

A HISTORY
OF
HINDU POLITICAL THEORIES.

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From the earliest times to the end of the first
quarter of the Seventeenth Century A.D.

U. GHOSHAL, M.A., Ph.D.

*Professor of History, Presidency College, Calcutta ;
Lecturer in Comparative Politics, Calcutta University.*

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To

The Sacred Memory of

S. G.

Born 1897.

Died 1916.

PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to trace the political thought of the Hindu people through the long and varied history of its origin, development, and decline.

The historical presentation of the Hindu theories of the State and Government is at this moment one of the great *desiderata* in the field of Indology. It is a welcome sign of the times that since the preparation of this volume was first undertaken, there has been a plentiful crop of books and papers bearing more or less directly upon selected areas of its subject-matter. So long however as there is a tendency, as at present, to depend mainly, if not exclusively, upon the analytical method, there is the risk of interpreting the concepts and categories of the Hindu thinkers in disregard of the limiting conditions of time and place. In the present work while analysis and comparison have, it is believed, received their due measure of attention, the object has been principally to unfold the record of the Hindu political mind in the order of its historical evolution as far as practicable. It has thus been possible to present the ideas concerned in their true historical perspective, and further and above all, to explain the process of their growth and development. It has thus become evident that Kautilya's Arthasāstra and the Śāntiparvaṇ section of the Mahābhārata, to quote one example, are not solely or even principally a repository

of the older political ideas, but probably register distinct advances of thought. Further, it has been shown that the remarkable theories of the king's origin in the *Māhābhārata* and the *Manusamhitā* exhibit a complex blending of ideas presumably produced by a reaction against the anti-monarchical tendencies of the Buddhist theory of contract.

Next to the urgency of treating Hindu political thought on historical principles may be mentioned the necessity of precise analysis of its leading tenets. Principally because of the paucity and obscurity of the literary material, there has been in this case the danger of reading modern ideas into the old texts, or at least stretching their meaning to a degree unwarranted by the evidence. It has been the author's aim to avoid these pitfalls, and confine himself as far as possible to an objective interpretation of his subject. This has involved the discussion of the exact signification of such technical terms as *prakṛiti* and *danda*, and has led to the consideration of such current views as those crediting the Hindus with the notion of popular sovereignty and the like.

While at the present time the provinces of political theory and of the institutions of the State are recognised to be distinct from each other in so far as their historical treatment is concerned, it is no doubt desirable for the sake of completeness that the historian of political theory in India should keep himself as closely in touch with the corresponding facts of political life as his compeer in the West. In the present instance, however, the method of treatment indicated above is precluded by the obscurity in which

the actual history of Indian institutions is still involved. Hence all that can be attempted is to bring out, as the author has sought to do, the general bearing of the institutions upon the growth of ideas.

A history of Hindu political thought, it may seem, should involve some digression into the general systems of Hindu philosophy, for some of the root-ideas of the former, such, e.g., as the doctrine of creation of the social order, are embedded in the ideas and principles of the latter. It is, however, a remarkable fact that the study of statecraft and cognate topics branched off at an early period in the history of the race from the general stream of Vedic culture and formed an independent branch of knowledge which might be called a secular science, were it not for the pronounced disinclination of the Hindu mind to conceive the secular life as the antithesis of the religious. In regard to the theories of the Brahminical canon, it may be observed that questions relating to the origin and nature of the king's office and the like have been treated in so far as they are so treated, on the basis of broad theological principles, e.g., the creation of kingship by the will of the Supreme Being. In these circumstances it has been held that a general treatment of such religio-ethical or socio-religious concepts as Dharma and the institution of the castes and orders is sufficient for the purposes of this work.

Apart from the intrinsic merit of the ideas dealt with in this volume and their value in illustrating the genius of Hindu culture, the principal interest of a work such as the present lies, it would seem, in

its furnishing the data, from an Eastern point of view, of a true science of Comparative Politics, a science taking cognisance of distinct types of institutions and theories conceived to be rooted in different conditions of existence and forms of race-consciousness, and involving the fullest recognition of the multilinear evolution of human social organisations. To fulfil this important end, it would seem necessary to appraise the concepts and categories of the Hindus especially in the terms of Western political theory. A task of this magnitude can not be attempted in the present volume, but a few important hints, it is believed, have been thrown in at the end to help the solution of the problem.

A considerable portion of this work formed the subject of a thesis that was approved by the University of Calcutta for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1922. The extracts from the Sanskrit and Pali works which, it will be noticed on examination, are many and copious, have been put in partly for their illustrative value, and partly to ensure a correct interpretation of their meaning. Except in the case of the standard versions in the *Sacred Books of the East*, the *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, and the *Harvard Oriental Series*, the translations are made directly from the original.

The author offers his tribute of grateful regard to Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal M.A. PH.D. D.SC., Vice-Chancellor, Mysore University, for his stimulating discourses which have suggested some portions of this work. To his friend and colleague Pandit Siva Prasad Bhattacharya M.A., he is greatly indebted for

ungrudging help in the preparation of translations from the Sanskrit, while another esteemed colleague Prof. K. Zachariah B.A. (Oxon.) has earned his thanks by the translation of an extract from the Italian work of G. B. Bottazzi on Kauṭilya and Thucydides. To another friend Prof. Rabindra Narayan Ghosh M.A., Vice-Principal, Ripon College, Calcutta, the author makes a special acknowledgment for a number of valuable suggestions and criticisms. Nor must he fail to record in this place his profound appreciation of the keen interest shown in his production by Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University. Finally, it is the author's wish that his work should be associated with the kind soligitude of his respected teacher Prof. Adhar Chandra Mukherjee M.A.B.L., and his friends Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray M.A., Mr. Akshay Kumar Maitra C.I.E., Mr. Rama Prasad Chanda B.A., and Professors Radha Kumud and Radha Kamal Mookerji.

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ERRATA

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|-------------------------|---|---|
| p. 32, line 12 | } | <i>delete</i> of Divine Right. |
| p. 33, line 9 | | |
| p. 33, line 20 | } | <i>for</i> Divine Right <i>read</i> divine |
| p. 42, line 27 | | <i>creation.</i> |
| p. 39, line 19 | | <i>for</i> Suṭa <i>read</i> Sūta. |
| p. 43, line 25 | | <i>delete</i> Social <i>before</i> Contract. |
| p. 49, footnote line 6 | } | <i>for</i> H. O. R. <i>read</i> H. O. S. |
| p. 53, footnote line 12 | | |
| p. 54, footnote line 4 | | |
| p. 66, footnote line 3 | | <i>for</i> Śāntiparvam <i>read</i> Śāntiparvan. |
| p. 81, line 11 | | <i>for</i> secular <i>read</i> 'secular.' |
| p. 84, footnote line 22 | | <i>for</i> amātyādih <i>read</i> amātya etc. |
| p. 116, line 9 | | <i>for</i> he <i>read</i> it. |
| p. 137, footnote line 4 | } | The correct title of G. B. Bottazzi's work is <i>Precursori di Niccolò Machiavelli in India ed in Grecia : Kauṣilya e Tucidide.</i> |
| p. 155, footnote line 2 | | |
| p. 146, footnote line 1 | } | <i>for</i> nemimekanta radrājñah <i>read</i> nemimekāntarādrājñah. |
| p. 175, footnote line 1 | | <i>for</i> kartrineno <i>read</i> kartrīneno. |
| p. 183, footnote line 8 | | <i>for</i> tubyā <i>read</i> tulyā. |
| p. 238, line 5 | | <i>for</i> becomes <i>read</i> become. |

INTRODUCTION

The Hindus belong to the category of peoples who have left their impress upon the pages of history as the founders of original systems of political thought. The foundation of the Hindu ideas of the State was laid at a time and in a region which ensured their indigenous origin. In the long and varied history of their subsequent development and decline, even at the points of the closest contact with extraneous systems of thought, there is no reasonable room for doubt regarding either the native source of their inspiration or else their national stamp.

It thus appears that the factors that helped to give rise to the political theories of the Hindus must have been embedded in the peculiar conditions of the land and character of its people. The most general factor that fostered these theories appears to have been the variety and multiplicity of the States that crowded the stage of Indian history in ancient times. India, as has been well said, is the type of endless diversity strangely yoked with an underlying unity. In the political sphere the unifying idea has struggled unceasingly with the deeply rooted tendency towards disruption, and hence empires of greater or smaller extent and duration have alternated with a bewildering maze of petty States. But the Indian States were not, contrary to the usual view, modelled

after a uniform pattern, that of despotic monarchy. The political history of India reveals at frequent intervals from the earliest period down at least to the fifth century A. D. a number of republican constitutions existing side by side with the familiar monarchic governments. It is evident that these conditions offered an exceptionally wide and rich field for the investigation of the concrete facts of political life and the formulation of general principles regarding their nature. Further, the intense strain and tension in which, in the absence of an effective international law guaranteeing the safety of the weaker States against the stronger, the lives of most Indian governments were passed, had the result of making the Art of Government (Arthaśāstra) a subject of burning interest. The same cause appears to have given rise to a remarkable notion underlying all the rules of the Arthaśāstra and much of the rules of the Brāhmanical canon, namely that the State, while subject like all human institutions to the influence of chance, was essentially a work of art requiring the exercise of the highest qualities of mind and body for its successful direction. The last influence that seems to have stimulated the political speculations of the Hindus was sectarian rivalry. It is true that in the long run the political ideas of the people transcended the differences of sect and assumed a more or less stereotyped character. Thus the theories of the State that are embodied in the Jaina legal and political treatises are in substance the replicas of the corresponding ideas of the Brāhmaṇas. In the early phase of its growth, however, Hindu political thought found in the divergence of sects a powerful

stimulus. Thus the challenge thrown out by the Buddhist divines to the standard orthodox doctrine of the origin of society apparently led to the theory of Contract, while the reply of the Brāhmana canonists in the Manusamhitā and the Mahābhārata involved the formulation of theories largely tinged with the dogma of the divine creation and personality of the king.

Such in our view are the factors that helped to sow the seeds of political speculation on the Indian soil. It is, however, idle to disguise the fact that scholars of undoubted eminence have pointed to certain alleged tendencies of the Hindu national character as disqualifying the people from conceiving the idea of the State. It was a little over half a century ago that the illustrious Prof. Max Müller delivered his verdict on the genius of the Hindu people in words that have become classical. "The Hindus," he said, "were a nation of philosophers. Their struggles were the struggles of thought; their past, the problem of creation; their future, the problem of existence.....It might therefore be justly said that India has no place in the political history of the world."* This celebrated dictum, which was justified at the time of its pronouncement by the darkness in which the history and the literature of ancient India were still enveloped, would seem to call for no serious notice at the present day, when immense strides have been taken in almost every branch of Indian antiquities. It is, however, a tribute to the enduring influence of Max Müller's teaching

* *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 1859, p. 31.

that his verdict is still accepted in scholarly circles in the present times. Thus it is confidently declared by a recent writer in words echoing the classical lines cited above, "The Orient in general, India in particular, did not conceive the idea of the State..... To employ a Christian expression, the sole city for the Indian sages is the city divine."* Another eminent scholar attributes to the religious institutions of the Hindus the same dominating influence as is attached by Max Müller to their religious ideals. "From the beginning of India's history," writes Prof. Bloomfield, "religious institutions control the character and the development of its people to an extent unknown elsewhere.....The religious life of the Brahmanical Hindu is divided into the four stages of religious disciple; god-fearing and sacrificing householder; contemplative forest-dweller; and wandering world-abandoning ascetic. Such at least is the theory of their religious law.....There is no provision in such a scheme for the interests of the State and the development of the race."†

Such is the estimate of the Hindu cultural ideals and institutions that modern writers seem to have inherited as a sacred legacy from the late Prof. Max Müller. And yet, when tested in the light of sober fact, it is found to be no more than a half-truth. To prove the hollowness of the charge that the ideals of the ancient Hindus were pitched in an exclusively religious key, it is not even necessary to refer to the remarkable blending of secular and religious types

* Janet, *Histoire de la Science Politique*, tome I, p. 26, English translation by the present writer. ^c

† *Religion of the Veda*, pp. 4-5.

in the extant literature of India and in its traditional lists of sciences (vidyās)*, or to the multiplicity of its practical arts (kalās)† and the multiple developments of its State consciousness.‡ The same purpose is likely to be served by a careful study of the story of the development of the Hindu mind that is unfolded in these pages. This, it is expected, will show that the State was regarded in Hindu eyes as an essential instrument for securing not merely the whole life, but also the bare existence, of the people. This conception led not only in the 'secular' Arthasāstra but also in the later Brahminical canon to the view that the State was within certain limits virtually an end in itself. Another point that it is hoped to demonstrate in the course of this work is that the Hindu scheme of social order involved not merely

* The list of vidyās is sometimes (Kāuṭilya I 1, Kāmandaka III 1, Manusamhitā VII 43, Śukranīti I 152-154) given as four, sometimes (Vāyupurāṇam III 6; 28) as eighteen, and sometimes (Śukranīti IV 3. 27-30 etc.) as thirty-two in number. Each of these lists contains some secular branches of knowledge. Thus the first and the shortest list comprises Politics (daṇḍanīti) and Economics (vārtā); in the second list are included medicine (āyurveda), military science (dhanurveda), music (gandharvavidyā) and Politics (arthasāstra); the last list contains Politics (arthasāstra), Erotics (kāmasāstra), fine arts (śilpasāstra) and other subjects.

† The number of kalās more than rivalled that of the sciences as it consisted, according to the ordinary enumeration, of sixty-four kinds. Cf. Śukranīti IV 3. 67-100.

‡ The Hindu view of the International States-system (maṇḍala) comprised a group of States varying from two to fifty-four according to different authorities (vide Kāmandaka XII 20 ff.). although the usually accepted number was twelve. The forms of diplomacy and foreign policy, moreover, were arranged by the Hindu writers under four and six heads respectively, which were further subdivided as well as rearranged into composite types.

the horizontal division into orders (āśramas) but also the vertical division into classes (varṇas), besides involving the king who was in many respects *sui generis*. In this scheme the Kṣatriya householder was required to be not merely "god-fearing and sacrificing," but also to protect all other classes. The function of protection, indeed, was the special province of the king, and so highly was it esteemed that the kingly duty (rājadharmā) was held in the Mahābhārata to be equivalent in moral values to the duties of the four castes and the four orders put together.* Above all the primary law of self-reservation was held in such great respect in the Brahminical canon that individuals and classes were permitted for the sake of livelihood to assume in times of difficulty abnormal functions which were aptly designated as emergency duties (āpāddharma). In the sphere of public life the application of this principle is illustrated by the rule of the Mahābhārata authorising all classes to take up arms in self-defence 'when the king's power wanes and the social order vanishes,' as well as by the injunction requiring submission to any one, even a Śūdra, who saves society from anarchy.†

Nevertheless there is a grain of truth concealed in the estimate of Hindu cultural ideals and institutions to which reference has been made above. It is an undoubted fact that the ancient Indian atmosphere was pre-eminently charged with the religious spirit. Nothing indeed shows this more clearly than the fate that overtook the materialistic schools of

* Vide Ch. IV. *Infra*.

† *Ibid*

thought which arose from time to time under the congenial influence of the fruitful genius of the people and their traditional tolerance of free thinking. The philosophical school of Chārvāka, to mention only one instance of this class, became the target of unmeasured attack from the most diversified schools of thought and it failed to take root on the Indian soil. The distinctive aim of catholic Hinduism, however, was to co-ordinate the material as well as the spiritual interests of men instead of exalting either of these at the expense of the other. The Hindu view of life, the view that is common to the Brahminical, the Buddhist and the Jaina, schools of thought, implies two paths or processes which wonderfully complement each other in the progress towards self-realisation,—the path of enjoyment (*pravritti*) and that of renunciation (*nivritti*). While liberation (*mokṣa*) is conceived to be the goal of the latter path, the former involves a co-ordination of the three ends, viz, virtue (*dharma*), pleasure (*kāma*) and wealth (*artha*), or at least the pursuit of the second and the third under the guidance and direction of the first.* This profound appreciation of the totality of human interests lies, unless we are greatly mistaken, at the root of the sociological ideas of the Hindus.

* Cf. *Manusamhitā* II 224 : “(Some declare that) the chief good consists in (the acquisition of) spiritual merit and wealth, (others place it) in (the gratification of) desire and (the acquisition of) wealth, (others) in (the acquisition of) spiritual merit alone, and (others say that the acquisition of) wealth alone is the chief good here (below) ; but the (correct) decision is that it is the aggregate of (these) three.” Cf. *Ibid* VI 34-37 ; XII 88-90. Also compare *Kauṭilya’s Arthśāstra* I 7 : Śukraniti III 2.

We have endeavoured to dispose of the main argument advanced by some scholars to discredit the claim of the ancient Indians to have contributed to the theories of the State. It remains to consider two offshoots of this view which command wide acceptance at the present day. ✓ In the first place it is held that not only the Indians but all other Oriental peoples were so thoroughly imbued with faith in the divine creation and ordering of the world that they were never impelled to enquire into the *rationale* of their institutions. ✓ Thus it is declared by one writer in concluding his estimate of Eastern cultures, "Now it was this appeal to dogma rather than to reason, to faith rather than to logically grounded belief, that was and has continued to be the one characteristic of Oriental civilisation. To the early Eastern mind, the fact that a thing existed was sufficient of itself to show its right to be. Thus was effectually excluded all possibility of inquiries as to the relative perfection, or justification for the existence of, *de facto* social and political institutions."* The second view that has to be mentioned in this connection is that although the Eastern peoples succeeded in formulating some concepts

* Willoughby, *Political Theories of the Ancient World*, p. 14. Cf. the striking contrast drawn between the mentality of the Greeks on the one hand and that of the Indians and the Jews on the other in the following lines, "Instead of projecting themselves into the sphere of religion, like the people of India and Judea, instead of taking this world on trust, and seeing it by faith, the Greeks took their stand in the realm of thought, and daring to wonder about things visible, they attempted to conceive of the world in the light of reason. . . . A sense of the value of the individual was thus the primary condition of the development of political thought in Greece." Barker, *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*, pp. 1-2.

of the State, they were too much vitiated by theological admixture to deserve the title of scientific deductions. Thus to quote the authority already cited, "In the ancient empires of the East to such an extent were religion and law confused that political science can scarcely be said to have existed as an independent branch of knowledge. The ultimate sanction of all law was supposed to be found in the sacred writings."* Writing in the same strain but with a restricted application Prof. Dunning observes, "The Oriental Aryans never freed their politics from the theological and metaphysical environment in which it is embedded to-day. . . . The Aryans of Europe have shown themselves to be the only peoples to whom the term 'political' may be properly applied."†

In considering the above arguments in their application to the Indian conditions alone, it is well to remember at the outset that the thought of the Brahminical canonists is not co-extensive with the whole realm of Hindu culture. In the field which is treated by us in the present place we may notice at least three other phases of thought, the Buddhist, the Arthaśāstra and the Jaina, of which the first two are more or less independent of Brahminical influence. Now nothing is more characteristic of the Buddhist and the Arthaśāstra political thought than its bold and avowed appeal to human reason.) The early

* Willoughby, *Nature of the State*, p. 12.

† *A History of Political Theories, Ancient and Mediaeval*, Introduction, pp. cix-xx.

schools and authors of the Arthaśāstra, in particular, introduced, as we have already observed, the conception of an independent branch of knowledge specifically concerned with the acquisition and the preservation of States, or in other words with the Art of Government, and not only did this science gather a rich literature around itself extending far down into the Middle Ages, but it found a place in the traditional lists of sciences. Furthermore, the ideas of the Arthaśāstra, as we shall see later on, were not confined within the four corners of an isolated system: they were absorbed and assimilated in the system of the Brahminical canon and were thence transmitted to other systems which drew their inspiration therefrom. (Regarding the theory of the Brahminical canon it has to be admitted that human reason was not allowed such full scope as to bring into question the foundations of the system, such, *e.g.*, as the grand concept of the social order with its attendant list of duties (dharma) relating to the constituent classes thereof: the trend of thought, on the contrary, was to make use of the faculty of reason for the purpose of establishing the validity of those concepts. We may further grant that the Brahminical ideas of the State are conceived principally in the setting of the Whole Duty of the king, and are linked up in several instances, as in the doctrine of the king's creation, with the notions of theology. Nevertheless it is a remarkable fact that 'rājadharmā' is treated in the canonical tradition of the Brāhmaṇas as independent of the Vedas at least in some of its parts, and it is held to be divisible from the point of view

of its consequences into two classes corresponding to the king's political and his personal functions. This was expressed with great force by the most famous commentator of the Manusamhitā, the illustrious Medhātithi, who is supposed to have flourished at a date not later than the tenth century A. D.*

We have endeavoured to consider the factors that were at work in the upbuilding of the fabric of Hindu political ideas. (We may next examine the consequences of the regional and cultural influences under which these theories grew up into a system.) And first we have to observe that Hindu political thought, found throughout its history its chosen seat in Northern India and the Deccan, the home-land of Indo-Aryan culture. It was a singular irony of fate that the Dravidian races of the South, who built in the later Hindu period powerful States founded on the bedrock of self-governing village assemblies, failed to make any notable original contribution to the stock of political ideas. Indeed the Southern races would appear in the light of their earliest literary records to have been from the first profoundly impressed with the ideas of the political thinkers of the North. Thus the Hindu theories of the State bore the stamp of the creative genius of the Indo-Aryans and were coloured by their distinctive ideals and experiences. Now a remarkable feature of the Indo-Aryan culture was, as we have said above, the enormous, though not exclusive, hold acquired by religion over the thoughts and actions of men. To the Hindu, however, religion was not merely a code of dogmas or a system of religious exercises, but it

* Cf. Ch. VI, *infra*.

was a synthesis of life. It therefore followed that the rules of public administration along with their underlying theories formed an integral part of the Brahmanical canon. But further, the Brāhmaṇa sacred literature presented from first to last the only continuous record of Hindu political speculation. The other systems were either, as in the case of the political sections of the Buddhist canon and the Arthaśāstra, finally swamped or merged in the ocean of Brāhmaṇa thought after enjoying a brief span of existence, or else they were like the Jaina works on polity virtual copies of some of the more advanced phases of Brāhmaṇa speculation.

The peculiar genius of the Indo-Aryans left its impress upon another aspect of Hindu political thought, namely its intensely realistic character. The political ideas of the Hindus were of the earth, earthy, and it was only on rare occasions that they were tempted to soar into the region of ideal polities. A remarkable instance of this exception to the general rule is the picture of the Universal Monarch (Chakravartin) in the Buddhist canon. The Hindu political thinkers indeed were not as a rule closet philosophers to whom it is permitted to indulge in dreams of blissful Utopias. They figured either in the role of teachers of the Sacred Law which was binding upon the king in every act of his life, and was enforced by the highest moral and spiritual sanctions. Or else, as makers of the Arthaśāstra, they claimed to lay down rules of policy that were founded upon the accumulated wisdom of past masters, and which princes and ministers were enjoined to lay to heart and practise in their lives. Thus the Hindu theories of

the State were mainly concerned with concrete problems of administration such as the conduct of the king, the choice of ministers, as well as internal and foreign policy. Even the abstract speculations relating to the origin of kingship and the like seem to have been the battle-cries in the strife of rival schools of thought concerning such vital issues as the relative rights of the king and the subjects.

We have, lastly, to examine the influence exercised upon Hindu political thought by certain specific types of polity to which the conditions in Northern India gave a peculiar prominence. Though republican constitutions figured, as we have said, upon the stage of Indian history, it was the monarchic State that dominated the scene. In the paucity of other data the most complete account of the Indian monarchies is to be derived from the literature of the sacred canon and the secular Arthaśāstra which reflects, as we have seen, actual and not ideal conditions of political existence. It is not our intention in the present place to mention all the distinctive features of the standard Indian polity, but to specify those characteristics alone that stamped themselves upon the system of Hindu thought. ~~The monarchic States, to begin with, ranged in size from governments of small extent to large empires stretching, in the hyperbolic language of the conventional description, to the boundary of the whole earth as far as the sea. It was however an index of the strong disruptive forces constantly at work that the small States comprised in the traditional States-system (maṇḍala) preponderated over the empires. Further, the monarchic governments usually involved a central administra-~~

tive machinery superimposed upon the subordinate administrations of the district, the town, and the village. The other features of the Indian State were concerned with the position of the priestly and the ruling classes as well as of the king with reference to the rest. The Brāhmanas indeed occupy from the first a very important place in the society and the State. In the Brahmanical canon not only are the person and property of the priestly order protected by the severest penalties but they are armed with a formidable array of immunities which includes the exemption from taxation as well as from capital punishment*. To the same favoured order is assigned in the later works the right of filling the panel of judges in the royal court of justice in a partial measure as well as the highest seat in the council of ministers. Above all the Brāhmaṇa has the God-given right of spiritual teaching and of guardianship of the Sacred Law which embraces every section of the community together with every act of their lives. The King's Chaplain (purohita), in particular, has not only the task of ministering to the spiritual needs of his master, but he also stands in the front rank of State officials, for to him belongs the function of warding off by means of his charms and spells the dangers threatening the safety of the king and the kingdom. It is remarkable that much of these ideas of the Brāhmaṇa's social and civic status is implicitly accepted in the systems lying outside the Brahmanical canon. But however high the pretensions of the Brāhmaṇa might be carried, the essential incompatibility of his func-

* Cf. Gaut. VIII^c 12-13; Baudh. I, 10, 18, 17; Apast. II 10, 10, etc.

tions with those of the ruling and the fighting Kṣatriya was seldom, if ever, lost sight of. The Arthasāstra works, which are in essence practical manuals of statecraft, merely emphasise this divergence by their significant exclusion of the purohita from the list of component factors (aṅgas) of government (rājyam). Thus the Brāhmaṇas did not monopolise the position of vantage with respect to the other classes, but they shared this privilege with the Kṣatriya. Turning to another point, we have to observe that the king who was the Kṣatriya par excellence was not held to be an irresponsible despot. In the system of the Brahmanical canon which forms the groundwork of the whole, the king was indeed entrusted with the highest executive functions. But the concept of the Sacred Law (dharma) which claimed to bind every section of the community involved a complete separation of these functions from the function of interpreting the Law which was reserved for the Brāhmaṇas. Further the rules of the Law which derived their origin from Divine Revelation embodied in the Vedas imposed upon the king a bundle of duties whose observance was enforced by the highest moral and spiritual sanctions.* Among these duties was reckoned that of respecting the traditional rights of the individuals as well as of collective groups,—rights which were indeed invested with an imperishable authority by their inclusion in the Sacred Canon. The Brāhmaṇa canonists, for instance, lay down with scrupulous care the heads of the government revenue as well as the proportion payable under each head, and they

* Cf. K. P. Jayaswal (*Calcutta Weekly Notes*, Vol. XVI, pp. xix-xxi; *Introduction to Hindu Polity*, pp. 17-18).

mention classes of people that are altogether to be exempted from taxation.* Further, the canonical writers require the king to respect the customs of diverse communal units and even to give legal effect to the rules passed by such bodies.†

Such were the types of polity that dominated the stage in ancient India and it is not too much to state that their principal features shaped much of the Hindu political thought. Thus the theories concerning the nature and conditions of republican States ~~form~~^{form} a small but by no means insignificant chapter in the history of Hindu speculation. But by far the largest body of political ideas of the Hindu writers is concerned with the monarchies. (The Hindu political theory, indeed, is essentially the theory of the monarchic State.) The monarchies, however, which formed the norm and type of polity in the systems of the Hindu

* The constitutional significance of the rules of taxation in the Brahmanical canon was first pointed out by Mr. K. P. Jayaswal (*Introduction to Hindu Polity*, Modern Review, Calcutta, May-September, 1913). We may quote here the disappointing example of two other ancient peoples showing how a complete void in the theory of taxation resulted from the absence of individual rights with reference to the State. "The whole constitution of the societies of Greece and Rome," says Prof. Bastable (*Public Finance*, p. 17), "was based on conceptions directly opposed to those under which our modern doctrines have been formed. With them the State was placed above and before the individual, who was bound to sacrifice himself unreservedly for his country. To persons holding such a belief the question of just taxation would appear to be of trifling importance."

† Cf. Gautama's Dharmaśāstra XI 20-21: "The laws of countries, castes, and families, which are not opposed to the (sacred) records, have also authority. Cultivators, traders, herdsmen, moneylenders, and artizans, (have authority to lay down rules) for their respective classes." S. B. E. Vol. II, p. 234." For a historical and critical survey of this subject, vide R. C. Majumdar, (*Corporate life in Ancient India*, p. 6 ff.),

thinkers were ordinarily small States comprised in the traditional maṇḍala, for it was only in exceptional cases, as in the system of the Buddhist canon, that the office of the Emperor was treated as a topic of speculation. Further, the high position occupied by the Brāhmaṇa as well as the Kṣatriya had its reflection in the doctrine of joint lordship of these powers over the rest. This in its turn became the occasion for a remarkable group of theories regarding the mutual relations of the above classes. (The Hindu theories of kingship, lastly, were a product of the rights and duties associated with this office. Thus the system of individual and communal rights with reference to the State seems to have given rise to what may be called the fee-theory of taxation, according to which the revenue was the price paid by the subjects to the king for the privilege of protection.) This famous maxim underlay the theories of kingship in the Buddhist as well as in the Brahmanical canon : it gave the cue to the Buddhist theory of Social Contract which was distinguished by its remarkable insistence upon the respective rights and duties of the king and the subjects, and it was used to counteract the consequences of the doctrine of Divine creation of the king and respectful submission of the subjects laid down in the Brahmanical canon. ✓

We have endeavoured to describe the salient features of Hindu political thought following from the peculiar conditions of the land and character of its people. It now remains to observe that the historical treatment of this body of ideas is subject to the limitations imposed by the dominant characteristics of Hindu literary craftsmanship. We have to mention,

in the first place, the general tendency of the Hindu writers to connect their works with schools and systems instead of making these the expression of their own minds. Indeed it appears that the personality of the individual is in this case merged in the common tradition and collective unity of the school. Thus in the field of political thought it is the Vedic theological schools and the schools of the Sacred Tradition (Smṛiti) as well as those of the Buddhist canon and the secular Arthaśāstra, that have been the nurseries of the most copious and original ideas. On the other hand, individual authors as such have made a relatively small contribution to the common stock of thought. Further, these writers are in most cases so enveloped in a mist of obscurity that they are no better than names. ✓ This general tendency towards the preponderance of schools is no doubt connected with an essential feature of Hindu culture, consisting in its emphasis of the communal consciousness at the expense of individual experience. ✓ Allied to this tendency is another characteristic feature of Hindu literature, namely, the indefiniteness of its chronology. It is indeed a striking fact that notwithstanding the immense strides that have been taken in the study of Indian antiquities, the dates of most of the literary compositions are still open to serious divergences of opinion among scholars. A typical instance is furnished by the political treatise of Kāmandaka which has been assigned no less than three distinct dates * ranging from the third to the

* 3rd or 4th century A. D. (Jacobi, quoted in I. A. 1912); 6th century A. D. (I. A. 1912); 7th century A. D. (I. A. 1911).

seventh centuries A. D. In other cases, as in the classical instance of the works of the Brahminical sacred literature, the utmost exertions of scholars have succeeded merely in fixing the dates within the limits of two or even more centuries. It is obvious that in these circumstances a strict chronological arrangement is out of the question. It therefore becomes necessary to study the subject in the order of development of parallel schools and systems, and to rest the whole upon the framework of broad chronological divisions representing successive stages of its growth. Another result of the twofold tendency which has been noticed above, is that we are driven to interpret the Hindu theories of the State ordinarily without reference to the special conditions of time, space and personal experience, in which they doubtless had their origin.

Such, then, are the lines along which the methodical treatment of Hindu political theories has proceed. We have, in conclusion, to add a few words concerning the dates of the various original authorities that have been utilised in the preparation of this volume. The beginnings of political speculation among the Hindus, it will be observed later, occur in the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. Regarding the dates of these works, the opinions of scholars vary so widely that it is impossible to mention one commanding general acceptance. On the whole, however, it appears desirable to place the works in question in the latter half of the second millennium before Christ and the earlier half of the

first.* The two following stages in the history of Hindu political thought, those of growth and maturity, are represented by a rich variety of systems consisting of the Brahminical Dharmasūtras as well as the Manusamhitā and the Mahābhārata, the Buddhist canonical and post-canonical treatises, and the literature of Arthasāstra. The Dharmasūtras are assigned by Prof. Jolly to the fourth, fifth and sixth, centuries before Christ.† The Manusamhitā is placed by Bühler in the period between the second century B. C. and the second century A. D. ‡ The Mahābhārata, in the opinion of a leading Western authority, belongs to the period from the second century B. C. to the second century A. D., or with a wider margin, from the fourth century B. C. to the fourth century A. D. § The Pali Buddhist canon for the most part falls within the limits of the fourth century B. C. || The only important post-canonical work of the Buddhists which is treated in this volume is the Chatuḥśatikā of Āryadeva assigned to the second century A.D. ¶ The Arthasāstra of Kauṭilya

* Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Index*, Preface, pp. viii-ix.

† *Recht und Sittlichkeit*, pp. 3-7 (quoted, R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, Preface, p. iii).

‡ S. B. E. Vol. XXV, Introduction, p. cxvii.

§ E. W. Hopkins, Art. Mahābhārata in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VII, p. 325; cf. *Ibid*, *Great Epic of India*, pp. 307-308.

|| Vide Oldenberg and Rhys Davids, S. B. E. Vol. XIII, Introduction, p. xxiii; Rhys Davids, S. B. E. Vol. XI, General Introduction, pp. xix-xx.

¶ Vide Preface to Mm. Haraprasād Śāstri's edition of the *Chatuḥśatikā*.

is ascribed by the unanimous literary tradition of the Hindus to the famous minister of the founder of the imperial Maurya dynasty (acc. circa 322 B. C.). This view, however, while accepted by some Western scholars, has been rejected by others.* In the present work we have, without pinning our faith either to the Hindu tradition or to its Western criticism, placed the work at about the end of the fourth century before Christ. Hence the early schools and authors of the Arthasāstra have been traced back to the immediately preceding period. The last stage in the evolution of Hindu political theories is marked by the treatises ascribed to Kāmandaka, Brihaspati and Śukra, the Jaina works on polity and law, as well as the later Brahminical canon consisting of the minor Smritis and the Purāṇas, the commentaries on the Smritis and the Digests of the Sacred Law. The work of Kāmandaka, as we have mentioned above, is still a chronological puzzle, but it may be placed with confidence in the period from 400 A. D. to 600 A. D. The Brihaspatisūtras is essentially an archaic work, but one of its historical allusions, it will be seen later, brings down its date in its existing form at least to the twelfth century A. D. Like the work of Kāman-

* Hillebrandt held the view that the Arthasāstra was produced by a school of Kauṭilya's disciples. His arguments were controverted by Prof. Jacobi (vide the English translation of the original German article in I. A. June—July 1918). Jacobi's view in its turn is rejected by Prof. A. B. Keith who holds (J. R. A. S. 1916, pp. 130-137) that the Arthasāstra was written by one of Kauṭilya's followers.

daka the Śukranītisāra is of uncertain date, but reasons will be shown in the proper place for putting it down in the late mediaeval period. Of the Jaina works with which we are concerned, the Nītivākya-mritam is an aphoristic treatise written by Somadeva who was the *protege* of a feudatory Chief subject to a Western Indian potentate Kriṣṇa III (fl. 10th century A. D.). The Laghu Arhannīti was written by the well-known Jaina scholar and divine Hemachandra (1089-1173 A.D.) at the behest of his royal patron Kumārapāla of Guzerat. As regards the later Brahminical canon, the minor Smritis are assigned by Prof. Jolly dates ranging from the fourth to the seventh centuries A. D.* To the same period belong the larger Purāṇas in their existing form. Of the great commentators on the Smritis, Medhātithi Vijnāneśvara and Aparārka belong, as will be shown in the sequel, to the tenth and the eleventh centuries after Christ, while Mādhava distinguished himself as the minister of the first king of the famous House of Vijaynagar in the early part of the 14th century. The two mediaeval Digests of the Sacred Law that have been taken up for examination in this work are the Bhagavantabhāskara and the Viramitrodaya. Both of these are voluminous works dealing with the manifold branches of Hindu law and ritual (āchāra). We are concerned with their political sections alone which are styled the Nītimayūkha and the Rājanītiprakāśa respectively.

* *Recht und Sitte*, pp. 21, 23, 27, 28 (quoted, R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, Preface, p. iii).

The author of the former work, Nīlakaṇṭha, is said to have flourished about 1600 A. D.*, while Mitra-miśra who wrote the latter treatise lived at the court of the Central India Rāja Vīrasimha who is chiefly remembered in history as the murderer of Abul Fazl, the minister of Akbar. †

* Mayne, *Hindu Law and Usage*, 7th edition, p. 29.

† Cf. West and Bühler's *Digest*, p. 22, quoted, *Ibid* p. 29.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST PHASE—FROM THE RIGVEDA TO THE UPANIŞADS.

The original social and political institutions of the Indo-Aryans—The doctrine of the king's divinity in the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmanas—Theory of the king's rule by virtue of his divine nature—Transformation of the Indo-Aryan tribal society into the political community—Theory of limitation of the king's and the priest's powers—Doctrine of the origin of divine kingship of Indra—Dogma of joint lordship of the Brāhmanas and the Kṣatriyas—Theories of the mutual relations of Brāhmanas and Kṣatriyas as well as of the 'purohita' and the king—The concept of Law (dharma) in the Upaniṣads.

The starting-point of the Hindu political ideas is to be discovered in the collection of hymns and prayers forming the earliest literary monument of the Indo-Aryans, the Rigveda Samhitā. In this work is embodied a number of doctrines like the divinity of the king and the divine creation of the social classes, which formed later, in the Yajus Samhitās and the Brāhmanas, the basis of the earliest speculations of the Hindus concerning the phenomena of the State.

It would thus appear that the early history of Hindu political thought was comprised in the oldest literature of the Sacred Canon and intertwined with its concepts. Nevertheless this must have been the natural offshoot of the social and political insti-

tutions of the people at the dawn of their history. It is therefore desirable to present a preliminary survey of the primitive condition of the Indo-Aryans before proceeding to consider their theories of the State. ✓ The Rigveda shows the Indo-Aryans to be passing through a stage of transition: the tribal society is being transformed into the aggregate of tribes or the 'Folk.' It is with this earlier stage that we are concerned in the present place. The Rigveda specifies and describes a number of tribes that are included within the Aryan pale. ✓ Such are the Purus, the Bharatas, the Tritsus, the Yadus, the Gandhāris, the Uśīnaras, the Anus and the Druhyus. Further, the Rigveda has preserved a picture, though traced in dim outlines, of the constitution of the tribal society in its time. ✓ The generic term 'jana' was applied to a tribe or people. ✓ The 'jana' was divided into a number of social groups called 'viś,' but the division of the 'viś' into a number of 'grāmas' is doubtful, since the 'grāma' might comprise different 'viścs,' or coincide with a 'viś,' or contain only a part of a 'viś.' The 'viś,' moreover, might mean either a territorial division, or else a communal group.* The government of each tribal unit was normally vested in a monarch (rājan). It has indeed been held that oligarchical forms of government were not unknown among the Indo-Aryans.† But this view has been challenged by others on the ground that the passage bearing on

* *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, pp. 269-270 (correcting Zimmer, *Alt. Leben*, pp. 159-160). Also compare *Ibid* I 245; II 306.

† Zimmer, *op. cit.* pp. 176-177 (quoted, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 216).

this question means merely that the nobles could be called rājan.* There can, however, be no reasonable doubt that the normal constitution prevailing among the Indo-Aryans was a monarchy in which the king's power was checked by the tribal assemblies (sabhā and samiti). The tribal society, moreover, was divided at an early period into a number of classes. The earliest and the most fundamental division that arose in its midst was undoubtedly the distinction between the conquering Aryans and the conquered aborigines (Dasyus or Dāsas). The division into the four standard classes of Hindu society, however, occurs in one of the admittedly latest hymns of the Rigveda, while in other parts even the titles of these are seldom mentioned. It was therefore believed at one time that the division into castes was unknown in the Rigveda and was introduced in later times.† This theory has been rejected at the present day in view of the fact that the Rigveda itself points to the presence of all the essential elements of the caste system of later times.‡

Such is a brief outline of the primitive institutions

* *Vedic Index*, Vol. II. p. 216. The authors of this work disprove (op. cit. p. 210) Zimmer's theory of the patriarchal organisation of the Indo-Aryans by pointing to their position as invaders in a hostile territory and by quoting the parallel examples of the Aryan invaders of Greece and the German invaders of England.

† Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. I pp. 239-295; Zimmer, *Alt. Leben*, pp. 185-203. For an admirable summary of their arguments, vide *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, pp. 248-249.

‡ *Vedic Index*, Vol. II p. 81; *ibid* pp. 250-251. Cf. Oldenberg, *Z.D.M.G.*, LI (translated in I.A., November—December 1920).

of the Indo-Aryans as reflected in the Rigveda, and these form the historical background of the theories of the State that were first formulated by the Hindu thinkers. It is convenient to begin our description of these theories with the view of the king's relations to his subjects. ✓ The Indo-Aryan king indeed is invested from the first with divine attributes. Already in the Rigveda, in a hymn attributed to Trasadasyu, king of the Purus, the royal sage sings, "Twofold is my empire, that of the whole Kṣatriya race, and all the immortals are ours: the Gods associate me with the acts of Varuṇa: I rule over (those) of the proximate form of man. I am the king Varuṇa; on me (the gods) bestow those principal energies (that are) destructive of the Asuras; (they) associate me with the worship of Varuṇa. I rule over (the acts) of the proximate form of man. I am Indra, I am Varuṇa, I am those two in greatness: (I am) the vast, profound, beautiful heaven and earth: intelligent, I give like Twastri animation to all beings: I uphold earth and heaven." The address is continued in the same strain through the three following stanzas, but it is unnecessary to quote them here. In the closing stanzas, Trasadasyu describes himself as resembling the God Indra and as a demi-god (araddha-deva).* ✓ In this striking hymn, it will be observed, the king compares and nearly identifies himself with the two leading deities of the Vedic pantheon. Such statements could hardly have occurred in the Rigveda, had they been completely out of tune with the sentiments of the time.

✓ In the Atharvaveda the conception of the kingly divinity is inculcated in the form of a general doctrine. In one of its hymns, intended in the ritual book to accompany the consecration of the king, occurs the following passage. "Him approaching all waited upon (pari-bhūṣ); clothing himself in fortune, he goes about (car), having own brightness; great is that name of the virile (vṛṣan) Asura; having all forms, he approacheth immortal things."* This stanza is copied from a verse of the Rigveda † addressed to the god Indra. ✓ It is safe to conjecture that the transference of the divine epithets to the human subject involves a conscious attempt to identify the king with the God. ✓ Further, the extract just quoted seems to refer directly to the "divinity that doth hedge a king." For it applies to the king the phrase the name of the 'virile Asura' (asurasya nāma), which in the original hymn corresponds with a term (asuryam) meaning the divinity in which the gods clothe themselves. ‡

✓ In the Yajus Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas the king's divinity is pre-eminently associated with his participation in the great political sacrifices. ✓ Thus the Śat. Br., § in the course of its exposition of the Vājapeya and the Rājasūya, repeatedly identifies the royal sacrificer with the god Indra. || ✓ Further, it describes two of the component rites of these grand

* Av. IV. 8, H. O. S. Vol. VII, p. 157.

† Rv. III, 38. 4.

‡ Vide Whitney's footnote, loc. cit.

§ Abbreviations used in this chapter:—Taitt. Sam. = Taittirīya Samhitā; Śat. Br. = Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa; Taitt. Br. = Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa; Ait. Br. = Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.

|| V. 1. 3. 4; 1. 4. 2; 2. 5. 3.

ceremonies as making the sacrificer identical with the god Prajāpati. Another rite of the Vājapeya, which involves the mounting of the sacrificial post, is made the occasion of the utterance of the following prayer by the sacrificer and his wife: 'We have become Prajāpati's children'.† Yet another rite of the Vājapeya, that of consecration of the sacrificer by the priest, is declared to have the result of making the sacrificer the equal of Brihaspati, and it involves a direct intimation to the gods by the priest that the sacrificer has become one of them.‡ In the Rājasūya rite of adoration of the king, the priest is made to utter the words, "Thou art Mitra! Thou art Varuṇa!" Afterwards, there occurs a dialogue between the king and the four priests assembled on his four sides, in the course of which the former addressing the latter is greeted in return as Brahman priest, Savitri, Indra, and Varuṇa.§

A feature of these identifications with the gods is that the king or the Kṣatriya is normally connected with the god Indra, just as the Brāhmaṇa is connected

* V. 2. 1. 24; 3. 4. 23.

† V. 2. 1. 11. With this expression may be compared the titles of 'Sons of Horus' and 'Sons of Heaven' assumed by the rulers of ancient Egypt and China respectively.

‡ Śat. Br. V. 2. 2. 14-15: 'I consecrate thee N. N., with the supreme rulership of Brihaspati'! therewith he mentions the (Sacrificer's) name: he thus makes him attain to the fellowship of Brihaspati, and to co-existence in his world. He then says, 'All-ruler is he, N. N.! All-ruler is he, N. N.!' Him, thus indicated, he thereby indicates to the gods: 'Of mighty power is he who has been consecrated; he has become one of yours; protect him!' thus he thereby says." S. B. E. Vol. XL p. 39.

§ Taitt. Sam. I. 8. 16. A variant form of this ceremony is described in the Śat. Br. (V. 4. 3. 27).

with the god Brihaspati. Thus the Taitt. Sam., explaining a rite of making offerings to Indra and Brihaspati, states that the Rājanya (Kṣatriya) is connected with Indra while Brihaspati is the holy power (Brahman).* The Śat. Br., in the course of its dogmatic exposition of the Vājapeya, repeatedly identifies the Erāhmaṇa and the Rājanya (Kṣatriya) with the gods Brihaspati and Indra, by equating them in each case to the common factors Brahman (priesthood or priestly dignity) and Kṣatra (ruling power) respectively.† Describing the Rājasūya the same work declares in another place that Indra is the sacrificer while men belong to Viṣṇu.‡

It appears from the above that the king's divinity is derived from a twofold title—as a member of the ruling class, and as a participator in the omnipotent sacrificial ceremonies. As the Śat. Br. remarks in a passage purporting to explain one of the component rites of the Rājasūya, “The sacrificer is Indra;—he is Indra for a twofold reason, namely because he is a Kṣatriya and because he is a sacrificer”.§ It deserves, however, to be specially remarked that the king was not alone in being ranked as a god. The passages just cited show that like him the Brāhmaṇa was habitually regarded as a god. Indeed the status of divinity was not the exclusive privilege of a single individual, or even of a single class. It was held to belong to all persons entitled to the performance of

* II. 4. 13.

† V. 1. 1. 11; 1. 5. 2-3, 4-5, 8-9, 11-12.

‡ V. 2. 5. 3.

§ V. 4. 3. 4; repeated, Ibid 7; S. B. E., Vol. XLI, pp. 98-99.

the Śrauta sacrifices. This is apparent from the dogmatic exposition of a ceremony forming an essential preliminary to the sacrificial act. The Dīkṣā or Initiation is declared in the Brāhmaṇas to have the result of raising the sacrificer to the level of the gods. Thus a passage of the Śat. Br. states, "He who is consecrated, truly draws nigh to the gods, and becomes one of the deities,"* while in another passage it is stated, "He who is consecrated indeed becomes both Viṣṇu and a sacrificer; for when he is consecrated he is Viṣṇu; and when he sacrifices, he is the sacrificer."† Of a similar import is the direction in the Śat. Br. requiring the priest to address the consecrated person as Brahman, and invoking the divine protection on his behalf, because he is one of the gods. It is expressly laid down in this connexion that the same form of address should be uttered by the priest, even with respect to a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya sacrificer.‡

We have endeavoured to trace the history of the doctrine of the King's divinity in the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. It is however only in the latter works that this dogma is held to justify the king's authority over his subjects. The point is fore-

* III. 1. 1. 8; repeated Ibid III. 2. 2. 10; 2. 2. 19; 2. 2. 22.

† III. 2. 1. 17.

‡ Śat. Br. III. 2. 1. 39-40; "Thereupon some one calls out, 'Consecrated is this Brāhman, consecrated is this Brāhman: ' him, being thus announced, he thereby announces to the gods: 'Of great vigour is this one who has obtained the sacrifice; he has become one of yours; protect him!' this is what he means to say. * * * Wherefore let him address even a Rājanya or a Vaiśya as Brāhman, since he who is born of the sacrifice is born of the Brāhman (and hence a Brāhmaṇa)" S. B. E. Vol. XXVI, p. 35.

shadowed in a passage of the Taitt. Sam. purporting to explain the nature of one of the so-called especial (ahīna) sacrifices. It is there declared that the priest should make offerings to the gods Agni, Soma, Indra, and Varuṇa, on behalf of a person who is mutually at variance with his fellows. The result of this act is thus stated, “So him becoming Indra, his fellows recognise as superior; he becomes the best of his fellows.”* This passage evidently seeks to base the king’s authority upon his divinity which is attained through the omnipotent sacrifice. The Brāhmaṇas mark a further advance upon the theory of Divine Right. It is indeed in these works that we can trace the beginnings of true political speculation among the Hindus. How is it, ask the authors, anticipating a famous question put centuries later into the mouth of king Yudhiṣṭhira in the Mahābhārata, that the king who is One rules over his subjects who are Many? In one place indeed the answer is given in the stereotyped dogmatic fashion of the Brāhmaṇas. There the Śat. Br., describing one of the rites of the Horse-sacrifice, states, “One additional (oblation) he offers, whence one man is apt to thrive amongst (many) creatures (or subjects)”†. Another passage of the same work answers the question in a wholly different fashion. The Rājasūya comprises a rite in which the Kṣatriya has to shoot to a certain distance with an arrow. Explaining the meaning of this rite the Śat. Br. states, “And as to why a Rājanya shoots, he the Rājanya, is the visible representative of Prajāpati

* II. 2. 11. 6, H. O. S. Vol. XVIII, p. 160.

† XII. 1. 3. 8, S. B. E. Vol. XLIV, p. 284.

(the lord of creatures) : hence, while being one, he rules over many."* This passage is of great interest in the history of Indian political thought, as it seems to enunciate for the first time a doctrine which became the cornerstone of the theories of kingship in the later canonical works, namely, that of the king's rule by virtue of his divinity.

We may pause here to describe one important limitation involved in the above theory of Divine Right. In the passages quoted above from the Vedic *Sāmhitas* and the *Brāhmaṇas* it will be observed that the king is never declared to be a god by virtue of hereditary descent. The king, then, has no indefeasible hereditary right following as a corollary from his divinity. Indeed, the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, purporting to explain the great ceremonies of royal consecration, distinctly affirm the human origin of the king. We shall see in a future chapter how the denial of the indefeasible right of the king becomes a cardinal feature of the theories of Divine Right formulated in the later canon.

Such was the famous theory of the nature of the king's office which was formally proclaimed in one of the *Brāhmaṇas*. The rise of this theory seems to

† V. 1. 5. 11, The original passage has *pratyakṣatanāṃ* which Sāyaṇa explains as *pratyakṣatamam rūpam*. Eggeling (S. B. E. Vol. XLI, p. 25) translates the first part of the above passage as "And as to why a Rājanya shoots, he, the Rājanya, is most manifestly of Prajāpati."

* Cf. Śat. Br. V. 3. 3. 12 : "Quicken him, O gods, to be unrivalled!—he thereby says, 'Quicken him, O gods, so as to be without an enemy;' * * * 'him, the son of such and such (a man), the son of such and such (a woman),' whatever be his parentage, with reference to that he says this * * *"

S. B. E. Vol. XLII, pp. 71-72.

have synchronised with the completion of a general change in the Indo-Aryan social organisation. This was nothing less than the transformation of the original tribal society into the political community, or the State. The steps leading to this momentous development may perhaps be discovered by piecing together the fragments of evidence from the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, and by interpreting them on the analogy of kindred changes among other peoples. (Already in the Rigveda we mark a tendency towards union of the small tribal units into larger aggregates. A hymn of this work * celebrates the well-known horse-sacrifice (aśwamedha) ceremony, which was associated in the later canon with the office of the Emperor. Further, the Rigveda mentions titles indicating the position of the overlord, and implying a higher status than that of the mere king (rājan). Such are the terms śamrāj, ekarāja and adhirāja, the first of which is likewise used as an honorific designation of the leading deities of the Vedic pantheon like Indra and Varuṇa. † (The institution of overlordship along with the imperial ceremony of Aśwamedha, obviously implies a more or less close political union of a number of tribes, and it may have occasionally led to tribal amalgamations. The Brāhmaṇa period witnessed the rise of permanent leagues of tribes bearing new names. Thus the Purus and the Bharatas are mentioned as separate tribes in the Rigveda. But in the Brāhmaṇas they are united into a common people bearing the historic designation

* Rv. I. 162.

† Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 24.

of the Kurus.* In a similar manner two other tribes called Turvaṣa and Krivi in the *Rigveda*, become merged in the Brāhmaṇas into the united Pañchāla people.†) Further, the Brāhmaṇas often join together the Kurus and the Pañchālas in such a manner as to suggest their amalgamation into one, single people.‡

The results of these tribal amalgamations which no doubt were symptomatic of a general change may be best understood in the light of the recorded history of a people that passed through the same experience as the Indo-Aryans. Describing the evolution of the social and political institutions of the ancient Teutonic tribes, Jenks writes, "The armies which swarm into the Roman Empire, the armies which invade Britain, are leagues of clans.....The most famous of the old Tacitean clans, the Chatti, the Chauci, the Cherusci, have disappeared, or been swallowed up in greater organisations. Their places are taken by new groups—Franks, Saxons, Alamanni—which are not ethnical names at all, but (and this is especially significant) names which inevitably suggest military organization The Franks comprise Salians, Sicambrians, Ampsivarians, Chamavians, Ribuarians. The Saxons include fragments of the Chauci and the Cherusci; the Alamanni are formed out of the Quadi, the Hermonduri, and other clans.

* *Vedic Index*, Vol I, pp. 167—168

† Vide Oldenberg, *Buddha* (English Translation by W. Hoey p. 401 ff.), and Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 317. Oldenberg (loc. cit) quotes the parallel case of the union of the Chamavi, the Sigamberi, and the Ampsivarii, into the composite race of the Franks.

‡ *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, pp. 165—166.

A new organism has swallowed up the old. But the new organism is not a mere enlargement of the old ; it is based on entirely different principles. The Clan has a natural leader ; the league of clans has none. And so the league of clans produces the war-chief, who may, perhaps, borrow the old Clan title of king, but whose proper designation among Teutonic peoples is 'heretoch,' or host-leader. This is the true character of the leaders of the Teutonic invasions. . . . But a military leader will naturally organise his army on other than Clan principles. . . . These privileged persons are simply royal officials, chosen for their military or administrative qualities. Many of them are of servile birth ; it is impossible that they should claim ancestral honours. The nobility of blood has been replaced by the nobility of the sword and the office. . . . The principle of selection for personal merit has wider results than the overthrow of a Clan nobility. It is responsible for what is, perhaps, the most vital difference between the Clan and the State. . . . The Germans of whom Tacitus writes conducted their warfare by *familix et propinquitates*. But the king in the time of the *Leges Barbarorum* dealt directly with the individual.* "The earliest notion of justice," the author continues, "as distinct from mere indiscriminate revenge, that we find among the Teutonic peoples, is undoubtedly, the blood-feud. . . . But when we first turn the search-light of history on the Teuton, he is found to be passing through and beyond the blood-feud. . . . To the blood-feud

* *Law and Politics in the Middle Ages*, p. 73-78.

then, succeeds the *wer* or money payment as compensation for the injury inflicted. . . . But two points in connection with the system of pecuniary compositions require careful attention. To begin with, it seems to have been a purely voluntary system. . . . In the second place, it was always admitted that there were some offences for which the money payment could not atone. . . . "These are our two starting points for the history of State justice. The king comes to the help of the Clan by compelling the avenger to accept the *wer*, and by compelling the offender to pay it. He likewise takes upon himself the punishment of bootless crimes."*

The Indian evidence fits in, on the whole, with a similar line of development of the Indo-Aryan tribal institutions. The Vedic king, indeed, figures from the first as the captain in war. Of the many allusions to the wars of the tribal king that occur in the *Rigveda*, it is enough to refer at this place to the celebrated fight of the ten kings against Sudās, king of the *Tritsus*.† It is significant that the king is described in the *Rājasūya* as the sacker of towns (*purām bhettā*).‡ It is, moreover, remarkable that Indra, the divine prototype of the earthly ruler, is pre-eminently distinguished as the fighter against the demon of drought, *Vritra*.§ (While it is difficult to trace any changes in the position of the Vedic king, it is possible to discover a gradual transformation of the order of nobles. The *Rājanyas* (afterwards called the *Kṣatriyas*) appear to

* *Ibid* pp. 100-105.

† *Rv.* VII. 18.

‡ Cf. *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 212.

§ Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 58-60.

have at first formed a hereditary ruling and fighting class. But this primitive nobility of blood was thrown into the shade by the rise of a band of officials, many of whom were especially connected with the royal household. The nucleus of these officers was apparently the group of king's clients (upastis), who are referred to in the Rigveda, and are described in the Atharvaveda as consisting, among others, of the chariot-maker (ratha-kāra), the smith (takṣan), the charioteer (sūta) and the troop-leader (grāmaṇi).* In the Yajus Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas these officers, along with others, are associated with the great political ceremonies. Thus the Rājasūya comprises a rite in which the sacrificial sword has to be passed round in succession among a number of persons who include the Sūta and the Grāmaṇi.† Another and a more important rite of the Rājasūya is the so-called Jewel-offerings (ratnahavīṃsi), in which the king has to make offerings to the gods at the houses of a number of persons called Jewels (ratnins) on the successive days. The list of these Jewels consists, according to the Śat. Br., of the Senāni (commander of the army), the Purohita, the sacrificer himself, the Queen, the Sūta (charioteer, or court minstrel and chronicler), the Grāmaṇi (headman or troop-leader), the Kṣattri (chamberlain), the Samgrahitri (charioteer,) the Bhāgadugha (carver), the Akṣāvāpa (keeper of dice), the Govikarta (hunter) and the Courier.‡ It is obvious from the

* Rv. X. 97. 23 ; Av. III. 5. 6. 7. Cf. *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 96.

† V. 4. 4. 15-20.

‡ V. 3. 1. A variant list occurs in the Taitt. Sam. (I 8. 9) and the Taitt. Br. (I. 7. 3).

above enumeration that the persons who are thus singled out for participation in the ceremony of royal consecration are, with the exception of the Queen, functionaries connected with the administration or with the royal household. In connection with the above ceremony, moreover, the Brāhmaṇas point directly to the fact that some of the persons mentioned were inferior in blood to the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas. Thus, according to the account of the Śat. Br. the king is required, immediately at the close of the 'Jewel-offerings', to perform two rites for expiating the act of 'putting those unworthy of sacrifice,—either Śūdras or whomsoever else,—in contact with the sacrifice.'* Thus (the Brāhmaṇas would seem to indicate the emergence of a nobility of service in the place of the old nobility of birth.) How powerful some of the new nobles were, will appear from the fact that the Śat. Br. declares the Sūta and the Grāmaṇī to be kingmakers (rājakrit), although not kings.† The history of the administration of justice among the Indo-Aryans, like the history of the nobility, appears to mark the gradual evolution of the State. The Rigveda, indeed, already points to the institution of money-compensation for offences instead of the old indiscriminate revenge or even blood-feud. One of its designations for a human being is

* Śat. Br. V. 3. 2. 2; Ibid 4. Commenting on the above passages, Sāyaṇa instances the commander of the army (Senāni) and others as Śūdras, and the huntsman (govikarta) and others as belonging to whatsoever low caste.

† Śat. Br. III. 4. 1. 7; XIII 2. 2. 18. Cf. Pañchavimsati Brāhmaṇa XIX. 4, which mentions a list of eight supporters (viras) of the king,—his brother, son, chaplain (purohita), queen (mahisī), the sūta, the grāmaṇī, the kṣatri and the samgrahitri.

'satadāya', meaning one whose wergeld is a hundred cows. But, at first, justice must have been administered by the family or the clan, instead of the State. In the Dharmasūtras, however, which belong to the immediately following period, the administration of justice is regarded as one of the principal duties of the king. This system, therefore, must have been thoroughly established by the close of the present period. (The Brāhmaṇas, indeed, contain sufficient hints pointing to the king's exercise of judicial functions.) Thus the Śat. Br., in the course of its dogmatic exposition of the Rājasūya sacrifice, mentions a rite as having the effect of guiding the king safely over judicial punishment, whence he becomes exempt from punishment.* The introduction of this special ceremony in the king's case would seem to imply that all his subjects were amenable to his jurisdiction. Further, the Śat. Br. describes another rite of the Rājasūya as having the result of making the king lord of the law, and it declares in this connection that the supreme state (paramatā),—which is one of the Vedic designations of sovereignty,—is that in which the people approach the king in matters of law.† This passage,

* Śat. Br. V. 4. 4. 7 : " They (viz. the Adhvaryu and his assistants) then silently strike him with sticks on the back ;— by beating him with sticks (daṇḍa) they guide him safely over judicial punishment (daṇḍabadha) : whence the king is exempt from punishment (adaṇḍya), because they guide him safely over judicial punishment." S. B. E. Vol. XLI, p. 108.

† Śat. Br. V. 3. 3. 9 : " For Varuṇa Dharmapati (the lord of the law) he then prepares a Varuṇa pap of barley : thereby Varuṇa, the lord of the law, makes him lord of the law ; and that truly is the supreme state, when one is lord of the law ; for whoever attains to the supreme state, to him they come in (matters of) law : therefore to Varuṇa Dharmapati." S. B. E. Vol. XLI, p. 71.

again would appear to hint at the king's sovereign jurisdiction over his subjects.

We have endeavoured above to describe the Vedic theory of the king's rule by virtue of his divine nature. It is now proper to consider an important limitation imposed by the Vedic canonists upon the king's authority over his subjects. (The Śat. Br., describing one of the central ceremonies of the Rājasūya, namely, that in which the sacrificer takes his seat upon the throne, states, "The king indeed is the upholder of the sacred law,* for he is not capable of all and every speech, nor of all and every deed; but that he should speak only what is right, and do what is right, of that he, as well as the Śrotriya (the Brāhmaṇa versed in sacred writ) is capable; for these two are upholders of the sacred law among men."† This passage evidently attempts to limit the king's powers by a reference to the moral nature of his functions. (According to it righteous conduct is the natural and necessary attribute of the king and the priest, since both of them are entrusted with the guardianship of the sacred law.)

We have next to consider a group of ideas concerning the origin of monarchy, which are characteristically treated in the Brāhmaṇas under a metaphorical guise, but which appear to contain the germs of the pointed and compact theories of later times. We shall begin with the short, but remarkable, picture of the condition of anarchy, which occurs in a passage of the Śat. Br. "Whenever there is drought, then the stronger seizes the weaker, for the waters are the law." † This

* V. 4. 4. 5. S. B. E. Vol. XLI. p. 106.

† XI. 1. 6. 24. S. B. E. Vol. XLIV. p. 18.

pithy and vivid description of the evil of anarchy was applied by the later writers to their view of the ('State of Nature' which preceded the advent of monarchy) and it was crystallized in the celebrated popular maxim called the Mātsyanyāya. (Apart from this account of the state of anarchy, the Brāhmaṇas lay down two views of the origin of the divine sovereignty of Indra.) The first occurs in a passage of the Taitt. Br. in connection with one of its elaborate accounts of cosmic creation. Prajāpati, it is there declared, made Indra the most inferior among the gods, as the youngest brother in a family is most inferior to the others. Then he sent away Indra to become the king (adhipati) of the gods. Indra, however, after being greeted by the gods, returned to Prajāpati, and begged from him the lustre (haras) belonging to the Sun, which at that time was possessed by Prajāpati. With some reluctance Prajāpati gave up his lustre to Indra, after making it assume the form of a gold ornament (rūkma). Thus Indra became the sovereign (adhipati) among the gods.* (According to this passage the sovereignty of Indra is derived entirely from the will of the Highest God, since he was originally inferior to all the gods. Further, the symbol of Indra's divine creation is the lustre in which he is enveloped. The king of the gods, in other words, rules by Divine Right. This view of the origin of the divine monarchy, it will be observed later, is transferred to the human king in the Mahābhārata as well as the Manusamhitā.)

✓ The theory of the creation of Indra's sovereignty by the highest of the gods fits in with the view of

* Taitt. Br. II. 2. 10. 1-2 with Śāyana's commentary.

kingship in the Brāhmaṇas, which, as we have seen, not only represent the monarch as a god in innumerable passages, but also derive his authority in one place from his divinity. (A somewhat different theory of the foundation of Indra's kingship is presented in a passage of the Ait. Br. introducing its description of the Great Unction (Mahābhiṣeka) ceremony.) The gods headed by Prajāpati said to one another, 'This one is among the gods the most vigorous, the most strong, the most valiant, the most perfect, who carries best out any work (to be done). Let us instal him to the kingship.' They all consented to perform just this ceremony (Mahābhiṣeka) on Indra."* In this passage it will be observed, Indra's sovereignty is sought to be derived from the election of the gods, Prajāpati himself figuring as the chief of the divine electors. (Further, the ground of Indra's election is declared to be his possession of the highest qualities of body and mind.† This version of the origin of monarchy is afterwards reproduced in the Buddhist canon, with the important addition of an original contract fixing the respective duties of the king and his subjects. It may, therefore, be held that the Brāhmaṇa anticipates in some measure the celebrated theory of ~~Soma~~ Contract of later times.

* Ait. Br. VIII. 4. 12, Haug's translation.

† The view of the elective origin of the divine sovereignty occurs in another passage of the Ait. Br. I. 1. 14. There it is declared that the gods and the demons fought with one another. The gods were beaten in all directions. Then they spoke to one another. 'It is because we have no king (arājatāya) that they are defeating us, let us elect a king.' Thereafter they created Soma king, and through his help obtained victory in all directions.

We have thus far endeavoured to describe the theories of the nature and the origin of the king's office, that are laid down in the Brāhmanas. It will now be our task to consider the views of the canonists concerning the status of the ruling class in general along with the priestly order in relation to the rest. The social system of the Indo-Aryans, as we have seen, involves from the first a division into four classes which were afterwards known as Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. Now the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmanas lay down doctrines of the origin of these classes, which involve their arrangement in an order of precedence. The earliest theory of class origins is contained in the celebrated and oft-quoted hymn in honour of the primeval giant (Puruṣa), which occurs in the last book of the Rigveda, and is reproduced in the Atharva as well as the Yajus Samhitās. Puruṣa, it states, has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand legs. He was born in the beginning, and with him the gods performed a sacrifice. His mouth became the Brāhmaṇa, his arms the Rājanya (Kṣatriya), his thighs the Vaiśya, and from his feet sprang the Śūdra. From his mind sprang the Moon, from his eye the Sun, from his mouth Indra and Agni, from his breath the god of wind. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the four quarters.* In this account of the origin of creation is obviously involved the dogma of precedence of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya by virtue of the creative act of the Deity. The point is explicitly brought out in an alternative

* Rv, X, 90 = Av, XIX, 6 = Vaj. Sam, XXXI, 1-6.

theory of social origins which occurs in a passage of the Taitt. Sam.) According to this view, the Brāhmaṇa was created from Prajāpati's mouth, and hence he is the chief. The Kṣatriya was produced from his breast and arms, and hence he is strong. From Prajāpati's middle the Vaiśya was created, and hence he is fit to be eaten, while the Śūdra was produced from the Creator's feet, and hence he is dependant on others and unfit for sacrifice." * Further, it has to be observed that the doctrine of precedence of Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya is sought to be justified in other passages on grounds independent of the dogma of their divine creation. Thus the Śat. Br. declares in one place that the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya precede but never follow the Vaiśya and the Śūdra, for otherwise there would ensue confusion between the good and the bad.† According to this passage, then, the gradation of classes is the reflection of their relative moral worth. Therefore the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya have a moral title of precedence over the other classes.'

We have now to consider how the above doctrine was developed in other passages of the Brāhmaṇas into the dogma of joint lordship of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya over the rest. In the passage of the Taitt. Sam. referred to above, the four classes are declared to correspond to as many separate categories of

* Taitt. Sam. VII. 1. 1.

† XIII. 4. 4. 13. Cf. Ibid V. 4. 4. 19. explaining the Rājāsūya rite of handing over the sacrificial sword to the Brāhmaṇa, the king and other persons, in succession: "And as to why they mutually hand it on in this way, they do so lest there should be a confusion of classes, and in order that (society) may be in the proper order." S. B. E. Vol. XLI, p. 111.

created beings.*^v The Brāhmaṇas, moreover, present alternative theories of the origin of society, which tend to exclude the lowest class from fellowship of the others, who alone are said to be created by the Supreme Deity. Thus according to a passage of the Taitt. Br. the Brāhmaṇas sprang from the gods and the Śūdras from Asuras (demons), while another passage declares the Śūdra to have sprung from non-existence.† A passage of the Śat. Br. mentions Prajāpati's creation of three triads, each of which is expressly stated to be co-extensive with the Universe. These comprise the series earth ether and sky, the Brāhmaṇa the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya, as well as the self the human race and the animals.‡ Another

* Taitt. Sam. VII. 1. 1; Prajāpati desired, "May-I have offspring. He meted out the Trivrit from his mouth. After it the God Agni was created, the Gāyatrī metre, the Ratnantara Sāman, of men the Brāhmaṇ, of cattle the goat; therefore are they the chief, for they were produced from the mouth. From the breast and arms he meted out the Panchadaśa Stoma. After it the God Indra was created, the Triṣṭubh metre, the Bṛihat Sāman, of men the Rājanya, of cattle the sheep. Therefore they are strong, for they were created from strength. From the middle he meted out the Saptadaśa Stoma. After it the All-gods as deities were created, the Jagatī metre, the Vairūpa Sāman, of men the Vaiśya, of cattle cows. Therefore are they to be eaten, for they were created from the receptacle of food. Therefore are they more numerous than others, for they were created after the most numerous of the Gods. From the feet he meted out the Ekaviṃśa Stoma. After it the Anuṣṭubh metre was created, the Vairāja Sāman, of men the Śūdra, of cattle the horse. Therefore these two, the horse and the Śūdra, are dependent on others. Therefore the Śūdra is not fit for the sacrifice, for he was not created after any gods." H. O. S. Vol. 19. pp. 557-558.

† I. 2. 6, 7; III. 2. 3. 9.

‡ Śat. Br. II. 1. 4. 11c; "Verily with 'bhūh'! (earth), Prajāpati generated the earth, with 'bhuvah'! (ether) the ether, with 'svah'! (heavens) the sky. As far as these worlds extend, so far

passage of the Śat. Br. goes further, and seeks to exclude even the Vaiśya from the fellowship of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya. Incomplete, it says, is he who is not either a noble or a domestic chaplain, while he who is either a noble or a domestic chaplain is everything.*

It is in these dogmas of the inherent impurity and imperfection of the two other classes and especially of the Śūdra, that we have to seek the true origin of the doctrine of the joint lordship of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya over both. This is laid down in a passage of the Śat. Br. which states that Brahma (priesthood) and Kṣatra (nobility) are established upon the people.†

In laying down the doctrine just stated that the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya exercise a joint authority over the people, the Brahmanical canonists are necessarily led to consider the mutual relations of these powers. Whatever might have been the case in the earlier period, the functions of the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas are sharply demarcated in the Brāhmaṇas. According to a passage of the Śat. Br., the nobility takes no delight in the priestly office and

extends this universe: with the universe it (the fire) is accordingly established. With 'bhūh'! Prajāpati generated the Brahman (priesthood); with 'bhuvah'! the Kṣatra (nobility); with 'svah'! the Viś (the common people). As much as are the Brahman, the Kṣatra and the Viś, so much is this universe: with the universe it (the fire) is accordingly established. With 'bhūh' Prajāpati generated the Self; with 'bhuvah' the (human) race; with 'svah'! the animals. As much as are the Self the (human) race, and the animals, so much is this universe: with the universe it (the fire) is accordingly established." S. B. E. Vol. XII, p. 296.

* VI. 6. 3. 12-13.

† XI. 2. 7. 16. •

spiritual lustre (Brahma) takes no delight in noble rank.* As regards the relative superiority of these classes, the dogma of the origin of society involves, as we have seen, the Brāhmaṇa's precedence over all the other classes by virtue of the will of the Creator. We have further seen that the ground of this superiority tended to be shifted from dogma to reason in the Brāhmaṇas.√ We may quote here some extracts bearing specifically upon the mutual relations of the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas. The Ait. Br. in the course of its exposition of the Rājasūya observes, "The Brahma certainly precedes the Kṣatra. For the king should think, when the Brahma is at the head, then my royal power would become strong and not to be shaken." † Similarly the Sat. Br., in the course of its explanation of the Rājasūya rite of handing on the sacrificial sword, observes that the king who is weaker than a Brāhmaṇa is stronger than his enemies. ‡ It follows from these passages that the Brāhmaṇa's precedence is necessary in the king's own interest, namely, the security of his power against his enemies.

(Proceeding further in the analysis of the relations of the ruling and the priestly classes with reference to each other, the Brāhmaṇas would appear, in the first place, to lay down the doctrine of co-ordination of these powers.) Thus the Sat. Br. in the course of

* XIII. 1. 5. 2-3; *Ibid* 5. In the ritual of the Rājasūya described in the Ait. Br. (VII. 19) the Kṣatriya is admitted into the sacrifice only on condition of exchanging his own weapons for those of the Brāhmaṇa.

† VI. 1. 1. Haug's translation, p. 497. Cf. *Ibid* 1. 4.

‡ V. 4. 4. 15. S. B. E. Vol. XLI p. 110.

its exposition of the Rājasūya makes the priest exclaim to the assembled multitude in two successive stages of the ceremony, "This man, O ye (people), is your king, Soma is the king of us Brāhmaṇas." * This passage is applied in the immediately following lines to justify the Brāhmaṇa's immunity from taxation, but it obviously carries within itself the notion that the priestly class is independent of the king. The Yajus Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, moreover, would appear to set forth two different views concerning the mutual relationship of these powers. The first is represented by a passage of the Taitt. Sam. which roundly declares the kingly power and the priestly power to be helpful to each other. † Some passages of the Brāhmaṇas, however, introduce us to the view of one primary power,—namely the sacerdotal—of which the other is a derivative. (Thus the Śat. Br. declares in one place that the priesthood (Brahma) is the conceiver and the nobility (Kṣatra) is the doer, for the god Mitra is intelligence and the god Varuṇa is will.) In the beginning the two were separate. Then Mitra, the priesthood, could stand without Varuṇa, the nobility, but Varuṇa could not stand without Mitra. "Whatever deed Varuṇa did unsped by Mitra, the priesthood, therein forsooth he succeeded not." Then Varuṇa invited the assistance of Mitra, promising to place him foremost. "Whatever deed sped by

* V. 3. 3. 12 ; Ibid 4. 2. 3. S. B. E. Vol. XLI, pp. 72, 95.

† Taitt. Sam. V. 1. 10. 3 : "Verily by means of the holy power he quickens the kingly power, and by the kingly power the holy power ; therefore a Brahman who has a princely person is superior to another Brahman ; therefore a prince who has a Brahman is superior to another prince." H. O. R., Vol. XIX p. 401.