

which is effected by its means"* . This important extract exhibits, we think, for the first time, the application of two principles in relation to the category of seven 'limbs.' These principles would be called, if we were to borrow Western equivalents, those of integration and differentiation. It follows from the above that Manu presents a completer conception of the organic unity of government than had occurred to his predecessors.

The theories of kingship in the canonical works with which we are here concerned involve, we think, the amplification in a greater or less measure of the principles jointly bequeathed by the early Arthasāstra teachers and the authors of the canonical Dharmasūtras. The author of the Mahābhārata, to begin with, reproduces, obviously for the purpose of justifying the royal authority, the earlier conception of the essential importance of the king's office. In chapter LXVII Bhīṣma, replying to one of Yudhiṣṭhira's questions, declares that the 'chiefest' duty of the subjects consists in the consecration of the king. A kingless State, he explains, is overcome by robbers : there virtue does not become settled, and the people devour one another. In a kingless State Bhīṣma goes on, fire does not convey libations to the gods, even the wicked do not prosper ; the two rob the one and many others rob the two ; he that is not a slave is made a slave ; the women are forcibly abducted. If the king, says Bhīṣma in concluding this part of his argument, did not exist in this world as a wielder of punishment, the stronger would

* IX 296-297, S. B. E. Vol. XXV, p. 395.

devour the weaker in the fashion of fishes living in the water*. The gist of the above passages may perhaps be expressed by saying that the happiness and indeed the existence of the people depend upon the king's office. In the following chapter Bhīṣma reproduces what purports to be the address of the sage Brihaspati to Vasumanas wherein, as we have seen in another place, both the evils attending the king's non-existence and the blessings following from his presence are described with great force.†

* Śāntiparvan, LXVII. 2, 3, 5, 14-15, 16.

† Supra, pp. 96-91. A similar conception of the extraordinary importance of the king's office occurs in chapter LXVII of the Rāmāyaṇa. There we are told how after the exile of prince Rāma and the death of king Daśaratha the Brāhmaṇas and the ministers approached Vaśiṣṭha, the family priest of the royal house of Ayodhyā. "The great king," said they, "is gone to heaven, Rāma again has betaken himself to the forest, the valiant Lakṣmaṇa also has accompanied Rāma. Both Bharata and Śatrughna have gone away to the city of Rājagriha in the Kaikeya kingdom to live in the delightful abode of their maternal uncle. Appoint a king over the Ikṣākus this very day, for this kingdom of ours would perish in the absence of a king." This prayer is supported by a passionate plea on behalf of monarchy. In a kingless State, it is said, the clouds do not sprinkle the earth with rain; the seeds are not sown; the son does not obey his father nor the wife her husband; there exists neither wealth nor family; truth does not prevail. There the Brāhmaṇa does not perform sacrifices, festivities and social gatherings do not take place; the girls decked with golden ornaments do not stroll to the gardens in the evening; the rich cultivators and herdsmen do not sleep with the doors of their houses unbarred; the merchants accustomed to wander long distances with rich wares do not travel with security; even the ascetic who is always in the habit of meditating on the Infinite Soul, does not stay; and the soldiers are powerless to defeat a foe. Such a kingdom is like a river without water, a forest without grass, and a herd of cattle without the herdsman. In such a kingdom nobody is one's own and the people constantly

Turning to the doctrine of divine nature of the king we have to observe that this is presented by our authors principally in connection with the remarkable, and as it seems to us, original theories of the creation of monarchy. These views, we are inclined to think, were formulated in the works we are now considering with the deliberate object of countering the tendencies inherent in the older theory of the king's origin. The Buddhist theory of contract, as we have observed in another place, tended to strengthen a notion already familiar to Hindu political theory, namely that the king was an official paid by his subjects for the service of protection.* Such a notion could not but be repugnant to those schools and teachers who upheld, as well in the canonical Dharmasūtras as in the secular Arthaśāstra, the king's office as the guarantee of individual and social existence. Kāuṭilya, as we have seen, was satisfied with a modified version of the Buddhist theory which he twisted to justify the king's authority and backed up with the doctrine of the king's divine nature. But his attempt was obviously a bold makeshift and nothing more. It was therefore neces-

devour one another in the fashion of fishes. Even those atheistical persons that are guilty of violating the established usage and have been punished by the king, give up fear and try to assert themselves. The king is the Truth, he is Virtue, he is the pedigree of the high-born, he is, as it were, the mother and the father; he surpasses by his excellent conduct the gods Yama, Kubera, Indra and Varuṇa. If the king did not establish the distinction between good and bad deeds, this universe, alas!, would be like darkness and no sound knowledge could exist.

* Supra, p. 121.

sary that new theories of the king's origin should be propounded, involving a higher basis for the king's office than the mere agreement of the people. Of such a nature, in our view, are the theories of the Mahābhārata and the Manusamhitā which, while based upon the ground-work of an antecedent state of nature, uniformly express, as we hope to show presently, the idea of the king's creation by Divine will.*

It will appear from the above that the theories of the origin of kingship as conceived by the authors with whom we are now dealing, were anti-popular in their origin, their object being, in other words, to support as against the anarchical tendencies of the theory of contract the principle of the king's authority. Let us consider these theories in some detail. The Manusamhitā describes the origin of kingship in the briefest outline. "For when these creatures being without a king dispersed in all directions, the Lord created a king for the protection of this whole (creation), taking (for that purpose) eternal particles of Indra, of the Wind, of Yama, of the Sun, of Fire, of Varuṇa, of the Moon, and of the Lord of Wealth (Kubera)."† This passage, it will be observed, begins with a reference to an original evil state of nature. But the author, instead of considering this like the

* The doctrines of divine creation of the king mentioned above appear to have found their ultimate support in the Brahminical theory relating to the creation of the world by a Supreme Being, just as the Buddhist theory of contract apparently found its resting-place in the conception of a natural world-order (dharma or niyama) independent of the Divine Will.

† VII, 3-4, S. B. E. Vol. XXV p. 216.

earlier writers as the prelude to a contract between the people and a human or a semi-divine being, introduces the Highest God as Himself creating the king out of His own will. The king, then, according to this view is, so far from being an official paid by the people for the service of protection, ordained by God to rule over his subjects. His rule, in short, rests not upon agreement but upon Divine ordination. The further bearing of the above passage upon the doctrine of the king's divinity will be more conveniently treated in another place.

The Mahābhārata has two distinct theories of the origin of kingship which are of a more elaborate and complex nature than the theory of the Manusamhitā. For these theories traverse at length the whole process of social evolution from its beginnings in the original state of nature, and involve the blending of the two ideas of divine creation and coronation-oath or popular agreement. It will be convenient to begin with the shorter of the two stories which is told by Bhīṣma in the course of his address, already referred to, relating to the 'chiefest' duty of the subjects. There he mentions, after describing what he conceives to be the evil consequences of the king's non-existence, "It was for this reason that the gods created the king." This idea of divine creation is developed by the speaker in greater detail in the following lines. People having no king in early times, we are told, met with destruction devouring one another as the larger fishes devour the smaller. They then assembled together and made compacts (samayāh) mutually undertaking to expel from their

midst persons guilty of abuse, assault, and connexion with other men's wives as well as those who would break the compact. Thus they lived by the terms of the compact for the purpose of inspiring confidence among all classes without distinction. Afterwards they collectively (*sahitāh*) approached the God *Brahmā*, being afflicted with sorrow. "Without a chief, O Lord," they said, "we are perishing. Give us a chief whom we shall worship in concert and who will protect us." The God appointed Manu to rule over them, but he would not at first accept them. "I fear," said he, "the sinful consequences of acts. Government, again, is a very difficult task, especially among men who are always deceitful in their conduct." The people, however, overcame his scruples by saying, "Don't fear. The sins will only devolve upon those who perform (the sinful acts). For the increase of your treasury we shall give you one-fiftieth of our animals and gold as well as one-tenth of grain. Of the spiritual merit that the people, well protected by the king, will acquire, the fourth part will belong to you." Thus coaxed, Manu made a tour round the world, striking terror into the hearts of all, and making them conform to their duties.*

The story of the origin of kingship that we have just described connects itself historically with the

* *Śāntipārvan* LXVII 17-32. 'Kartṛineno gamiṣyati' 'the sins will devolve upon the authors (of the sinful acts)' is the reading in the Calcutta edition. This is preferable to the reading 'vidhāsyāmo dhanam tava' of the South Indian recension, since the object of the people's address is clearly to quiet Manu's apprehension of sinful contamination.

individual figuring in Kauṭilya's version of the king's creation. The other story to which we have now to turn our attention is associated with the person who was remembered in Vedic tradition as the first consecrated ruler of men.* In chapter LIX of the Śāntiparvan Yudhiṣṭhira is introduced as asking R̥ṣiṣma two distinct questions, which are substantially as follows. How did the title of 'king' (rājan) come into existence, and why does one man rule over persons of great intelligence and valour, although he has the same physical organs and mental attributes, is subject to the same changes of birth and death and is equal in all respects to the others? The answer to these questions involves a complete account of the creation of the king's office and of the basis of his rule over his subjects. For the moment we are concerned with the former point alone. There was at first, says the hero, neither sovereignty nor sovereign, neither punishment nor punisher (naiva rājyam na rājāsinna cha daṇḍo na dāṇḍikah). At that time the people used to govern themselves by means of Justice or Righteousness (dharma). Afterwards however they became completely worn out and were assailed successively by the vices of intoxication, greed, wrath and self-indulgence. The world was disturbed, and the Vedas as well as Justice perished. The gods were affrighted, and they sought the protection of the Lord Brahmā. The great God created for their sake and for the good of the world a gigantic treatise consisting

* Cf. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa V 3.5.4: "Prithu, son of Veṇa, was consecrated first of men." S. B. E., Vol. XLI, p. 81.

of one hundred thousand chapters which treated the fourfold end of life—virtue, wealth, desire and salvation. This was called Daṇḍanīti and became the archetype out of which successive summaries were prepared by the gods Śiva and Indra and the sages Brihaspati and Śukra. Thereafter the gods approached Viṣṇu and implored Him to select a person deserving to occupy the highest place (śraiṣṭhyam) among mortals. The great God created by a fiat of his will a son produced out of his own lustre. This person however did not desire sovereignty, and he treated his authority as a trust (nyāsa). His fourth successor became skilled in policy and protected the people, while the next gained an empire, and became self-indulgent. Then came Veṇa who was killed by the angry sages for his tyranny. Out of his right arm, pierced by the great sages, came forth Prithu, handsome, fully armed, skilled in the Vedas and in the science of archery. He was enjoined by the gods and the great sages to follow the established laws (dharma) without fear or favour, and with strict control of his passions. The gods and the sages, moreover, proposed to him an oath (pratijñā) which he accepted in the following terms, “ I will constantly protect the earth in thought, word and deed, as if it were Brahman. I will carry out the established laws in accordance with daṇḍanīti. I will never act arbitrarily. The twice-born classes shall never be punished by me and the world shall be saved from the danger of inter-mixture of classes.” Prithu was consecrated by the Brāhmaṇas and the sages as well as by the gods including Viṣṇu

Himself. He was called king (rājan) because all his subjects were gratified (rañjitāh) by him, and he earned the title of Kṣatriya as he healed the wounds of the Bṛāhmaṇas. The eternal God Viṣṇu in person established his status by declaring that no one would transcend him. The divine Viṣṇu, moreover, entered the person of the king, and hence the whole universe worships the kings as if they are gods.*

Such are the two stories of the origin of kingship that are set forth in the Mahābhārata. The mythological atmosphere is patent in either case as also the curious blending of ideas and notions of an incongruous nature. Nevertheless the above extracts, it is hardly too much to say, mark the culmination of the Hindu theories of the king's origin. Let us analyse the leading ideas in these passages. In both, it will be observed, the starting-point is an original State of Nature which is so vividly described in the words of the latter extract, "naiva rājyam na rājāsinna cha daṇḍo na dāṇḍikah." While, however, this involves, in the first case, from the very start a dreadful condition of anarchy, it is presented in the second case as a preliminary condition of peace and righteousness followed by a period of growing degeneracy and accumulating evil. The first theory introduces immediately at the close of the anarchical state of nature a stage which, we think, has no parallel in Hindu political theory except in the passages of the

* Śāntiparvan LIX 5-136. Mr. K. P. Jayswal (*Calcutta Weekly Notes*, Vol. XVI p. xx, corrected and amplified, *Modern Review*, Calcutta, Vol. XI p. 193) was the first to discover in the above passage the two successive stages of the evolution of kingship, as conceived by the canonical author, as well as the formula of the coronation-oath,

Buddhist canon that have been quoted in another place.* This stage involves the formation by popular agreement of society without a political superior, in this approaching closely, to borrow the language of Western political philosophy, to the notion of a social contract as distinguished from a governmental pact. Passing to the immediately following stage it should be noticed that both the extracts attribute the king's creation,—and herein lies the essential difference of the Mahābhārata story from the older theories of the Buddhist canon and of the Arthasāstra,—to the will of the Supreme Deity. For while in the first story Manu is ordained by the god Brahmā to rule over the people, in the second Viṣṇu creates a mind-begotten son for the same purpose. Here the story might well have ended, but the author goes on to supplement this by importing notions having little or no affinity to that of divine creation. In the first case it is declared that the people made what may be called a one-sided contract with the king-designate, by which they relieved him from the responsibility for their own sins, while charging themselves to pay the royal dues. The king, then, it would seem, rules his subjects by the right of divine creation, which is reinforced by the voluntary agreement of the subjects. In the second case, Prithu who is the first true king and is the seventh lineal descendant of Viṣṇu's nominee has to accept an oath of observance of the established laws and institutions, and at the same time he is mentioned to have been not only ordained by Viṣṇu but animated by the God's essence.

* Supra, pp. 117-119.

From this it would appear to follow that the king, according to the author, while ruling by virtue of divine creation, is subject to the terms of his coronation oath.

In examining the theories of the king's origin as above described, we have found involved in them the notion of the king's divine nature. This point deserves to be treated in some detail. The teachers of the Arthaśāstra including even Kautilya imputed, as we have seen in another place, a kind of divinity to the king by metaphorically assimilating his functions to those of various specified deities. This view is not unknown to the authors whom we are now considering. Manu, for example, enjoins the king in one place to imitate the energetic action of eight specific deities, and he seizes the occasion to show how the king's acts resemble severally the functions of those deities.* Similarly Bhīṣma, in chapter LXVIII of the Śāntiparvan, asked as to why the king is called a god, quotes the long address of the sage Brihaspati in which, as we have observed before, the king is said to assume the forms of five deities according to the varying nature of his functions.† Yet the most characteristic pronouncement of the canonical authors of this period on the present point, and that which in their system bears directly upon the question of the mutual relations of the king and his subjects, is centred in the doctrine of the king's divine personality—a doctrine which, we can not help thinking, was deliberately introduced by these authors with the object of strengthening

* IX 303-311.

† *Supra* p. 95.

the principle of authority. (In Manu's theory of the king's origin, it will be observed, the king is stated to have been created out of the particles of eight guardians of the world.) The consequence of this act in investing the king with superhuman majesty is described in the immediately following lines. "Because a king has been formed of particles of those lords of the gods, he therefore surpasses all created beings in lustre; and, like the sun, he burns eyes and hearts; nor can anybody on earth even gaze on him. Through his (supernatural) power he is Fire and Wind, he Sun and Moon, he the Lord of justice (Yama), he Kubera, he Varuṇa, he great Indra." While Manu conceives the king to be formed out of eight guardians of the world, the author of the Śāntiparvan declares him, by way of justifying his authority, to have absorbed the essence of the god Viṣṇu,—a view which recalls the idea conveyed in a text of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.† In the passage bearing on this point, Bhīṣma, after answering Yudhiṣṭhira's first question regarding the origin of kingship, proceeds, as it seems to us, to answer the second query of the king, namely why the people submit to one man who is their equal in all respects. The Lord Viṣṇu, he says, entered the person of king Prithu, and hence the world bows down to one man as to a god. What reason is there, he asks, for the people's submission to one man except his divine quality

* VII 5-7, S. B. E. Vol. XXV p 217. With the last verse cf. Ibid V 96 where the king is held to be an incarnation of the same list of eight deities.

† V 1. 5. 14. cf. *supra*, pp. 32-33.

(*daivādrite guṇāt*)? A god, he continues, whose stock of spiritual merit is exhausted comes down upon earth from heaven, and is born as a king versed in the science of polity and as a man endowed with Viṣṇu's majesty. As he is established by the gods, no one transcends him and everybody submits to him. This capacity of ruling the earth does not accrue to him by his own merit. Meritorious acts lead to meritorious results, and hence mankind obeys the voice of one man who is equal to it.* In this case, it will be observed, the author categorically denies the king's authority to arise from his intrinsic qualities. He derives it on the contrary from the king's divine origin and nature, on the hypothesis of the king's creation by the god Viṣṇu and his incorporation of the god's essence.†

We have thus far endeavoured to show how the older ideas relating to the essential importance of the king's office and his divine nature were developed by the canonical writers of this period. As in the

* Śāntiparvan, LIX 128, 13^a, 133-136.

† We may consider in the present place certain current estimates of the Hindu doctrine of the king's divinity. Prof. Pramatha Nath Banerjea (op. cit. p. 71 and foot-note) holds on the authority of certain texts of the Śukranīti (I 30-34; Ibid 87) that in ancient India "only a righteous king was regarded as divine," and "the king was not a devatā but a nara-devatā." Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar (op. cit. p 130) virtually endorses the former statement and quotes one of Dr. Banerjea's texts (Śukra I 70) to prove that according to the Hindu theory "a king is a naradeva only so long as he is virtuous and he ceases to be so the moment he goes to the bad." Now however important Śukra's qualification of the older doctrine of the king's divinity might be, it is difficult to understand the grounds on which his view is held to represent as above the Hindu theory on the point in question. For Śukra's theory, so far as we

earlier case, these theories led as a logical corollary to the formulation of the doctrines of submission and obedience of the subjects. "Even an infant king," says Manu in one place, "must not be despised (from an idea) that he is a (mere) mortal; for he is a great deity in human form. Fire burns one man only, if he carelessly approaches it; the fire of a king's (anger) consumes the (whole) family, together with its cattle and its hoard of property." Again, he says, "The (man), who in his exceeding folly hates him, will doubtlessly perish; for the king quickly makes up his mind to destroy such (a man). Let no (man), therefore, transgress that law which the king decrees with respect to his favourites, nor (his orders) which inflict pain on those in disfavour." * Like Manu the author of the Śāntiparvan inculcates the submission of the subjects to their ruler. In chapter LXVII where Bhīṣma develops his view making the consecration of the king the 'chiefest' duty of the subjects, he says that the person who desires his own welfare should honour the king as he honours the god Indra. Again, he states that the people should respectfully salute the king as the disciples salute their preceptor, and they should wait upon him as the gods wait upon Indra, for he who is honoured by his own subjects is feared even

are aware, is peculiar to him and is not shared by the other Hindu authors. As for the contention that the king was not a 'devatā' but a 'nara-devatā', it is pointedly disproved by one of the concluding verses of chapter LIX of the Śāntiparvan which categorically states that the kings and the gods ever since Prithu's time have been declared by the sages to be equal (tato jagati rājendra satatam śabdītam budhaiḥ devāścha naradevāścha tuḥyā iti viśāmpate).

* VII 8; 13, S. B. E. Vol. XXV pp. 217-218.

by his enemies, while he who is not so honoured is overwhelmed by them : if the king is overwhelmed, all his subjects feel unhappy.*

We have mentioned above those ideas of the canonical authors of this period which, it appears, were meant by them to justify the king's authority over his subjects. Let us next consider what, if any, counteracting principles derived more or less from the same source were drawn by these authors into their common synthesis. We find that however much these writers stressed the duty of the subjects, they insisted, as before, upon the king's observance of the reciprocal duty of protection.† In some passages the duty

* Śāntiparvan LXVII 4,34-36.

† Cf. Śāntiparvan LVIII 1-4 where protection is declared to be the cream of the king's duties and is held to be particularly approved by seven specified teachers who are the authors of treatises on the science of polity. In the Manu-samhitā as well as the Śāntiparvan protection is frequently inculcated in the earlier fashion by means of moral and spiritual sanctions. Thus Manu in one place, while urging the king to punish thieves, compares (VIII 303) the king's protection of the subjects to the performance of a sacrifice, and he writes (VIII 306) "A king who protects the created beings in accordance with the sacred law and smites those worthy of corporal punishment, daily offers (as it were) sacrifices at which hundreds of thousands (are given as) fees." On the other hand Manu (VII 111-112) threatens the oppressive king with the loss of life, family, and kingdom. In the Śāntiparvan (LXXI 26-29) Bhīṣma, after declaring the king's protection of the subjects to be his highest duty, observes, "In a thousand years the king expiates the sin which he commits in one day by his failure to protect his subjects from fear. For ten thousand years the king enjoys in heaven the fruit of the merit which he acquires in a single day by just protection of his subjects." In other passages the canonical authors inculcate protection by making the king participate in the spiritual merits as well as demerits of his subjects. Thus Manu

of protection is brought into relation, as before, with the king's collection of taxes so as to imply that the former follows as a corollary from the latter.* Furthermore the theory of divine creation in the Manusamhitā while leading, as we have observed in another place, to the doctrine of submission and obedience of the subjects, suggests in its actual context that the king is liable to the divinely ordained

observes (VIII 304) in the context from which we have just quoted, "A king who (duly) protects (his subjects) receives from each and all the sixth part of their spiritual merit; if he does not protect them, the sixth part of their demerit also (will fall on him)." Yājñavalkya (I 333) similarly states that the king who justly protects his subjects obtains one-sixth of their merits, since the gift of protection is greater than all other gifts. In chapter LXXV 5-10 of the Śāntiparvan Bhīṣma, asked as to how the king may attain blissful regions, says that the king enjoys a fourth part of the spiritual merit earned by his well-protected subjects. On the other hand the king is liable to one-fourth or one-half or even the whole of whatever evil befalls the kingdom. From this the author draws the practical conclusion that the king who fails to recover wealth stolen by thieves should return its equivalent out of his own treasury.

* Cf. Manu (VII 144), "The highest duty of a Kṣatriya is to protect his subjects, for the king who enjoys the rewards just mentioned (viz. the taxes specified, Ibid 130-132; 137-139) is bound to (discharge that) duty"; Ibid IX 254: "The realm of that king who takes his share in kind though he does not punish thieves (will be) disturbed and he (will lose heaven"; Ibid VIII 307-308: "A king who does not afford protection, (yet) takes his share in kind, his taxes tolls and duties, daily presents and fines, will (after death) soon sink into hell. They declare that a king who affords no protection, (yet) receives the sixth part of the produce, takes upon himself all the foulness of his whole people"; Śāntiparvan CXI. 31: "An impotent Kṣatriya is the king who unjustly exacts his dues without fulfilling his duty of protection and he is unskilled in the expedients of policy"; Ibid CXXXIX 100; "(The king) should spend his taxes after collecting one-sixth (of the produce as) the same: he who does not properly protect his subjects is a thief among kings (pārthivataskarah)." Similarly

duty of protection.* Finally, it should be remarked that Bhīṣma in one passage, while answering the question relating to the condition of a state *in extremis*, pointedly declares protection to be the sole justification of the king's existence,—a view which obviously serves as a powerful counterpoise to the canonical doctrine relating to the duty of the subjects.†

Allied to the conception of protection as being the supreme duty of the king is the view mentioned in chapter LXIX of the Śāntiparvan which relates to the king's observance of the science of polity (*daṇḍanīti*) in the fullest measure. In the extract

Yājñavalkya (I 3, 3, 5) says that the king takes half of whatever sins are committed by the unprotected subjects since he levies taxes. In this connexion we may mention Śāntiparvan LXXI 10 where certain taxes levied by the king are called his wages (*vetana*)—a view involving the idea that the king is an official.

* Cf. Manu VII 2 (a verse which immediately precedes the author's account of the king's creation): "A Kṣatriya who has received according to the rule the sacrament prescribed by the Veda, must duly protect this whole (world)." S. B. E. Vol. XXV, p. 216.

† The reference is to Chapter LXXVIII (35-44) of the Śāntiparvan. There Bhīṣma replying to a question of Yudhiṣṭhira declares that the person who becomes a raft on a raftless stream or a means of conveyance where there is no other means, should be honoured, no matter whether he is a Śūdra or a man of any other caste. For, as the speaker pointedly asks, what is the use of a bull incapable of bearing burdens, a cow that gives no milk, a wife who is barren and a king who fails to afford protection? In picturesque language he declares that a Brāhmaṇa who does not study the Vedas, and a king who fails to protect his subjects, are like a wooden elephant, a leathern deer, a eunuch or a barren field. He who constantly protects the good, concludes Bhīṣma, and restrains the wicked, should alone be made a king; this whole world is sustained by such a man.

bearing on this point, Bhīṣma undertakes to teach his royal interlocutor what he conceives to be the great benefit accruing from daṇḍanīti to the king as well as the subjects. In the course of this address he states that the king is the cause of time and not *vice versa*. When the king acts wholly according to daṇḍanīti, there arises the Golden Age. When he observes three-quarters of the science, the Silver (Treta) Age comes into existence. The Brazen (Dvāpara) Age arises when the king gives up half of daṇḍanīti and follows the remaining half. Lastly the Iron (Kali) Age emerges when the king gives up the whole of daṇḍanīti, and oppresses his people by means of evil expedients (ayogena). In the concluding lines of the above chapter Bhīṣma repeats that the king is the creator of the four ages, and he observes that the king enjoys a great reward in case of his producing the Golden Age, little reward when he produces the Silver Age and the proper reward for producing the Brazen Age, while for causing the Iron Age he incurs great sin and lives for ever in hell.* The above extract, besides stressing the king's obligation in respect of observance of the science of polity, presents, we think, some additional points of interest. We have, in this case, presented to us in a special sense, an idea known to another teacher who is quoted in chapters XC—XCI of the Śāntiparvan, the idea namely that the king is the creator of the Age-cycle. As in the latter example, it is

* Śāntiparvan IXIX 79-101. In verse 89 of the above extract we have adopted the reading 'nityardham' of the South Indian recension in place of 'nityartham' of the Calcutta edition.

here used not to advance the king's authority but *to impress him with a sense of his responsibility.* Another idea involved in the foregoing extract is that the varying nature of the king's rule produces corresponding variations in the social and moral and even physical conditions of the age—a view which is paralleled by that of the sage Utathya as known to us from the quotation in chapter XC of the Śāntiparvan.

We may mention, in the next place, an extract which, although occurring in a separate book of the Mahābhārata, is most relevant to the subject of our present enquiry in as much as it inculcates, as far as we are aware, for the second time in the order of historical sequence, the right of tyrannicide.† In chapter LXI of the Anuśāsanaparvan Bhīṣma speaking on the Law of charity (dānadharma) observes, "The king who tells his people that he is their protector but does not actually protect them should be slain by his combined subjects like a mad dog afflicted with the rabies".‡

* The same idea relating to the king's connection with the Age-cycle appears in the Manusamhitā IX 301-302, where it is used to inculcate the duty of active exertion on the part of the king.

† For the earlier passage, vide p. 101 supra.

‡ Anuśāsanaparvan LXI 32-33. Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar (*Political Science Quarterly*, March 1918, p. 498), considers we think, without sufficient reason, two verses in the Manusamhitā (VII 111-112) to involve "an unequivocal enunciation of the doctrine of resistance, i.e. of the rights of the people against the king." In our opinion these merely convey a solemn warning to the oppressive king, and may at the most be construed into an inculcation of the duty of protection. Cf. p. 184, footnote, supra.

Let us next consider the views of the canonical authors of this period with regard to the Brāhmaṇa's position in relation to the king and the people. Here, again, it would seem that the writers absorbed the ideas of the Arthaśāstra and the Dharmasūtras in a common synthesis. Thus Bhīṣma, to begin with, says in one place, "By honouring the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, the people attain happiness; by disregarding these they assuredly perish; Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas are said to be the root of all castes." * This passage obviously inculcates the old canonical doctrine relating to the joint authority of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya over all the rest. As between these powers Manu teaches in one place the doctrine of their interdependence. He writes, "Kṣatriyas prosper not without Brāhmaṇas, Brāhmaṇas prosper not without Kṣatriyas; Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, being closely united, prosper in this (world) and in the next." † Yet the whole burden of the context in which the above passage occurs is the idea of the Brāhmaṇa's immense potency and sanctity. "Let him (viz. the king) not," says Manu, "though fallen into the deepest distress, provoke Brāhmaṇas to anger; for they, when angered, could instantly destroy him together with his army and his vehicles." ‡ This is followed by other verses to the same effect, but it is unnecessary to quote them here. In another place Manu declares, "The Brāhmaṇa is declared (to be) the creator (of the world),

* Śāntiparvan LXXIII 4-5.

† IX 322, S. B. E. Vol. XXV, p. 399.

‡ Ibid 313, S. B. E. Vol. XXV, pp. 397-398.

the punisher, the teacher, (and hence) a benefactor (of all created beings); to him let no man say anything unpropitious, nor use any harsh words." * These sentiments find expression in relation to our subject in the view already inculcated in the earlier canon, namely that the Brāhmaṇa is the one primary power of which the Kṣatriya is the derivative. Thus the Manusamhitā and the Śāntiparvan have two verses in common, stating that the Kṣatriyas sprang from the Brāhmaṇas who are therefore entitled to restrain the latter. † With this may be connected the statement uttered by Bhīṣma in another place, namely that the security and welfare of the kingdom depend upon the king, while those of the king depend upon the 'purohita'. ‡

However important may be the part played by the theories of the State in the rājadharmā sections and chapters of the works with which we are here concerned, there is, we think, little doubt that the bulk of these sections consists of rules relating specifically to the art of government. These rules involve, as we hope to show presently, the absorption of a mass of Arthaśāstra material into the system of the Brahminical canon. Both Manu and the author of the Śāntiparvan, for example, make the king's training and self-discipline the first requisite of successful government. Manu starts his description of the duties of the

* XI 35, S. B. E. Vol. XXV, p. 436. Cfp: supra.

† Manu IX 320-321 = Śāntiparvan LXXVIII 21-22.

‡ Śāntiparvan LXXIV 1.

king and the royal officers by saying that the king should worship learned Brāhmaṇas, should cultivate modesty, should learn the four traditional sciences and should conquer the senses. The last involves the suppression of eighteen vices (vyaśanas) which Manu declares to be worse than death.* The reason for the exercise of this self-command is indicated in another place where it is declared that the person who has conquered his own senses is alone able to keep his subjects under control.† Similarly in chapter LXIX (3-4) of the Śāntiparvan, Bhīṣma while instructing Yudhiṣṭhira about the primary duty of the king or of one doing duty in his stead, states that the king should first conquer his own self and afterwards his enemies, for, he asks, how can the king who has not achieved self-conquest conquer his enemies? Again, in chapter LXXI‡ Bhīṣma, asked as to how the king who protects his subjects may not be afflicted with anxiety and may not commit breach of righteousness, says that the king should give up covetousness and anger. For the foolish king who performs his task under the influence of anger and desire cannot secure either virtue or wealth.

Like Kautilya the canonical authors of this period urge the king's appointment of ministers and other officers whose qualifications and employment they describe in some detail.§ They lay down, moreover,

* VII 37-53.

† Ibid 44.

‡ Verses 1; 6-7.

§ Manusamhitā VII 54-68; Śāntiparvan LXXX, LXXXIII.

rules after Kauṭilya's fashion for the king's consultation with his ministers. * In this connection it should be noticed as a further illustration of the connection between Arthaśāstra and canonical thought that Manu discovers the *rationale* of a civil service in the very nature of government, † while Bhīṣma declares sovereignty to have espionage for its root and deliberation for its essence.

Turning to the rules of public policy we may mention that Manu enjoins the king to protect his kingdom and destroy its opponents, by employing the striking analogy of the weeder who plucks up the weeds and preserves the corn. ‡ In an earlier verse he recommends the king to adopt the traditional list of four expedients, namely conciliation, dissension, bribery and force. § Among these, it should be observed, Manu prefers conciliation and force to the rest, while he justifies the employment of the latter expedient only in the last resort. ||

In connection with this point, it may be noticed as a characteristic feature of the canonical statecraft its frequent inculcation of a mixed or a middle course of conduct upon the king. ¶ Manu, for example, urges the king in one place to be both sharp and gentle on the ground that one who behaves in this fashion

* Manusāhita VII 147-155.

† Ibid VII 55: "Even an undertaking easy (in itself) is (sometimes) hard to be accomplished by a single man; how much (harder is it for a king), especially (if he has) no assistant, (to govern) a kingdom which yields great revenues?" S. B. E., Vol. XXV, p. 224.

‡ VII 110.

§ Ibid 107.

|| Ibid 108-109.

is highly respected.* This precept is taught with greater effect in the Śāntiparvan. In chapter LVI Bhīṣma speaking on the duties of the king urges the observance of the qualities of truthfulness, righteousness, straightforwardness and the like,† but in the same breath he mentions certain exceptions to the general rule by pointing to the essential needs of statecraft. The mild king, we are told, is constantly disregarded by all men, while he who is strict becomes oppressive to the people; hence the king should be both mild and strict.‡ In a later passage Bhīṣma forbids Yudhiṣṭhira to be merciful towards all creatures and, after quoting a text from Bṛhaspati, concludes that the king should neither be constantly merciful nor constantly severe, but should be like the vernal sun which causes neither cold nor perspiration.§ Again in chapter LXXV Bhīṣma, after saying that the king who is self-seeking, cruel and very greedy, can not rule his subjects, is constrained to state in reply to a question of Yudhiṣṭhira that sovereignty can not be exercised by one who is wholly merciful. In a later verse Bhīṣma attempts to justify his teaching by saying that no righteous man, be he householder or king or student, ever scrutinized the nature of righteousness with particular care.|| This implies, as we learn from the commentator, that a slight breach of morality is unavoidable. In another place the teacher, asked

* VII 140.

† Śāntiparvan LVI 17-20.

‡ Ibid 21.

§ Ibid 37-40.

|| Śāntiparvan LXXV 14 ; 18 ; 28.

as to the qualifications of the ministers (*sachivas*), confesses that the kings desiring success have to adopt both righteous and unrighteous paths and he proceeds to advise that the king should trust as well as distrust some people.*

Coming to the domain of foreign policy properly so called, we find the canonical authors making in the style of the *Arthaśāstra* expediency the grand canon of statecraft. In chapter CXXXVIII of the *Śāntiparvan* Yudhiṣṭhira asks how the king should behave when he is swallowed up by many foes. How, he continues, can the king acquire friends and foes, and how should he behave towards them? Bhīṣma replies by expounding what he calls the esoteric duty that is applicable in times of distress. The foe, he says, becomes a friend and the friend becomes disaffected owing to the regard for self-interest. The course of affairs is constantly shifting, hence the king should repose confidence as well as wage war. In a later passage Bhīṣma drives his lesson home by indulging in an apparent paradox. The unwise man, he says, who does not constantly ally himself with the foe fails to attain his desires or even slight rewards, while he who with an eye to his own interest makes an alliance with the foe and war with the friend wins great success.†

* Ibid LXXX 5; 12. In other cases the author abandons this balanced attitude and commits himself straightway to a more extreme position. Thus in chapter LXXXV 33-34 Bhīṣma urges the king to make others trust him but not himself trust any one. Reposing of trust even in one's sons, he continues, is not approved, and he concludes by observing that want of trust is the highest mystery among kings.

† *Śāntiparvan* CXXXVIII 4, 7, 12-14, 16-17. The same spirit is reflected in Manu's rules of foreign policy, VII 169-180,

While laying down their rules of public policy, the canonical authors show themselves ready enough to justify the king's sacrifice of personal and domestic ties for the purpose of ensuring the good of the State. The person who acts contrary to the interests of the kingdom consisting of seven limbs, says Bhīṣma in one place, must certainly be slain, no matter whether he is a preceptor or a friend.* Yet it is noticeable that as in Kauṭilya the goal towards which the system of statecraft is directed is not territorial aggrandisement. Manu, for example, requires that the king after winning a victory should place a relative of the vanquished ruler on the throne after fully ascertaining the wishes of the conquered people.†

Another branch of statecraft that is treated in these works and forms, as before, a distinct group by itself, is concerned with the rule of punishment (*danda*). Here, as in other cases, the canonical authors would seem to clothe in a poetical and romantic garb the ideas of the Arthāśāstra. Thus Manu for the purpose of stressing the importance of punishment as the grand security of public order, personifies the abstract principle and invests it with the highest attributes of sanctity and power. "For the (king's) sake," he says, "the Lord formerly created his own son, Punishment, the protector of all creatures, (an incarnation of) the law, formed of Brahman's glory." And again, "Punishment is (in reality) the king (and) the male, that the manager of affairs, that the ruler, and that is called the surety

* Śāntiparvan LVII 5.

† VII 202.

for the four orders' obedience to the 'law.'* This is followed by a verse of a similar import which, as we now know, was borrowed by Manu from an older text.† In another place Manu justifies the infliction of punishment, in the fashion of some of the Arthasāstra teachers, by pointing to the inherent evil of cosmic nature. He writes, "The whole world is kept in order by punishment, for a guiltless man is hard to find; through fear of punishment the whole world yields the enjoyments (which it owes.)"‡

While on the subject of punishment, Manu mentions certain qualities as being absolutely necessary for the king's successful discharge of this all-important function. Such are the qualities of straightforwardness, considerateness, control of the senses and the like.§ We might perhaps take this in the light of a much-needed corrective to the view laid down by the author in an earlier passage|| where punishment is declared in effect to be the king's divine prerogative.

Let us next consider the attitude of the authors whom we are now considering, towards religion and morality in so far as this is reflected in their rules relating to internal administration and external policy. As regards the first point, it is obvious, since politics is here treated under the title of rājadharmā, that it is part and parcel of the Sacred Law

* VII 14; 17.

† VII 18; cf. p. 107 supra. For a still more vivid and powerful description of the nature of punishment, vide chapter CXXI of the Śāntiparvan.

‡ VII 22.

§ VII 26-31.

|| VII 10-11 noted just above.

(dharma). To say this, however, is not to state that politics as conceived by these thinkers is derived from the sacred canon, for, as we have seen in another place, they drew freely upon the ideas of the Arthasāstra to fill in the dim outline of the earlier canonical list of the king's duties. The point is brought out in a characteristically dramatic fashion, in chapter CXLII of the Śāntiparvan which, as stated by the author, forms the grand *apologia* on behalf of Bhīṣma's teaching. There we are told how the pious and gentle king Yudhiṣṭhira, after listening to the Machiavellian rules and principles of his master, can restrain himself no longer and bursts out in the agony of his soul, "If this horrible and disreputable course of conduct is prescribed by thee even for persons like ourselves, does there exist any established usage of the robbers which thou wouldst advise me to shun? I am bewildered and thrown into grief; my virtue (dharma) is relaxed; however much I may try to reconcile myself to them, I have not the resolution to act according to thy precepts." Bhīṣma makes the memorable admission that his teaching of duty to the king has not been derived from hearing the Sacred Canon alone, but is the 'culmination of wisdom' and is the 'distilled honey gathered by the learned.' This leads to a disquisition on the nature of rājadharmā. The king, it is urged, should arrange for that manifold wisdom, by following which his reason is not characterised by a one-sided morality. Duty (dharma) having wisdom (buddhi) for its source as well as the practice of pious men must be always learnt from experience. Since those kings who are supreme in wisdom are capable of desiring

conquests, they should counteract the 'dharma' by means of reason. The king's 'dharma' is not capable of being performed by a one-sided morality: how can a weak king acquire wisdom which he has not learnt before? Politics, then, according to this view, is based not so much on the sacred canon as on reason and experience.†

Turning next to the consideration of the authors' attitude towards morality in so far as this is manifested in their rules of statecraft, we think we can detect in them a qualified acceptance of the teaching of the Arthaśāstra. These authors, indeed, no doubt in accordance with their stricter adherence to the concept of the religious basis of human existence repudiate almost entirely the dismal creed of cruelty and deceit which formed, as we have seen in another place, the essence of the Arthaśāstra statecraft. Manu, for example, while enjoining the king to be on his guard against the treachery of his enemies,

* Śāntiparvan CXLII 1-7.

† The commentator Nilakantha brings out this idea very clearly by drawing a contrast between the rules of public policy and the Vedic religious rites and ceremonies. He writes, (commentary on Śāntiparvan CXLII 3), "This is not enjoined (to be done) in the manner of the Agnihotra sacrifice and the like, but because it was framed by learned men who found serious evils arising from its non-performance."

‡ The above conception of Politics as involving the lessons of reason and experience leads Bhisma in the latter portion of the chapter from which we have just quoted, to mention a remarkable canon of interpretation of the Sacred Law in general. The knowledge of dharma, he says (Ibid 17), is acquired not by means of the sacred text alone, nor by reason alone. [Cf. p. 113 footnote, supra]. Again, he says (Ibid 21) that the canon is exalted by a verbal interpretation united with reason that is based upon the canon.

categorically forbids him to act with guile.* Both the Manusamhitā and the Śāntiparvan, moreover, contain a code of the rules of war for the guidance of the Kṣatriyas, which is distinguished by its humane spirit.† Nevertheless the authors whom we are now considering sanction, in the interests of the king or of the State, some remarkable departure from the strict ethical standard. To illustrate this point we need not, we think, lay much stress on those passages which exalt fighting as an act of merit on the part of the king,‡ or those which justify the king's chastisement of his foes.§ More conclusive evidence is furnished by other passages to which we may at once turn our attention. In chapter C Yūdhiṣṭhira on whom the lessons of righteous warfare have just been impressed by his master asks how the kings desirous of victory may lead their troops to battle even by slightly offending against the rules of morality. | Bhīṣma says in the course of a lengthy reply that the king should learn both kinds of wisdom, namely, the straightforward and the tortuous. While the king, the teacher continues, should not follow the latter kind of wisdom, he should use it for removing the evil that overtakes him.|| In another place Bhīṣma, asked as to the line of conduct which a king should pursue when his friends are diminishing and foes are many, when his treasury is exhausted and he has no troops, when his ministers and assis-

* Manusamhitā VII 104.

† Ibid VII 90-93 ; Śāntiparvan. XCV-XCVI.

‡ Cf. Manu VII 89 etc.

§ Cf. Ibid VII 32, 110 etc.

|| Śāntiparvan C 1 ; 5.

tants are wicked and his counsels are divulged, replies that the king should seize the wealth of all persons other than the ascetics and the Brāhmanas. Further on he declares that the oppression of the subjects for the purpose of raising the revenue is no sin and he states on the analogy of the felling down of trees for furnishing sacrificial stakes, that success is impossible without slaying those persons who stand in the way of enriching the treasury.* Finally we may mention a passage in chapter LXIX of the Śāntiparvan where Bhīṣma seems to preach for once that noxious cult of the poison and the dagger which, as we have seen in another place, was started into vogue by the Arthaśāstra. In this passage it is declared that the weak king may afflict the territory of his powerful enemy by means of weapons, fire, poison and stupefying articles.†

It will appear from the above that the canonical authors while broadly inculcating the subordination of politics to morality condone some slight breaches of this principle for fulfilling what they conceive to be the interests of the State. In justification of this attitude the author of the Śāntiparvan first mentions the argument that his rules of policy, however much they might offend against the principles of higher morality, are based upon the supreme law of self-preservation which involves in this case the acquisition of power as well. Thus in chapter CXXX which forms the great storehouse of such arguments, Bhīṣma begins by expressing his disapprobation of the rule that he is about to suggest

* Śāntiparvan CXXX 1-2 ; 20 ; 36 ; 41-42.

† Ibid LXIX 22.

in the case specified by Yudhiṣṭhira—the rule, namely, that the king should relieve his own distress by seizing the wealth of all his subjects other than that of the ascetics and the Brāhmaṇas. This line of conduct, he says, while fitted to ensure the king's livelihood is not approved by himself from the point of view of true morality in as much as it involves the infliction of pain upon the subjects and in the end is destructive like death itself. Nevertheless Bhīṣma has no hesitation in urging in the lines immediately following that the king should raise the revenue as one raises water out of waterless tracts. In supporting this view he says, "Virtue can be secured without acquiring the revenue, but life is more important than religious merit." Developing this idea in a later verse he says that since the weak man who follows the path of virtue is incapable of securing a just means of subsistence and since strength can not be acquired by mere effort, an unrighteous act assumes the nature of virtue in times of distress, while a righteous act becomes in such times a sin. The whole effect of this teaching is summed up in the dictates of unblushing egoism. "With his whole soul and by all means, the king should seek to deliver not his or anyone else's virtue but only himself."*

In support of his plea for a system of statecraft based upon the creed of self-preservation, Bhīṣma is able to plead in the chapter that we are now con-

* Śāntiparvan CXXX 8-9, 13-16, 18. We have adopted in the rendering of the last verse but one the explanation of the commentator who illustrates the author's meaning by saying that the king's fleecing of the subjects becomes a righteous act in times of distress, while its non-performance becomes a sin.

sidering the authority of the sacred canon and the example of the pious. One set of duties, he declares, is prescribed for those who are competent to carry them out and a quite another set for times of distress. Again, he says that the Brāhmaṇas themselves when suffering from distress may perform sacrifices for those who are not eligible and may eat forbidden food.*

Not content with invoking the law of self-preservation Bhīṣma appeals in the context that we are now treating to the normal tendencies of existence as furnishing a sufficient justification for his rule of policy. Here again, it should be noticed, he supports his argument by pointing to the example of the pious. The livelihood of no man here, he says, not even that of the ascetic living in the forest and wandering alone can be maintained without hurting others. No one can live by following the occupation that is prescribed by the sage Śaṅkha; especially is this maxim true of one who desires to protect his ^{सुखं च} [†] In the above extract, it will be noticed, Bhīṣma [†] virtually declares in justification of his statecraft [†] that violence is the natural law of existence and especially of the government of men. Of a similar nature [†] is the statement contained in a later passage, namely that whatever exists in this world is desired by all men, each of them shouting 'This is mine'.[‡] This passage which occurs in the midst of a panegyric

* Śāntiparvan CXXX 14; 21.

† Ibid 28-29. 'Śaṅkhalikhitam' in verse 29 is differently interpreted by the commentator, as meaning 'what is written in one's destiny.'

‡ Ibid 46.

on wealth, evidently implies the acquisition of riches to be the natural law of existence.

Among the subsidiary arguments urged by the author in justification of his partially unscrupulous statecraft is one based upon the nature of the Kṣatriya's rule of life. The idea in this case is that the inexorable authority of the sacred canon imposes upon the Kṣatriya or the king who is in distress some rules of doubtful morality,—a view which evidently implies the canon to be above and beyond morality. Neither subsistence by begging, says Bhīṣma in another place in the course of the above argument, nor the occupation of the Vaiśya or the Śūdra, has been ordained for the Kṣatriya whose treasury and army are weak and who is therefore overpowered by all people; for him there has been prescribed only that occupation which is next to his proper duty.*

The last argument urged by the author in justifying the rule relating to the king's forcible seizure of the property of the subjects is based upon the notion of the paramount importance of the king or of the State—a notion which, if pressed to its logical conclusion, would involve the view that the State is above and beyond morality. Since the Kṣatriya, Bhīṣma says in one of the verses of chapter CXXX, is the destroyer as well as the preserver of the people, he should take away wealth from them when he is

* Śāntiparvan CXXX 23-24. The commentator explains the last passage by saying that the king's proper duty is the acquisition of wealth by means of victory in the battlefield, and that the duty nearest to it is the acquisition of wealth by the oppression of one's own kingdom as well as that of the enemy.

engaged in the task of protection. Further on he says that the king and the subjects (lit. the kingdom) should protect each other in times of difficulty. Just as the king protects his subjects in their peril by bestowing his substance, so should the latter support the former in his difficulty. In a later passage Bhīṣma states that the revenue is the root of the king ; it is also the root of the army which again is the root of all duties which in their turn are the root of the subjects. In the following lines the hero compares, for the purpose of exculpating the royal exactions, the king's function to the performance of a sacrificial act.*

Much as the monarchic State forms in the Manusamhitā and the Mahābhārata the centre of the canonists' speculation, the author of the latter work steps in one place out of the beaten track and addresses himself to the problem of non-monarchical communities (gaṇas).† In Chapter CVII of the Śāntiparvan Yudhiṣṭhira tells Bhīṣma, " I want to hear,

* Śāntiparvan CXXX 27, 30-31, 35, 37-39.

† The political significance of gaṇa in the sense of a non-monarchical or a republican community was first pointed out (*Modern Review*, Calcutta, May 1913) by Mr. K. P. Jayswal who subsequently (*J. B. O. R. S.* 1915, pp. 173-174) reiterated some of his arguments in the course of his exposition of the following passage from the Mahābhārata. The point has since been treated with great thoroughness by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar who has distinguished (op. cit., Lect. IV, passim) between the generic sense of gaṇa (namely, 'Government of the Many' or a republic of the Greek type), and its special sense (namely, a 'republic of a tribal character which was confined to the Kṣatriya order'). Dr. Narendra Nath Law, it may be noted, translates (*Modern Review*, September 1916) gaṇa in the Mahābhārata extract to be just quoted in the more general sense of 'an autonomous tribe' or 'a self-governing community.'

O chief of the wise, the course of conduct of the gaṇas, how they prosper and are not torn by dissensions, (how they) conquer their enemies and acquire allies?" Bhīṣma begins his lengthy reply by tracing to their roots the causes of the destruction of the gaṇas. Among the gaṇas as well as the royal [families which form their unit], he says, it is desire and anger that kindle hostilities. First, one [of two parties] harbours desire, and [when this is not gratified], becomes filled with indignation. Then [these two] incur the loss of men and money and crush each other. [A number of such parties] oppress one another by means of espionage, intrigues and force, by applying the threefold policy of conciliation, dissension and gift, and by the methods involving the loss of men and money as well as intimidation. In such a case it is by receiving [spies and the like] that the gaṇas that live by unity are torn asunder, and they, being divided and dispirited, succumb to the enemy through fear. From this Bhīṣma concludes that the gaṇas should always put forth their effort in unison, for, as he explains, those who put forth their strength and effort in combination are capable of acquiring wealth and they win the friendship of external powers. Reverting to the earlier theme he says in the concluding lines of his address that the quarrels among the families, when ignored, by the family elders, produce the ruin of the clan as well as disunion in the gaṇa. Contrasting the effect of disunion with that of foreign aggression, he urges in the same connection that the external danger is of no consequence, but the internal danger is to be guarded against, for it cuts at the root. Further on

he says, referring to the special nature of the gaṇas, that all their members are alike in respect of caste and family, but not in the qualities of energy, intelligence and physical accomplishments. Bhīṣma closes his argument with the same practical advice as before. "By means of dissensions as well as gift, the gaṇas are torn asunder by the enemies: hence unity is declared to be their principal refuge."

Dissension, then, according to this view, is the bane of the gaṇas and its avoidance their primary desideratum. Next to this in the author's estimation perhaps ranks the necessity of concentration of the main functions of administration in the hands of a council of chiefs.* The heads of the gaṇas, we are told in the above context, should be principally respected, for the course of worldly affairs depends largely upon them. Descending to details the teacher says that the safeguarding of counsel as well as espionage should be left to the chiefs, for, as he states with true insight into the nature of public assemblies, it is not meet that the gaṇa as a whole should hear the counsel. The heads of the gaṇas should carry out in secret the measures contributing to their welfare, for otherwise the interests of the separate, divided and scattered, gaṇas would suffer decay and there would arise dangers among them.

Among the minor conditions mentioned by Bhīṣma in the foregoing chapter as ensuring the welfare of the gaṇas are the appointment of righteous

* It may be observed that Yudhiṣṭhira in putting his question points (CVII 8) to the same twofold weakness of the gaṇas, namely the danger of disunion, and the difficulty of secret consultation.

officials, just laws and administration of justice, discipline, attention to counsel, espionage and the treasury, and lastly, respect for valour and wisdom.*

Such is the famous and oft-quoted extract embodying the canonist's view of the conditions ensuring the success of republican communities. If we have to look for a precedent, we may perhaps find one in two passages of the Buddhist canon which, as we have seen in another place, give identical lists of seven conditions of welfare with reference to the Vajji—Licchhavi confederacy.† A comparison of these passages, with the present one reveals, we think,

* Śāntiparvan CVII 6-32. In interpreting the above extract we have felt it necessary to differ in certain places from the versions of Mr. K. P. Jayswal (J. B. O. R. S. 1915, pp. 174-178) and Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar (op. cit., pp. 110-111). 'Kulānāñcha rājnāñcha' in verse 10 is, we think, for reasons stated below, correctly rendered as 'among the kulas of the rājās' (Jayswal) and not as 'among the kulas and the kings, (Majumdar). Mr. Jayswal (loc. cit. p. 176 footnote) explains it to mean 'aristocracies like that of Patala,' but the context (vide specially verse 28) shows that 'kula' is closely connected with, in fact is part and parcel of, the 'gaṇa.' The true meaning of 'rājakula' in the above phrase is probably the royal family or clan which, as we learn from other sources, formed the political unit of the gaṇa and was governed by a chief or chiefs bearing the title of king. (Vide D. R. Bhandarkar, op. cit., pp. 150-151, 160, 163 etc.). In verses 11-12 'lobhameko hi vṛiṇute.....tato hyamaṛṣasamyuktau.... prakarṣantitaretaram,' evidently involves a transition from the singular to the dual and thence to the plural number. In verse 26 'prithaggaṇasya bhinnasya vitatasya' means, we think, the separate, divided and scattered, gaṇas. Finally, the second line of verse 31 'na cbodyogena buddhyā vā rūpa-dravayena vā punah' should we think go with the former line and not with the following couplet, since the application of dissension and bribery which is mentioned in verse 32 does not exclude the exercise of energy, intelligence, and 'tempting with beauty.'

† Vide supra, pp. 121-122.

the superiority of the later thought in form as well as in matter. For while the Buddhist author addresses himself to the case of a particular republican community and gives but a bare list of its essential qualifications, the Brahminical writer analyses the qualifications of republics in general, and brings out in course of this analysis some of their outstanding characteristics. From the nature of the qualifications insisted on in the foregoing passages it further appears that while in the earlier analysis the moralist preponderates over the political thinker, the case is just the reverse in the latter instance.*

* Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar (op. cit. p. 107) thinks, in view of the changed attitude of the author towards the republics as compared with Kautilya, that the above passage from the Mahābhārata 'ushered in a new epoch of political thought which was a reaction against that represented by the school of Kautilya'. We are not quite sure whether this claim can be sustained. For much as we agree with Dr. Majumdar in his emphasis of the different angle of vision from which the non-monarchical communities are studied by Kautilya and the author of the Mahābhārata, we fail to find in the former anything resembling a theory of republics,—Kautilya's treatise as we have said elsewhere, is essentially a work on the art of government and not on the theory of the State. Nor must it be forgotten that the reflections in the Mahābhārata extract above quoted, however acute they might be, roused not a single echo in the later systems of thought, while the speculations of the canonical author relating to the monarchical State were eagerly drawn upon by the subsequent writers. In these circumstances we may perhaps correctly describe the position held by the theory of the gaṇas in the Śāntiparvan in relation to the historical development of Hindu thought by saying that it involved the consideration, after a long interval and with an intensified insight, of the problem of republican communities.

II

It has been our endeavour in the early part of this chapter to show how the canonical authors of the present period incorporated a more or less considerable branch of the Arthaśāstra thought with the teaching of the older canon. We have now to mention another author belonging apparently to the close of this period who represented, although in an incidental fashion and within closely restricted limits, an independent, not to say contrary, tradition of political thinking. The Chatuḥśatikā written by the Buddhist monk Āryadeva is a didactic and philosophical work, but it has even in its existing fragmentary condition at least two extracts bearing specifically on the subject-matter of politics. It will be convenient to treat these extracts along with the accompanying commentary which, however distant it might be in time, elucidates the author's meaning by connecting it with the imaginary *prima facie* argument (*pūrvapakṣa*) to which it apparently furnishes an answer. The first extract is concerned with the nature of the king's office. Replying, as the commentator mentions, to the argument that the king's pride is justified because all undertakings depend upon him, Āryadeva states with angry impatience, "What superciliousness is thine, (O King!), thou who art a (mere) servant of the multitude (*gaṇadāsa*) and who receivest the sixth part (of the produce) as thine wages."* In the above passage, it will be observed, an idea frequently represented in the earlier literature, namely, that the king is an official paid by the

* Chatuḥśatikā, p. 461.

people for the service of protection, is for once carried to its extreme limit, and however much we may be disinclined to treat Āryadeva's outburst as partaking of the nature of a well-considered political theory, it is impossible not to be struck with the broad contrast that it presents to the attitude of the Brahminical canonists of this period who applied themselves principally to the vindication of monarchical authority.*

The second extract which we may properly consider in this connection is concerned with what may be called the relation of politics to morality. The wise man, Āryadeva states in one place, should not conform to all the doings of the sages since even among them there exist the grades of bad, intermediate and good persons. This passage, the

* While on the subject of kingship as conceived by Āryadeva, we may pause for a moment to trace the subsequent fortunes of the Buddhist theory of Contract,—a theory which as we have seen in another place, hinges upon the election of a fictitious king called Mahāsammata by popular consent. It appears to us, from the evidence bearing on this point, that the Buddhist theory was pushed into the background by the rival Brahminical theories of the king's divine creation and was finally extinguished on the Indian soil along with the faith of which it was the product. It is significant to notice in this connection that the author of the Śūkranīti, while exhibiting (I 188) at a later date Āryadeva's conception of the king's relation to the people, is constrained to base this upon the king's ordination by the god Brahmā (Infra, ch. VII). Meanwhile, however, Buddhism had travelled to distant lands, and the theory of Contract as forming part and parcel of the Sacred Canon, found a secure asylum in the native literatures of those countries. We thus get more or less identical accounts of the election of Mahāsammata in the Tibetan *Dulva* (Vide Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, pp. 1-9), the Burmese *Damathat* (Richardson's translation, p. 7) and the Ceylonese sacred works (vide Spence Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 68.)

commentator thinks, answers the plea that the king who even slays creatures in accordance with the law (dharma) laid down by the sages (ṛṣipraṇita) commits no sin. In days of yore, the author states in the following verse, the people were protected by the good kings as if these were their own children ; but the world is now converted into a deer-park, as it were, by kings following the rule of the Iron Age. This passage, according to the commentator, is intended to teach that the canon which is consistent with righteousness is binding, while that which is inconsistent with the same has no authority. If the king striking at his enemy through a loophole, the author urges with pitiless logic in a later verse, were to commit no sin, sinful consequences would not accrue to other thieves from beforehand. This passage, the commentator thinks, refutes the argument that the canon declares the king striking through a loophole to be exempt from sin. In a later verse the author similarly observes, "The sacrifice of one's all in the form of indulgence in wine and such other things is not commended. How then can the sacrifice of one's own self in battle be praised ?" Here we have, according to the commentator, the answer to the plea that if the king dies on the battlefield, he surely attains heaven by virtue of his self-sacrifice.*

The above extract, it seems to us, controverts the position of the Brāhmaṇa canonists of this period at some important points. In the Manusamhitā and the Mahābhārata, as we have seen in another place,

Politics is treated within certain limits as more or less independent of morality.* Hence the authors not only justify lawful slaughter, but also approve of the king's treacherous attack upon his foe, and in the same spirit commend the king's death on the battlefield as an act of the highest sacrifice. Far different is the attitude exhibited by the Buddhist author in the passage above quoted. To this stern and uncompromising moralist Politics, it would appear, is absolutely subservient to morality. He begins by boldly avowing, in justification of his ban against lawful slaughter, that the sages themselves must be judged by the eternal standards of right and wrong. Continuing his argument in the following verse, he points out by contrast with the conditions of a hypothetical golden age in the past the wickedness of the canonical laws of his own time. This implies, if we may trust the commentator, that the sacred canon itself must be judged by the ethical standard. Turning to another point, the Buddhist author declares, in flat contradiction of the Brahmaṇa canonists, that the king treacherously attacking his enemy is just like an ordinary robber, while his self-sacrifice on the battlefield is on the same moral level as the spending of one's whole substance in riotous living.

* Vide supra, pp. 199-200,

CHAPTER V.

THE BEGINNINGS OF DECLINE—THE ESSENCE OF POLITY (NĪTISĀRA) OF KĀMANDAKA, AND THE PURĀNAS AND MINOR LAW-BOOKS (SMRITIS). CIRCA, 200-500 A.D.

I

Kāmandaka's Nītisāra is not an original work, but a scholar's compilation based principally upon Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra—The theory of integration of the constituent factors of sovereignty—The theory of kingship—The rule of the king's discipline and of punishment (daṇḍa)—Relation of Kāmandaka's statecraft to morality.

II

General character of political ideas in the Purānas and the minor Smritis—The doctrine of the king's divine nature—The theory of the king's immunity from harm and of obedience of the subjects—The principles limiting the abuses of the king's power.

I.

In the preceding chapter we have endeavoured to describe in connection with the two great works of the Brahminical canon and especially the Mahābhārata the synthesis, under the influence of the dominant conception of the religious basis of human existence, of political ideas derived as well from the secular Arthaśāstra as the older canon. It is indeed in the last-named work that Hindu political theory reached its high water-mark. In the

present period the writers, as we hope to show presently, tried at some points to amplify or at any rate treat the ideas of the older masters, but their speculations can not certainly compare either in depth or in thoroughness with those of their predecessors.

Of the works with which we are concerned in this chapter we shall first select for examination the one which divides with the Śukranītisāra the credit of being the most popular text-book on the science of polity in the whole range of Hindu literature.* The Nītisāra of Kāmandaka, as this treatise is called, may well claim to be reckoned as the representative of the literature of Arthaśāstra during this period, for its author professes in the genuine style of the latter class of works to deal with the acquisition and the protection of territory.† Nevertheless there can, we think, be no comparison between Kāmandaka and his predecessors in the same field, for he can not, unlike the latter, lay claim to the merit of originality or even of first-hand study of the phenomena of the State. Out of love for the science of polity, he says in the context in which the passage just quoted occurs, we shall teach something that

* Kāmandaka's Nītisāra is repeatedly quoted in the Rājadharmā and Nīti sections of the Mediaeval Digests of the sacred law. Even the Matsya Purāna, as we shall see later on in this chapter, borrows one of its longest discourses on Nīti from the same source. A Nīti work, lastly, purporting to be the composition of Kāmandaka is extant in the ancient literature of the island of Bali near Java. Vide *Essays Relating to Indo-China*, Vol. II, p. 93. (Trübner's Oriental Series).

† Vide Kāmandaka I 8 : upārjane pālāne cha bhūmer bhūmīśvaram prati yat kiñchidupadekṣyāmo rājavidyāvidām matam.|| Throughout this work the references to Kāmandaka in the Roman character stand for prakaraṇas, not sargas, in the edition of T. Gaṇapati Śāstri (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series).

is approved by those versed in the royal policy. This is evidently the language not of one in touch with practical politics, but of a man of books. Kāmandaka moreover leaves us in no doubt as to the source of his inspiration. For in the same context he deliberately announces his work to be based upon the teaching (*darśana*) of Viṣṇugupta (Kauṭilya) whose ancestry and achievements he extols in the highest terms.* The *Essence of Polity*, then, according to the explicit testimony of its own author, is a scholar's compilation based principally upon the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya. In accordance with this description we find that the author, while excluding from his purview the whole of Kauṭilya's material relating to civil law and the departments of the administration, furnishes what amounts to a metrical paraphrase of the rest. It must, however, be remembered to Kāmandaka's credit that he arranges his borrowed material under more convenient headings, while he multiplies, it may be with pedantic thoroughness, the categories into which his master's rules of public policy are resolvable. † While Kauṭilya's work is the chief source of Kāmandaka's inspiration, he is indebted, as we hope to show presently, to the Brāhminical canon for some phase of his thought.

* I 2-7. Elsewhere (III 6) Kāmandaka, citing an opinion of Kauṭilya, characterises it as the teaching of his master.

† Cf. *e.g.* Kāmandaka's division of his work into separate chapters dealing with the circle of States (*maṇḍala*) (XII-XIII), the six forms of foreign policy (XIV-XVI), deliberation in the State Council (XVII), and the conduct of the Ambassador (XVIII-XIX). Also cf. Kāmandaka's lists of the different kinds of alliance (XIV), war (XV), neutrality and marching (Ch. XVI), as well as the lists of kings with whom alliance should be made and of those with whom it should not be made (XIV).

Beginning our survey of Kāmandaka's political ideas with his treatment of the concept of seven limbs of sovereignty, we have to observe that the author takes over from his master the specific order in which the 'calamities' of the limbs are described.* Along with this Kāmandaka combines, however incongruously, a notion that was at best dimly perceived by Kauṭilya, the notion, namely, of the organic relation of the factors of sovereignty. Thus he applies in one place the epithet 'helpful to one another' (parasparopakārī) to the seven limbs, and he explains his meaning by saying that sovereignty does not flourish even if it is deficient in one single limb.† In this passage is evidently embodied an idea which, if we might express it in the technical language of political theory, would be called that of the integration of the governmental units.

When we turn to consider the general theory of kingship in Kāmandaka, we find him virtually reproducing in a somewhat perfunctory fashion some of the basic ideas of the older masters. He has, to begin with, a lively sense of the importance of the king's office from the point of view of the subjects. Protection, he says in one place, depends upon the king; the science of agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade (vārttā), in its turn, depends upon protection, if this science were to be suspended, the people would not live even though they might breathe. Like the clouds, Kāmandaka goes on, the king is the refuge of all creatures: if the clouds were to go wrong, the creatures could still live, but they could

* XXII 93. Cf. Kauṭ. pp. 322-324.

† VII 1-2.

not do so if the king were to go wrong.* According to this view, then, the king's office is the primary as well as the essential condition of existence.† In an earlier passage the author shows how the happiness as well as the misery of the people depends upon the personality of the king. There he says that the king who is approved by the aged persons causes prosperity and rejoicing, while he who is an imperfect guide plunges the people in utter destruction.‡

While thus inculcating the old notion of the paramount importance of the king's office, Kāmandaka, it should be particularly remarked, fails to mention, as he might very well have done, the theories of divine creation of the king. Indeed it appears that the author's references to the divine nature of the king, much as this doctrine was familiar by this time, are few in number and indirect in their nature.§ The result of this half-hearted acceptance of the older teaching may be seen, we think, in the remarkably colourless fashion in which the author handles the old doctrine relating to the submission of the subjects. The people, he says, honour even as they honour Prajāpati (Brāhminā) the king who is virtuous,

* I 12-13.

† Similarly in IV 34, after describing the duties of the castes and the orders, the author states that should the king not exist, righteousness would perish, and if righteousness were to disappear, the world itself would be destroyed.

‡ I 9-10.

§ One such reference may be quoted. In the introductory verse where it is customary to offer salutation to a deity for the purpose of removing obstacles, the author pronounces benediction upon the king, the lord, the auspicious one, wielder of the sceptre, through whose might the world follows the path. This is justified, as the commentator remarks, the plea that the king is created out of the essence of guardian deities and is animated by the god Viṣṇu. (Sankarārya's commentary on Kāmandaka I 1.)

who protects his subjects well and who conquers the towns of his enemies.

When we look out in Kāmandaka's work for the principles counteracting those of monarchical authority, we find it to be an almost complete blank. There is, however, one extract which, while occurring in the context of passages justifying the king's authority, incidentally embodies, we think, the idea of the king's duty of protection. There it is said, "The king protects the people; the latter cause him to thrive (by payment of the sixth part of the produce and the like). Protection, however, is better than causing prosperity, since if the former were to disappear, the latter would be an evil even if it could exist."† In this extract the last phrase is particularly noticeable. Its meaning, as the commentator points out, is that in the absence of protection whatever is paid by the subjects for making the king thrive is impure in the sense of being mixed up with the sins of the subjects.‡

* I 11.

† I 14.

‡ Kāmandaka's silence with regard to the theory of the king's divine creation and his colourless reference to the doctrine of submission of the subjects, are matched by a Tamil author belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, the illustrious Tiruvalluvar who treats the subject of kingship in one of the sections of his famous work called the Kural. May this coincidence be taken to be a measure of the qualified success as yet attained by the Brahminical theories of the king's origin such as those that are exhibited in the Manusmhitā and the Mahābhārata? It will probably help us to answer this question if we remember that the attitude of Kāmandaka and the Tamil poet presents a marked contrast to that of the canonical authors of this period, whose theories of kingship are saturated, as we hope to show presently, with the ideas of the king's divine nature and of the obedience of his subjects.

Kāmandaka's rules relating to the art of government properly so called, which form as might be expected the core of his thought, have little, if any, independent interest. It will be enough to illustrate their nature by means of two examples. Kāmaṅdaka urges upon the king in the early part of his work* the necessity of self-discipline and intellectual training, his rules to this effect being merely an amplification of those laid down by Kauṭilya. He conceives this discipline to be the essential requisite of successful government, for he says, "How can the person who is unable to control his own mind conquer the earth extending up to the sea?"†. In some later verses‡ he drives his lesson home in the fashion of his master by quoting the instances of those who achieved success through sense-control and of those who failed through its neglect.‡

Next to his inculcation of discipline on the king's part may be mentioned as an illustration of the author's statecraft his rule of punishment (daṇḍa). Paraphrasing a text of Kauṭilya Kāmandaka shows the evils of excessive severity as well as leniency, and he recommends the infliction of just punishment.§ With equal fidelity to his master he points out in a later passage, the function of punishment as the grand safeguard against anarchy, and he connects this with the old Brahminical idea of the universal wickedness of men ||. Since creatures with their proper duties violated, he says, have a tendency to

* I 21-60 ; II 61-71.

† I 39.

‡ I 56, 58-60.

§ V 37.

|| Cf. pp. 107, 154 supra.

prey upon one another, there arises in the absence of punishment the destructive condition indicated by the maxim of the fishes (*mātsyanyāya*). Amplifying this idea in the following verse, the author states that this world, shelterless and being perforce caused to sink into hell under the influence of desire, greed and the like, is sustained by the king by means of punishment.* This is followed by two other verses of the same nature, but it is unnecessary to quote them here.

When we turn from the above to consider the author's attitude towards morality in so far as his rules of policy are concerned, we find him occupying a position which, in its attempt to condone a partially Machiavellian statecraft from the point of view of authoritative example, betrays the influence of the *Mahābhārata*.† In the beginning of his work he broadly inculcates the king's observance of the rule of virtuous conduct. The king who is devoted to righteous conduct, he says, unites himself and afterwards his people with the threefold end of life, while he who is of an opposite nature destroys both without doubt. In the following lines he drives his lesson home by quoting the example of the good king *Vaijavana* and the wicked king *Nahuṣa*, and he admonishes the king to seek his welfare with righteousness as his guide.‡ This, however, does not prevent the author from reproducing in the actual details of his statecraft some of the typical rules of the *Arthaśāstra*. Thus in his chapter relating to

* V 40-41.

† Cf. p. 202 *supra*.

‡ I 15-16.

the suppression of disturbers of the public peace he writes that the king should slay without delay the wicked ones (dūṣyāh)—that is, as the author explains, those sinful favourites of the king who singly or collectively harm the kingdom—either secretly, or else publicly after causing them to incur the enmity of the people.* In another place Kāmandaka, while analysing the seven traditional forms of policy (upāya) divides punishment into three classes, of which the first-named (viz. slaying) is subdivided into two kinds, namely the open and the secret. While the former should be applied, Kāmandaka thinks, against the enemy who is hated by the people, the latter should be inflicted upon those who irritate the subjects, who are the king's favourites, and who are powerful and oppressive to the others. This last form of punishment, the author explains, consists in the application of poison, secret appliances, weapons, and ointments causing sores.† In the third and last extract bearing on this point Kāmandaka divides fighting into two classes, namely fair and treacherous. The former, we are told, should be resorted to when the king has the advantage of time and place, has seduced the enemy's elements of sovereignty (or subjects) and is powerful, but the latter should be followed in the contrary circumstances. This last form of fighting comprises, as we learn from the numerous examples given by the author, various methods of slaying the enemy by

* IX 9-10. Cf. p. 149, supra. It may be mentioned in this connection that Kāmandaka's example of contrivances for secret punishment (Ibid 11-12) is copied from Kautilya p. 239.

† XXVII 9-12.

attacking him on unfavourable ground or when he is off his guard.*

Rules like the above might have been justified by Kāmandaka, as they were by his master, merely from the point of view of the interests of the society or of the State. It is, however, characteristic of the author that he seeks in the course of the chapters just cited to justify his statecraft on the higher ground of morality. Thus while advising the king to suppress the disturbers of the public peace, he writes, 'Kings that were almost like sages had recourse to righteous slaughter; hence the king is not afflicted with sin by slaying the wicked in the interests of righteousness.'† Again, in his chapter relating to unrighteous fighting the author winds up by saying that the slaying of the foe by treachery does not involve the obstruction of righteousness, and he quotes the example of the Kuru hero Aśvatthāmā who slew the Pāṇḍava host during night-time when it was absorbed in deep slumber.‡

II

Let us now turn to the second class of writings that may be said more or less properly to fall within the limits of this chapter. This is the collection of the Purāṇas and the minor Law-books (Smritis), which represents during this period the literature of the Brahminical canon, just as Kāmandaka's

* XXXI 54-60. Cf. pp. 149-150, *supra*.

† IX 5. In connection with this point it should be noticed that Kāmandaka introduces (Ibid 7) an elastic definition of morality (dharma), making it synonymous with the approved opinion of the Aryas learned in the canon.

‡ XXXI 71.

Nītisāra represents the literature of Arthasāstra.* Here again, as in the former case, the signs of decline as compared with the vigorous speculation of the earlier epoch are writ large on the surface. For in the first place much as the authors of the Purāṇas worked out in their sections on rājadharmā and Nīti the ideas of the older canon, especially in relation to the king's office, their contributions are essentially of the nature of compilations based upon the earlier material.† Nothing, moreover, is more characteristic of these authors, in so far as our point of view is concerned, than their endless and monotonous repetition of the rules of kingly conduct in the place of speculations of an abstract nature.‡ As regards the minor Law-books we find that however interesting may be the development of the theory of kingship in these works, they make

* Strictly speaking it is the Mahāpurāṇas alone that should be included along with the minor Smṛitis in the present section, but for the sake of convenience it has been thought advisable to draw upon the minor Purāṇas as well.

† A remarkable instance of what we think to be pious plagiarism occurs in the Agni Purāṇa (CCXXXVII-CCXLI) which contains a long discourse on Nīti that purports to have been addressed by king Rāma to his brother Lakṣmaṇa. It consists in reality of a string of unacknowledged quotations culled from the successive chapters of Kāmandaka's Nītisāra.

‡ A further sign of decline in our view is the description in the Garuḍa Purāṇa (CVIII 1) of Nītisāstra as a science of general morals, of which the art of government is only a branch.

after all but a slight contribution to political theory.*

To illustrate the political ideas of the works that we are now considering, it will be enough to describe their theories of kingship. The Purāṇas repeat in some passages the older view of the primary importance of the king's office from the standpoint of the subjects. The author of the Brihaddharma Purāṇa, for instance, declares in one place that the four orders (āśramas) are capable of enjoying their existence only under the king's protection, while the prosperity that exists in the absence of the king depends upon another person and is therefore insecure.† It is, however, mainly upon the doctrine of the king's divine nature—a doctrine which, as we have seen elsewhere, is as old as the Vedic Samhitās—that the authors whom we are now considering depend for the purpose of stressing the principle of monarchical authority. Thus the author last cited declares in one place that the king has a divine body in the

* The paucity of political ideas in the Purāṇas and the minor Smritis is explained partly at any rate by their nature and scope. The Purāṇas, as Prof. Bühler pointed out long ago (S. B. E. Vol. XXV, Preface, p. xci), are "popular sectarian compilations of mythology, philosophy, history and the sacred law, intended, as they are now used, for the instruction of the unlettered classes, including the upper divisions of the Śūdravarna, the so-called Sachchhudras." The minor Smritis, again, apart from the fact that they have come down to us mostly in a fragmentary form, are concerned in the main with the branches of civil and criminal law alone.

Quoted in Hemādri, Chaturvargachintāmaṇi, Vrata-Vol. II, p. 1050. The same idea is conveyed in the Brihaddharma Purāṇa (Pūrva- in the form of a striking metaphor. There and without a king is like a woman

form of a mortal, and again, that the king who has the same physical attributes and limbs as other men lives on earth as a god.* The idea of the king's divinity is presented by these authors in the two distinct forms that we have found to occur in the Manusamhitā and the Śāntiparvan, namely, that involving the equivalence of the king's functions to those of the deities and that signifying the king's creation by the Supreme God out of the divine elements. Both these notions, it will be presently seen, are connected with the king's fulfilment of the essential duties of his office. The first may be illustrated by means of the following examples. The king, we are told by Nārada as well as Brihatparāśara, assumes the forms of five deities, namely Fire, Indra, the Moon, Yama and Kubera, according as he fulfils an equivalent number of functions.† Slightly altered versions of the above may be traced in the Mārkaṇḍeya and the Brihad-dharma Purāṇas.‡ The account in the Agni Purāṇa is somewhat different in as much as it conceives the king as assuming the forms of nine deities according to the nature of his functions. The king, we are

* Quoted, Hemādri (loc. cit.). Nārada (XVIII 52) compares the king to a deity.

† Quoted in Mitrāmīśra's Rājanītiprakāśa, pp. 20-21. The text of Nārada here cited corresponds to chapter XVIII 26-31 of the published work. (Vide S. B. E. Vol. XXXIII pp. 217-218). In another passage quoted by Mitrāmīśra (op. cit. pp. 21-22) Nārada adds, "The king by virtue of his brightness and purity is like the Being without beginning and without end, provided he does not stray from the path (of duty)."

‡ The list in the Mārkaṇḍeya (XVII 21) has the Sun and Wind in place of Fire and Kubera, while that of the Brihad-dharma (Uttarakhaṇḍam III 6-7) has Īśa (Śiva) and Varuṇa in the place of Indra and Kubera.

told, is like the sun because he can be gazed at with difficulty on account of his lustre; he is like the moon because he is the object of gratification to the people through his sight; he is the god of wind since he sweeps the world with his spies; he is Manu Vaivasvata because of his punishing crimes; he is the god of fire when he burns the evil-minded; he is Kubera when he gives away wealth to the twice-born; he is Varuṇa since he showers wealth; he is the Earth as he sustains the world by his forbearance, and he is the god Hari because he protects the people by exercising the powers of enthusiasm, counsel, and the like.*

Let us next mention the passages illustrating the doctrine of the king's divine creation. *Brihatparāśara* states in one place that the Creator formed the king out of the essences of eight separate deities whose names are specified by the author.† This idea occurs in an amplified form in the *Brihadharma Purāṇa* which states that the Lord of creatures (*Prajāpati*) formed the king's person by taking lordship from Indra, power from Agni, cruelty from Yama, prosperity from the Moon, riches from the god of wealth, and steadiness from Viṣṇu.‡

The theory of the king's divine nature naturally leads to that of the submission and obedience of the subjects, which the canonical authors whom we are now treating appear likewise to have derived from the *Manusamhitā* and the *Mahābhārata*. This

* CCXXV 17-20.

† Vide *Mitrāmīśra*, op. cit., p. 16.

‡ *Uttarakhaṇḍam* III 8-9. The *Matsya Purāṇa* (CCXXVI 1-12) combines the idea of the king's divine creation with that of the equivalence of his functions to those of the deities.

obligation on the part of the subjects is justified, as before, partly on the ground of the primary importance of the king's office and partly on that of his divine nature.* The Brihaddharma Purāṇa states in one place that the king assumes the forms of five distinct deities and therefore none should harm or vilify him.† According to Devala the mother is Hari (Viṣṇu), the father is a deity, the elder brother is the god Kriṣṇa, the preceptor is the god Viṣṇu, and the king is a god in visible form; therefore none should harm them.‡ The king's command, so runs a couple of verses in Nārada, makes impure men pure and *vice versa*: hence he should not be slighted or abused.§ Elsewhere Nārada declares in language recalling a celebrated text of Gautama's Dharmaśāstra, "Two persons, a Brāhmaṇa and a king, are declared to be exempt from censure and corporal punishment in this world; for these two sustain the visible world."||

While in the above extracts the canonical authors would seem to teach the king's right of immunity from harm, they inculcate in other passages more or less on the same twofold basis of the king's divinity

* Nārada, it will be presently seen, adds a third ground involving the king's personal merit, which we are doubtless to understand was acquired by the latter in his previous birth.

† Uttarakhaṇḍam III 6-7.

‡ Vide Hemādri, Chaturvargachintāmaṇi, Prāyaścittakhaṇḍam pp. 76-77.

§ Vide Mitraniśra, op. cit. p. 22.

|| XV and XVI 20, Jolly's translation. Cf. Gaut. VIII 1-3; XI 31-32, quoted pp. 62-63, supra. We may mention in this connection that Nārada (XVIII 12) forbids advising or rebuking a king as well as a Brāhmaṇa on account of their dignity and sanctity, and elsewhere (Ibid 54) he includes both the king and the Brāhmaṇa in the list of eight sacred objects.

and the nature of his office the duty of obedience on the part of the subjects. The king's command, says Brihatparāśara in one place, is his great majesty ; he who disregards this should be slain by means of weapons. Whatever the king hears, does and speaks, should be done by all his subjects. He who disregards the king's power at once perishes. Finally the author clinches his arguments by putting a question. " Who will not," he asks, " obey the command of the person that quickly does, sees, hears, knows, causes to shine and protects, everything, since he is born out of the essences of all deities ? " * We may notice in this passage a tendency to develop the older teaching relating to the obedience of the subjects. This tendency, we think, is most prominent in the next passage that we shall consider. The king's command, says Nārada in one place, should be obeyed, otherwise death would follow. What the king says, be it right or wrong, is the law (dharma) of the suitors. The king lives on this earth like a visible Indra ; the people cannot prosper by violating his orders. Whatever a king does is right, that is the settled rule, because the protection of the world is entrusted to him and on account of his majesty and benignity towards all creatures. (As a husband though worthless must be always worshipped by his wives, in the same way the king though feeble should be worshipped by his subjects.) Through fear of the king's command the people do not swerve from their duties. The subjects are purchased by the king's austerity, he is their master, therefore they should submit to his command ; their pursuits of

* Vide Mitramiśra, op. cit. p. 23.

agriculture, pasturage and the like (vārtā), depend upon the king.* In this extract it is categorically stated that the king should be honoured irrespectively of his personal qualifications, and his orders obeyed without reference to their moral justification. Whether the further implication of this theory as involving absolute non-resistance on the part of the subjects was realized by the author, it is impossible to say. But there can be no doubt that the above passage marks the culmination of the Hindu doctrines of submission and obedience and makes the closest approach to the Western theory of Divine Right.

And yet while anciently emphasizing as above the principle of a hierarchical authority, the authors whom we are now considering are careful to re-iterate, however partially, the principles tending to check the abuse of the king's power. These writers, to begin with, repeatedly express the idea that the king is the universal protector.† The duty of protection moreover is enjoined by means of the usual

* Quoted, Mitrāmīśra, op. cit. p. 22.

† The Garuḍapurāṇa (vide Mitrāmīśra, op. cit. p. 30) declares that the king is the strength of the weak. A passage of the Kālikāpurāṇa (Ibid p. 30) states that the king is the son of the sonless, the riches of the poor, the mother of the motherless, the father of the fatherless, the protector of those who have no supporter, the husband of the widow, the servant of those who have none such and the friend of men. Brihaspati (Ibid p. 24) declares that the king (rājan) is so called because he gladdens (rañjayati) his subjects with the fourfold division of his troops and because he shines in his own person. A text of the Garuḍapurāṇa (Ibid p. 30) mentions that the king is called the protector of those who have none, the home of the homeless, the father of the sonless, and the father of the fatherless.