioned, Pân. iv. 2. 56. Another passage in the commentary on Pâṇini (iv. 3. 87.) proves even the existence of a poem in praise of Subhadrâ, which, if we remember the former mention of a war about Subhadrâ (iv. 2. 56.), seems most likely to have celebrated this very conquest of Subhadrâ by Arjuna. In the Mahâbhârata this story forms a separate chapter, the Subhadrâ-haraṇa-parva (Âdiparva, p. 288.), which may be the very work which Pâṇini, according to his commentator, is alluding to. That the chapter in the Mahâbhârata belongs to the oldest parts of this epic, may be seen from its being mentioned in the Anukramaṇi of Dhṛitarâshṭra (i. 149.). "When I heard that Subhadrâ, of the race of Madhu, had been forcibly seized in the city of Dvarakâ, and carried away by Arjuna, and that the two heroes of the race of Vṛishṇi had repaired to Indraprastha, I then, O Sanjaya, had no hope of success." The Mahâbhâshya, however, does not explain the former Sûtra, (iv. 2. 56.), and for the latter it gives examples for the exceptions only, but not for the rule. The word *grantha*, used in the Sûtra, (iv. 3. 87.), is always somewhat suspicious. That some of the Sûtras which now form part of Pâṇini's grammar, did not proceed from him, is acknowledged by Kaiyyaṭa, (cf. iv. 3. 131, 132.) अपाणिनीयः सूत्रेषु पाठ इत्याह इति कैय्यटः। कौपिंजलहास्तिपादादित्यस्यापाणिनीयत्वात् इति कैय्यटः॥ *Krishṇa Vâsudeva*, who is considered as peculiarly connected with the tradition of the Pâṇḍavas, is quoted as *Vâsudeva*, of the race of Vṛishṇi (Pân. iv. 1. 114.); as *Vâsudeva*, together with Śiva and Âditya (Pân. v. 3. 99.); as *Vâsudeva*, together with Arjuna (iv. 3. 98. text). In the commentary to Pân. iii. 3. 156., and ii. 3. 72., we have proof of *Kṛishṇa*'s being worshipped as a god; in i. 4. 92. he is mentioned as a hero. His residence, *Dvarakâ*, however, does not occur in Pâṇini.

under the name of the Mahâbhârata, celebrating the war of the Kurus and Pâṇḍavas.[1]

In the form in which we now possess the Mahâbhârata it shows clear traces that the poets who collected and finished it, breathed an intellectual and religious atmosphere, very different from that in which the heroes of the poem moved. The epic character of the story has throughout been changed and almost obliterated by the didactic tendencies of the latest editors, who were clearly Brahmans, brought up in the strict school of the Laws of Manu. But the original traditions of the Pâṇḍavas break through now and then, and we can clearly discern that the races among whom the five principal heroes of the Mahâbhârata were born and fostered, were by no means completely under the sway of the Brahmanical law. How is it, for instance, that the five Pâṇḍava princes, who are at first represented as receiving so strictly Brahmanic an education, — who, if we are to believe the poet, were versed in all the sacred literature, grammar, metre, astronomy, and law of the Brahmans,—could afterwards have been married to *one* wife? This is in

[1] That Pâṇini knew the war of the Bhâratas, has been rendered highly probable by Prof. Lassen (Ind. Alterthumskunde, i. 691. 837.). The words which called forth Pâṇini's special rule, (iv. 2. 56.), can scarcely be imagined to have been different from those in the Mahâbhâshya; viz., Bhâratah saṅgrâmah, saubhadrah saṅgrâmah. It was impossible to teach or to use Pâṇini's Sûtras without examples, which necessarily formed part of the traditional grammatical literature long before the great Commentary was written, and are, therefore, of a much higher historical value than is commonly supposed. The coincidences between the examples used in the Prâtiśâkhyas and in Pâṇini, show that these examples were by no means selected at random, but that they had long formed part of the traditional teaching. See also Pâṇ. vi. 2. 38., where the word "mahâbhârata" occurs, but not as the title of a poem.

plain opposition to the Brahmanic law, where it is said, "they are many wives of one man; not many husbands of one wife."[1] Such a contradiction can only be accounted for by the admission, that, in this case, epic tradition in the mouth of the people was too strong to allow this essential and curious feature in the life of its heroes to be changed. However, the Brahmanic editors of the Mahâbhârata, seeing that they could not alter tradition on this point, have at least endeavoured to excuse and mitigate it. Thus we are told in the poem itself, that at one time the five brothers came home, and informed their mother that they had found something extremely precious. Without listening further, their mother at once told them they ought to divide it as brothers. The command of a parent must always be literally obeyed; and as Draupadî was their newly discovered treasure, they were obliged, according to the views of the Brahmans, to obey, and to have her as their common wife. Indian lawgivers call this a knotty point[2]; they defend the fact, but refuse to regard it as a precedent.

[1] वेदे ऽप्येवं श्रूयते एकस्य बह्वो जाया भवंति नैकस्या एव बहवः पतयः संति॥

[2] धर्मो द्विविधः स्थूलः सूक्ष्मश्च। मंदमतिभिरपि सुखेन बुध्यमानः स शौचाचमनसंध्यावंदनादिः स्थूलो धर्मः। शास्त्रपारंगतैः पंडितैरेव बोद्धुं योग्य इतरेषामधर्मभ्रांतिविषयो द्रौपदीविवाहादिः सूक्ष्मो धर्मः।

Cf. Sâyaṇa's Com. on Parâśara. MS. Bodl. 172, 173. Another explanation is given by Kumârila:

यौवनस्थैव कृष्णा हि वेदिमध्यात्समुत्थिता। सा च श्री श्रीश्च भूयोभिर्भुज्यमाना न दुष्यति॥

/ Neither does the fact that Pâṇḍu is lawfully married to two wives, harmonise with the Brahmanic law. That law does not prohibit polygamy, but it regards no second marriage as legal, and it reserves the privilege of being burnt together with the husband to the eldest and only lawful wife. Such passages in the ancient epics are of the greatest interest. We see in them the tradition of the people too far developed, to allow itself to be remodelled by Brahmanic Diaskeuastes. There can be little doubt that polygamy, as we find it among the early races in their transition from the pastoral to the agricultural life, was customary in India./ We read in Herodotus (v. 5.), that amongst the Thracians it was usual, after the death of a man, to find out who had been the most beloved of his wives, and to sacrifice her upon his tomb. Mela (ii. 2.) gives the same as the general custom of the Getæ. Herodotus (iv. 71.) asserts a similar fact of the Scythians, and Pausanias (iv. 2.) of the Greeks, while our own Teutonic mythology is full of instances of the same feeling.[1]/ And thus the customs of these cognate nations explain what at first seemed to be anomalous in the epic tradition of the Mahâbhârata, that at the death of Pâṇḍu, it is not Kuntî, his lawful wife, but Mâdrî, his most beloved wife, in whose arms the old king dies, and who successfully claims the privilege of being burnt with him, and following her husband to another life.[2]/

[1] Cf. Grimm, History of the German Language, p. 139.

[2] Other instances of Dharmavyatikrama are:

कृष्णद्वैपायनस्य गृहीतनैष्ठिकब्रह्मचर्यस्य विचित्रवीर्यदारेष्व-
पत्योत्पादनप्रसंगः॥ युधिष्ठिरस्य कनीयोनिर्जितभ्रातृजा-

The same remark applies to the Râmâyaṇa. In this second epic also, we see that the latest editors were shocked by the anomalies of the popular traditions, and endeavoured to impart a more Brahmanic polish to the materials handed down to them from an earlier age. Thus king Daśaratha kills the son of a Brahman, which would be a crime so horrible in the eyes of the Brahmans, that scarcely any penance could expiate it.[1] This is the reason why the young Brahman is represented as the son of a Śûdrâ woman, and tells the king so himself, in order to relieve him from the fear of having killed the son of a Brahman. The singular relation, too, between Râma and Paraśu-Râma, was probably remodelled by the influence of the Brahmans, who could not bear the idea of their great hero, the destroyer of all the Kshatriyas, being in turn vanquished by Râma, who was himself a Kshatriya.

The Vedic literature, by the very sacredness of its character, has fortunately escaped from the remodelling puritanism of the later Brahmans. There must, from the first, have been as great a variety in the intellectual, religious, and moral character of the Indians, as there is in the geographical and physical character of India. If we look at Greece, and consider the immense diversity of local worship, tradition, and customs, which co-existed within that small tract of country, and then turn

यापरिणयनं॥ वासुदेवार्जुनयोर्निषिद्धमातुलदुहितृरुक्मि-णीसुभद्रापरिणयनं॥—Kumârila Bhaṭṭa.

[1] Cf. Manu, viii. 381. "No greater crime is known on earth than slaying a Brahman, and the king, therefore, must not even form in his mind an idea of killing a priest."

our eyes to the map of India, barred as it is by mountain-ranges and rivers, it becomes clear that the past ages of such a country cannot be represented in their fulness and reality by the traditions of the later Brahmans, which as we now possess them in the epic and pauraṇic poetry of the Hindus, are all tinged with the same monotonous colouring. Such a uniformity is always the result of an artificial system, and not of a natural and unimpeded development. It is indeed acknowledged by the Brahmans themselves that different customs prevailed in different parts of India. Some were even sanctioned by them, notwithstanding their policy of monopolising and (so to speak) *brahmanising* the whole Indian mind. Although, for instance, in the liturgic works annexed to the Vedas (Śrauta-sûtras), an attempt was made to establish a certain unity in the sacrifices of the people all over India, yet in the performance of these sacrifices there existed certain discrepancies, based on the traditionary authority of the wise of old, between family and family. This is still more the case in the so-called domestic ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, marriage, &c., described in the Gṛihya-sûtras, which, connected as they were with the daily life of the people, give us much more real information on the ancient customs of India than those grand public or private sacrifices which are prescribed in the Śrauta-sûtras, and could only have been kept up by sacerdotal influence. In these domestic ceremonies everybody is allowed, as a general law, to follow the customs of the family[1] to which he belongs, or of

[1] Thus it is said, for instance, in the Commentary to Pâraskara's Gṛihya-sûtras, that it is wrong to give up the customs of one's own family and to adopt those of others:

his village and country, provided these customs do not too grossly insult the moral and religious feelings of the Brahmans.

Although these domestic ceremonies were fully sanctioned by the Brahmanic law, the authority upon

शाखांतरीयकर्मकरणे दोषमाह वसिष्ठः॥ न जातु परशाखोक्तं कर्म बुधः समाचरेत्। आचरन्परशाखोक्तं शाखारंडः स उच्यते॥ यः स्वशाखोक्तमुत्सृज्य परशाखोक्तमाचरेत्। अप्रमाणमृषिं कृत्वा सोऽंधे तमसि मज्जते॥ स्मृत्यंतरेऽपि॥ स्वकर्म पर्युत्सृज्य तु यदन्यत्कुरुते नरः। अज्ञानाद्यदि वा लोभात्स हतः पतितो भवेत्॥ छंदोगपरिशिष्टेऽपि॥ स्वशाखाश्रयमुत्सृज्य परशाखाश्रयं तु यः। कर्तुमिच्छति दुर्मेधा मोघं तस्य च यत्कृतं॥

"Vasishṭha declares that it is wrong to follow the rules of another Śâkhâ. He says, 'A wise person will certainly not perform the duties prescribed by another Śâkhâ; he that does is called a traitor to his Śâkhâ. Whosoever leaves the law of his Śâkhâ, and adopts that of another, he sinks into blind darkness, having degraded a sacred Ṛishi.' And in another law-book it is said: 'If a man gives up his own customs and performs others, whether out of ignorance or covetousness, he will fall and be destroyed.' And again, in the Pariśishṭa of the Chhandogas: 'A fool who ceases to follow his own Śâkhâ, wishing to adopt another one, his work will be in vain.'"

Only in case no special rule is laid down for certain observances in some Gṛihyas, it is lawful to adopt those of other families:

स्वशाखानुक्तमप्यविरुद्धं परशाखोक्तं ग्राह्यं॥ तथा च कात्यायनः॥ यन्नोक्तं स्वशाखायां परोक्तमविरोधि च। विद्वद्भिस्तदनुष्ठेयमग्निहोत्रादिकर्मवत्॥ सूत्रांतरानुक्तमपि स्मृत्युक्तं ग्राह्यं॥

which they are founded does not lie directly in the sacred revelation of the Brahmans (Śruti), but in tradition (Smṛiti), a difference, the historical importance of which will have to be pointed out hereafter. As to the customs of countries and villages, there can be no doubt that in many cases they were not only not founded upon Brahmanic authority, but frequently decidedly against it. The Brahmanic law, however, is obliged to recognise and allow those customs, with the general reservation that they must not be in open opposition to the law. Thus Âśvalâyana in his Gṛihya-sûtras, says:—"Now the customs of countries and places are certainly manifold. One must know them as far as marriage is concerned. But we shall explain what is the general custom."[1]

Here the commentator adds:—"If there be contradiction between the customs of countries, &c., and those customs which we are going to describe, one must adopt the custom as laid down by us, not those of the country. What we shall say is the general law, this is our meaning. Amongst the Vaidehas, for instance, one sees at once that loose habits prevail. But in the domestic laws continence is prescribed; therefore there is no doubt that the domestic and not the national customs are to be observed."[2]

[1] Âśv. S. i. 7.,

अथ खलूच्चावचा जनपदधर्मा ग्रामधर्माश्च तान्विवाहे प्रतीयाद्यत्तु समानं तद्वक्ष्यामः

[2] जनपदादिधर्माणां वक्ष्यमाणानां धर्माणां च विरोधे सति वक्ष्यमाणं धर्ममेव कुर्यान्न जनपदादिधर्ममिति। यद्वक्ष्यामस्तत्सर्वत्र समानमित्येवार्थः। वैदेहेषु सद्य एव व्यवायो

In the Sûtras of Gautama, too, a similar line of conduct is traced out. After it has been said that the highest authority by which a government ought to be guided consists in the Vedas, Vedângas, Śâstras, and old traditions, it is added (Adhy. 11. Sûtra 20.), that in cases where the customs of countries, classes, and families are not expressly founded upon a passage of the Veda, they are, notwithstanding, to be observed, if they are not clearly against the principles of the sacred writings, such as would be, for instance, marrying the daughter of a maternal uncle.[1]

There is an interesting passage in the Gṛihya-sangraha-pariśishṭa, composed by the son of Gobhila, which Dr. Roth quotes in his Essays on the Veda, p. 120.:—"The Vâsishṭhas wear a braid on the right side, the Âtrêyas wear three braids, the Angiras wear

दृष्टः। गृह्येषु तु ब्रह्मचर्यं विहितं। तच्च गृह्योक्तमेव कुर्यान्न देशधर्ममिति सिद्धं॥

[1] The commentator Haradatta here mentions the following as customs that prevailed in certain territories, and which had no sanction in the Veda:—When the sun stands in Aries (mesha), the young girls would paint the Sun with his retinue, on the soil, with coloured dust, and worship this in the morning and evening. And in the month Mârgaśîrshâ (November-December) they roam about the village, nicely dressed, and whatever they receive as presents they give to the god. When the sun stands in Cancer (karkaṭa) in Pûrvâ Phalgunî (February), they worship Umâ, and distribute sprouting kidney-beans and salt. When the suns stands in Aries in Uttarâ Phalgunî (?), they worship the goddess Śrî.

As customs of classes he mentions that at the marriage of Śûdras, they fix posts in the ground, put thousands of reflecting lamps upon them, and lead the bride round by the hand.

As customs of families, again, he remarks, that some wear the śikhâ (lock of hair) in front, some behind, and that passages of the Veda (pravachanas) allow both according to different times.

five locks, the Bhrigus have their head quite shaved, others have a lock of hair on the top of the head."[1]

Another peculiarity ascribed to the Vâsishṭhas is that they exclude meat from their sacrifices.[2]

A similar notice of the customs of neighbouring nations, is found in Raghunandana's quotation from the Harivanśa, — that the Śakas (Scythians) have half their head shorn, the Yavanas (Greeks ?) and Kambojâs the whole, that the Pâradas (inhabitants of Paradene) wear their hair free, and the Pahlavas (Persians) wear beards.[3]

In the same way, then, as different traditions were current in India relative to such observances, it is probable that different families had their own heroes, perhaps their own deities, and that they kept up the memory of them by their own poetic traditions. It is true that such a view is merely conjectural. But when we see that in some parts of the Veda, which are represented as belonging to different illustrious and

[1] दक्षिणकपर्दा वासिष्ठा आत्रेयास्त्रिकपर्दिनः।
आंगिरसः पंचचूडा मुंडा भृगवः शिखिनोऽन्ये॥

[2] This we learn from the Karma-pradîpa, a supplement to the Sûtras of Gobhila, i. 18. : वसिष्ठोक्तो विधिः क्षत्त्रो द्रष्टव्योऽच निरामिषः॥

[3] अर्द्धं शकानां शिरसो मुंडयित्वा व्यसर्जयत्।
यवनानां शिरः सर्वं कंबोजानां तथैव च॥
पारदा मुक्तकेशाश्च पह्लवाः श्मश्रुधारिणः।
निःस्वाध्यायवषट्काराः कृतास्तेन महात्मना॥

See also Pâṇ. gaṇa mayûravyansakâdi.

noble families, certain gods are more exclusively celebrated[1]; that names which in Vedic poetry

[1] In later times, when the sects of Vishṇu and Śiva had sprung up, and the Indian world was divided between them, it seems as if different deities had been ascribed to different castes. Thus it is said in the first Adhyâya of the Vasishṭha-smṛiti:

चतुर्वेदी च यो विप्रो वासुदेवं न विंदति।
वेदभारभयाक्रांतः स वै ब्राह्मणगर्दभः॥
तस्मादवैष्णवत्वेन ब्राह्मण्यादि विहीयते।
वैष्णवत्वेन संसिद्धिं लभते नात्र संशयः॥
नारायणं परं ब्रह्म ब्राह्मणानां हि दैवतं।
सोमसूर्यादयो देवाः क्षत्रियाणां विशामपि॥
शूद्रादीनां तु रुद्राद्या अर्चनीयाः प्रयत्नतः।
यत्र रुद्रार्चनं प्रोक्तं पुराणेषु स्मृतिष्वपि॥
तदब्रह्मण्यविषयमेवमाह प्रजापतिः।
रुद्रार्चनं त्रिपुंड्रं च पुराणेषु च गीयते॥
क्षत्रविट्शूद्रजातीनां नेतरेषां तदुच्यते।
तस्मात् त्रिपुंड्रं विप्राणां न धार्यं मुनिसत्तमाः॥

"A Brahman versed in the four Vedas, who does not find Vâsudeva, is a donkey of a Brahman, trembling for the heavy burden of the Veda. Therefore, unless a man be a Vaishṇava, his Brahmahood will be lost; by being a Vaishṇava one obtains perfection, there is no doubt. For Nârâyaṇa (Vishṇu) the highest Brahma, is the deity of the Brahmans; Soma, Sûrya, and the rest, are the gods of Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas; while Rudra and similar gods ought to be sedulously worshipped by the Śûdras. Where the worship of Rudra is enjoined in the Purâṇas and law-books, it has no reference to Brahmans, as Prajâpati declared. The worship of Rudra and the Tripuṇḍra (the three horizontal marks across the forehead) are celebrated in the Purâṇas, but only

are known as those of heroes and poets (Purûravas, Kutsa) are afterwards considered as names of infidels and heretics, we have a right to infer that we have here the traces of a widely extended practice.

In the hymns of the Rig-veda we meet with allusions to several legendary stories—afterwards more fully developed by the Brahmans in their Brâhmaṇas — by which laws that were in later times acknowledged as generally binding, and as based upon the authority of the Veda, are manifestly violated. It is an essential doctrine of the Brahmans, that the religious education, and the administration of sacrifices, as well as the receiving of rewards for these offices, belong exclusively to their own caste. Kakshîvat, however, whose hymns are found in the first and ninth maṇḍala of the Rig-veda, and who, whether on account of his name or for some better reason, is said to have been a Kshatriya, or of royal extraction, is represented as receiving from King Svanaya presents, which, according to Manu [1], it would have been unlawful for him to accept. In order to explain this

for the castes of the Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śûdras, and not for the others. Therefore, ye excellent Munis, the Tripuṇḍra must not be worn by Brahmans."

[1] Cf. Manu, x. 76.; and Rig-veda-bhâshya, ii. p. 30. Rosen, who has quoted this passage to Rv. i. 18. 1., reads याजनाध्यापने चैव विशुद्धाच्च प्रतिग्रहात् which he translates by "abstinere jubet a dirigendis sacrificiis, ab institutione sacra et ab impuris donis," referring to Manu, x. 103—110. विशुद्ध however, does not mean impure, but pure. The reading of the commentary ought to be विशुद्धाच्च प्रतिग्रहः for thus the very words of Manu, x. 76., are restored.

away, a story is told, that although Kakshîvat was the son of King Kalinga, yet his real father was the old Rishi Dîrghatamas, whose hymns have likewise been preserved in the first maṇḍala of the Rig-veda. This poet had been asked by the king to beget offspring for him, according to ancient Indian custom. The queen, however, refused to see the old sage, and sent her servant-maid instead. The son of this servant and the Ṛishi Dîrghatamas was Kakshîvat, and as the son of a Ṛishi he was allowed to perform sacrifices and to receive presents. This story shows its purpose very clearly, and there can be little doubt that it owes its origin to the tender conscience of the Brahmans, who could not bear to see their laws violated by one of their own sacred Ṛishis. It is a gratuitous assumption to suppose that the poets of the Veda should have been perfect in the observance of the Brahmanic law. That law did not exist when they lived and composed their songs, for which in later times they were raised to the rank of saints. Whether Kakshîvat was the son of a Brahman or a Kshatriya, of a servant-maid or of a queen, is impossible to determine. But it is certain that in the times in which he lived, he would not have scrupled to act both as a warrior and priest, if circumstances required it. This becomes still more evident, if we accept Professor Lassen's view, who considers Dîrghatamas, the father of Kakshîvat, as one of the earliest Brahmanic missionaries in the southern parts of Bengal, among the Angas and Kalingas.[1]

[1] In this case, the name of the queen also, Sudeshṇâ, would be significant, for Sudeshṇa is the name of one of the nations in

Now, under circumstances of this kind, when the Brahmans were still labouring to establish their supremacy over different parts of India, it can hardly be believed that the different castes and their respective duties and privileges should have been established as strictly as in later times. In later times it is considered a grievous sin to recite the hymns of the Veda in places where a Śûdra might be able to hear them. In the Rig-veda we find hymns which the Brahmans themselves allow to be the compositions of the son of a slave. Kavasha Ailûsha is the author of several hymns in the tenth Book of the Rig-veda; yet this same Kavasha was expelled from the sacrifice as an impostor and as the son of a slave (dâsyâḥ putra), and he was readmitted only because the gods had shown him special favour. This is acknowledged by the Brâhmaṇas of the Aitareyins[2] and

Bengal. See Vishṇu-Purâṇa, p. 188. The word "godharma," which occurs in the story of Dîrghatamas, in the Mahâbhârata, i. 4195., and which Prof. Lassen translates by "pastoral law," must have an opprobrious sense, and Indian Pandits explain it by "open and indiscriminate concupiscence."

[2] Aitareya-Brâhmaṇa, II. 19.:

ऋषयो वै सरस्वत्यां सत्रमासत। ते कवषमैलूषं सोमादन-
न्दास्याः पुत्रः कितवो ब्राह्मणः कथं नो मध्ये दीक्षिष्टेति।
तं बहिर्धन्वोदवहन्नैनं पिपासा हंतु सरस्वत्या उदकं मा
पादिति। स बहिर्धन्वोदूह्यः पिपासयावृत्त एतदपोनप्त्री-
यमपश्यत्प्र देवत्रा ब्रह्मणे गातुरेतिति। तेनापां प्रियं
धामोपागच्छत्। तमापो ऽनूदायंस्तं सरस्वती समंतं
पर्यधावत्। तस्माद्धाप्येतर्हि परिसारमित्याचक्षते। यदेनं

Kaushîtakins, and in the Mahâbhârata also Kavasha is called a Nishâda.

The marked difference between the Vedic and epic poetry of India has been well pointed out by Professor Roth of Tübingen, who for many years has devoted much time and attention to the study of the Veda. According to him, the Mahâbhârata, even in its first elements, is later than the time of Buddha.[1] "In the epic poems," he says, "the

सरस्वती ममंत परिससार॥ ते वा ऋषयो ऽब्रुवन् विदुर्वा इमं देवा उपेमं क्रयामहा इति तथेति तमुपाक्रयंत। तमुपक्रयैतदपोनप्त्रीयमकुर्वत प्र देवत्रा ब्रह्मणे गातुरेत्विति॥

Kaushîtaki-Brâhmaṇa, XI.:

माध्यमाः सरस्वत्यां सत्रमासत। तद्धापि कवषो मध्ये निषसाद। तं हेम उपोदुर्दास्या वै त्वं पुत्रो ऽसि न वयं त्वया सह भक्षयिष्याम इति। स ह क्रुद्धः प्रद्रवंत्सरस्वतीमेतेन सूक्तेन तुष्टाव। तं हेयमन्वेयाय। तत उ हेमे निरागा इव मेनिरे। तं ह्यान्वानृत्योचुर्ऋषे नमस्त अस्तु मा मा हिंसीस्त्वं वै नः श्रेष्ठो ऽसि यं त्वेयमन्वेतीति। तं ह ज्ञापयां चक्रुस्तस्य ह क्रोधं विनिन्युः। स एष कवषस्यैव महिमा सूक्तस्य चानुवेदिता॥

Comment: उपोदुः परुषं वदितवंतः॥ निरागा निष्क्रुष्टो रागो येषां॥ अन्वानृत्य विनयेन नृतमनुसृता इव॥ ज्ञापयां चक्रुः संतोषयां चक्रुः॥

[1] Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Veda. Drei Abhandlungen von R. Roth, Doctor der Philosophie. Stuttgart, 1846.

Veda is but imperfectly known; the ceremonial is no longer developing, it is complete. The Vedic legends have been plucked from their native soil, and the religion of Agni, Indra, Mitra, and Varuṇa has been replaced by an altogether different worship. The last fact," he says, "ought to be the most convincing. There is a contradiction running throughout the religious life of India, from the time of the Râmâyaṇa to the present day. The outer form of the worship is Vedic, and exclusively so [1]; but the eye of religious adoration is turned upon quite different regions.[2] The secondary formation, the religion of Vishṇu and Brahma, began with the epic poetry, and remained afterwards as the only living

[1] The worship of the Hindus at the present day cannot be called exclusively Vedic, though Vedic remains may be traced in it. In the Introduction to the edition of the Rig-veda, by the Tattvabodhinî-sabhâ, it is said, on the contrary,

আদ্য কালিক বৈদিক ধর্ম্মের সহিত ইদানীন্তন প্রচলিত ধর্ম্মের বিভিন্নতা উজ্জ্বল রূপে প্রতীত হইবেক॥

"the difference between the present received law and the early Vedic law, will clearly be perceived by this edition." And again.

পুরাণ বিহিত নর, পশু, পক্ষী, সর্প, মৎস্যাদি নানা অবয়ব বিশিষ্ট দেবগণের পৌরাণিক অর্চ্চনা ত্রবং লোক বিখ্যাত আধুনিকতম তান্ত্রিক ক্রিয়ার বিস্তারিত পদ্ধতির সহিত বেদ বিহিত যজ্ঞানুষ্ঠানের কিপর্য্যন্ত ভিন্নতা তাহা সম্যক্ রূপে দৃষ্ট হইবেক॥

"It will be seen exactly what difference there is between the Paurâṇic worship of the gods, who, according to the Purâṇas, are exhibited with the different bodies of men, animals, birds, serpents, and fishes; the widely spread custom of tântric ceremonies, which are the most modern and famous on earth; and the performance of sacrifices as prescribed in the Veda."

[2] Professor Burnouf has treated the same subject in his Review of Prof. Wilson's Translation of the Vishṇupurâṇa, Journal des Savants, 1840, May, p. 296.

one, but without having the power to break through the walls of the Vedic ceremonial, and take the place of the old ritual."

And if it be unsafe to use the epic poems as authorities for the Vedic age, it will readily be admitted that the same objection applies with still greater force to the Purâṇas. Although one only of the eighteen Purâṇas has as yet been completely published, enough is known of their character, partly by Professor Burnouf's edition of the Bhagavat-purâṇa, partly by extracts given from other Purâṇas by Professor Wilson, to justify our discarding their evidence with reference to the primitive period of Vedic literature. Even the Mânava-dharmaśâstra, the law-book of the Mânavas, a sub-division of the sect of the Taittirîyas, or, as it is commonly called, the Laws of Manu, cannot be used as an independent authority. It cannot be said that the compilers of these laws were ignorant of the traditions of the Vedic age. Many of their verses contain a mere paraphrase of passages from the hymns, Brâhmaṇas, and Sûtras; but they likewise admitted the rules and customs of a later age, and their authority is therefore valid only where it has been checked by more original and genuine texts.

The Code of Manu is almost the only work in Sanskrit literature which, as yet, has not been assailed by those who doubt the antiquity of everything Indian. No historian has disputed its claim to that early date which had, from the first, been assigned to it by Sir William Jones. It must be confessed, however, that Sir William Jones's proofs of the antiquity of this code cannot be considered as conclusive, and

no sufficient arguments have been brought forward to substantiate any of the different dates ascribed to Manu, as the author of our Law-book, which vary, according to different writers, from 880 to 1280 B.C.

If the age of Manu or of the epic poems could be fixed, so as to exclude all possible doubt, our task with regard to the age of the Veda would be an easy one. The Veda is demonstrably earlier than the epic poetry and the legal codes of India. We do not, however, advance one step by saying that the Veda is older than the author of the Mânava-dharma-śâstra, whose date is altogether unknown, or even than the Mahâbhârata, if it can be doubted whether that poem in its first elements be anterior to the Buddhistic religion or not; while it is said, at the same time, that the last elements which have been incorporated into this huge work allude to historical events later than the Christian era.[1] Here, then, we must adopt a new course of procedure. We must try to fix the age of the Veda, which forms the natural basis of Indian history; and we must derive our knowledge of the Vedic age from none but Vedic works, discarding altogether such additional evidence as might be obtained from the

[1] That the principal part of the Mahâbhârata belongs to a period previous to the political establishment of Buddhism, has been proved by Prof. Lassen, Ind. Ant. i. 489—491. Much has been said since to controvert his views with regard to the age of the Mahâbhârata, but nothing that is really valuable has been added to Prof. Lassen's facts or reasonings. "It is not at all difficult," as Prof. Lassen remarks, "to look at this question from one single point of view, and to start a confident assertion. But in doing this, many persons commit themselves to inconsiderate judgments, and show an ignorance of the very points which have to be considered."

later literature of India. Let some Vedic dates be once established, and it will probably be possible to draw lines of connection between the Vedic and the rest of the Indian literature. But the world of the Veda is a world by itself; and its relation to all the other Sanskrit literature is such, that the Veda ought not to receive but ought to throw light over the whole historical development of the Indian mind.

The Veda has a two-fold interest: it belongs to the history of the world and to the history of India. In the history of the world the Veda fills a gap which no literary work in any other language could fill. It carries us back to times of which we have no records anywhere, and gives us the very words of a generation of men, of whom otherwise we could form but the vaguest estimate by means of conjectures and inferences. As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind, will belong for ever to the *Rig-veda*.

But in the history of India, too, the Veda is of the greatest importance. It has been a standing reproach against our studies that it is impossible to find anything historical in Indian literature.[1] To a certain extent that reproach is well-founded; and this accounts no doubt for the indifference with which Sanskrit literature is regarded by the public at large.

We may admire the delicate poetry of Kâlidâsa, the

[1] See Burnouf, Introduction à l'Histoire du Buddhisme, p. iii.

philosophical vigour of Kapila, the voluptuous mysticism of Jayadeva, and the epic simplicity of Vyâsa and Vâlmîki, but as long as their works float before our eyes like the mirage of a desert, as long as we are unable to tell what real life, what period in the history of a nation they reflect, there is something wanting to engage our sympathies in the same manner as they are engaged by the tragedies of Æschylus, or the philosophical essays of Cicero. We value the most imperfect statues of Lycia and Ægina, because they throw light on the history of Greek art, but we should pass by unnoticed the most perfect mouldings of the human frame, if we could not tell whether they had been prepared in the studio of a Phidias, or in the dissecting-room of a London hospital.

In the following sketch of the history of Vedic literature, I cannot promise to give dates, such as we are accustomed to find in the literary histories of other nations. But I hope I shall be able to prove that there exist in that large mass of literature which belongs to the Vedic age, clear traces of an original historical articulation; and that it is possible to restore something like chronological continuity in the four periods of the Vedic literature. If this can be achieved, if we can discover different classes of literary works, and vindicate to them something of a truly historical character, the reproach that there is nothing historical to be found in India will be removed, as far as the peculiar nature of that literature allows.

The modern literature of India, though not yet grouped in chronological order, will find in the lite-

rature of the Vedic age something like a past, some testimony to prove that it did not spring up in a day, but clings by its roots to the earliest strata of Indian thought. The Laws of the Mânavas, though no longer the composition of a primeval sage, will at least be safe against the charge of being the invention of some unemployed Indian lawgiver. Plays like Śakuntala and Urvaśî, though no longer regarded as the productions of a Periclean age, will be classed among the productions of what may properly be called the Alexandrian period of Sanskrit literature. But whatever we may have to surrender with regard to the antiquity claimed by these and other Sanskrit works, that portion of the literature of India which alone can claim a place in the history of the world, and which alone can command the attention of those who survey the summits of human intellect, not only in the East but over the whole civilised world, will, we hope, for the future, be safe against the doubts which I myself have shared for many years. It is difficult, no doubt, to believe that the most ancient literary work of the Aryan race, a work more ancient than the Zendavesta and Homer, should, after a lapse of at least three thousand years, have been discovered, and for the first time published in its entirety, not in one of the Parishads on the borders of the Ganges, but in one of the colleges of an English University. It is difficult to believe that sufficient MSS. should have been preserved, in spite of the perishable nature of the material on which they are written, to enable an editor to publish the collection of the Vedic hymns in exactly that form in which they existed at least 800 years before the Christian era; and, still more, that this collection, which was completed at the time

of Lycurgus, should contain the poetical relics of a pre-Homeric age; an age in which the names of the Greek gods and heroes had not yet lost their original sense, and in which the simple worship of the Divine powers of nature was not yet supplanted by a worship of personal gods. It is difficult to believe this; and we have a right to be sceptical. But it is likewise our duty to inquire into the value of what has been preserved for us in so extraordinary a manner, and to extract from it those lessons which the study of mankind was intended to teach to man.