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time in Westminster Hall at the coronation of the ancient kings of England; and which were attended by the feudal Barons of the realm who had already paid their homage and sworn fealty to the new sovereign. Still, like most ancient institutions, the banquet was invested with a religious meaning, and was regarded both as a coronation feast and as a sacrifice to the gods. Indeed, it seems to have been a ceremonial at once devotional and festive; in which animals were sacrificed and roasted, and duly offered with hymns and invocations to the deities of the Vedas, as well as served up at the national banquet to the kinsmen, neighbours, and tributary Chieftains.¹

¹ The mode by which the Bráhmans arrogated to themselves the sole right of officiating at the great sacrifices, and even of partaking of the meat, is curiously indicated by the following myths, which have been preserved in the Aitareya Brahmanam (Book VII. c. 4, Haug's translation). It should be premised that sacrifice is personified; so, too, is divine knowledge as the Brahma, and sovereignty as the Kshattrá. The following texts are extracted verbatim:—

“After Prajâpati had created the sacrifice, the Brahma (divine knowledge) and the Kshattrá (sovereignty) were produced. After both two kinds of creatures sprang up, such ones as eat the sacrificial food, and such ones as do not eat it. All eaters of the sacrificial food followed the Brahma, the non-eaters followed the Kshattrá. Therefore, the Bráhmans only are eaters of the sacrificial food, whilst the Kshattríyas, Vais'yas, and Shûdras do not eat it.

“The sacrifice went away from both of them. The Brahma and Kshattrá followed it. The Brahma followed with all its implements, and the Kshattrá followed (also) with its implements. The implements of the Brahma are those required for performing a sacrifice. The implements of the Kshattrá are a horse, carriage, an armour, and a bow with arrow. The Kshattrá, not reaching the sacrifice, returned; for, frightened by the weapons of the Kshattrá, the sacrifice ran aside. The Brahma then followed the sacrifice, and reached it. Hemming thus the sacrifice in its further course the Brahma stood still; the sacrifice, reached and hemmed in its course, stood still also, and recognizing in the hand of the Brahma its own implements, returned to the Brahma. The sacrifice having thus remained only in the Brahma, it is therefore only placed among the Bráhmans (i. e. they alone are allowed to perform it).

“The Kshattrá then ran after this Brahma, and said to it, ‘Allow me to take possession of this sacrifice (which is placed in thee).’ The Brahma said, ‘Well, let it be so; lay down thy own weapons, assume, by means of the implements of the Brahma (the sacrificial implements) which constitute the Brahma, the form of the Brahma, and return to it!’ The Kshattrá obeyed, laid down its own weapons, assumed, by means of the implements of the Brahma which constitute the Brahma, its form, and returned to it. Therefore, even a Kshattríya, when



During the subsequent period when the ascendancy of the Brāhman began to assert itself side by side with the sovereignty of the Kshatriyas, the ceremonial of these sacrifices underwent a significant change. The simple offerings to the gods were no longer made by the patriarch of the family, or Chief-tain of the tribe, but by an exclusive sacerdotal class, claiming a divine origin, and invested with supernatural powers. The result was that the political purport of the festival appears in a great measure to have passed away, whilst even the religious ideas, which found expression in the original institution, lost all their natural and joyous character. The child-like idea of propitiating the gods with choice viands became more or less modified by the more gloomy, but, at the same time, more complex conception, that

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Decline of the
political element
during the
Brahmanical
ascendancy.

Change in the
religious senti-
ment. Simple
idea of propitiat-
ing the gods by
delicious food,
modified by the
complex idea
that the deity
was to be pro-
pitiated by
blood, and that
animals were to
be slain as an
atonement for
sin.

he lays down his weapons and assumes the form of the Brahma by means of the sacrificial implements, returns to the sacrifice (he is allowed a share in it).'

"As regards the portion of sacrificial food which is to be eaten by the sacrificer, they ask, whether the Kshatriya should eat, or whether he should not eat it? They say, if he eat, then he commits a great sin, as having eaten sacrificial food although he is an *ahutād* (one not permitted to eat). If he do not eat, then he cuts himself off from the sacrifice (with which he was connected). For the portion to be eaten by the sacrificer, is the sacrifice. This is to be made over to the Brahma priest. For the Brahma priest of the Kshatriya is in the place of (his) Purohita. The Purohita is the one-half of the Kshatriya; only through the intervention of another (the Brahma priest), the portion appears to be eaten by him, though he does not eat it with his own mouth. For the sacrifice is there where the Brahma (priest) is. The entire sacrifice is placed in the Brahma, and the sacrificer is in the sacrifice. They throw the sacrifice (in the shape of the portion which is to be eaten by the sacrificer) into the sacrifice (which has the form of the Brahma) just as they throw water into water, fire into fire, without making it overflow, nor causing any injury to the sacrificer. Therefore is this portion to be eaten by the sacrificer (if he be a Kshatriya) to be given up to the Brahma.

"Some sacrificial priests, however, sacrifice this portion to the fire, saying, 'I place thee in Prajāpat's world, which is called vibhan (shining everywhere), be joined to the sacrificer, Svāha!' But thus the sacrificial priest ought not to proceed. For the portion to be eaten by the sacrificer is the sacrificer himself. What priest, therefore, asserts this, burns the sacrificer in the fire. (If any one should observe a priest doing so) he ought to tell him, 'Thou hast singed the sacrificer in the fire. Agni will burn his breaths, and he will consequently die. Thus it always happens. Therefore, he should not think of doing so.'



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blood must be shed to propitiate an offended deity, and to atone for any neglect in the fulfilment of superstitious duties, or for any breach of Brahmanical law. Accordingly, whilst the primitive ritual was still maintained, whilst the flesh meat, the simple cakes, the parched grain, the clarified butter, the milk, the curds, and the soma wine, were still offered to the genial gods of the Vedas, the animals were slaughtered at the stake in the hope of appeasing the wrath of some revengeful and exacting deity, or as a vicarious atonement for national transgression or individual sin.

Brahmanical
doctrines of
sacrifices, pen-
ances, and castes,
overthrown by
the reformation
of Buddha, 600
B.C. to 800 A.D.

But against these superstitious conceptions of a divine ruler delighting in blood there arose that mighty movement known as Buddhism. In the same reforming spirit, and about the same age of the world's history, in which Isaiah denounced the rites and observances of the Mosaic law, the mysterious Buddha arose to anathematize the animal sacrifices of the Bráhmans.² For a period of twelve centuries, namely, from the sixth century before the Christian era until the eighth century after it, Buddhism triumphed throughout Hindústan; trampling upon the whole ceremonial of Brahmanism, with all its sacrifices, penances, and castes; and setting forth

² Isaiah's denunciations of the Mosaic ritual are very strong. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom! Give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah! To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations! Incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them" (Isaiah i. 10—14). The story of Cain and Abel points to an opposite direction. The fruits of the earth were not accepted, but only the firstlings of the flock (Gen. iv. 2—4).



the paramount necessity for purity of mind and body, and a more elevated moral rule. Sacrifices of all kinds were especially excluded from the Buddhist ritual; and no corresponding rite was permitted beyond the offering of flowers to the Buddhas who had attained the perfection of being. At the expiration of that period, namely, about ten centuries ago, there arose that great Brahmanical reaction or revival, which has continued with but slight disturbance from either Islam or Christianity down to the present day. But the reforming spirit of Buddhism has never been wholly eradicated, and indeed has left a lasting impress upon the national ritual. The great sacrifices of antiquity have never been revived; and the sacrifice of goats has been restricted to the exceptional worship of Durgá, and chiefly confined to the province of Bengal. The Homa, or clarified butter, which is presented to the fire in sacrificial ladles, and the Páyasa or sacred food of rice and milk, which is cooked in the sacrificial kettles, form in the present day the main staple of the so-called offerings or sacrifices to the gods of India.

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Brahmanical re-
vival 800 A.D.
et seq.

Influence of
Buddhism
throughout the
modern age of
Brahmanical
revival.

Animal sacri-
fices replaced
by the Homa
and Páyasa.

From the foregoing observations it will have been seen that, since the first institution of the Rajasúya, the national conception of sacrifice has undergone four modifications, corresponding to the four great periods of Hindú history, namely, the Kshatriya, the Brahmanical, the Buddhistic, and the Brahmanical revival. The great sacrifices or banquets of the Kshatriyas were modified by the Bráhmans into sacrificial sessions of a purely religious character; but were subsequently swept away by the reformation of Buddha, which only permitted of the

Review of the
subject. Four
different con-
ceptions of sa-
crifice, viz. :

(1.) The corona-
tion banquets of
the Kshatriyas.

(2.) The sacrifi-
cial sessions of
the Bráhmans.

(3.) The flower
offerings of the
Buddhists.

(4.) The offering
of Homa and
Páyasa during
the Brahman-
ical revival.



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Absence of allusions to animal sacrifice in the description of the Rajasúya of Yudhishthira, although it formed a part of the ancient rite.

offering of flowers. So complete and effectual was this reformation, that animal sacrifices found no place in the Brahmanical revival; and the offerings to the gods henceforth mainly consisted of Homa and Páyasa, the clarified butter and the sacred food.³ These data should be borne in mind whilst considering the description of the Rajasúya of Yudhishthira; inasmuch as the Mahá Bhárata appears to have assumed its present shape during the later period of Brahmanical revival; and consequently the description of the Rajasúya in the form in which it has been handed down by the Brahmanical compilers, bears traces of nearly all the ideas which prevailed throughout the widely different periods mapped out in the foregoing paragraphs. One exception, however, must be noticed, namely, that the fact of animal sacrifices in the Rajasúya of Yudhishthira has been apparently suppressed in the Mahá Bhárata, although it undoubtedly found a place in the early Brahmanic ritual.⁴ The result has been that the sacrifice is not represented as an atonement for sin. Even this exception, however, finds full expression in the Aswamédha, or horse sacrifice performed by Yudhishthira at the conclusion of the great war; as well

³ Whilst ghee or clarified butter formed the staple of the Homa, and rice and milk were the staple of the Páyasa, other materials of smaller importance were and are mingled with both, chiefly consisting of things produced from the cow. This part of the subject will be considered in connection with the worship of the cow.

⁴ That an animal was tied to a stake and sacrificed as a burnt-offering at the Rajasúya, is plainly set forth in the Aitareya Bráhmaṇam, which apparently contains the oldest form of purely Brahmanical ritual extant. Dr Haug has published the original text of this valuable Bráhmaṇa, with an English version attached; and it may be added that his work is of the highest authority, inasmuch as he practised all the ancient forms of sacrifice under the direction of one of the few Bráhmans who have preserved the sacrificial mysteries as they descended from the remotest times. See Dr Haug's preface to the Aitareya Bráhmaṇam.



as in the Aswamédha performed by Ráma after his war with Rávana; all of which will fully appear in their proper place hereafter.

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The legend of the Rajasúya of Yudhishthira may be divided into four sections, namely:

Division of the
legend of the
Rajasúya into
four sections.

1st, The preliminary Conquests.

2nd, The Sacrifice and Banquet.

3rd, The Death of Sisupála.

4th, The Jealousy of Duryodhana.

In taking into consideration the preliminary conquests of the Pándavas, it will be necessary to bear in mind what appear to be the bare facts. The Rajasúya was a triumphant ceremony. The Pándavas had gone out of Hastinápura with their mother, their joint wife, and their priest, and had settled in a new country. They had built the fort at Indra-prastha, cleared the jungle of Khándava, and driven out the Scythian tribe known as the Nágas. Finally, having founded a new Raj, and having sufficiently established a supremacy over every bordering enemy, and having thus proved to the satisfaction of their new subjects that they could protect cattle and harvests, they invited all their kinsmen and neighbours to a Rajasúya, and in the presence of all the people solemnly inaugurated their elder brother Yudhishthira as Raja of Khándava-prastha.

(1.) Preliminary
conquests.

The very restricted area of conquest indicated in the foregoing incidents would be amply sufficient to warrant the performance of a Rajasúya. The ceremony certainly involved the idea of conquest over every enemy; but this idea would be sufficiently realized if a Raja had established himself in a Raj, and gained by his exploits the respect of all the Chieftains in the immediate neighbourhood.

Limited area of
conquest.

Idea of the Ra-
jasúya in its
original appli-
cation.

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jasúya extended
to universal con-
quest.Wars of the
Pándavas.Yudhishtira
determines on
performing a
Rajasúya.Pays all the
debts of his sub-
jects.

Calls a Council.

Sends for Krish-
na and takes his
counsel.Mythical con-
quest of Jará-
sandha, Raja of
Magadhá.

In a later age, however, when the memory of the actual facts had nearly passed away, and the dim traditions were remodelled by later bards of boundless imaginations but limited geographical knowledge, the idea of conquest extended indefinitely over the whole earth, and necessarily led to the introduction of a considerable amount of mythical matter in order to realize the marvellous idea of universal empire. How this was effected may be gathered from the following myth:—

Now when Arjuna had returned to his brethren at Indra-prastha, the Pándavas went out to war and conquered many Rajas, and Raja Yudhishtira determined to perform the great sacrifice which is called the Rajasúya. Having brought all his passions under the most perfect control, Raja Yudhishtira ordered every debt which any of his subjects owed to be paid out of the public treasury; but there were few debtors in that Raj, for all the people were ever engaged in virtuous and pious acts, and they rejoiced when they heard that the Raja was about to perform a Rajasúya. Then the Raja called together a Council of his brethren; and the Bráhmans, and his preceptor Dhaumya, and the sage Vyása were also present; and he told the Council what he intended to do, and they all consented and rejoiced exceedingly. But still Raja Yudhishtira was distrustful of himself, and he would not commence the sacrifice without taking the counsel of Krishna; and he sent messengers to Dwáraká to invite Krishna to come to Indra-prastha. And Krishna came to Indra-prastha, and said:—"There remains one Raja to be conquered before you can perform the Rajasúya sacrifice, and that is Jarásandha the Raja of Magadhá." And Krishna and Arjuna and Bhíma disguised themselves as Bráhmans, and journeyed to the city of Magadhá, and Bhíma challenged Jarásandha to single combat; and Jarásandha came out and fought against Bhíma, and after much fighting he was defeated and slain. Then the three returned to Indra-prastha, and Krishna advised Yudhishtira how the Raja-



súya should be performed. And Yudhishtira commanded his four brethren to go and collect tribute for the performance of the sacrifice from all the Rajas in the world, as was necessary in a Rajasúya; and he sent Arjuna to the north, Bhíma to the east, Sahadeva to the south, and Nakula to the west, and they went abroad for a whole year.⁵

When the year was fully over the four brethren returned to Indra-prastha, and all the friends of Yudhishtira counselled him not to lose the opportunity of performing the Rajasúya. Krishna, who had returned to Dwáraká, came again to Indra-prastha with immense wealth and a large army; for as the walls protect the house so Krishna protected the Pándavas; and every man rejoiced to behold Krishna, as men rejoice to behold the rising sun. Then Raja Yudhishtira again spoke to Krishna about the Rajasúya; and Krishna said:—"You are now a great Raja, and it is proper for you to perform the Rajasúya, and I shall rejoice to assist you, and will do whatever you command." Yudhishtira replied:—"Your presence alone is a sufficient guarantee for the success of my Rajasúya."

The whole of the foregoing narrative is evidently a myth of the Brahmanical compilers who sought to promulgate the worship of Krishna. The mythical wanderings of the four brothers to the four quarters of the earth, where they waged supernatural wars, and whence they brought away supernatural quantities of gifts and tribute, are wholly unworthy of notice.⁶ The mythical conquest of Jarásandha, Raja of Magadhá, calls, however, for some remark. In the traditional life of Krishna, that hero is represented as a cowherd of the Yádava tribe, who rebelled against the Raja of Mathura, and put him

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Yudhishtira commands his four brethren to collect tribute from the four quarters of the world.

Return of the four brethren.

Krishna again advises Yudhishtira to celebrate the Rajasúya.

Mythical character of the foregoing narrative.

Wars of the four brethren in the four quarters of the earth all mythical.

Conquest of Jarásandha, Raja of Magadhá, a myth appertaining to the life of Krishna.

⁵ The Brahmanical compilers seem to have considered that Yudhishtira would be rather dull during the absence of his brothers. Accordingly, the mythical Vyása was introduced, who spent the entire year in imparting lessons of morality to Yudhishtira.

⁶ The details may perhaps be found useful hereafter, as exhibiting the extent of geographical knowledge possessed by the Hindús in comparatively modern times.



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to death. Subsequently, however, Krishna was defeated by Jarásandha and compelled to migrate with all his tribe from the city of Mathura to that of Dwáraká. Accordingly, in associating the tradition of Krishna with that of the Pándavas, the Brahmanical compilers ignore the vast geographical interval between Magadhá, the modern province of Bahar, and the city of Hastinápur, and represent Krishna as directing the attention of Yudhishthira to Jarásandha, as a Raja who must be conquered before the Rajasúya could be performed. The story of the conquest of Jarásandha by Krishna, Arjuna, and Bhíma, is related at great length in the Mahá Bhá-rata, but the details are of a purely fabulous character.⁷

(2.) The sacrifice
and feast.

The second section of the legend, comprising a description of the sacrifice and feast, is far more significant than the story of the preliminary conquests, although characterized by the same extravagant exaggerations. The legend, as it appears in the Mahá Bhá-rata, may be related as follows :—

⁷ The barest outline of the myth will be sufficient to satisfy the most credulous reader. Bhíma, Krishna, and Arjuna go out single-handed to fight Jarásandha. On reaching the city of Magadhá, Krishna taunts Jarásandha with having shut up twenty thousand Rajas for the purpose of sacrificing them to the god Siva; a taunt which seems to indicate the opposition of the worshippers of Vishnu to the worshippers of Siva; Krishna being an incarnation of Vishnu. Bhíma then challenges Jarásandha to battle, and they fight together for fourteen days without stopping; and, moreover, without any interference, although all the people of Jarásandha, and all his army, were looking on. The battle terminates in a supernatural climax. It seems that Jarásandha, by the favour of a Rishi, had been born in two halves from the two wives of a Raja; and these two halves were supernaturally united after birth. On the fourteenth day of the battle Bhíma carried out the trick which he had practised against the Asuras, of whirling Jarásandha round by the heels, and dashing out his brains against the ground, and then rending him into his original halves! Such is a very curtailed specimen of the lengthened myths which are to be found in the Mahá Bhá-rata, and which are almost as useless for the purposes of history as the dreams of a mad-man.



Now when all things had been made ready for the Rajasúya, all the Rajas came to the place of sacrifice, bringing much wealth with them; and those who were friends to Raja Yudhishtira brought great presents, and those who had been conquered brought much tribute. And all the kinsmen of the Pándavas came in like manner to the Rajasúya. Duryodhana and all the Kauravas were there, together with the Mahárajá, and Bhíshma, and Drona, and Drupada, the father of Draupadí, and Sisupála, the Raja of Chedí, and Krishna, and his brother Balaráma, and his father Vasudeva. And all the Rajas of the Middle Country, and all the Rajas of the South Country, came in like manner to the Rajasúya; and altogether there were so many Rajas that their names cannot be recounted.

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Assembling of
the Rajas to the
Rajasúya.

Rajas of the
Middle and
South Coun-
tries.

And every Raja had a lodging or pavilion of his own, in which provisions of every variety were served up in great abundance. And these pavilions were all very lofty, and of a pure white colour inlaid with gold; and round about each pavilion were very many beautiful trees, and round about the trees was a lofty wall covered with garlands of flowers. And the windows in those pavilions were made of golden network, and the doors to the rooms were made of solid gold, and the walls of the rooms were made of gold and silver. And all the rooms were laid with rich carpets, and decorated with furniture fitted for a Raja, and perfumed with sandal wood and incense. And the stairs leading to the upper rooms were so made, that no man found it difficult to go up or down. And the moment a man entered one of these rooms he was sure to be refreshed were he ever so weary. And the Rajas beheld the sacrifice while they were seated in those rooms.

Magnificent pa-
vilions appoint-
ed for the re-
ception of the
Rajas.

And Raja Yudhishtira commanded that all the Bráhmans and Kshatriyas, and all the respectable Vaisyas and Súdras, should be invited to attend the Rajasúya. And all the Rajas came and took up their abode in the pavilions; and all the Bráhmans who were to assist at the sacrifice came in like manner, and were entertained as splendidly as the Rajas. And all the four castes came as they had been invited. And the whole city of Indra-prastha resounded

Assembling of
all the four
castes.



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Place of sacrifice.

Vyása, the chief of the sacrifice.

Sasarman, the leader of the choir of Bráhmans.

Dhaumya and Yajna-walkya, the sacred cooks.

Choir of young Bráhmans.

The great feast.

Distribution of food and gifts.

Mythical respect shown to the Bráhmans.

Exaggerations in the description of the sacrifice and feast.

with the chaunting of Vedic hymns, and "Take and eat" were the only words that could be heard.

Meanwhile the place of sacrifice was made ready, and it was surrounded on all sides by the pavilions of the Rajas and the Bráhmans, and by very many storehouses and treasuries; and it surpassed in richness and beauty every place of sacrifice which had ever been seen before. And

the sage Vyása was chief of the sacrifice, and appointed everything that was to be done; and he brought some very learned sages to attend the great ceremony. And Sasarman

was appointed to be Udgátri, or chief chaunter of the Vedic hymns. And Dhaumya and Yajna-walkya were the Hotris, who cooked the sacrifice, and offered it to the gods; and

their sons and pupils were the Brithis, or assistant Hotris, who chaunted the mantras whilst the sacrifice was being presented to the fire. Then Raja Yudhishtira, bowing down to his uncle Dhritaráshtira, asked the permission of Bhíshma, Drona, Duryodhana, and the rest, that he might begin the ceremony, saying:—"You have full control over my property and Raj, so do what is best for me: All of you must assist me in this undertaking, and each one must accept a separate charge." Then Bhíshma and Drona

directed the feast, and gave their counsel as to what was to be done, and what was to be omitted. Duryodhana was made the general superintendent in giving and receiving presents. Duhsásana superintended the distribution of the food; and Sahadeva took charge of all the choicer provisions; and two of the most faithful servants of Arjuna distributed the rice, the butter, the sugar, the milk, and the sandal wood. Aswattháma, the son of Drona, and Sanjaya, the minister and charioteer of Dhritaráshtira, waited upon

the Bráhmans; Kripa gave the gifts to the Bráhmans; and Krishna was appointed to wash the feet of the Bráhmans; and the gifts that were given to the Bráhmans were beyond all computation.

The extravagant exaggerations which appear in the foregoing narrative are somewhat distracting, but yet it may be possible to draw an approximate



picture of the events which actually transpired. The scene which probably presented itself to the eye at the Rajasúya, was a barbarous sacrifice followed by a rude feast in the open air. The ceremonies performed at the sacrifice are not clearly related in the Mahá Bhárata, but were probably in accordance with those which find expression in the Rig-Veda. A number of priests, either Bráhmans, or the predecessors of Bráhmans, marked out the spot for sacrifice, and strewed the place with the sacred kusa grass, and kindled the sacrificial fire, singing the old incantations which had been handed down to them by their fathers from times primeval. They next presented the Homa in sacrificial ladles, and poured it upon the flame with much chaunting of Vedic hymns, and performance of mystic rites; and doubtless they invoked Agni, the deity of fire, to lick up their simple oblations, and carry them in the ascending flame to the bright gods on high. Then animals may have been sacrificed, and their flesh cooked upon the fire, whilst vast quantities of other food were prepared, partly as offerings to the gods, and partly as provisions for the assembly. But before the worshippers sat down to the feast, the deities of the Vedas, with Indra at their head, would be invoked in passionate strains to descend from their resplendent abodes, and to come and sit down upon the sacred grass, and partake of the choice viands which had been prepared for their acceptance; and especially to drink up the milk, the curds, the ghee, the sugar, and the grateful and exhilarating juice of the soma.

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Probable picture of the real scene.
Probable character of the sacrificial rites.

The place of sacrifice strewed with Kusa grass.

The sacrificial fire.

Presentation of the Homa.

Invocations to Agni.

Nature of the sacrifices.

Invocations to Indra and all the gods to descend and partake of the offerings.

The so-called Rajas who really attended the Rajasúya were in all probability a rude company of

Probable character of the Rajas who were present at the Rajasúya.

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Topics of conversation.

half-naked warriors, who feasted boisterously beneath the shade of trees. Their conversation was very likely confined to their domestic relations, such as the state of their health, the condition of their families, the exploits of their sons, and the marriages of their daughters; or to their domestic circumstances, such as herds of cattle, harvests of grain, and feats of arms against robbers and wild beasts. Their highest ideas were probably simple conceptions of the gods who sent light, heat, and rain; who gave long life, abundance of children, prolific cattle, and brimming harvests, and who occasionally manifested their wrath in lightning and thunder, in devastating tempests and destroying floods. Such, in all probability, was the general character of the festive multitude who sat down upon the grass at the great feast to eat and drink vigorously to the honour and glory of the new Raja.

Reasons why the authentic tradition is lost in mythical exaggerations.

The Mahá Bhá-rata composed in an age of Brahmanical ascendancy.

Contemporary splendour of the courts of the Rajas.

But the simple details of such a primitive gathering, grateful as they would have proved to a student of human nature, could scarcely have satisfied the aspirations of the later Brahmanical bards, or the pre-conceived ideas of the audiences before whom they recited the ancient story. The age when the Mahá Bhá-rata assumed its present form was a period of Brahmanical ascendancy. The divinity of the Bráhmaṇ caste was powerfully enforced and implicitly believed; and those ancient sages who had rendered themselves famous by their wisdom and fabled austerities, were revered as gods. At the same time the Courts of the Hindú Rajas who acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Brahmanical hierarchy, were a blaze of Oriental splendour and luxury. The Rajas themselves never appeared before their subjects, unless arrayed in royal vest-



ments of cloth of gold and colours, adorned with a profusion of jewels, and surrounded on all sides by the glittering insignia of Hindú royalty. In other words, an age of ecclesiastical power and regal magnificence had succeeded to the simple patriarchal rule which prevailed in the Vedic period. Under such circumstances as these, the bards and eulogists, who chaunted the ancient story before the later Rajas, could scarcely have related the primitive details of olden time in which Princesses milked the cows, and Princes tilled the land. On the other hand, every exaggeration and embellishment which was introduced would add to the attraction of the legend, for they would redound to the greatness and grandeur of the Hindú heroes of olden time, the fathers of the very men who were drinking in the story. The temptations which led the Brahmanical compilers to exalt their ancient sages in the eyes of a later generation were even stronger; for the fabled respect paid to the sages by the ancient Rajas furnished bright examples for later Rajas to follow; and certainly the assertion that Krishna washed the feet of the Bráhmans is the highest glorification which could be conceived by the Hindús.

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The early tradition remodelled to suit the tastes and ideas of a later period.

The Brahmanical compilers tempted by self-interest to exaggerate the respect paid to the ancient sages.

Significance of the assertion that Krishna washed the feet of the Bráhmans.

The death of Sisupála, which forms a third section of the legend of the Rajasúya, belongs to one of that series of traditions respecting Krishna which are so frequently found interlaced with the history of the Pándavas. The tradition is apparently authentic in itself, and only demands consideration because it seems to have been grafted on another authentic tradition with which it has no real connection. The story is as follows :—

(3.) The death of Sisupála an authentic tradition belonging to the Krishna group, but grafted on to the history of the Pándavas.

Legend of the presentation of the Argha to the greatest Chieftain present at a Rajasúya.

Now the custom was at the beginning of a Rajasúya to



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The Argha given
to Krishna.

Wrath of Sisupála.

General uproar.

Threat of Sisupála that he
would spoil the
sacrifice.

Sisupála be-
headed by the
chakra of
Krishna.

Rajasúya of
Yudhishtira
saved by
Krishna.

Point of the fore-
going legend;
the presentation
of the Argha to
Krishna.

declare who was the greatest and strongest of all the Rajas there assembled, in order that the Argha might be given to him; and Bhíshma, as ruler of the feast, declared that the honour was due to Krishna, who was the greatest and strongest of them all. But Sisupála, the Raja of Chedi, was exceedingly wroth with Krishna, for when he was betrothed to the beautiful Rukmini, Krishna had carried her away and made her his own wife. So Sisupála arose and threw the whole assembly into an uproar, and he said with a loud voice:—"If the honour be due to age, it should have been given to Vasudeva; if it be due to him who has the greatest Raj, it should have been given to Raja Drupada; if it be due to the youth of loftiest mind, it should have been given to Raja Duryodhana; if it be due to the greatest preceptor, it should have been given to Drona; and if it be due to the greatest saint, it should have been given to Vyása: But shame be upon this assembly, who hath given that honour to a cowherd, who was the murderer of his own Raja." Having thus spoken, Sisupála and his friends who were with him made a great tumult. Yudhishtira and Bhíshma then reasoned with Sisupála, but he would not heed their words, and drew his sword, and threatened to slay all the guests and spoil the sacrifice. Yudhishtira and his brethren then rose to fight against Sisupála, but Bhíshma withheld them; and Sisupála in his rage abused Bhíshma and Krishna in such opprobrious terms that the whole assembly were alarmed. At last Krishna said:—"I have hitherto restrained my hand, because this man is my own kinsman, but I can bear with his words no longer." And thus speaking he whirled his chakra furiously at Sisupála, and severed his head from his body; and Sisupála fell dead upon the ground, and his sons carried away his body and burnt it upon the funeral pile. Thus Krishna saved the Rajasúya of Yudhishtira by the slaughter of Sisupála; for had Raja Yudhishtira been set at defiance by a Raja who had not been conquered, the Rajasúya would have been imperfect and of no avail.

The foregoing story turns upon the presentation



of the Argha to the greatest Chieftain present at the Rajasúya; the Argha being a respectful gift, such as fruit and flowers, or milk and honey, which the Hindús are still accustomed to offer to an idol, or to a Bráhmaṇ, or to a bridegroom on his wedding day. The legend is at variance with the mythic account of the pavilions from which the Rajas are said to have beheld the sacrifice; but this contradiction cannot be said to prove anything, as it is derived from a mythical source. A stronger suspicion arises from the fact that the story is perfectly in accordance with the traditionary accounts of the assemblies of the Yádavas, but has no parallel in the traditionary accounts of the councils of the Kshatriyas of the royal house of Bhárata, which indeed are generally characterized by an observance of order and law. Then again no trace of such custom, as that of presenting the Argha to the most distinguished Chieftain at such an assembly, appears in the ancient ritual of the Rajasúya, as preserved in the Aitareya Brahmanam. On the contrary, the Rajasúya was a ceremony expressive of the superiority of the Raja who performed the sacrifice; whilst the custom of offering the Argha as a token of respect or act of worship belonged to the Buddhist period, and was essentially a form of worship antagonistic to that of sacrifice. That Sisupála was killed at some festival of the Yádavas is by no means unlikely, and more than one such tragedy will be noticed hereafter in the traditionary history of Krishna; and the only question that remains is the reason why the Brahmanical compilers grafted such a barbarous incident upon the traditions of the Kshatriyas.

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Nature of the
Argha.

Discrepancy between the legend of the Argha and the mythic account of the pavilions.

Conformity of the story to the traditions referring to Krishna, but not to the traditions referring to the descendants of Bhárata.

Presentation of the Argha not to be found in the ancient ritual of the Rajasúya.

The Argha attributed to the Buddhist period.

Reason why the Yádava tradition of the death of Sisupála is grafted on to the Kshatriya tradition.

The legend, a religious myth, representing the opposition of Vishnu to Śiva, and enforcing the worship of Krishna as an incarnation of Vishnu.

The whole legend, however, as it appears in the



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Mahá Bhárata, is leavened with references to the divine nature of Krishna, as an incarnation of Vishnu; whilst Sisupála is said to have been born with three eyes, a fable which at once converts him into a representative or incarnation of Siva. For a long period the opposition of the worship of Vishnu to the worship of Siva desolated India with persecutions and civil wars; and the ancient legend has been converted into a myth to indicate both the opposition of the two deities, and the superior might of Vishnu. The Argha was a token of worship. By denouncing the presentation of the Argha to Krishna, Sisupála virtually denounced the worship of Vishnu; and his extraordinary death is thus treated as a manifestation of the divine wrath of Krishna, as an incarnation of Vishnu, of whom the chakra is a distinguished symbol.⁸

The chakra of Krishna an emblem of the wrath of Vishnu.

(4.) Jealous wrath of Duryodhana.

The jealous wrath of Duryodhana forms the conclusion of the story of the Rajasúya; but whilst the envy of the Kaurava Chieftain at beholding the success of his rival kinsmen is perfectly intelligible, his anger is said to have been excited by circumstances which can only be regarded as fictions of a later age. This conclusion will at once be obvious from the story, which is as follows:—

Duryodhana's surprise at the marvels at Indra-prastha.

Mistakes a square of crystal for real water.

When the sacrifice had been fully accomplished, Duryodhana entered the place where it had been performed, and saw very many beautiful things that he had never beheld in his own Raj at Hastinápúr. Amongst other wonders was a

⁸ The chakra, or sharp-edged quoit, was the peculiar weapon of Vishnu, and is invariably placed in one of his four hands. At a subsequent period the chakra was converted into the prayer-wheel of the Buddhists. The subject however belongs more directly to the history of the religion of the Hindús, under which head it will be considered in a future volume.



square made of black crystal, which appeared to the eye of Duryodhana to be clear water; and as he stood on the margin he began to draw up his garments lest they should be wetted, and then throwing them off he plunged in to bathe, and was struck violently on the head against the crystal. Then he was very much ashamed and left that place immediately; and coming to a lake of clear water, he thought it was black crystal and boldly walked into it, and would have been drowned had he not been dragged out by the servants of Raja Yudhishtira. Then the servants brought him new clothes, and he walked very warily; and the four brethren of Yudhishtira saw him, and began to laugh at his walking. Duryodhana was then very wroth, but he would not look at them, and he said nothing to them, and he sought to come away from that place; and it so happened that he tried to go out at a false door, and struck his head very violently in trying to pass quickly through it. After this he found his way out of the palace and returned to the city of Hastinápura, and told his father, the Mahárajá, all that had occurred.

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Mistakes a lake
of clear water
for one of
crystal.

Excites the
mirth of the
Pándavas.

Strikes his head
against a false
door.

It is somewhat singular that the foregoing story is not only a fiction of a later age, but seems to have been borrowed from the Mussulmans. A legend is preserved in the Koran that when the Queen of Sheba paid a visit to Solomon, she was conducted by the Hebrew King into a room floored with glass, upon which she thought that the glass was water and lifted up her robe.⁹ That the early colonists at Indra-prastha should have arrived at such a high pitch of art as the story would seem to imply ap-

The foregoing
fiction borrowed
from the Koran
of the Mussul-
mans.

⁹ Koran, chap. xxvii. *Sale's translation.* According to Arab commentators the legs of the Queen of Sheba were covered with hair like those of an ass; and Solomon was anxious to prove the fact by ocular demonstration. Subsequently the Queen is said to have renounced idolatry, and to have professed Islam; and Solomon thought of marrying her, but would not do so until the hair had been removed. See *Sale's notes on the passage.*



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Possibility of
the legend ori-
ginating from
an independent
source.

pears wholly incredible ; but that the unscrupulous compilers should have borrowed the idea from the early Mussulmans is by no means unlikely ; although it is possible that the fable might naturally arise in the mind of any imaginative people on first beholding a commodity like glass, which bears so strong a resemblance to solid water.



CHAPTER VII.

THE GAMBLING MATCH AT HASTINÁPUR.

THE celebration of the Rajasúya had raised the fortunes of the Pándavas to the height of human prosperity; and at this point the universal conception of an avenging Nemesis, that humbles the proud and casts down the mighty, finds full expression in the Hindú Epic. The grandeur of the Rajasúya, and the sovereignty which it involved, excited the jealousy of Duryodhana, and revived the old feud between the Kauravas and Pándavas. Duryodhana plotted with his brother Duhsásana and his uncle Sákuni, how they might dispossess the Pándavas of their newly acquired territory; and at length they determined to invite their kinsmen to a gambling match, and seek by underhand means to deprive Yudhishthira of his Raj.

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The avenging
Nemesis.

Duryodhana,
jealous of the
Rajasúya, plots
to dispossess the
Pándavas of
their new Raj.

Proposal to in-
vite the Pándava-
vas to a gamb-
ling match.

The specialities of Hindú gambling are worthy of some attention. The passion for play, which has ever been the vice of warriors in times of peace, becomes a madness amidst the lassitude of a tropical clime; and more than one Hindú legend has been preserved of Rajas playing together for days, until the wretched loser has been deprived of everything he possessed and reduced to the condition of an exile or a slave. But gambling amongst the Hindús does

Gambling the
special vice of
the Kshatriyas.

Hindú tradi-
tions of its dis-
astrous results.

Specialities of
Hindú dice:
skill as well as
chance brought
into play.



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Ancient game of
coupun with
cubic dice.

Modern game of
pasha with ob-
long dice.

not appear to have been altogether dependent upon chance. The ancient Hindú dice, known by the name of coupun, are almost precisely similar to the modern dice, being cubic balls thrown out of a box; but the practice of loading is plainly alluded to, and some skill seems to have been occasionally exercised in the rattling of the dice box. In the more modern game, known by the name of pasha, the dice are not cubic, but oblong; and they are thrown from the hand, either direct upon the ground, or against a post or board, which will break the fall, and render the result more a matter of chance. It would, however, appear from the Mahá Bhárata that Yudhishthira was invited to a game at coupun.

The legend of the great gambling match at Hastinápur may now be related as follows:—

Legendary ac-
count of the
gambling match
at Hastinápur.

Unscrupulous
skill of Sakuni,
the maternal
uncle of Dur-
yodhana.

And it came to pass that Duryodhana was very jealous of the Rajasúya that his cousin Yudhishthira had performed; and he desired in his heart to destroy the Pándavas and gain possession of their Raj. Now Sakuni was the brother of Gándhári, who was the mother of the Kauravas; and he was very skilful in throwing dice, and in playing with dice that were loaded; insomuch that whenever he played he always won the game. So Duryodhana plotted with his uncle, that Yndhishthira should be invited to a match at gambling, and that Sakuni should challenge him to a game, and win all his wealth and lands.

Duryodhana
prevails on the
Mahárajá to in-
vite the Pándá-
vas to a gamb-
ling match.

Vidura carries
the invitation to
Indra-prastha.

After this the wicked Duryodhana proposed to his father, the Mahárajá, that they should have a great gambling match at Hastinápur, and that Yudhishthira and his brethren should be invited to the festival. And the Mahárajá was glad in his heart that his sons should be friendly with the sons of his deceased brother Pándu; and he sent his younger brother, Vidura, to the city of Indra-prastha to invite the Pándavas to the game. And Vidura went his way to the city of the Pándavas, and was received by them with every



sign of attention and respect. And Yudhishtira inquired whether his kinsfolk and friends at Hastinapur were all well in health, and Vidura replied, "They are all well." Then Vidura said to the Pándavas :—"Your uncle, the Mahárajá, is about to give a great feast, and he has sent me to invite you and your mother, and your joint wife, to come to his city, and there will be a great match at dice-playing." When Yudhishtira heard these words, he was troubled in mind, for he knew that gaming was a frequent cause of strife, and that he was in no way skilful in throwing the dice; and he likewise knew that Sakuni was dwelling at Hastinapur, and that he was a famous gambler. But Yudhishtira remembered that the invitation of the Mahárajá was equal to the command of a father, and that no true Kshatriya could refuse a challenge either to war or play. So Yudhishtira accepted the invitation, and gave commandment that on the appointed day, his brethren, and their mother, and their joint wife should accompany him to the city of Hastinapur.

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Reluctance of
Yudhishtira.

His obligation
to obey the
Mahárajá and
accept a chal-
lenge.

When the day arrived for the departure of the Pándavas, they took their mother Kuntí, and their joint wife Draupadí, and journeyed from Indra-prastha to the city of Hastinapur.

The Pándavas
proceed to Has-
tinapur with
Kuntí and
Draupadí.

And when they entered the city they first paid a visit of respect to the Mahárajá; and they found him sitting amongst his Chieftains; and the ancient Bhíshma, and the preceptor Drona, and Karna, who was the friend of Duryodhana, and many others were sitting there also. And when the Pándavas had done reverence to the Mahárajá, and respectfully saluted all present, they paid a visit to their aunt Gándhári, and did her reverence likewise. And after they had done this, their mother and joint wife entered the presence of Gándhári, and respectfully saluted her; and the wives of the Kauravas came in and were made known to Kuntí and Draupadí. And the wives of the Kauravas were much surprised when they beheld the beauty and fine raiment of Draupadí; and they were very jealous of their kinswoman.

Pay visits of
ceremony to
Mahárajá Dhri-
taráshtra and
the Ráni Gánd-
hári.

Jealousy of the
wives of the
Kauravas at the
beauty and ele-
gance of Drau-
padí.

And when all their visits had been paid, the Pándavas retired with their wife and mother to the quarters which had been prepared for them, and when it was evening they

The Pándavas
return to their
quarters and re-
ceive the visits
of their friends.



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received the visits of all their friends who were dwelling at Hastinápur.

Morning of the
gambling match.

The Pándavas
conducted to
the pavilion.

Sakuni chal-
lenges Yudhis-
thira to a game
at dice.

Yudhishtira
requires that
Sakuni should
play fair.

Taunt of Sakuni.

Yudhishtira in
his wrath ac-
cepts the chal-
lenge.

Duryodhana
proposes to lay
the stakes
whilst Sakuni
plays.

Yudhishtira
protests, but
plays.

Picture of the
gambling scene
in the pavilion.

Now on the morrow the gambling match was to be played; so when the morning had come, the Pándavas bathed and dressed, and left Draupadí in the lodging which had been prepared for her, and went their way to the palace. And the Pándavas again paid their respects to their uncle the Mahárajá, and were then conducted to the pavilion where the play was to be; and Duryodhana went with them, together with all his brethren, and all the Chieftains of the royal house. And when the assembly had all taken their seats, Sakuni said to Yudhishtira:—"The ground here has all been prepared, and the dice are all ready: Come now, I pray you, and play a game." But Yudhishtira was disinclined, and replied:—"I will not play excepting upon fair terms; but if you will pledge yourself to throw without artifice or deceit, I will accept your challenge." Sakuni said:—"If you are so fearful of losing, you had better not play at all." At these words Yudhishtira was wroth, and replied:—"I have no fear either in play or war; but let me know with whom I am to play, and who is to pay me if I win." So Duryodhana came forward and said:—"I am the man with whom you are to play, and I shall lay any stakes against your stakes; but my uncle Sakuni will throw the dice for me." Then Yudhishtira said:—"What manner of game is this, where one man throws and another lays the stakes?" Nevertheless he accepted the challenge, and he and Sakuni began to play.

At this point in the narrative it may be desirable to pause, and endeavour to obtain a picture of the scene. The so-called pavilion was probably a temporary booth constructed of bamboos and interlaced with basket-work; and very likely it was decorated with flowers and leaves after the Hindú fashion, and hung with fruits, such as cocoa-nuts, mangoes, plantains, and maize. The Chieftains present seem to have sat upon the ground, and watched the game.



The stakes may have been pieces of gold or silver, or cattle, or lands; although, according to the legendary account which follows, they included articles of a far more extravagant and imaginative character. With these passing remarks, the tradition of this memorable game may be resumed as follows:—

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So Yudhishthira and Sakuni sat down to play, and whatever Yudhishthira laid as stakes, Duryodhana laid something of equal value; but Yudhishthira lost every game. He first lost a very beautiful pearl; next a thousand bags, each containing a thousand pieces of gold; next a piece of gold so pure that it was as soft as wax; next a chariot set with jewels, and hung all round with golden bells; next a thousand war elephants with golden howdahs set with diamonds; next a lakh of slaves all dressed in good garments; next a lakh of beautiful slave girls, adorned from head to foot with golden ornaments; next all the remainder of his goods; next all his cattle; and then the whole of his Raj, excepting only the lands which had been granted to the Brāhmans.¹

The succession
of games.

Mythical losses
of Yudhishthira.

Loses the whole
of his Raj, ex-
cepting the jag-
heers of the
Brāhmans.

Now when Yudhishthira had lost his Raj, the Chieftains present in the pavilion were of opinion that he should cease to play, but he would not listen to their words, but persisted in the game. And he staked all the jewels belonging to his brothers, and he lost them; and he staked his two younger brothers, one after the other, and he lost them; and he then staked Arjuna, and Bhīma, and finally himself, and he lost every game. Then Sakuni said to him:—
“You have done a bad act, Yudhishthira, in gaming away

Stakes his
brothers as
slaves, and loses
them.

Stakes himself,
and loses.

¹ A lakh is a hundred thousand, and a crore is a hundred lakhs, or ten millions. The Hindú term might therefore have been converted into English numerals, only that it does not seem certain that the bards meant precisely a hundred thousand slaves, but only a very large number.

The exceptional clause in favour of the Brāhmans is very significant. When the little settlement at Indra-prastha had been swelled by the imagination of the later bards into an extensive Raj, the thought may have entered the minds of the Brahmanical compilers that in losing the Raj, the Brāhmans might have lost those free lands, known as inams or jagheers, which are frequently granted by pious Rajas for the subsistence of Brāhmans. Hence the insertion of the clause.

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Stakes Draupadi.
Agitation of the
elder Chieftains,
and joy of the
Kauravas.

Yudhishtira
loses.

General con-
sternation.

Duryodhana
sends for Draupadi to sweep
the rooms.

Vidura protests,
and urges that
Draupadi was
not lost, as Yudhishtira was a
slave when he
staked her.

Duryodhana
sends his ser-
vant to bring
Draupadi to the
pavilion.

yourself, and becoming a slave : But now stake your wife Draupadí, and if you win the game you will again be free."

And Yudhishtira answered and said:—"I will stake Draupadí!" And all assembled were greatly troubled and thought evil of Yudhishtira; and his uncle Vidura put his hand to his head and fainted away, whilst Bhíshma and Drona turned deadly pale, and many of the company were very sorrowful; but Duryodhana and his brother Duhsásana, and some others of the Kauravas, were glad in their hearts, and plainly manifested their joy. Then Sakuni threw the dice, and won Draupadí for Duryodhana.

Then all in that assembly were in great consternation, and the Chieftains gazed upon one another without speaking a word. And Duryodhana said to his uncle Vidura:—"Go now and bring Draupadí hither, and bid her sweep the rooms." But Vidura cried out against him with a loud voice, and said:—"What wickedness is this? Will you order a woman who is of noble birth, and the wife of your own kinsman, to become a household slave? How can you vex your brethren thus? But Draupadí has not become your slave; for Yudhishtira lost himself before he staked his wife, and having first become a slave, he could no longer have power to stake Draupadí." Vidura then turned to the assembly and said:—"Take no heed to the words of Duryodhana, for he has lost his senses this day." Duryodhana then said:—"A curse be upon this Vidura, who will do nothing that I desire him."

After this Duryodhana called one of his servants, and desired him to go to the lodgings of the Pándavas, and bring Draupadí into the pavilion. And the man departed out, and went to the lodgings of the Pándavas, and entered the presence of Draupadí, and said to her:—"Raja Yudhishtira has played you away, and you have become the slave of Raja Duryodhana: So come now and do your duty like his other slave girls." And Draupadí was astonished at these words, and exceedingly wroth, and she replied:—"Whose slave was I that I could be gambled away? And who is such a senseless fool as to gamble away his own wife?"



The servant said :—“ Raja Yudhishtira has lost himself, and his four brothers, and you also, to Raja Duryodhana, and you cannot make any objection : Arise, therefore, and go to the house of the Raja ! ” Then Draupadī cried out : —“ Go you now and inquire whether Raja Yudhishtira lost me first or himself first ; for if he played away himself first, he could not stake me.” So the man returned to the assembly, and put the question to Yudhishtira ; but Yudhishtira hung down his head with shame, and answered not a word.

Draupadī refuses to go.

Then Duryodhana was filled with wrath, and he cried out to his servant :—“ What waste of words is this ? Go you and bring Draupadī hither, that if she has aught to say, she may say it in the presence of us all.” And the man essayed to go, but he beheld the wrathful countenance of Bhīma, and he was sore afraid, and he refused to go, and remained where he was. Then Duryodhana sent his brother Duhsāsana ; and Duhsāsana went his way to the lodgings of Draupadī and said :—“ Raja Yudhishtira has lost you in play to Raja Duryodhana, and he has sent for you : So arise now, and wait upon him according to his commands ; and if you have anything to say, you can say it in the presence of the assembly.” Draupadī replied :—“ The death of the Kauravas is not far distant, since they can do such deeds as these.” And she rose up in great trepidation and set out, but when she came near to the palace of the Mahārāja, she turned aside from the pavilion where the Chieftains were assembled, and ran away with all speed towards the apartments of the women. And Duhsāsana hastened after her, and seized her by her hair, which was very dark and long, and dragged her by main force into the pavilion before all the Chieftains. And she cried out :—“ Take your hands from off me ! ” But Duhsāsana heeded not her words, and said :—“ You are now a slave girl, and slave girls cannot complain of being touched by the hands of men.”

Duryodhana sends his servant a second time.

The servant refuses to go. Duhsāsana goes to bring Draupadī.

Duhsāsana drags Draupadī into the pavilion by her hair.

When the Chieftains thus beheld Draupadī, they hung down their heads from shame ; and Draupadī called upon the elders amongst them, such as Bhīshma and Drona, to

The elder Chieftains paralyzed. Draupadī vainly appeals to Bhīshma and Drona.



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The Pándavas
forbidden by
Yudhishthira to
interfere.

Duhsásana in-
sults Draupadí
before all the
assembly.

Draupadí's
solemn appeal
to the Chief-
tains.

Gross outrages
committed by
Duhsásana
and Duryod-
hana.

Bhíma's fearful
vow.

Sudden appear-
ance of the
Mahárája in the
pavilion.

The Mahárája
apologizes to
Draupadí, and
bids her return
with her hus-
bands to Indra-
prastha.

acquaint her whether or no Raja Yudhishthira had gamed away himself before he had staked her; but they likewise held down their heads and answered not a word. Then she cast her eye upon the Pándavas, and her glance was like the stabbing of a thousand daggers, but they moved not hand or foot to help her; for when Bhíma would have stepped forward to deliver her from the hands of Duhsásana, Yudhishthira commanded him to forbear, and both he and the younger Pándavas were obliged to obey the commands of their elder brother. And when Duhsásana saw that Draupadí looked towards the Pándavas, he took her by the hand, and drew her another way, saying:—"Why, O slave, are you turning your eyes about you?" And when Karna and Sakuni heard Duhsásana calling her a slave, they cried out:—"Well said! well said!"

Then Draupadí wept very bitterly, and appealed to all the assembly, saying:—"All of you have wives and children of your own, and will you permit me to be treated thus? I ask you one question, and I pray you to answer it." Duhsásana then broke in and spoke foul language to her, and used her rudely, so that her veil came off in his hands. And Bhíma could restrain his wrath no longer, and spoke vehemently to Yudhishthira; and Arjuna reproved him for his anger against his elder brother, but Bhíma answered:—"I will thrust my hands into the fire before these wretches shall treat my wife in this manner before my eyes." Then Duryodhana said to Draupadí:—"Come now, I pray you, and sit upon my thigh!" And Bhíma gnashed his teeth, and cried out with a loud voice:—"Hear my vow this day! If for this deed I do not break the thigh of Duryodhana, and drink the blood of Duhsásana, I am not the son of Kuntí!"

Meanwhile the Chieftain Vidura had left the assembly, and told the blind Mahárája Dhritarashtra all that had taken place that day; and the Mahárája ordered his servants to lead him into the pavilion where all the Chieftains were gathered together. And all present were silent when they saw the Mahárája, and the Mahárája said to Draupadí:—"O daughter,



my sons have done evil to you this day : But go now, you and your husbands, to your own Raj, and remember not what has occurred, and let the memory of this day be blotted out for ever." So the Pándavas made haste with their wife Draupadí, and departed out of the city of Hastinápur.

Then Duryodhana was exceedingly wroth, and he said to his father :—"O Mahárajá, is it not a saying that when your enemy hath fallen down, he should be annihilated without a war? And now that we had thrown the Pándavas to the earth, and had taken possession of all their wealth, you have restored them all their strength, and permitted them to depart with anger in their hearts; and now they will prepare to make war that they may revenge themselves upon us for all that has been done, and they will return within a short while and slay us all : Give us leave then, I pray you, to play another game with these Pándavas, and let the side which loses go into exile for twelve years; for thus and thus only can a war be prevented between ourselves and the Pándavas." And the Mahárajá granted the request of his son, and messengers were sent to bring back the brethren; and the Pándavas obeyed the commands of their uncle, and returned to his presence; and it was agreed upon that Yudhishtira should play one game more with Sakuni, and that if Yudhishtira won, the Kauravas were to go into exile, and that if Sakuni won, the Pándavas were to go into exile; and the exile was to be for twelve years, and one year more; and during that thirteenth year those who were in exile were to dwell in any city they pleased, but to keep themselves so concealed that the others should never discover them; and if the others did discover them before the thirteenth year was over, then those who were in exile were to continue so for another thirteen years. So they sat down again to play, and Sakuni had a set of cheating dice as before, and with them he won the game.

Duryodhana
wrathfully re-
monstrates with
the Mahárajá.

Proposes the re-
call of the Pán-
davas, and set-
tlement of the
dispute by
another game.

Return of the
Pándavas.

The winners to
obtain the en-
tire Raj, and the
losers to go into
exile for twelve
years in a jungle
and one year in
a city.

Yudhishtira
loses the game.

When Duhsásana saw that Sakuni had won the game, he danced about for joy; and he cried out :—"Now is established the Raj of Duryodhana." But Bhíma said :—"Be not elated with joy, but remember my words : The day will come

Joy of Duhsá-
sana.

Wrath of Bhí-
ma.



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Kuntí remains
at Hastinápura.

Departure of
the Pándavas.

Draupadí's ter-
rible vow.

Affecting char-
acter of the fore-
going tradition
of the gambling
match.

Its truthfulness
to human
nature as mani-
fested by a
primitive but
high-spirited
race.

Wives not un-
frequently lost
and won at
Kshatriya
gambling
matches.

Draupadí evi-
dently familiar
with the idea.

when I will drink your blood, or I am not the son of Kuntí." And the Pándavas, seeing that they had lost, threw off their garments and put on deer-skins, and prepared to depart into the forest with their wife and mother, and their priest Dhaumya; but Vidura said to Yudhishtira :—"Your mother is old and unfitted to travel, so leave her under my care;" and the Pándavas did so. And the brethren went out from the assembly hanging down their heads with shame, and covering their faces with their garments; but Bhíma threw out his long arms and looked at the Kauravas furiously, and Draupadí spread her long black hair over her face and wept bitterly. And Draupadí vowed a vow, saying :—"My hair shall remain dishevelled from this day, until Bhíma shall have slain Duhsásana and drank his blood; and then he shall tie up my hair again whilst his hands are dripping with the blood of Duhsásana."

The foregoing tradition of the gambling match at Hastinápura is not perhaps so horrible as the fictions of Bhíma's encounters with the Asuras, but it appeals far more strongly to the feelings; and but for the depraved element involved in the idea of polyandry, would form one of the most attractive legends in the Mahá Bhárata. Throughout the narrative there is a truthfulness to human nature, and a truthfulness to that particular phase of human nature, which is prominently manifested by a high-minded race in its primitive stage of civilization. The real interest of the story begins from the moment that Draupadí was lost. As regards the truth of this incident there can be little doubt. Amongst the ancient Kshatriyas, where women were chiefly prized on sensual grounds, such stakes were evidently recognized. Draupadí herself, although shocked at the result, was by no means unfamiliar with the



idea.² She protested, not on any ground of sentiment or matrimonial obligation, but solely on a technical point of law; and even after she had been dragged by the hair into the pavilion, and when she appealed to the Chieftains, in consideration of their own wives and children, to protect her from outrage, she still only asked for an answer to her question:—"Had Yudhishthira become a slave before he staked his wife upon the last game?" As to the treatment which she subsequently received, it was simply an assertion of the right of ownership which Duryodhana claimed over the wife of his kinsmen.³

The most sensational scene in the narrative is the sudden appearance of the blind Mahārāja, at the critical moment when Draupadī had received the worst affront, and Bhīma had uttered his terrible vow of revenge. It is easy to conceive that, but for this event, swords would have been drawn, and the gambling pavilion would have been a scene of blood-

Sensational character of the scene in which the blind Mahārāja suddenly appears in the pavilion.

² European traditions of gambling are by no means free from scandals of a similar character, although they were invariably regarded as secret. There is a horrible story of a gambler playing away his wife in Mr Ainsworth's romance of "Old St Paul's," which is apparently based upon some tradition of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the ladies became gamblers, and not unfrequently paid their debts at the sacrifice of their honour. See Massey's *History of England*, Vol. II.

³ An extraordinary interpolation in this portion of the narrative is worthy of notice, inasmuch as it affords a striking illustration of the reckless spirit in which the Brahmanical "arrangers" grafted their absurd inventions upon the authentic legend. Duhsāsana is said to have tried to strip Draupadī in the presence of the assembly, but she prayed to Krishna, and the god miraculously interposed in her behalf, by so multiplying the number of her under garments, that as fast as Duhsāsana removed one, another appeared in its room. At a subsequent period in the poem, when Krishna was acting as a mortal hero, and a friend to the Pāndavas, Draupadī took occasion to thank him for the services he had rendered her in clothing her at such a perilous time. The incident is rendered more curious by the circumstance that the early fame of Krishna rested upon an exploit of the very opposite character, namely, his having carried away the clothes of the daughters of the cowherds while they were bathing.

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Unpardonable
nature of the
affront which
had been put
upon the Pándava-
vas.

Impressive pic-
ture of the de-
parture of the
Pándavas and
Draupadi on
their exile.

shed. But in a moment all was hushed. The authority of the Mahárajá was paramount, and no one attempted to interpose when the Pándavas left the place at his command. But when they had fairly departed for their own city, Duryodhana remonstrated with his father warmly and effectually; and the arguments which he urged are precisely those which would be urged in the present day by a Rájput Chieftain. The Pándavas had received such an affront that it was impossible they should either forgive or forget. They would be dishonoured for ever if they did not wipe out the insult with blood; and their revenge might prove fatal to the whole house of Bhárata. There was no other way by which a deadly feud could be prevented than by one party or the other going into exile, whilst the other remained in possession of the entire Raj.

The concluding scene always forms an impressive picture in the mind of the Hindú. All is lost, and the Pándavas are doomed to years of exile. Duhsásana is dancing with joy at the thought that the final game was won, whilst Bhíma is vowing to drink his blood. Yudhishtira and his four younger brothers are leaving the assembly, covering their faces with shame, whilst Bhíma is throwing out his long arms as expressive of his rage. But the terrible figure of Draupadí, as she dishevels her long black hair, is the very impersonation of revenge; and a Hindú audience never fails to shudder at her fearful vow, that the straggling tresses shall never again be tied up until the day when Bhíma shall have fulfilled his vow, and shall then bind them up whilst his fingers are still dripping with the blood of Duhsásana.



CHAPTER VIII.

SECOND EXILE OF THE PÁNDAVAS—THE TWELVE YEARS
IN THE JUNGLE.

THE tradition of the second exile of the Pándavas is naturally separated into two portions, namely :—

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1st, The wanderings in the jungle during twelve years.

Tradition of the twelve years of jungle life, to be distinguished from the fiction of the thirteenth year of city life.

2nd, The concealment in a city during the thirteenth year.

These two narratives are widely distinct in their origin and character. The story of the twelve years' wanderings in the jungle comprises some incidents which are based upon authentic tradition ; but the legend of the concealment in a city during the thirteenth year, so far as the Pándavas are concerned, is a palpable fiction. These points will be fully proved and elucidated hereafter ; but for the present it will be convenient to bear in mind the broad distinction.

Besides this distinction, it should also be noticed that there are certain indications in the story of the twelve years' wanderings which lead directly to the inference that the period of exile was not twelve years but twelve months. The incidents of jungle life which can be referred to the authentic tradition are but few in number, and might easily have

Theory that the twelve years of exile were originally twelve months, and that the thirteenth year was an intercalary month introduced to complete the solar year.



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occurred within the space of a single year. On the other hand, the story is very largely interpolated with mythical details and legends, which are so wildly supernatural in their character, that they may be safely treated as later interpolations. Accordingly, it follows that either the term of twelve years has been adopted for the purpose of affording sufficient time for the transactions to have taken place which are recorded in the myths; or that the myths have been introduced for the purpose of filling up the more lengthened period of exile. The hypothesis that the narrative of the thirteenth year is a later fiction confirms this view. The exile for twelve lunar months would not be equal to a solar year; and, therefore, it seems likely that this fiction of a thirteenth year originated in the idea that thirteen lunar months were necessary to the completion of a solar year.

Legend of the twelve years' exile, partly mythic and partly authentic.

The details of the legend of the twelve years' exile are thus divisible into two classes, viz.—

1st, The Mythic.

2nd, The Authentic.

But before attempting to carry out this division, it may be as well to glance at the general character of the legend; and this may, perhaps, be best gathered from the following narrative :—

Legendary sketch of the life of the Pándavas in the jungle.

Pilgrimages to holy places.

Instructions of Bráhmaṇas.

And it came to pass that the Pándavas, with their wife Draupadī, and their priest Dhaumya, wandered in the jungle for twelve years, and they fed on such game as the brethren shot on their way. And they made many pilgrimages to holy places, and fasted, and bathed, and performed religious worship; and they met with many holy Bráhmaṇas and sages who instructed them in pious acts, and beguiled them with stories of ancient times, and



promised them that the day should come when they should be restored to the Raj. Sometimes they came to verdant places covered with flowers, where the trees were loaded with fruits, and many curious animals presented themselves; but at other times violent winds arose and blackened the sky with dust, and laid prostrate the largest trees, and then the rain would fall heavily, and the torrents would pour down from the mountains like rivers, and the roads would become so wretched that all the Pándavas, excepting Bhíma, would be unable to move, and the weary Draupadí would faint away; but then the giant Bhíma would carry his fatigued brethren and his afflicted wife upon his back and shoulders, and under his arms, and walk on as before.

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Changes in
jungle scenery.
Occasional tem-
pests.

The general character of the mythical portions of the legend of the exile is indicated in the foregoing paragraph; but in the present instance some more particular description is necessary, as the myths occupy a very large space in the Mahá Bhárata, and are not wholly devoid of historical significance. It has already been seen that in addition to the Brahmanical bearing of the Mahá Bhárata, there is an underlying effort throughout the poem to ascribe a divine origin to the Pándavas, and to associate them with the gods of the Hindús. In the story of their birth it is plainly asserted that Pándu was not their real father, but that they were directly begotten by the gods; that Yudhishthira was the son of Dharma, that Bhíma was the son of Váyu, and that Arjuna was the son of Indra, whilst Nakula and Sahadeva were the sons of the two Aswins. Accordingly, in the legend of their twelve years' wanderings, a number of additional myths have been inserted to confirm this relationship and association. These myths furnish a striking illustration of the wide difference between the mental

1st, Mythical
portion of the
legend of the
twelve years' ex-
ile.

Description of
the subject
matter.

Introduced to
confirm the
myth that the
Pándavas were
the sons of the
ancient gods of
the Hindús.



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culture of the European and that of the Hindús. To the former they must appear childish and unmeaning, but to the latter they are highly attractive, for they serve to amuse the dreamy and indolent intellect of the Hindú, whilst gratifying his religious instinct with the idea that he is storing up in his memory a rich stock of pious legends and divine mysteries.

Samples of the
myths.

Dialogue be-
tween Yudhis-
thira and his
mythical father
Dharma, or per-
sonified good-
ness.

Interview be-
tween Bhíma
and Hanuman,
the monkey
hero, who are
both the myth-
ical sons of Váyu
or the wind.

Hanuman's
supernatural
shrinking and
swelling.

A few samples of these extraordinary myths may now be exhibited in a bare outline. On one occasion Yudhishtira was accosted by a divine being, who subsequently turned out to be his mythical father Dharma, or personified goodness. Dharma asked him a number of sphinx-like questions respecting human life and Bráhmanism, all of which were answered by Yudhishtira in a spirit of Brahmanical wisdom. Bhíma in his turn met with Hanuman, the monkey hero of the Rámáyana, who was mythically his own brother, as both were the sons of Váyu, or the wind. Bhíma, by virtue of his parentage, was proceeding along as swiftly as the wind; so that the earth trembled at his velocity, the largest trees were shaken to the ground, and one touch of his toe killed every lion, tiger, or wild elephant that sought to obstruct his passage. The attention of Hanuman was attracted by these marvels, and he obtained an interview with his mythical brother, by shrinking himself to the size of the smallest ape, whilst swelling out his tail to such an enormous bulk that it effectually stopped the progress of Bhíma. Hanuman then related to Bhíma the whole story of the Rámáyana, and swelled out his body until it was as lofty as the Vindhya mountain, and shone with a yellow radiance like that of



molten gold. By Hanuman's aid Bhíma made his way to the gardens of Kuvera on the Himálaya mountain, and there he found flowers which had a thousand petals, and which had been eagerly desired by Draupadí because their smell was so delicious that it would make old people young again, and convert sorrow into joy.

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Bhima proceeds to the gardens of Kuvera, the god of wealth.

But of all the myths which have been introduced for the sake of associating the Pándavas with the gods, none are so famous as those which refer to Arjuna, the fabled son of Indra, who was himself the sovereign of the Vedic deities. Arjuna proceeded to the Himálaya mountains, by the advice of his mythical grandfather Vyása, for the sake of performing such penances as should propitiate the gods, and induce them to grant him celestial weapons which would ensure him the victory over Duryodhana and the Kauravas. On reaching the Mandara mountain he heard a voice in the sky calling upon him to stop; and Indra appeared in all his glory, and promised to give him the divine weapons provided he succeeded in propitiating the god Siva. Arjuna then entered upon a course of austerities so severe that Siva was perfectly gratified, but proved the valour of his worshipper by taking upon himself the form of a mountaineer and engaging Arjuna in single combat. Arjuna, unable to make any impression upon his enemy, at length discovered the deity, and prostrated himself at the feet of Siva; upon which Siva gave him one of his most powerful weapons. Subsequently the gods of the four quarters of the universe—Indra, Yama, Varuna, and Kuvera—presented themselves to Arjuna, and respectively furnished him with their own peculiar

Famous myths referring to Arjuna.

Arjuna practises austerities on the Himálaya mountains to induce the gods to grant him celestial weapons.

Indra refers him to Siva.

Arjuna propitiates Siva, who engages him in single combat.

Receives a weapon from Siva.

The gods of the four quarters of the universe present him with weapons.



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Practises the
use of arms in
the heaven of
Indra.

Mythic wars of
Arjuna against
the Daityas of
the sea.

Chariot-horses
of the colour of
peacocks.

Historical signi-
ficance of the
foregoing
myths.

weapons. Arjuna was then carried away in Indra's chariot to the city of Amarávatí, which is the heaven of Indra. There he spent many years in practising the use of arms; and at length was sent by Indra to make war against the Daityas of the sea.

The mythic account of Arjuna's wars against the Daityas of the sea, is also worthy of notice if only as a creation of the imagination. On approaching the coast in a chariot which flew through the air, Arjuna beheld the sea rising in vast heaps, and saw ships laden with rubies, and fishes and tortoises as large as mountains. He blew his war shell and the Daityas trembled with fear, but in return they sounded their drums and trumpets so loudly that the monsters of the deep leaped above the waves. Thousands of Daityas rushed upon him, but he uttered powerful mantras as he discharged his arrows, and kept them all at bay. They rained fire, water, and mountains upon him, but he triumphed in the end and slew them all. Then the women came out screaming like cranes, but Arjuna passed them by and entered the city, where he saw chariots with ten thousand horses of the colour of peacocks. Meantime the women were terrified at the rolling of his chariot, and fled to their houses, whilst the noise of their ornaments resembled the falling of stones upon a mountain. After this victory Arjuna returned to Indra, and was rewarded with great praises; and the sovereign of the gods presented him with a chain of gold and a diadem, and with a war shell which sounded like thunder.

These extravagant myths, unmeaning as they appear in themselves, are not without historical significance, when considered in connection with the



age in which the Mahá Bhárata assumed its present form. It was an age of Brahmanical revival; an age when the Bráhmans appealed to the old national gods of the Hindús against the practical atheism of the Buddhists; an age when the national traditions were remodelled, and ancient forms of worship were restored, for the purpose of enlisting the sympathies of the masses against the Buddhistic hierarchy, and re-establishing the caste supremacy of the Bráhmans. Under such circumstances the object of the Brahmanical compilers in inventing these absurd myths is sufficiently obvious; they desired to associate the ancient gods of India with the favourite heroes of the Hindús. The mythical wars of Arjuna against the Daityas would also appear to be not without significance, if the Daityas may be identified with the Buddhists; and this identification is not wholly without foundation. The Daityas possessed horses of the colour of peacocks, and peacocks are especially the sacred emblem of the Buddhists. Moreover the statement that the Daityas inhabited the islands of the sea is in perfect accordance with this view; as the Buddhists certainly took refuge in Burmah and Ceylon when driven out by the Bráhmans from the great Indian peninsula.

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Favourite
heroes of the
Hindús associ-
ated with the
old national
gods in the age
of Brahmanical
revival against
Buddhism.

Wars of Arjuna
against the
Daityas typical
of the wars of
the Bráhmans
against the
Buddhists.

Having thus disposed of these somewhat distracting myths, it is refreshing to return to the more authentic and natural traditions of the exile of the Pándavas. From the simple incidents which follow, it would seem that the Pándavas never strayed to a great distance from their Raj; and that they only moved about in search of game, residing in some temporary hut or booth which they probably constructed for themselves. They were accompanied

2nd, Authen-
tic portion of
the legend of
the twelve years'
exile.

Indications that
the Pándavas
never wandered
at a great dis-
tance from their
Raj.

Life of the Pán-
davas in the
jungle.



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by their wife Draupadí, and are said to have also taken their priest Dhaumya with them; but the references to the latter personage are by no means satisfactory, nor is his presence in any way necessary to the story. Kuntí, as already stated, was left behind at Hastinápura. The five sons of Draupadí appear to have been sent to the house of her father Drupada; whilst Subhadrá, if she really were married to Arjuna, would seem to have returned to her father's house at Dwáraká, accompanied by her son Abhimanyu.

Four incidents
in the jungle life
of the Pándavas.

The incidents in the jungle life of the Pándavas, which are either authentic in themselves, or apparently have reference to actual events, are four in number, namely:—

1st, The capture of Duryodhana and Karna by the Gandharva tribe, and their subsequent release by the Pándavas.

2nd, The Vaishnava sacrifice performed by Duryodhana.

3rd, Yudhishtira's dream.

4th, The attempt of Jayadratha to carry off Draupadí.

1st, The capture
of Duryodhana
and Karna by
the Gandhar-
vas.

The first of these traditions, namely, the capture of Duryodhana and Karna by the Gandharva tribe, and their subsequent release by the Pándavas, may be related as follows:—

Tradition of the
Kauravas going
out into the
jungle to mark
the cattle, but
really to spy out
the Pándavas.

And it came to pass that whilst the Pándavas were sojourning in the jungle, Raja Duryodhana desired to spy out their misery, and flaunt his own magnificence before them. Now every three years it was the custom for the Kauravas to go out into the pastures and mark all the calves, and to renew the marks upon the cows; and as it was known full well that the Mahárajá would forbid them from



going near the Pándavas, Duryodhana asked for leave to go out and mark the cattle. And the Mahárajá gave his consent, and Duryodhana, and Karna, and many of the Kauravas departed out of the city, and after hunting in the jungle many days, they came near to the spot where the Pándavas were encamped. Now on a certain day Duryodhana sent on his people to pitch his tent by the side of a great lake, and it so happened that a band of the Gandharva tribe had already pitched their tents on the same spot; and the servants of Duryodhana came back and told their master. Then Duryodhana sent an insolent message to the Gandharvas, and ordered them to take up their tents and depart with all speed. And the Gandharvas went out and fought against Duryodhana, and defeated him, and took him prisoner, together with Karna and many of the Kauravas. And some of those who fled went and told the Pándavas that their kinsmen had been taken prisoners by the Gandharvas; and the Pándavas went out and fought the Gandharvas and utterly routed them, and compelled them to restore the prisoners they had taken. And Yudhishtira gave a feast to the Kauravas, and called Duryodhana his brother; and Duryodhana affected to be much pleased, but his pride was humbled, and he was very wroth, and he would have killed himself, but for the hope that the day would come when he would be fully avenged. Duryodhana then returned to the city of Hastinápura, and on a certain day there was a Council held in the palace of the Mahárajá, and Bhíshma arose and praised the valour of the Pándavas and advised Duryodhana to make peace with them; but Duryodhana rose up and smiled contemptuously, and left the assembly without speaking one word, and Bhíshma returned in great indignation to his own house.

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Insolence of
Duryodhana to
the Gandharvas.

Duryodhana and
Karna defeated
and taken prisoners by the
Gandharvas.

The Pándavas
come to their
rescue.

Mortification of
Duryodhana.

His resentment
at the public
rebuke administered by Bhíshma.

The foregoing simple tradition calls for little remark, but it is difficult to avoid noticing its curious resemblance to a corresponding incident in the patriarchal period of Hebrew history. It will be remembered that when Lot had been carried away

Similarity between the rescue of Duryodhana by the Pándavas and the feast given by Yudhishtira to the rescue of Lot by Abraham, and the feast of bread and wine.



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prisoner by the Assyrians, he was rescued by Abraham and his armed servants, and the victory was celebrated by a feast of bread and wine. This similarity, however, by no means implies that the two narratives refer to the same event, but simply that such little victories followed by a feast were a characteristic of the patriarchal period.

2nd, The Vaishnava sacrifice performed by Duryodhana.

The second incident of the exile, namely, the Vaishnava sacrifice performed by Duryodhana, may now be related as follows :—

Jenious desire of Duryodhana to perform a Rajasúya.

After these things, Raja Duryodhana resolved to celebrate a Rajasúya, that should surpass the Rajasúya of his cousin Yudhishtira; and he called to his priest and said :—“Let all things be got ready for a Rajasúya sacrifice.”

Disqualified whilst the Mahárajá and Yudhishtira are alive.

Then the priest answered :—“O Duryodhana, you cannot perform a Rajasúya whilst the Mahárajá is still alive, and whilst your enemy Yudhishtira is also alive; but you may perform a Vaishnava sacrifice, and all the Rajas who are your vassals may attend it; and this sacrifice is as great as a Rajasúya.” And Duryodhana said :—“Be it so!” So all things were made ready for a Vaishnava sacrifice; and messengers were sent to summon all the Chieftains belonging to the Raj that they should attend the sacrifice.

Prepares to perform a Vaishnava sacrifice.

His brother Duhsásana insultingly invites the Pándavas to the sacrifice.

Now whilst the messengers were going their rounds, it came into the heart of Duhsásana, the brother of Duryodhana, to send a messenger to Yudhishtira, to invite the Pándavas to be present likewise; and the man went his way and delivered the message to his brethren. Then Yudhishtira, ever mild and dignified, thus made reply :—“Such a sacrifice as Raja Duryodhana is about to perform must redound to the exaltation of the whole house of Bhá-rata; but I and my brethren cannot attend until the years of our exile be accomplished.” But Bhíma was very wroth, and he cried out to the messenger :—“Go and tell Raja Duryodhana, that when the thirteen years are over, Raja Yudhishtira will kindle such a sacrifice with his weapons

Mild answer of Yudhishtira.

Wrathful reply of Bhíma.



as will burn up all the sons of Dhritaráshtra.”¹ These messages were duly delivered to Raja Duryodhana, but he answered not a word.

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After this Raja Duryodhana performed the Vaishnava sacrifice without the city, and distributed much provisions, and many dresses, and rich gifts; and all those who were his friends said that no one had ever before performed so great a sacrifice, whilst those who were his enemies said that the sacrifice was not worth one-sixteenth of the Rajasúya of Yudhishthira. And Duryodhana returned to his own house in great state, while the eulogists and story-tellers went before him and opened their mouths in his praise, and celebrated the deeds of his fathers; and all the people came out in great multitudes, and scattered flowers and parched grain along the road before him. And Karna said to Duryodhana:—“By the auspicious force of your great destiny you have brought this sacrifice to an end; and when by your fortunate power you shall have slain the Pándavas, and shall perform the Rajasúya, I too will be present and pay you homage.” Duryodhana answered:—“When I have slain the Pándavas, I will certainly perform the Rajasúya, and you shall be there to do me reverence.” Then Karna vowed a vow, saying:—“I will neither wash my feet, nor eat venison, and I will say nay to every one who asks me for a favour, until I have slain Arjuna.” And the spies of the Pándavas carried intelligence of all that occurred to Raja Yudhishthira; and when Yudhishthira heard that Karna had bound himself by a vow to slay Arjuna, he was very sorrowful, for he knew that the day would come when there would be a great battle between Arjuna and Karna.

Duryodhana performs the Vaishnava sacrifice.

Divers opinions of his friends and enemies.

Returns to his palace in a great procession.

Congratulations of Karna.

Karna's vow to slay Arjuna.

Sorrow of Yudhishthira.

The foregoing tradition of the Vaishnava sacrifice that was performed by Duryodhana throws a

Review of the tradition of the sacrifice of Duryodhana.

¹ William the Norman is said to have uttered a similar rough threat to that of Bhíma. William was very corpulent and confined to his chamber. The French King remarked that his English brother was a long time lying in. William retorted that there should be no lack of tapers at his churking, and he kept his word by ravaging France with fire and sword.



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Reasons why
Duryodhana
could not per-
form a Rajasúya
as Yudhishtira
had done.

Doubts respect-
ing the Vaishna-
va sacrifice.

3rd. Yudhishtira's dream.

Apparently a
Buddhistic par-
able.

Legend of the
dream.

The animals of
the jungle im-
plore Yudhishtira to leave.

clearer light upon the institution known as the Rajasúya, inasmuch as it confirms the view that a Rajasúya was emphatically an assertion of sovereignty. Duryodhana could not assert his sovereignty because his father was still living, and because his enemy and rival, Yudhishtira, was alive also. Yudhishtira, on the other hand, had been in a condition to perform a Rajasúya, because he had established an independent Raj at Indra-prastha, and had succeeded in conquering all who had opposed him. It is, however, difficult to say in what respect the Vaishnava sacrifice differed from the Rajasúya. The worship of Vishnu appears indeed to have been of a comparatively modern origin, and to have belonged to a period posterior to the age of animal sacrifices. Under such circumstances, whilst the fact may be admitted that Duryodhana performed a sacrifice, the statement that it was a Vaishnava sacrifice may be regarded as a later interpolation.

The third incident of the exile, namely, Yudhishtira's dream, is mythical in its present form, but still is evidently founded on authentic fact. The Pándavas prepared to move to another forest, apparently because the game had become scarce in the neighbourhood of their encampment; and this simple incident has been converted into a significant parable which bears traces of a Buddhistic origin. The parable is as follows:—

Now it so happened that Yudhishtira dreamed a dream, and in his dream the wild animals of the forest came to him weeping and trembling with fear, and they said to him:—
“We are the very few animals that have escaped your hands, and we therefore pray you to remove to another place that we



ourselves may be relieved from the terror of our lives, and may multiply again as before." And Yudhishtira was moved with sorrow, and when he awoke he told his dream to his brethren how that the animals had implored his mercy. So the Pándavas went away with their wife Draupadí and priest Dhaumya, and dwelt in the forest of Káma, and took up their abode in a hut, which was given to them by a holy Rishi who dwelt in that quarter.

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The Pándavas
move to the
forest of Káma.

The fourth incident in the twelve years' exile, namely, Jayadratha's attempt to carry off Draupadí, throws a strange light upon the old jungle life, which many Kshatriya heroes appear to have occasionally led in days of yore. The tradition may be related as follows:—

4th. The attempt
of Jayadratha to
carry off Draupadí.

And it came to pass that one day the Pándavas went out to hunt in the forest, and they left their wife Draupadí, with her own consent, in charge of the priest Dhaumya. And it happened that Jayadratha, the Raja of Sindhu, was going on that day with a great train to Chedipur to celebrate his marriage with the daughter of the Raja of that city; and he passed by the hut, and saw Draupadí standing against a tree, and he was stricken with her beauty; and he said in his heart:—"If this beautiful damsel be not already married I will go no further, but will espouse her." And he sent a Chieftain who was with him to go and inquire her name and lineage; and the Chieftain alighted from his chariot and went to Draupadí, and inquired who she was, and told her his own name, and the name of Jayadratha, and also the names of the other Chieftains who were with them. Now when Draupadí saw that a strange man was coming towards her, she left the tree, and drew her veil around her; but when the Chieftain had finished speaking, she came forward and said:—"As there is neither man nor woman near, I must myself answer your questions: But I know who you are; your father is Raja of Saurashtra, and Jayadratha is my kinsman, for he has married Duhsalá, who is the daughter of Mahárajá Dhritaráshtira: I am Draupadí, the daughter of Raja Drupada, and the wife of the five

Jayadratha,
Raja of Sindhu,
visits Draupadí
in the absence of
her husbands.

Falls in love
with Draupadí.

Sends a Chief-
tain to inquire
her name and
lineage.

Conversation
between the
Chieftain and
Draupadí.

Draupadí's pro-
ffered hospitali-
ties.



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Jayadratha enters the hut.

Rajas of Indra-prastha : My husbands have gone out to hunt in the forest, but they will soon return : Alight, therefore, all of you, for Raja Yudhishtira will be gladdened at your coming, and will prepare a feast for you." So the man went and told Raja Jayadratha all that she had said ; and Jayadratha got down from his chariot, he and six Chieftains who were with him, and entered the house like a jackal entering a pagoda. And Jayadratha asked Draupadí if all was well with her and her husbands ; and she replied that all was well. And Draupadí desired that he would take a seat, and she offered to bring water to wash his feet, saying :—"The Pándavas will soon return with plenty of venison, and Raja Yudhishtira will rejoice to make you welcome."

His wicked proposals to Draupadi.

Then Raja Jayadratha said to her :—"Put yourself to no trouble on my account, but get you into my chariot, that we may be happy together : The Pándavas have lost their Raj, and have become vagabonds in the jungle ; so do not waste your attentions upon such husbands as these, but leave them to themselves and come with me, and I will make you my Rání." Then Draupadí knit her brow and arose in anger, and said :—"Get you gone to your own land, for my husbands are Rajas of great renown, as deadly as serpents, and as powerful as Indra. Would you attack a wild elephant with a staff, or arouse a sleeping lion with a switch ? Would you kick a tiger with your foot, or stroke a venomous serpent with your toes ? Yet such will my husbands be unto you, unless you depart with all speed to your own home."

Rage of Draupadi.

Her curses and threats.

Then Raja Jayadratha tried to soothe her, but she heeded not his words, but poured forth curses upon him, and threatened him with the arrow of Arjuna, and the mace of Bhíma, and the wrath of all her husbands. And the Raja put forth his hand, and took hold of her garment ; and she struck him with her fist and knocked him down. Then the Raja arose and seized her with all his strength, and placed her in his chariot, while she shrieked and cried out to the priest Dhaumya for help and succour. And Dhaumya came out and said :—"O Jayadratha, you are breaking the good old laws of the Kshatriyas, for by those laws you cannot take

Jayadratha carries away Draupadi in his chariot by main force.

Laws of the Kshatriyas concerning the carrying away of women.



away this woman until you have vanquished all her husbands." But the Raja heeded not his words, but placed Draupadī in his own chariot, and drove away, and the old priest followed after him weeping and lamenting.

All this while the Pándavas had been hunting in the forest, but Yudhishthira had seen many evil omens, and before the day was half spent, he persuaded his brethren to return. Now as they approached the hut they did not see Draupadī, but they beheld her little maid lying upon the ground and weeping violently; and the maid told them how Raja Jayadratha had carried away Draupadī, like a dog who has seized the sacrificial meat, and she pointed out the way he had gone, and the marks of his chariot-wheels. Then the Pándavas set off in hot haste, and soon approached their enemy, and so discharged their arrows that many of the Chieftains were killed. And the heart of Jayadratha was filled with dismay, and he set down Draupadī from his chariot, and drove with all speed to a thicket which was hard by. Then Bhíma said to Yudhishthira:—"Go home now with Draupadī, and with our brothers, Nakula and Sahadeva: As for me, though Jayadratha fled to the caves beneath the earth, and had Indra himself for his charioteer, he should not escape my hands." Yudhishthira replied:—"O my brother, Jayadratha has been very wicked, but he has married the sister of Duryodhana, and we may not kill our kinsman." But Draupadī was mad with anger at these words, and cried in a loud voice to Bhíma and Arjuna:—"If you have any regard for me you will slay this Jayadratha: He is the worst of Rajas and the vilest of men: The most exalted of all the ancient sages has said that the man who carries off the wife of another in times of peace must be pursued and put to death, even though he desist from his wicked purpose." Draupadī then returned to the hut, accompanied by Yudhishthira and Nakula and Sahadeva.

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The Pándavas
return to their
hut and learn
what has oc-
curred.

Pursuit of Jaya-
dratha.

Jayadratha
abandons Drau-
padī and seeks
to escape.

Yudhishthira's
clemency.

Wrath of Drau-
padī.

Return of Yud-
hishthira with
Draupadī.

When Bhíma and Arjuna heard the words of Draupadī, their wrath was kindled greatly against Jayadratha, and they pursued him hotly, and taunted him with his prowess in running away with their wife, and called upon him to turn