INTELLIGENT MAN'S GUIDE TO INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

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Sir MUNMOHANDAS RAMJI Kt. J. P.

Dedicated to the loving memory of the late

Sir Munmohandas Ramji Kt., J. P.

as a mark of respect and veneration

for the highly valuable services

rendered by him to the cause

of Hindu religion and for the

guidance, help and inspiration

received from him by the

author from time to time.

—:o:—

FOREWORD

BY

Mahāmahopādyāya Dr. Gangānāth Jhā, M. A., D. Litt; LL. D.
Ex-Vice Chancellor of The University of Allahabad.

The volume now going out to the public has been aptly named "Intelligent Man's Guide to Indian Philosophy" because as things stand at present, the subject of 'Indian Philosophy,' for the matter of that, Indian 'anything' cannot be properly understood by the 'non-intelligent' man. And the irony of the sitution is further accentuated when we realize that the requisite intelligence itself-by which is meant the real insight into things-cannot be attained without the right understanding of "*Indian Philosophy*" which comprises within its scope all forms and phases of a being's whole activity of body, speech and mind. And yet the highest truths of Indian Philosophy are such as cannot be understood by any one who has not gone through the entire discipline prescribed for the would-be 'Philosopher.' Mere 'Reading' does not-indeed cannot-carry us very far in the domain of Philosophy and yet Reading is the first step that has to be taken. For purposes of this Reading, there are many books available; but even so, the trend of survey has not been exhausted, as will be evident to the man who has read all the available books, on the perusal of the present volume. Herein the purview of 'Philosophy' has-rightly according to the Hindu idea of things - been carried far beyond that of the popularly known 'DARS'ANAS'. It embraces all regions of human activity. It has been written with care and judgment and it is hoped, will find readers who are sure to benefit by its study.

Mithila
George Town,
Allahabad,
November 20, 1934.

GANGĀNĀTH JHĀ

PREFACE

It is not without some misgivings that I venture to place before the public and all those who are interested in the growth of Philosophical and religious thought of the different schools in India, this humble work of mine, as the present day atmosphere is surcharged with dynamic and conflicting forces of all kinds seeking as it were to devour the ancient civilisation and culture of India which have survived hitherto all attacks direct or indirect made against it. The schism between the rich and poor, capital and labour and so on is too wide to be crossed over by mere school or college education without the help of a broad and all-embracing religion having as its basis a truly Philosophical and unitary interest. The present University education has entirely failed to arrest the growing tendency among students to imbibe anti-religious feelings leading to agnosticism and even to atheism or to secure a brotherly spirit of unity and a loving co-operation between members of the same society belonging to different castes, creeds, and religions.

The Darwinian principles of "Marry and Multiply" and "Survival of the fittest" have done considerable harm to society. No religious instructions are imparted at present to students in schools and colleges and sometimes even a policy of utter selfishness and aloofness is encouraged. The present education, apart from its other defects, is not training the students for a life of high discipline which is so necessary to combat successfully the struggles of actual life. It is rather unfortunate that owing to the absence of religious education in our schools and colleges and due to the influence of modern thought and culture on the minds of our youths at present, there is no yearning for knowledge of Hindu Scriptures and Shāstras and the principles of religion and Philosophy taught therein as would appear from the remarks of Professor Maxmuller who says "It is feared that even this small remnant of Philosophical learning will vanish in one or two generations as the youths of the present day, even if belonging to orthodox Brahmanic families do not take to these studies as there is no encouragement." A glowing tribute is also paid to the ancient religions of India by the famous Dr. Robert Earnest Hume, Professor of History of Religions, New

York, as would appear from the following remarks made by him in the Preface to his translation of the Upanishads. Thus he says "I would add a reverent salutation to India–my native land, mother of more religions than have originated or flourished in any other country of the world."

It is really deplorable that there is seen of late a growing tendency to indifference towards religion on the part of students which develops into antipathy and sometimes even into animosity towards religion. To combat this evil therefore, I have made an humble attempt to explain in this book the first principles of Philosophy and traditional religion, which have been inherited by the sons of India as their most cherished and valued heritage, but which are at present being neglected by them. The object of this book, however, is not so much to restate the mere tenets of each system of philosophical and religious thought put forward by the reputed authors of the several philosophical and religious works in India as to give a more comprehensive account of the philosophical and religious activities of the Indian nation from the earliest times and show that religion is connected with the social and national structure of the Hindu Society. The Hindu religion known as Sanātan or Eternal Religion of hoary antiquity with its socio–religious order of castes and other institutions, which was founded on the Philosophical doctrine of Monism as propounded in the Upanishads, does not profess to be a sectarian or communal religion consisting of certain dogmas, rites, and forms laid down for the guidance of the followers of certain castes, creeds and sects only, but it is a social institution having eternal principles, truths, beliefs, laws and practices, which aimed at bringing about the unity and solidarity of the nation as a whole and further securing in the end true happiness and independence of all human beings as members of a living organism under the kingdom of God.

Certain schools of modern thought have, of late, offered a real challenge to religious beliefs, and they have put forward different interpretations of their own to counteract the religious beliefs of the people. One such school has propounded the theory of materialism and naturalistic atheism. The followers of this school have propounded

the view that belief in the existence of God was unnecessary to explain the origin of this world, which, according to them, was the mechanical expression of unpurposive and unthinking forces of nature, which had no regard to the hopes and fears of the faltering man, and a note was taken by them of those things only which subserved to the material comforts and wants of human beings. Mr. Bertrand Russel is the pioneer of the above school of thought. According to him, human values were not fundamental, and the world of nature and man had been created by accident only. In short, a human individual only as endowed with intelligence, and not God, sat in judgment over our actions and who had a final say in all matters. This was however only a dogmatic mode of negative thinking which could not satisfy the rational Philosopher. It may be asked if there was no purpose, plan or design in this world of nature and man, how is that every human being has an innate desire of securing eternal existence, supreme happiness unalloyed with any particle of suffering and true freedom? This would clearly prove the theory of naturalistic atheism as irrational and one is led to postulate the existence of an eternal intelligent Being called God which ever exists and which has got eternal freedom as its innate nature. From the every earliest times, Indian mind has been averse to atheism, and all sacred and religious works of the Hindus, including the Dharma Shāstras (traditional laws) with the ethics therein, were theistic, which assumed a belief in God as the supreme moral being, who was the creator, ruler and governor of this universe of nature and man. The natural and moral laws of God were just and inflexible and one could secure real happiness by an unswerving Faith in Him, and by a disinterested service coupled with true love to Him, who alone was capable of emancipating the faltering humanity from all suffering by His Divine Grace. In India, the doctrine of devotion to God (*Bhakti*) is so popular that numerous religious cults and creeds have been started by several prophets, saints, and savants, from time to time, which have attracted a large number of followers till to-day. For the same reason, the Bhagwad Gitā or the Holy Song sung by the Divine Incarnation, Lord Shri Krishna, which contains the quintessence of the Vedas and Upanishads and constitutes one of the Prasthānas or canonical books of highest

authority to the Hindus has captivated the minds of persons of all castes and creeds in India who love it as their most precious treasure-trove.

There is seen of late, all around, a growing tendency to disintegrate, and a movement in that behalf is launched forth by certain reformers propounding various false theories as those of equality of rights of all, socialism, communism, Bolshevism and so on, apparently with the object of emancipating the masses from all disabilities whether economic, political, social, educational, or otherwise, but really to serve their own ends, either political or otherwise, by destroying the Faith and beliefs of the people. People are therefore required to be on their strict guard to protect themselves from the contaminating influence of these evil forces, which have spread everywhere, and which threaten to destroy their peace, happiness and liberty. I have therefore explained in this book the fallacies underlying the modern theory of communism and pointed out ways and means of combating the present day disruptive forces leading to communism, Bolshevism, and so on, and urged the need of leading more a truly religious life and a life of strict discipline and self-restraint as taught in the Hindu Shāstras than a life of rank materialism and animalism which lead a man to degradation and suffering only in the long run. Of late, however, we find in some of the eminent scientists of the West a growing tendency towards spiritualism and and they are showing signs of dissatisfaction towards materialism. Hence, with a view to avert the present day disruptive forces which threaten to eat away the very vitals of our Society, I have made an humble attempt in this book to create in the minds of the present day youths, who are fascinated with ideas of modern culture, education and civilization, a real taste for the superior culture and civilization possessed by the Hindus who were once the torch bearers of light and learning. These pages are therefore intended to present to the reader in a handi-form the cardinal doctrines relating to the philosophical, religious, and traditional systems of thought as prevailing in India, and give him a general idea of the Hindu Philosophy and traditional religion and their extreme usefulness in daily life, so as to enable him to withstand successfully the antagonistic and divergent forces which have penetrated deep into our country and created dissentions in the Hindu Community and retarded its growth and development as a nation.

This work deals with the principles of Philosophy, Religion and Ethics as taught in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagwad Gitā, the two Epics of Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata and the Hindu Shāstras in a general way. While in the subsequent books which will be issued in due course, the principles of Philosophy and religion as taught in the several systems or Darshans proper, both theistic as well as atheistic, and the several schools, sects creeds, and cults of religious thought as started by different teachers from time to time and having numerous followers in almost all parts of our country, will be explained by me. Special care has been taken in these pages to avoid a sectarian point of view while dealing with questions affecting the traditional religion of the Hindus and a very broad and comprehensive standpoint is taken throughout. The exact relationship subsisting between law and religion in all bearings has also been explained in this book so as to make it useful to any one in the daily walks of life.

Besides, to make the book useful to the legal profession, special attention has been paid to subjects having a direct bearing on law such as the sources of law, marriage, divorce, Mimānsā rules of interpretation of Texts, ancient customs and usages, catholicity of the sacred laws, theories of punishment, philosophy of law and so on.

In conclusion I have got to acknowledge my indebtedness to the learned authors of the several books, specially referred to in this book, and particularly, to Dr. Paul Deussen and Mr. W. Douglas P. Hill M. A. the authors of the "The Philosophy of the Upanishads" and "The Bhagwad Gita"-Oxford University Press, respectively, for the valuable assistance derived by me from their excellent works.

I also desire to acknowledge here my grateful thanks to my friend Mr. F. B. Vaccha, Bar-at-law, for helping me in correcting the proofs relating to the vedic period and also to my worthy father Rao Bahadur C. S. Pandya, B. A. for helping me in correcting the proofs of the remaining portions of the book. I have also to thank my friend Mr. R. Krishnamacharya, the Editor of the "Indian Mirror," for the help rendered by him in furnishing me with certain information relating to communism dealt with in the book. Lastly I have to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to the various Religious Heads and Pandits for making valuable suggestions on many topics dealing with the Shāstric authorities.

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MANUBHAI. C. PANDYA.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Introduction... ... ... 1–16 (24)

Object of Philosophy 1

Subjects of Philosophy 2

Relation of Philosophy and Religion 2

The Law of Karma and Transmigration of the Souls. 3

The Doctrine of Evil and Freedom of Choice ... 5

Means of knowledge... 7

Historic survey 10

The gist of the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads. 12

The paths of Devotion and knowledge 13

Reconciliation of Monotheism with monism ... 14

Hindu religion and its comprehensiveness ... 16– 1

Trend of Modern Science more towards spiritualism. 16– 4

Contrast of Eastern and Western standpoints of religion. 16– 6

Contrast between Eastern and Western systems of morality 16– 8

The sacred Laws and Traditions of the Āryans... 16– 9

The Institution of caste (Chāturvarna) 16–12

Hindu Ethics 16–19

Catholicity of the Hindu Dharma Shāstras and adaptation of Law to changed circumstances ... 16–22

BOOK No. I

VEDIC PERIOD

CHAPTER II

Samhitās and Brāhmanas

Introductory 19- 24

General 19

The age of the Vedas 20

The field of Vedic Subjects... 20

Vedic Karmas or actions 25- 29

Sacrifice as Dharma or Religious Duty 25

Rules relating to the social order of castes and ... stages of life. (Varnāsrama) 26

Rules of good conduct and Ethics 28

Kāmya Yajnas or Scrifices with desire 28

Theology of the Vedic deities 29- 38

Major Deities... 29

Minor Deities... 34

Āryan Deities and the Deities of Dāsas and Asuras. 35

Abstract Deities 37

Vedic Philosophy 38- 47

Classification of the Vedic Gods 38

One God having three forms (Trimūrti)... ... 39

Polytheism and Pantheism... 39

Henotheism 41

Monotheism 41

Philosophical inquiries after discovery of the Supreme Being 42

Cosmogenic hymns 43

Philosophical conception of the Supreme Being in Purusha Sūkta 46

Vedic Eschatology 48- 51

Reward of Heaven after death for good works ... 48

Celestial pleasures of the deceased Fathers (Pitṛis) in company with Gods 48

Enjoyment in company with deceased relations ... 49

Invocation of the deceased Fathers (Pitṛis) for Blessings (Srāddhas) 49

Consignment to the infernal region of sinners ... 50

Genesis of the law of Karma or retribution ... 51

Interpretation of the Vedas 51- 53

Different methods of interpretation 51

Etymological method of interpretation 52

Traditional method of interpretation 52

Critical method of interpretation 53

CHAPTER III

Philosophy of the Upanishads.

Introductory 54- 58

Classification of the Upanishads... 56

Principal Topics of the Upanishads 58

Ontology 58- 68

Nature of Nirguna (attributeless) Brahman or the Absolute 59

The nature of Ātman or self 62

The Doctrine of Advaita or non-dual monism... 64

Absolute Idealism and unity of the world ... 65

Theology 68- 79

Search for God of worship 69

Upāsanās or Meditations-Symbol Worship ... 71

Meditations of God with Attributes 72

Worship of Ātman or self 74

Theism 75

Cosmology 79– 91

Creation of the Universe... 79

Idealism, Pantheism and Causation 80

Theories of Triple and Quintuple Creation ... 81

Destruction of the Universe 82

The Doctrine of Māyā or Unreality of the Universe. 83

Criticism of the theories of Creation 88

Esoteric Doctrine of Cosmology... 90

Psychology 91– 96

Individual Soul 91

True and false self 92

Gross, subte, and causal bodies 92

The theory of five sheaths of self 94

Waking, dreaming and deep sleep 95

Triune Unity of the Supreme Self 95

Eschatology 96–101

Immortality of the Soul... 96

Transmigration of the Soul 98

The Doctrine of five Fires: Panchāgni Vidyā... 99

Devayāna and Pitṛiyāna or the Paths of Gods and Fathers 99

The Doctrine of transmigration based on the law of Karma and retribution 100

Emancipation 101–105

Oneness with the Supreme Being 101

Companionship with the Supreme Being ... 104

Release by stages (Krama-Mukti) 105

Ethics of the Upanishads 105–108

Moral Virtues 105

Rules of castes and stages of life (Varnāshrama). 106

Place of Ethics in the Upanishadic philosophy 107

BOOK No. II

THE EPIC PERIOD

CHAPTER IV

The Epic Philosophy

Introductory 111

The Rāmāyana 112–113

The Ethics of the Rāmāyana 112

Theology of the Rāmāyana 113

The Māhābhārata 113–124

Theology of the Māhābhārata 113

The Pāncharātra or Bhāgwat system 120

Systems of Philosophy in the Māhābhārata:—

Philosophical episodes in the Māhābhārata. 121

Five orthodox systems of philosophy ... 121

Unorthodox and atheistical systems ... 122

Theistical Sānkhya 123

Classical Sānkhya 123

Precursors of Buddhist and Jaina Religions. 123

Dualism and Monism 124

Ethics of the Māhābhārata 124–125

CHAPTER V

The Bhagwad-Gitā

Introductory 126–128

Ontology 129-135

Discrimination of Ātman (Self) and Prakṛiti (not-self or nature) 129

Ātman or true self is not a Doer 130

Unity of Brahman Transcendent and Immanent. 131

The Doctrine of Knowledge and its usefulness... 133

The Theory of Union (Samucchaya) of action and knowledge 134

Theology **135-149**

Early History of Theism 135

Incarnation of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva:— 137

Whether the embodied form of the incarnate Kṛishna is the Supreme Brahman or a part manifestation of his glories (Vibhūti) ... 138

The embodied form of Kṛishna is illusory (i.e. of Māyā) 139

Organic Unity of the cosmos in the being of Kṛishna transcendent and immanent... 139

Kṛishna as concrete manifestation of the all-pervading and infinite Brahman for worship 140

The Doctrine of Bhakti or Devotion:—

The path of Devotion in the Gitā is universal and non-sectarian 140

Moral effect of devotion 141

Simple worship with love preferred to the formal one... 142

Identity of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva with the Supreme Being as the Royal mystery ... 142

Organic unity of the cosmos in Kṛishna's lower and higher natures 143

Devotee with knowledge object of Kṛishna's love 144

Emancipation as the fruit of devotion ... 144

Two methods of worship: devotion to the manifest Lord and contemplation of the unmanifest Absolute 144

Unity of Kṛishna in various aspects:—

Kṛishna as Purushottama or Triple Purusha. 145

Kṛishna as Īshwara or ruler 147

Kṛishna as God of Justice and fruit-giver. 147

The Doctrine of Divine Grace 148

Cosmology 149-158

Creation by the Lord of Dual Nature ... 149
Order of Evolution 151
The Doctrine of three Gunas (strands) of Nature. 152
The Doctrine of Non-Dual Monism or Absolute Idealism... 154
Absolute Idealism and Pantheism 154
The Doctrine of Māyā or Unreality of the World 155
Prakṛiti is the Creative medium of God ... 156
Prakṛiti constitutes the Law of Causation ... 157

Psychology 158-160

Nature of Empiric Soul 158
Empiric Soul as doer and enjoyer 159
Release by knowledge of field (Kshetra) and the field-knower (Kshetrajna) 159
Free and bound Souls 160

Eschatology 160-162

Paths of Fathers (Pitṛiyāna) and the Gods (Devayāna) 160
Atmospheric and Nether worlds (Hell) ... 161
The Doctrine of Transmigration... 161

Emancipation 162-166

Positive conception of Emancipation 162
Different forms of Emancipation:— 163
Oneness with the Supreme Being... ... 163
Emancipation as an Eternal and Immutable Abode 163
Approach to the Highest Divinity for eternal comradeship 164
Means to Emancipation 165

Ethics of the Gitā 166-178

Relation of action and knowledge 166
Denouncement of total inaction... 167
Denouncement of actions with Desire 167
Doctrine of Karma-Yoga or action without desire 168

Practice of self control and work with Detachment 168
The cause of Sin... 171
Sacrificial Acts 172
Duties relating to the four castes (Chāturvarna). 173
Moral qualities 175
Self-realisation as the supreme purpose of Ethics in the Gita 178

CHAPTER VI

Dharma Shāstras

Early History **179-180**

Dharma Sūtras **180-182**

Sūtra Literature attached to the Vedas ... 180
Classification of Dharma Sūtras... 181
Ethics of the Dharma Sūtras 131

Dharma Shāstras **183-187**

Basis of authority of the Smṛitis 183
Subject-matter of Smṛitis 183
Classification of Smṛitis 184
Principal Smṛitis 184
Commentaries on Smṛitis 186
Compilations and Digests of Law 186
Mimānsa rules of interpretation 187

Manu Smṛiti **187-200**

Glowing tributes of Scholars to Manu Smṛiti... 187
Short summary of Manu Smṛiti 188
Important Doctrines in Manu Smṛiti 189
Sources of authority:— 189
Theology 189
Cosmology 190
Philosophy 191
The Law of Karma and Transmigration of the Soul 191
Ethics (Dharma) 192

Duties of the four castes (Chāturvarna) ... 193
Obligatory duties of the twice-born to perform the daily Prayers (Sandhyā) and the five great sacrifices (Pancha Mahāyajnas) 195
Hospitality to the guest and social service. 197
Prohibition of inter-caste marriage ... 198
Preference of a moral life to that by birth. 198
The high status of womanhood 199
Sacramental character and indissolubility of Hindu marriage 199
Ideal Unity of Husband and wife ... 199
Freedom of a woman in conformity with law (Dharma) 200
Brāhman as the type of virtue and self-sacrifice 200

Incidents of Hindu marriage and marriage rites and ceremonies 200–213

Marriage a religious sacrament and obligation 200
Betrothal and marriage 201
Competency of parties to marriage ... 202
Suitable qualifications of a Bridegroom... 202
Whether eunuchs and madmen are competent to marry ? 203
Suitable qualifications of a bride for marriage 203
Marriage with girls outside one's caste... 204
Eight forms of marriage 205
Different sorts of sons 207
Rites and ceremonies of Brahma marriage... 208
The Hindu ideal of marriage 212

Rules and Regulations governing marriage and marital relations 213–248

Selection and choice of husband..... ... 213
Age of marriage 214
Period of marital consummation and regulations relating thereto 220

Rights and Duties of Husband and wife ... 224
The custom of Sati or self-immolation of widow... 229
Maintenance of wife and widow:— 230
Duty of husband to maintain his wife ... 230
Widow's right to maintenance 231
Forfeiture of maintenance by widow's unchastity 231
Adoption by husband and wife... 232
Adoption by husband 232
" " wife 233
" " widow 233
Niyoga or the practice of begetting a son on the wife of another by a religious appointment or commission 235
Widow remarriage whether recognised in the Dharma Shāstras and if so how far ?... ... 237
Divorce repugnant to the Sacramental theory of marriage 244
Polyagamy inconsistent with the Vedic ideal of marriage 245
Polyandry uncommon among the Āryan Hindus 246
Sale of a girl denounced by the lawgivers ... 248

The Sacred laws and traditions of the Āryans 248–262

Twofold nature of the Āryan religion as taught in the Dharma Shāstras 248
Traditional mode (Paramparā) of handing down sacred Precepts and customs about good conduct (Sadāchāra)... 250
Sources of the sacred laws of the Āryans ... 252
Rules of interpretation of the Sacred Texts... 253
Good conduct (Āchāra) and ancient usages as trancendent law 254
Assembly of Learned Brāhmans (Parishad) competent to decide doubtful points of sacred law 258
Different sets of duties for different ages ... 259
Catholicity of Dharma Shāstras and adaptation of law to changing conditions 260

Rules of conduct for the four orders of caste as constituting the Sanātan Religion (*Chātur Varna Dharma*) 262-287

What is Sanātan Religion 262
The religious sacraments (Sanskāras) ... 262
Institution of four castes (Chātur Varna)... 264
Āryans (Savarnas) and Un-Āryans (Avarnas) 266
Origin of caste in Pre-Vedic times and its subsequent growth 268
Dāsas and Sūdras 270
Distinction of caste on the basis of *Varna* (colour) and *Jāti* (small groups of caste)... 271
Determination of caste by birth and not profession 273
Offsprings of mixed marriages (Varna Sankara) (Anuloma and Pratiloma)... 275
Duties and occupations of Chāndālas and svapachas (degraded classes of persons) ... 277
Whether there could be a change of castes in this very life or in succeeding lives only ?... 278
Whether a Sūdra is entitled to study the Vedas and perform Vedic sacrifices ? ... 280
Religious duties and professions of the four castes (Chātur-Varna Dharma) 282
General rules of religious conduct for the twice-born and their relaxation in the Kali age and in distressed times... 284
Excommunication from caste for infraction of caste rules... 284
Conclusion 287

Rules of conduct laid down for the four orders of life (Āshrama Dharma) 287-314

Duties of a Student (Brahmachāri) 287
The Duties of a householder (Gṛihastha) ... 296

Duties of a Hermit (Vānaprastha) 304
„ „ an ascetic (Sanyāsi) 306
General observations on the four orders of life 311

Rules and Regulations about food and drink **314-326**

Rules based on express texts, old traditions and principles of hygiene 314
Lawful and forbidden food and drink ... 315
Rules for and against flesh-eating 317
Lawful and forbidden flesh 318
Origin of the practice of flesh-eating and subsequent restrictions 318
General public feeling against cow-slaughter from the earliest times 319
Determination of the legal position as regards flesh-eating 321
Relaxation of the rules and restrictions as to diet in the Kali age 323
Relaxation of restrictions as to diet in distressed times. 324

Rules and Regulations regarding purity and defilement by touch etc., ... **326-339**

Regulations regarding purity of conduct (*Shauchā-chāra*) an integral part of the Hindu religion 326
Regulations about compulsory bath and sipping of water (Āchaman) for purification ... 328
Regulations regarding purification from defilement by touch 330
Regulations interdicting touch during impurity due to birth and death 332
Impurity due to suicide and rules of purification 332
Interdiction of the touch of a woman in menses or in confinement 333
Rules regarding pure and impure things and modes of purification from defilement ... 334
Defilement of food by touch and even sight of the impure 337

Relaxation of the rules about purity etc., in times of distress 339

Special rules of interdiction regarding touch and intercourse with Chāndālas, degraded persons (Patitas) and low castes (Antyajas) 339-371

Defilement by touch or intercourse with Chāndālas and degraded castes (Patitas)... 339

Special rules of purification from defilement and polution by touch of *Chāndālas* etc., ... 341

Whether the rule of Untouchability was a modern innovation or whether it had the sanction of the Vedas ? 344

Whether the Hindu Shāstras or the law of the land warrant the Untouchables alleged right to temple entry. 350

Untouchables in the Buddhist Literature ... 354

Bewildering Extent of Prevalence of Untouchability in Southern India due more to Pre-Dravidian influence. 355

The Anti-Untouchability movement... ... 357

Fundamental difference between backward classes and Untouchables 358

Low and backward castes (*Antyajas*) ... 359

Bogey of untouchability as a political instrument 361

Uplift of backward classes and Sūdras ... 362

Elevation of Sūdras and degraded persons to Āryanhood by *Vrātyastoma* Ceremony and the Suddhi (purification) movement ... 364

Chāndālas (Untouchables), Antyajas (low castes) and Sūdras (servant class) and their inter-relations 366

Two classes of Sūdras, Sat-Sūdras and Asat-Sūdras 366

Exploitation of Sūdras and low caste men by the reformers... 368

Elevation of status of Sat-Sūdras and persons of low castes of pure habits and special rights accorded to some of them by way of exception 368

Growing spirit of communalism harmful to the growth of true nationalism and unity ... 370

Punishments and penalties for religious offences and Sins 371-389
Sin due to a transgression of the Divine laws 371
Theories of punishment:—
Retributive theory 373
Deterrent or preventive theory 373
Reformative or educative theory 374
Primitive punishments... 374
Punishment of fines 375
Corporal punishments 376
Penances for sins and religious offences by way of purification 377
Confession and a determination not to commit sin in future, essential elements 377
Classes of difficult penances 379
Classification of Sins as Mahāpātakas (great sins), Upapātaks and other minor sins ... 381
Excommunication of persons having intercourse with out-casts 384
Expiatory penances and rites dictated by the synod of learned Brāhmans (Vidvat Parishad) 387
The special purpose of the Dharma Shāstras 388
Ethics the main purpose of the Dharma Shāstras 389-401
Rules' of the Dharma Shāstras were means only to the supreme end of self-realisation and not ends in themselves 389
Whether the ethics of the Bhagvad Gitā is opposed to that of the Dharma Shāstras ?... 390
Obedience to law and authority paramount duty of all as laid down in the Scriptures and Dharma Shāstras 391
Theistic basis of the ethics and sacred laws laid down in the Dharma Shāstras ... 392
Criticism of the modern theory of equality of all 393
Restraining influence of the Dharma Shāstras in combating the present day disruptive forces leading to communism and Bolshevism. ... 394
The fallacies underlying the modern theory of communism 397
Some phases of communism 397
Communism opposed to democracy and its disastrous consequences 397
Restraining influence of the Dharma Shāstrās 398
399

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. B.	Aitareya Brāhmana.
A. D. S.	Āpastambha Dharma Sūtras.
A. G. S.	Āpastambha Grihya Sūtras.
A. P.	Āditya Purāna.
A. R.	Ayodhyākānd Rāmāyana.
A. S.	Āpastambha Smriti.
A. U.	Aitareya Upanishad.
A. V.	Atharva Veda.
A. V. S.	Atharva Veda Saṁhitā.
Ag. S.	Angiras Smriti.
At. S.	Atri Smriti.
B. D. S.	Bauddhāyana Dharma Sūtra.
B. G.	Bhagwad Gitā.
B. P. or Bh. P.	Bhāgwat Purāna.
B. S.	Brihaspati Smriti
B. U.	Brihadāranyaka Upanishad.
Bom.	Indian Law Reports Bombay.
Bom. L. R.	Bombay Law Reporter.
Brooke's G. L.	Brooke's Gospel of Life.
Ch. U.	Chhāndogya Upanishad.
G. D. S. or G. S. ...	Gotama Dharma Sūtras.
G. G. S.	Gobhila Grihya Sūtras.
H. W. R. Act.	Hindu Widow's Remarriage Act.
I. A.	Indian Appeals.
I. U.	Ishavāsya Upanishad.
J. S.	Jaiminiya Pūrva Mimānsa Sūtras.
K. U.	Katha Upanishad
Ka. U.	Kausitaki Upanishad.
Ke. U.	Kena Upanishad.
M. B. Anu. or M. B. A. P.	Māhābhārata Anushāsana Parva.
M. B. S. P.	Māhābhārata Shanti Parva.
M. I. A.	Moore's Indian Appeals.
M. S.	Manu Smriti.
M. U.	Mundaka Upanishad

M. U. Bh.	Mundaka Upanishad Bhāshya by Shankarāchārya.
Ma. U.	Māndukya Upanishad.
N. Pt. U...	Nṛisiṁha Pūrva Tapini Upanishad.
N. S.	Nārada Smṛiti.
P. B.	Panchaviṁsa Brāhmana.
P. C.	Privy Council.
P. G. S....	Pāraskara Gṛihya Sūtra.
P. S.	Pārāsara Smṛiti.
P. U.	Prasna Upanishad.
R. Pt. U...	Rāma Pūrva Tapini Upanishad.
R. V.	Ṛig Veda.
S. B.	Satapatha Brāhmana.
S. B. E....	Sacred Books of the East Series.
S. G. S. or Sh. G. S....	Shānkhāyana Gṛihya Sūtra.
S. U.	Svetāsvatara Upanishad.
Sm. S. or Sv. S... ...	Samvarta Smṛiti.
T. B.	Taittariya Brāhmana.
T. S.	Taittariya Saṁhitā.
T. U.	Taittariya Upanishad.
V. D. S. or V. S. ...	Vasistha Dharma Sūtra.
V. K. S...	Vātsyāyana Kāma Sūtra.
V. P.	Vāyu Purāna.
V. S.	Vājasaniya Saṁhitā.
Vi. S.	Vishnu Smṛiti.
Vy. S.	Vyāsa Smṛiti.
Y. S.	Yājnavalkya Smṛiti.
Ym. S.	Yama Smṛiti.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

(1) Object of Philosophy.

Though the scope of Indian Philosophy in its treatment and discussion of the various topics and subjects generally is similar to that of Western Philosophy, one at once marks out the singular absence of all discussion relating to the summum bonum of human life called Moksha or final Beatitude in Western Philosophy as distinguished from Indian philosophy, according to which, Moksha constitutes the final goal and end of all life. All schools of Indian Philosophy whether orthodox or heterodox, theistic or atheistic, realistic or idealistic, lay special stress on Moksha in their various treatises as the highest object of philosophy though there is a great difference among them as to their views about the exact nature of Moksha. Some of them take a negative view of Moksha as meaning freedom from all pain and misery as the Naiyayikas, Vaisheshikas, Sankhyas and Buddhists, while others take a positive view of Moksha as meaning the highest supersensuous bliss or happiness as in the case of Vedantins.

The Mimansakas believe in Svarga or enjoyment of the heaven as Moksha which is the highest reward for the performance of sacrifices as enjoined by the Vedas. The general word for philosophy in the East is Darshana which literally means perception or direct vision according to Vedanta. Perception here does not mean ordinary perception or cognition by the senses but it means the inner consciousness and joyful experience of the real as a harmonious whole, transcending all distinctions of subject and object but with a balance of thought, feeling and willing which is acquired by Intuition. This is opposed to the purely rationalistic view of cognition or knowledge which is based on previous conceptions and according to which the object is always opposed to the subject as setting up a limit to all knowledge. To tide over the gulf between the subject and

the object, spirit and nature or soul and body, various theories have been advanced by Western philosophers from time to time such as the mechanical theory, occasionalism, and the theory of pre-established harmony, but none of these theories gives a satisfactory solution of the difficulty of bridging over the gulf between subject and object as opposed to each other. Of late, however, we find a tendency in some of the Western philosophers of recognising Intuition as the highest means of acquiring true knowledge of the Absolute or the Reality in all its bearings thus supporting the conception of the true end of philosophy as entertained by the Indian Philosophers as stated above.

(2) Subjects of Philosophy.

The main subjects of philosophy are Ontology which deals with and explains the true nature and essence of Being and Reality, Cosmology, which deals with physical nature and the theories of creation and Rational Psychology which deals with the nature of spirit or life and the psychical states of individuals in their relations to the environments. It also includes the science of Epistemology which explains the theory of knowledge and how knowledge of things is acquired. The various schools of Indian philosophy deal with the above subjects and they have got different theories of their own by which they try to establish Ultimate truth. Several of these schools further deal with the subject of Eschatology which explains the doctrine of the last or final state of persons, viz. death and what happens after death. Several philosophers of the West have however refused to include Eschatology as a subject of metaphysics proper and they have relegated it to the domain of religion which is separated from philosophy proper.

(3) Relation of Philosophy and Religion.

In India philosophy and religion are inseparable unlike the West where religion and philosophy are not only divorced but they are actually antagonistic to each other. As a matter of fact, the aim of both religion and philosophy is one, namely the determination of absolute truth or reality and the Ultimate end of life. In India constant attempts have been made from the very earliest times to reconcile philosophy with religion and religion is put on a sound basis from a

philosophical stand-point so as to satisfy the rational test. It may be stated generally that religion establishes all truth with authority while philosophy does so by appeal to reason. Religion is generally dogmatic while philosophy is rational. The truths are enjoined upon us by religion in a dogmatic manner while philosophy presents the same to us in a persuasive manner so as to induce us to accept the same by an appeal to our reason.

(4) The Law of Karma and Transmigration of the Souls.

Besides religion, Indian philosophy also treats of morality as forming its part. Morality is given a true spiritual significance by Indian philosophers. It is however treated only as a means to the end of self-realisation and not as an end in itself. Indian philosophers have from the very beginning discussed at great length about the doctrines of transmigration of the souls and the immortality of the soul, about which we find very little discussion in Western philosophies. The doctrine of transmigration of the souls is based on the theory of Karma or retribution according to which rewards and punishments are given as fruits of the good and bad deeds done severally by men in their previous lives. Every man is born here being sent by God to enjoy the fruits of his own deeds done in his past life. The doctrine of transmigration of the souls has been part and parcel of most of the schools of Indian philosophy from the very earliest times. Their conception of Moksha or final beatitude consists in freedom from the rounds of births and deaths and transmigration in this mortal world. The said ideas however are to be found only in a nascent state in the Vedas but they are developed later on in the Upanishads and thereafter in the Epics, Smritis and Darshanas or schools of philosophy. They all accept the doctrine of transmigration of the souls. By the law of Karma the individual souls are made to revolve innumerable rounds of births and deaths in this world as an atonement for the misdeeds done by them in their past lives until all sins are purged out by leading a high moral life, as enjoined in the Vedas and Dharma Shastras or codes of Law and there is a spiritual awakening ultimately by true knowledge as taught by the Upanishads and Vedanta which leads to Moksha. All the orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy and even the heterodox

system of Jaina Philosophy accept the above doctrine and the Law of Karma as axiomatic truths. The doctrine of transmigration of the souls was also believed by the Greek philosophers Plato, Empedocles, Pythagoras and others. Indian philosophy is not merely confined to dry dialectical discussions of the metaphysical problems of ontology, epistemology and cosmology but it has a definite and practical aim of realising the unity of spiritual self as the highest goal from a religious stand-point of a comprehensive nature which finds a permanent restive place in the eternal peace of the Absolute which is called Brahmi-sthiti, thus successfully tiding over the gulf of the apparent duality between mind and matter, subject and object, idealism and realism and transcendentalism and immanence. The above result was not brought about at once but only gradually by slow gradations from time to time culminating in the full-fledged doctrine of non-dual monism or transcendental unity of the Absolute as the highest fruit of the blossoms growing on the divine tree of the immortal Upnishads as explained by the great scholiast Shri Shankaracharya who was one of the greatest philosophers and theologians the world has ever produced.

Immortality of the Soul.

The doctrine of transmigration of the souls is related to the science of eschatology which treats of the fate of soul after death. According to the theory of Indian philosophy there are only two states of souls after death viz. a state of transmigration and rebirths in bodies of gods, human beings, or lower beings, and the state of emancipation, which are supported by the doctrine of immortality of the soul. This doctrine was accepted even by the Greek philosophers Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Some of the materialistic philosophers of the West do not accept the above doctrine of immortality of the soul and they offer two theories about the state of the soul after death viz. that there is a total annihilation of the soul after death or there is eternal retribution which is meted out once for all to all souls on the day of resurrection as believed in the theologies of the Christian, Zorostrian and the Mahomedan religions. Professor Paul Deussen has given the following answer to the above theories. As regards the theory of annihilation, he says that annihilation is in conflict with

man's love for self and his innate faculty or desire for certainty which is more deep-rooted than even the metaphysical knowledge that spirit as such has no birth or dissolution. As regards the second theory of eternal retribution, Professor Deussen argues that it opens the prospect of eternal reward or punishment for an existence of the soul in this world which is so brief and liable to errors and accidents that the said theory cannot be supported on rational grounds. Dr. Annie Beasant also accepts the doctrine of transmigration and she expresses her views on the subject as follows:—

"With reincarnation man is dignified immortal being evolving towards a divinely glorious end; without it he is a tossing straw on the stream of chance circumstances, irresponsible for his character, for his actions and for his destiny. With it, he may look forward with fearless hope, however low in the scale of evolution he may be to-day, for he is on the ladder to divinity and his climbing to its summit is only a question of time. Without it he has no reasonable ground of assurance as to progress in the future nor indeed any reasonable ground of assurance in future at all.

The main difficulty with many people in the reception of the doctrine of reincarnation is their own absence of memory of their past, yet they are every day familiar with the fact that they have forgotten very much even of their lives in their present bodies and that the early years of childhood are blurred and those of infancy a blank. They must also know that events of the past which have entirely slipped out of their normal consciousness are yet hidden away in dark caves of memory and can be brought out again vividly in some form of disease or under the influence of mesmerism." The doctrine of transmigration of the soul is based on the theory of Karma or moral retribution which is justified on rational grounds.

(5) The Doctrine of Evil and Freedom of the Choice.

We have seen above that the doctrine of transmigration of the souls is based on the theory of Karma or Moral Law according to which every person is responsible for the deeds done by him whether good or bad and which presupposes a Freedom of the choice and ability

to do what he wishes. It only expresses in another form the working of the natural law of cause and effect which must be eternally operative. The law says "As you sow, so shall you reap." Man is however distinguished from nature in as much as he is a rational and responsible being, being endowed with mind by which he can choose and determine what action he shall adopt. His actions are not therefore quite mechanical as those of nature which has no thinking mind. Human actions are responsible and they presuppose complete Freedom of the choice. Man is therefore governed by the moral law which is distinguished from the mechanical law governing nature, otherwise called the law of causation. Man is not a mere automaton acting mechanically but being endowed with mind and intellect, he is a rational being. Freedom or liberty which constitutes the rational nature of a man would have no meaning unless he had the power to determine and regulate his actions according to his ideas and thoughts. The problem of sin or evil has puzzled the minds of the Western philosophers from old and they have not been able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problem in the absence of knowledge of the true philosophical basis thereof. As a matter of fact, evil is not regarded as the result of a rebellion against God as postulated in theology but it is the inevitable consequence of a mistake or ignorance of the moral law. There is no punishment but an inevitable consequence of wrong doing which it was possible for one to prevent by right thinking and willing. If a man commits sin or makes mistakes he has to suffer the consequences of the violation of the moral law as long as he is a victim of errors. In the same way right doing must be rewarded for the same reason. It is a wrong notion to believe that there is anything intrinsically evil in nature. As a matter of fact, there is no evil power having an ultimate reality or a real objective existence like Satan, apart from and independent of the Supreme Being or God, whose real nature consists of good only. The above notion owes its rise to the doctrine of dualism of the Christian theology which postulates Satan as a separate entity in opposition to God, but which is false as pointed above. The true principle is that sin is its own punishment and righteousness is its own reward according to the moral law of Karma. "The problem of

evil will be met only to the degree that we cease doing evil and do good, for evil will disappear when we no longer indulge in it. When the whole world sees the right and does the right, then and not until then will the problem of evil be solved for the entire race". A question is often asked why sin or evil was at all created by God? But this is on the hypothesis that sin or evil as opposed to good is something real and permanent. The hypothesis is however false as pointed out above and so the above question is untenable. The real philosophical explanation however is that man being a rational being and not a mechanical automaton, he must suffer on the road to self realisation and suffering is necessary for an all round experience of life which otherwise would be one-sided and mechanical. This however does not mean that pain or evil is real but it is transitional only.

(6) Means of Knowledge.

Having considered above the various subjects constituting the domain of philosophy, it is necessary to consider what are the means of right knowledge according to the various schools of Indian philosophy. It may be stated that no true knowledge of any subject whether physical or metaphysical, can be acquired, without right means of knowledge. Different schools have therefore prescribed different means for acquiring knowledge of the cardinal doctrines of philosophy, such as Perception, Inference, Analogy, Presumption, Revelation, Intuition, Tradition etc. The relative value and authority of the above means of knowledge is not the same for all schools but the same varies with different schools as will be pointed out while explaining the cardinal doctrines of the said schools. Suffice it to say for the present that it is very necessary that the reader of Indian Philosophy should have a clear understanding of the various means of knowledge as recognised in the various schools and their relative value and anthority so as to enable him to have a thorough grasp of the cardinal doctrines of the said schools. It is only after a thorough understanding of the principles governing the various means of knowledge as advocated by the different schools of Indian philosophy that the aspirant after truth can achieve final beatitude or Moksha which is the summum bonum of life.

Their Relative Value and Authority.

Now as regards the relative value and authority of the above means of knowledge, the Mimansakas and the Vedantins look upon the Vedas or the Revealed Texts as of highest authority and having a greater authority than reason or inference while the Sankhyas look upon Inference as of higher authority than the Revealed Texts.

Inference or Reason.

Inference or reason is also an important means of knowledge. But according to the Vedanta view, to be authoritative on problems of philosophy reason must not be opposed to or inconsistent with the Revealed Texts.

Vedas or Shrutis.

It may be stated here that according to the orthodox view the Vedas or Shrutis which constitute the Revealed Texts of the Hindus are the highest source of authority and knowledge. Their conception of the Revealed Texts however is quite different from that of other religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Revealed Texts of the Hindus include the Mantras, Brahmanas and the Upanishads. Unlike the Holy Bible and the Koran, which also claim to be Revealed books, the Vedas are not treated as books composed by one man or a prophet embodying his precepts, sayings and doings but are deemed to embody the wisdom and knowledge of eternal truths as revealed to and seen by the various seers or Rishis by Intuition or direct vision, and which has an objective validity for all times and for all persons. The Vedas therefore contain eternal truths and have an objective and universal validity. According to the Mimansakas the words of the Vedas do not stand for any individual objects but they symbolise and connote the Akritis or genus i. e. class concepts which correspond to the objects denoted by them. The concepts are deemed to be inseparably and eternally connected with the words of the Vedas which have therefore an eternal meaning and objectivity. The same words always correspond to the same objects without any subjective element in the form of feelings or prejudices of any individual human being. It is in this sense that the Mimansakas call the

Vedas Apaurusheya i.e. not created by any individual human being who is likely to mix up his utterances with his personal prejudices and feelings and thus distort the true meaning of the words voiced by him. The Vedas are infallible and contain eternal truths. The Vedantins also accept the above view of the Mimansakas and they believe the Vedas to be eternal and infallible.

Intuition.

The Vedantins however believe in the superior value and efficacy of Intuition or supersensuous experience as the direct and immediate means of knowledge so as to ensure the certainty and objective validity of the knowledge conveyed by the words of the Vedas as Revealed Texts. Intuition thus occupies a very prominent place in Indian philosophy as a means to the acquisition of right knowledge.

Perception.

Perception is knowledge acquired by the senses. It is useful only in acquiring a superficial knowledge of the outward names and forms of objects as they present themselves to our senses. The knowledge of the outward presentments of objects thus acquired by us through our senses is only an appearance and not a reality according to the Vedanta view which is at present accepted even by some of the eminent philosophers of the West like Bradley and others.

Smritis.

Next to Shruti or Revealed Texts as authority according to the orthodox view come Smritis which mean books composed by human authors but based on Shrutis or Revealed Texts so far they are remembered by the authors. The Smritis as sources of authority include various Dharma Shastras or codes of law and duties whether religious, social or moral compiled by venerable Rishis like Manu, Yajnavalkya, Vashistha, Narada and others. They also comprehend the two well-known epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana which in addition to teaching the incidents of history also contain important discussions relating to ethics, religion and philosophy. Smritis further include Puranas which explain in a popular way the various philosophical and religious problems by the use of apt and homely illustrations anecdotes and mythologies.

They lastly comprise Sutras or aphorisms dealing in short with the doctrines of the different schools of philosophy such as the Nyaya Vaishesikha, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva-mimansa and Uttara-mimansa or Vedanta. Various Bhashyas or commentaries thereon have been written by various commentetors.

Mimansa-Rules of Interpretation.

In dealing with the subject of the different means of knowledge according to the different schools of Indian Philosophy, it would be necessary to consider the rules laid down by Purva Mimansa for a true interpretation of the various Texts of Shrutis and Smritis, as a thorough knowledge and understanding of the said rules is indispensable to a proper understanding of the meanings of the several texts and dogmas contained in the different text-books prescribed as authorities in the different schools. Without such knowledge it is not possible for anyone to have a thorough knowledge of the cardinal doctrines of philosophy taught in the different schools. Though the subject of interpretation of the Texts does not properly form a part of philosophy a knowledge of its rules is necessary from a practical point of view, to understand the principles of philosophy taught in the said schools. Even for purposes of Law Courts it often becomes necessary to have a proper knowledge of the rules of interpretation of the Hindu Law Texts governing a particular case. For a proper and just decision of any important case on Hindu Law by Courts of justice, it is quite necessary that the deciding Court must have a thorough knowledge of the Mimansa rules of interpretation of the Hindu Law Texts governing the case in question. In the absence of such knowledge on the part of the Judges deciding such cases there is every likelihood of miscarriage of justice being done to the parties.

(7) Historic Survey.

It has been stated by an eminent scholar that India has been a nation of philosophers having produced a galaxy of wise thinkers and geniuses from the earliest times beginning with the Vedas of hoary antiquity down to the modern period. Thus we find in the list of philosophers the names of Apantaratamas, Vashistha, Vishwamitra, Vamdeva, Yajnavalkya, Sanat-kumara, Shandilya and others as

Vedic seers, Gautama Buddha and Mahavira as religious reformers and founders of the Bauddha and Jaina schools of philosophy, Jaimini and Vyasa as the founders of the Purva-mimansa and Uttara-mimansa or Vedanta schools of philosophy respectively, Kumarila Bhatta and Shankaracharya the well-known commentators on the Mimansa and Vedanta Sutras respectively, Kapila, Asuri and Panchashikhi as the founders and propagators of the Sankhya Philosophy, Patanjali as the author of the Yoga Sutras, Gotama and Kanada as the founders of the Nyaya and Vaisheshikha schools of philosophy and Vatsayana and Prasastapada the well-known commentators of the Nyaya and Vaisheshikha Sutras of Gotama and Kanada. The above philosophers and several others have made themselves famous by their valuable publications and treatises on philosophy.

On taking a historic survey and following the trend of thought of the Indian philosophers, one finds a regular evolution and development of thought which gave rise to different schools of philosophy in different periods. It culminated ultimately in the doctrine of Indian monism in the school of Vedanta as the very essence of Indian philosophy as exposed by that eminent and world renowned scholiast and philosopher Shankaracharya who was born in about the eighth century of the Christian era in his commentaries on the Upanishads, Gita and the Vedanta. The said Bhashyas so far from being mere commentaries may in fact be regarded as the real body of Vedanta doctrines containing the very quintessence of Indian philosophy which has captivated the minds of not only the large majority of Indian people but also of several Westerm philosophers and is the most popular of all schools of philosophy at present studied in India.

Reconsciliation of Apparent Conflicts.

The most difficult problem that has engaged the serious attention of different philosophers from time to time is the task of reconciliation of unity with plurality and the apparent conflict between nature and man, matter and mind and body and soul which seem to have been arrayed against each other competing for rivalry and superiority from times immemorial. In addition to solving the above problems,

Indian philosophy has also attempted to accomplish another equally difficult task of reconciling conflicting Texts so as to deduce therefrom one uniform meaning from a rational stand-point and bring about a satisfactory solution of all the apparent conflicts. It may be stated here that no one has been so successful in the above task as Shankaracharya as is admitted even by such eminent Western critics and scholars like Thibeau, Jacob, Gough, Prof. Maxmuller and Dr. Paul Deussen. By his system of philosophy known as non-dual monism or transcendental unity, Shankara has performed one of the most marvellous and daring feats that one could think of whereby he has succeeded in steering clear of all difficulties and tiding over the apparent gulf of the duality of spirit and nature, mind and matter and soul and body, by reconciling them with the Absolute or Reality as aspects thereof and having a relative value but no independent existence, apart from the Absolute.

(8) The Gist of the Teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads.

In this connection it may be mentioned that although both Mimansa and the Vedanta are agreed in recognising Vedas or Shrutis as the highest authorities, there is a fundamental difference in their views as to the gist of the teachings of the Vedas.

Mimansa View.

According to Mimansa the main purpose of the Vedas is to teach righteous action or Dharma including therein observance of sacrificials rites in obedience to the injunctions of Vedic Texts. This view is carried so far by Jaimini the author of the Purva-Mimansa Sutras that if any Text of the Vedas does not contain any statement enjoining an imperative action called Vidhi-vakya it loses all authoritative force and is reduced to the position of a mere explanatory statement or Artha-vada which serves the subsidiary purpose of explaining or eulogising the principal text enjoining action.[1]

Vedanta View.

The Vedanta school has however taken exception to the above mode of interpretation of the Vedic Texts by the Mimansakas and

1. J. S. 1-2-7.

it holds the view that the real purpose of the Vedic Texts and in particular the Upanishads which form the last part of the Vedas and called the Vedanta is to teach the knowledge of the highest philosophical truths and principles, which are in no way subsidiary to action, but independent of action, although it believes in the utility of moral, social and ritualistic actions as means to the acquisition of knowledge. It will be thus seen that according to Vedanta works as taught by the Vedic Texts are useful adjuncts and preliminary aids to the acquisition of philosophical wisdom and knowledge. But the highest end of life known as Moksha or final beatitude which is the summum bonum of life cannot be achieved by mere actions whether moral, social or ritualistic divorced from knowledge or by any other means than the highest knowledge as taught in the Upanishads and the Vedanta. The same idea is repeated in the Bhagwad Gita which is one of the Prasthana-trayis or the three sets of the canonical books of authority recognised by Shankara and several other venerable Acharyas after him.

(9) The Paths of Devotion & Knowledge.

Some of the modern Vaishnava-acharyas after Shankara as Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Vallabha and Madhva have however preached the new doctrine Bhakti-marga or the path of devotion by which a man can achieve his Moksha or summum bonum of life by Divine Grace of the Lord without any reference to action and knowledge and independently of them. Of the teachers holding the above view the foremost is Vallabha according to whom Bhakti-marga or the method of devotion is even superior to that of knowledge and wisdom. This view is however opposed to the teachings of the Upanishads and Vedanta as explained by Shankara according to whom Moksha or the final beatitude could not be achieved by any means other than knowledge as taught in the Vedanta.[1] Devotion is only a kind of action which is only a means to the end of realisation of the ultimate unity and not the end in itself. As a matter of fact Shri Krishna has pointed out to Arjuna in the Bhagwad Gita[2] "that there are only two methods of realising the highest end of life, viz. the Sankhya

1. S. U. 6-15 2. (3-3)

method of knowledge and the Yoga method of action ". The method of devotion is included in the method of action. The Mantra and the Brahmana portions of the Vedas are called the Karma-Kanda which deal with works of all kinds and include prayers to God, while the Upnishad portion of the Vedas is called the Jnana Kanda which teaches knowledge of the Supreme Being or the Absolute as the summum bonum of life. The Upanishads also consist of two parts viz. the Upasana Kanda or Theology dealing with the various practices and modes of worship of God and the Jnana-Kanda or metaphysics proper teaching the great philosophical truths. These two parts of the Upanishads are quite distinct having distinct scopes and purposes of their own, and they cannot be mixed up though the object to be worshipped and known is the same. It is called Ishwara (God,) Para Brahma or Paramatman. The Metaphysical portion of the Upanishads dealing interalia with the subject of Ontology, explains the exact nature or Swarupa of the Absolute as the highest spiritual self in all its bearings and aspects whether phenomenal or transcendental and also the exact relations between God, nature and man which practically cover the whole ground constituting the main subjects of philosophy proper. It thus contains the substantive part of philosophy which is the most important part for our purposes. The theological portion of the Upanishads on the other hand deals with the modes of prayers to God and it contains the procedural part of philosophy showing the modes of application of philosophical principles to its main purpose of self-realisation and Moksha as the summum bonum of life.

(10) Reconciliation of Monotheism with Monism.

This introduces us to the most important subject of monotheisim and monism as to which opinions of different philosophers seem divided. Some philosophers having a theological bias believe that the highest reality is God having a distinct personality and the summum bonum of life or Moksha according to them consists in a state of companionship and blissful union with God whether after death when it is called Videha-Mukti or during life when it is called Jivan-Mukti. Other philosophers however having a metaphysical turn of mind believe that

the highest reality is impersonal, and is called the Absolute having a distinct being of its own separate from the relations of the phenomenal world which are not denied but which have their existence within the Absolute in a mysterious and miraculous way by the Maya–Shakti of the Absolute, by a non–dual unity whereby the objects of the phenomenal world which seem divided to the unphilosophical minds find their integral being and unity in the Absolute in a harmonious way. It is a pure misconception on the part of the theists to believe that their personal God is a Being seperate from the Absolute as conceived by the philosophers or even superior to the Absolute. As a matter of fact God who is viewed as a personal Being by the theists is not separate from or other than the Absolute. The conception of God by the monotheists as the creator, governor and ruler of the phenomenal universe is based on the doctrine of relativity which has no ultimate reality independent of the Absolute as pointed out above, and also as recently proved by several eminent philosophers of the West as Bradley and Einstein. It does not give us a true idea of the real nature of God in His pristime purity and entirety so as to free Him from the limitations of time, space and causation, which constitute the a priori and fundamental postulates of the phenomenal world with its apparently divided units which veil and shut out from us the true knowledge of the real nature and unity of God. Besides the theists taking their stand on the relativity of the phenomenal world, by their doctrine of monotheism are unable to tide over the wide gulf between subject and object as opposed to each other. Further the conception of God of the theists as a personal Being is not free from traces of anthropomorphism and the limitations thereof. For the above reasons the theistic conception of God is imperfect and it does not give us a correct idea of the whole philosophical truth.

As against the above view of the theists, the monistic philosophers give us a better idea of the real nature or Swarupa of the Absolute as Sacchidananda i.e. the Supreme Being of Infinite Truth, Wisdom and Bliss in its pristime purity transcending all limitations of time, space and causation and the ceaseless opposition

created by the barriers of the seeming duality of the phenomenal world. Besides, the Absolute of the Philosophers by his wonderful and mysterious Maya-Shakti or potential energy which is always innate in Him has also the intrinsic capacity of assuming the role of a personal God as the creator, governor and ruler of this universe of relativity by His natural and moral laws, thus meeting and satisfying the practical needs of theology. The Absolute of the monists is conceived as a triune unity in its three-fold aspects called the spiritual, intellectual and physical which preserves the integrity and harmony of the cosmos as a whole. There is no breach at any time in the harmonious unity and working of the cosmos as a whole which is ever evolving new shapes and forms of a variegated nature within the Absolute under Divine guidance and control, until it achieves its final purpose and fruition by securing a permanent restive place of eternal peace to all within the Absolute. This is in short the doctrine of Indian Monism a knowledge of which is calculated to uproot from society all social, political and communal strifes and discords that are found prevailing in almost all countries, all over the world, and bring about a universal integration and solidarity of all persons inhabiting the different parts of the globe as members of a living organism and foster among them feelings of universal love and brotherhood, as members of a universal fellowship under the Kingdom of God.

(II) Hindu religion and its comprehensiveness.

Sanātan Religion.

An opinion seems to prevail in certain quarters that the Hindu religion known as Sanātan religion means a religion relating to the observance on the part of the orthodox Hindus of certain rites and rituals, and caste rules and customs in matters affecting touch, food, drink, marriage, purity, penances and so on only. But this is far from truth. Sanātan religion is not a sectarian religion but it is an eternal religion which is very comprehensive in its nature and extent. The very term Sanātan suggests that it is an eternal religion revealed by God for all time-past, present, and future, and that it deals with principles of eternal truths, eternal laws and eternal practices for individuals of all castes, creeds, and sects as also the whole society. The holy Bhagwad Gitā describes the highest Lord as the guardian of eternal religion (Shāsvata Dharma).[1] Sanātan religion does not profess to be a sectarian religion for a certain class of persons following dogmas of particular castes, creeds or sects only but it is a religion of eternal principles having a universal application. Sanātan religion was not promulgated by a particular person, saint or prophet at a definite time in history as in the case of other religions as Islam, Judaism, Christianity and so on but it was revealed by God to the sages and seers of India in the form of eternal principles and truths as manifested in the Vedas of hoary antiquity and which has been practised by the Āryans since ages past down to the present times by an unbroken tradition without any break in continuity. This affords a strange contrast to other religions which were started at definite times in history by certain prophets and saints as Mahomed, Moses, Jesus Christ and so on. Sanātan religion is a very broad and comprehensive religion and it includes the religion of works, duties and conduct called *Karma Mārga* as prescribed by the sacred laws as also the religion of faith, belief, and devotion called *Bhakti Mārga*, and the religion of knowledge called *Jnāna Mārga*. These constitute the practical and theoretical portions of Sanātan religion. The practical portion of Sanātan religion deals with rules and regula-

1. (B. G. 11-18; 14-27).

tions about conduct in relation to individuals and society e.g. those relating to caste and orders of life (*Varnāsrama*) and rites and rituals and other rules of conduct as laid down in S'hruti (Revealed Texts as Vedas, Brāhmanas and Upanishads), Smṛiti (tradition and sacred Law) and Purānas (religious treatises dealing with Mythologies and narratives relating to the different gods and goddesses as worshipped by the Hindus and so on), while the theoretical portion deals with doctrines of faith, principles of devotion as in several theologies, and abstruse principles of metaphysics and philosophy as contained in the Vedas, the Upanishads, and treatises of various schools of philosophy and religion founded by different teachers, prophets and saints as Shankarāchārya, Rāmānujāchārya, Madhwāchārya, Vallabhāchārya, Rāmānand, Tulsidās, Chaitanya, Jnāneshvar, Tukārām, Narsinha Mehtā, Mirābāi and so on. India is a land of philosophers and saints and it has produced a galaxy of men who have started various schools of philosophical and religious thoughts from time to time. I shall deal with these in volumes 2 and 3 which will be published hereafter. Both these portions of religion were complements of each other and neither was sufficient by itself to constitute Sanātan religion as a whole. Theory needs practice and practice needs theory. No perfection could be attained by any man in any science or art without proficiency in both theory and practice. Similarly to be perfect in religion a man must be proficient in the knowledge of both its theoretical and practical sides. The theology of the Hindus has one peculiarity which distinguishes it from the theologies of other religions viz., that it has a capacity of accommodating itself to persons of all ranks and grades of thought and culture by providing different modes of worship of God as pure and impersonal Brahman, personal God, local gods and goddesses, incarnations of God, prophets, saints and so on to suit the varying tastes and temperaments of different persons which can never be of one kind only. This has one salutary effect of fostering a spirit of great toleration in the minds of the Sanātani Hindus for all possible kinds and varieties of worship as seen in the numerous cults, creeds, and sects among them all over the country, and they are also free from a spirit of exclusiveness, sectarianism and dogmatism which cannot tolerate any other mode of worship as seen in several other religions.

The Hindu system of religion known as Sanātan religion is so wide, comprehensive and elastic that it is capable of assimilating any number of apparently heterogeneous and diverse systems of thought and worship. The principles of Sanātan religion are true for all time so as to fully justify its title of eternal religion.

Definitions of Religion.

Religion has been defined in various ways by different sages. Thus Jaimini the author of Pūrva Mimansā defines religion as that which is distinguished by a command or an injunction,[1] the fulfilment of which leads to an unseen religious merit called (Apūrva) and an abode in paradise after death. According to Jaimini every man desirous of securing celestial happiness after death must fufil the sacred duties imposed on him by the sacred laws as contained in the Vedas (scriptures) and Smritis, and any omission in this constitutes a sin which leads to suffering and punishment unless atoned for by a confession and performance of penances and austerities as prescribed in the Shāstras. This definition deals more with the practical side of religion. Kanāda the author of the Vaisheshika philosophy on the other hand, defines religion as "that which leads to elevation and prosperity in this life and supreme beatitude or liberation in the life to come after death,"[2] thus laying emphasis on both its theoretical as well as practical sides. The word *Dharma* which ordinarily means religion is often used in a loose sense and it means conduct, duty, righteousness, spiritual merit, law, or religion. It is derived from the root Dhru i. e. to hold and it means that by which a man is held in position and saved from a fall, thus distinguishing itself from irreligion and impiety which seek after exclusive gratification of sensual desires and material aggrandisement and consequent downfall of one from a religious standpoint. Thus conduct which seeks after wordly comforts and material prosperity only of an individual to the exclusion of other members of society cannot be said to be religious as religion partakes of the element of social side as its ingredient. In fact Dr. Deshmukh in his thesis on 'Religion in Vedic Literature' which brought on him the Degree of Doctorate of philosophy defines religion as follows. Thus he says:

1. (J. S. 1–1–2). 2. (V. S. 1–1–2).

" A religion is a social institution having a set of principles, doctrines, beliefs and practices, and certain more or less imperative rules of conduct which are in accordance with those principles, doctrines, and beliefs and which aim at furthering human happiness."* "The sanskrit language has no word equivalent to what is understood by religion. Nor is there an English equivalent for the Sanskrit word "Dharma" which is indeed the nearest term which expresses the sense of the word religion " The word *Dharma* is generally used in the sense of either religion or morality according as either sense predominates over the other. In both senses it has reference to the social side. Religion thus consists of two elements viz. *Beliefs* and *practices* rather than any one of these constituents in particular as I have already shown above. The above definition of religion would include " the feelings, acts and experience of individual men, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the *divine*, whether such relation may be *moral, physical,* or *ritual.* " It may be stated in general that theologies, philosophies and ecclesiastical organizations grow out of religion in the above sense. Though Sanātan religion presupposes a belief in the existence of God, yet a great controversy is raised by some over the necessity of a belief in God in defining religion in a broad sense. There are systems of thought which are usually called religious, yet which do not positively assume a God. Thus Buddhism and Jainism are recognised and known to be religious systems though they are both atheistic and refuse to assume the existence of God. Similarly, modern transcendental idealism also seems to let God in the sense of a superhuman person evaporate into abstract ideality by its doctrine of immanent divinity in the very nature of the whole universe. It is said that "the essentially spiritual structure of the universe is the object of the transcendental cult. "

(12) Trend of modern science more towards spiritualism rather than materialism.

It is now admitted even by the great scientists of the West that the phenomenal world of material objects and nature with its infinite variety of names and forms all based on the fundamental

*(Origin and development of Religion in Vedic Literature by Dr. P. S. Deshmukh).

postulates of time, space and matter relations is neither complete nor perfect. The theory of relativity of Einstein has clearly shown to the world, that the time, space and causal forms of the phenomenal world are not absolute and real but they are within the realm of relativity only which presupposes as its counter part the assumption of the Absolute. The atomic theory has been exploded long ago by eminent scientists of the West and an atom is no more believed to be an indivisible final unit in the universe. The later theory of electrons has shown that an atom is neither indestructible nor indivisible, but that it is split up into innumerable smaller units called electrons each of which is surcharged with electric charges of different magnitudes. But even this theory is now abandoned and the minute units into which matter is divided and subdivided all charged with electric energy are not final objects but they are only relations of time, space, and energy which imperceptibly merge into one another and even to the boundless real annihilating all relations of time, space, and content. The trend of thought of the great physicists and scientists of mordern times converges more clearly towards idealism rather than materialism and as pointing to something far beyond the present. The modern idealists and even several eminent scientists too seem to explain matter by mind. The implications of Einstein's theory of relativity clearly seem to lead to theology and religion as having a final say on the problem of reality. Space and time are "relative to matter," and even "matter must be resolved into action." This gives us a crux of the whole problem. Materialism is now quite dead and we are led to soar into the higher realms of idealism and spiritualism having eternal values, so as to present to us a glimpse of the supreme cause and absolute reality which is beyond this universe of space, time, and matter which thenceforth gives to us a new significance altogether as having its being in infinity by divine enlightenment and a spiritual vision. No progress in science or materialism will ever land us on the higher realms of spiritualism and supreme bliss and the happiness resulting therefrom. But it is the province of Religion in its essence only as belonging to our personal life and experience and the means laid down therein to land us on the higher realms of our vision and our highest destination of life. The great sages of India had all realized the

supreme purpose of life and achieved final emancipation and perfect bliss by following the path of religion only, and not the path of materialism which leads a man to degradation only.

(13) Contrast of Eastern and Western standpoints of religion.

Religion has been the source of great solace, strength and sustenance to thousands in their calamities, bereavements, and misfortunes of life and they have found in the Eternal and changeless their only refuge from the miseries and sorrows of life by a loving and devotional faith in His beneficent powers, just laws and His wise dispensation of justice which is always tempered with mercy. It may be however mentioned here that the standpoint of religion in the East differs materially from that in the West. In India, philosophical thought has exercised an enormous influence upon the Hindu mind which has always shown a great fascination for abstract mystical speculations and evinced a greater regard for the infinite than the finite. The frame of Hindu mind was such that it always yearned for a peaceful rest and an eternal abode in the bosom of the changeless and the eternal. Indian philosophy was sought to root out the very source of unrest in man by securing an eternal place in the highest divinity which was also conceived as a Supra Moral Being by the Hindu theologians who pointed out to their followers seeking final emancipation the easiest means of having a sole refuge in Him as a Friend, Father and Philosopher, by a loving service to Him accompanied with Faith and Devotion. Thus theology was always wedded to philosophy in the East unlike the West where theology was generally divorced from philosophy. The fundamental motive in both religion and philosophy was the same though the ways and means of achieving the final goal were different. In India all the great philosophers as Rāmānuja, Shankara, Vallabha and others were also great theologians and teachers of religious learning who founded different schools of religious and philosophical thoughts known as *Kevalādvaita* (non-dual monism), *Visistadvaita* (distinguished monism), *Suddhadvaita* (pure monism) and so on. Again the religious and philosophical systems in the East were saturated with deep feelings of pessimism and they dwelt on the vanity of life which is conceived as full of miseries and suffering. In fact most of the said systems e.g. Vedant as in the school of Shankara, Buddhism, Jainism and so on

are full of pessimism. As contrasted with Indian philosophy the the philosophy of the Greeks was more optimistic and although the Greeks were great thinkers and took delight in speculative thought on the higher problems of life and metaphysics, yet they took the world to be a place of rest and happiness and they did not agree with the Indian view that life was essentially miserable. Again the Hindu standpoint of religion was more subjective than objective unlike that in the West where the religious standpoint was more objective than subjective. Thus the Greek systems of religious thought dwelt on the healthiness of earthly life and their outlook showed more an objective turn of mind with a characteristic optimism and a taste for high arts and æsthetics. The Greeks had a great love for life itself and for all that was earthly and they started several social and political institutions which were brought to perfection and they also attached a high value to physical and intellectual perfection and beauty. The Hindu outlook on the other hand was more inward and subjective and the Hindus preferred more a life of poverty, renunciation and self-control to a life of ease and comfort. The Hindu mind pondered more over the deeper problems of existence and metaphysics rather than those relating to secular life as politics, sciences, arts, and so on which were practically neglected by them and in which they have made little progress as compared with the Greeks and other Western nations. The Hindu and Buddhistic systems of religious thought were essentially metaphysical rather than physical or physiological. The problem of existence was fundamental with them and it engaged their attention most while the problem of conduct was secondary. Ethics did not play such an important part in Indian schools of religious thought as Metaphysics and theology. Ethics had its utility in the Indian schools but it played a subordinate part. Moral life was useful as a preparatory means only to a higher and a philosophical mode of life. Ethics was never an end in itself in the Indian schools but it was a means only to the supreme end of self realisation which was achieved by a philosophical wisdom only and not ethics. The Hindu view of life traced all evil to error and ignorance which in their turn brought about a ceaseless desire for wordly and sensual objects and consequent suffering. The remedy for conquering

evil and suffering was intellectual and not volitional. Men therefore had recourse to philosophy and a contemplative and devotional mode of life directed to God and not to morality to conquer all the ills of life.

(14) Contrast between Eastern and Western systems of morality

As regards the differences between the different systems of morality and thought in the East and West, Mr. M. A. Buch has made the following observations in his book on Hindu Ethics: " It is one of the differences between systems of morality like the Jewish, Islamic, Christian and Zorostrian on the one hand and the Hindu, Jain and Buddhistic systems on the other, that while the former glorify a life of action, of striving and willing and energy, the latter place above every thing else a life of mystic illumination, of perfect gnosis, of the highest realisation. The Greek also identified knowledge with virtue and vice with ignorance. Never was a nation so fond of contemplation as the Greeks. It was the ideal life of philosophers. It filled them with raptures × ×. The whole force and energy of the Islamic and Jewish and Zorostrian faith is directed to showing that life is a battle between opposing forces, between powers of light and darkness. All men figure as soldiers ranged on one side or the other. The Greeks thought of life not as a battle of mighty forces, not as a theatre of epic actions but as a riddle, a problem, an intellectual treat. The Hindus pictured life as a conflict between Māyā and Brahman, between ignorance and knowledge. Their whole aim was to go from non-existence to existence, from darkness to light. " As regards the charge levelled against Hindu Ethics to the effect that it is mere subjective fancy, Mr. Buch has answered the same in the following manner. Thus he says: "It must be said however to the credit of the Hindus that far from making all morality a mere subjective fancy, a private illusion, they made it the one central thing in this life. Morality or Karma is the one law dominating all life, human and infra human; but it is the special characteristic, the very prerogative of human beings. No being can transcend its limits; once launched into existence or Saṁsāra, its operation was inexorable. The Hindu view lays deep the foundations of moral life

in the very heart of the universe; it is as objective, as real, as the whole world itself. The whole universe comes into existence and vanishes solely under the influence of the law of Karma. Another point which is connected with this position is the objective validity of freedom of the will in the Hindu theory. Man's belief in himself as a center of fresh actions is not altogether an illusion. Man's self consciousness becomes the basis of his whole life; and this self-consciousness has as much reality as the objective world."*

(15) The sacred laws and traditions of the Āryans.

According to the Vedic theory the main purpose of a man's life was fourfold viz., *Dharma* (religious duty), *Artha* (worldly prosperity, *Kāma* (sensual desires) and *Moksha* (spiritual emancipation). Of the above four objects of life, *Dharma* or religious duty occupies the first place as a successful fulfilment of the other purposes of life depended entirely on the fulfilment of the religious duties enjoined on a man. In fact it is stated in the Māhābhārata that religion originates from good conduct (*Āchārah Prabhavo Dharmah*). The memorable verses in the Māhābhārata known as Bhārata Sāvitri make the following encomium on virtue: " Raising up both my hands, I cry aloud but no one listens to my voice. From virtue results wealth and fulfilment of all desires. Why should not therefore virtue be practised ? Virtue should not be abandoned for desire, fear, avarice, or even for life's sake. Virtue is eternal, joys and sorrows are fleeting. Soul is eternal but the root cause of its migrations is fleeting." The revered sage and law-giver Manu also lays down in his celebrated law code that good conduct (*Āchāra*) is transcendental religion (*Āchārah Paramo Dharmah*). The law-givers of India from the earliest times have framed minute rules and regulations as to conduct concerning both individuals as well as society on various subjects and matters relating to domestic, religious, social, moral, sacrificial, legal, and other spheres of a man's life which one was enjoined to observe minutely and scrupulously so as to secure an unseen religious merit called *Apūrva* which brought an eternal abode in the heaven with its attendant pleasures by way of reward. The Dharma Shāstras which contain the sacred laws and traditions of the Āryans constitute the

* (The principles of Hindu Ethics by M. A. Buch).

Smṛitis of the Hindus. They are based on the Vedas and they mainly treat of rules of commandment (*Vidhi*) and prohibitions (*Nishedha*) regulating conduct in relation to the social, moral, legal, and religious spheres of a man's life. The main purpose of the Dharma Shāstras was ethical. The observance of rites and rituals e.g. those relating to sacred thread, marriage and so on, and rules relating to the four castes (*Varnas*) viz., Brāhman (priestly class) Kshatriya (military class), Vaisya (merchant class), and Sūdra (servant class), and four stages of life (*Āshrama*) viz., Brahmacharya (studentship), Gṛihastha (state of householder), Vānprastha (state of anchorite), and Sanyāsa (state of ascetic), and those relating to moral conduct (*Sadāchāra*), ablutions, purity, touch, food, drink, marriage, penances, purifications and so on, marked out and distinguished the Āryans from Un-Āryans who were known for their unclean and filthy habits, immoral acts and an impulsive animalistic life seeking after gratification of sensual pleasures even at the cost of their fellow brethren members of the same society who were treated by them with cruelty. The Un-Āryans who formed a separate class by themselves had their dwelling houses at the end of the city or village in which the Āryans observing the rules relating to the 4 castes and those relating to conduct and so on resided. The rules framed by the law-givers in the Dharma Shāstras were meant for the preservation of racial purity and morals and culture and civilisation of the Āryans.

Traditional mode of handing down and preserving the sacred laws

According to the researches of European scholars, the law books of the Āryans which consisted of *Sutras* or short aphorisms in prose and *Smṛities* in verses were redacted into writing for the first time shortly after 600 B. C. which witnessed the rise of 2 new heterodox religions, Buddhism and Jainism founded by Gautama Buddha and Mahā Vira. Both these religions were opposed to the Vedic religion of Āryans which was in danger of being absorbed by these religions. The Āryans therefore with a view to preserve the Vedic religion and Āryan culture and civilisation from the onslaughts of the said 2 religions were obliged to redact their sacred literature and laws in the form of Sūtras or short aphorisms which were committed to memory and transmitted orally from teacher to pupil

with an unbroken continuity. The sacred laws along with the Vedas and canonical literature were thus preserved since the Vedic times of hoary antiquity till to-day by an unbroken tradition (*Parampará*). The sacred laws with the rituals and rules of conduct therein which had their germs in the Vedas, Brāhmanas, and Upanishads were committed to memory by the Brāhmans who transmitted the same orally from generation to generation by the traditional method.

Secred laws and traditions in Sūtras and Smṛitis.

The sacred laws and traditions were arranged systematically by the law-givers who compiled them first in the form of *Sūtras* and afterwards in the form of *Smṛitis*. The Dharma Sūtras related to the rules of practical life, virtue, and law. The principal Dharma Sūtras were composed by Gotama, Bauddhāyana, Āpastambha, Vasistha, and Vishnu. Of these, Gotama was the oldest, being assigned the sixth century before Christ. The Dharma Shāstras or *Smṛitis* did not constitute one single book but they consisted of treatises composed by holy sages. The principal Smṛitis as enumerated by sage Yājnavalkya amounted to about twenty in number viz., those composed by Manu, Yājnavalkya, Atri, Vishnu, Hārita, Ushanas, Angirā, Yama, Āpastambha, Samvarta, Kātyāyana, Bṛihaspati, Pārāsara, Vyāsa, Sankha, Likhita, Daksha, Gotama, Sātātapa and Vasistha.

Manu Smṛiti.

Of these Manu Smṛiti occupies the first rank and it is held in high esteem and considered as the highest authority on questions of religions precepts, sacred laws and traditions. It is said in a Vedic passage 'All that Manu said is medicine.' Manu was a Kshatriya and a great sage whose name is mentioned in the Ṛig Veda, as the ancestor of mankind. The Manu Smṛiti in its present form seems to have been based on Mānava Dharma Sutras which seem to have been lost and are not available at present. Dr. Buhler assigns to Manu Smṛiti in its present form a date between 200 B. C. to 200 A. D. There are several well known commentaries on Manu of which the important ones are those of Medhātithi, Kulluka Bhatta, and Govindarāja.

Yājnavalkya Smṛiti.

The next important Smṛiti was that of the Sage Yājnavalkya which is assigned the date 300 to 400 A. D. approximately. The arrangement in Yājnavalkya is better than in Manu. It is divided into three chapters of about the same length dealing with *Āchāra* (conduct), *Vyavahāra* (law), and *Prāyaschitta* (penance) respectively. There are several commentaries on Yājnavalkya of which the important ones are those of Aparārka and Vijnāneshwara. The last one is called *Mitākshara* which constitutes an important treatise on Hindu law as governing the Hindus in general.

Other Smṛitis.

The Smṛitis dealing specially with religious and secular laws in addition to those of Manu (200 B. C. to 200 A. D.), and Yājnavalkya (300 A. D.), were those of Nārada (500 to 600 A. D.), Bṛihaspati (600 to 700 A. D.), Kātyāyana (600 to 700 A. D.) and so on. These Smṛitis deal with the religious laws and rules of conduct as governing and regulating the life and conduct of the people in general and they have laid down in particular elaborate rules relating to the social order of the four castes (*Varnas*) and the four stages of life (*Āshramas*) and the duties to be observed by men and women in general.

(16) The institution of caste (chātur Varna).

Caste-a social and national institution.

The social order of castes was a divine institution of great antiquity being traced to the Ṛig Veda and even earlier. Of the four castes the first three viz, the Brāhmans (priestly class), the Kshatriyas (warrior class), and the Vaisyas (merchant class) were called *Dwijas* or the twice born on account of their being entitled to the initiation of sacred thread ceremony (*Upanayana*), the study of the Vedas and the right to perform Vedic sacrifices. The fourth caste included Sūdras (servant class) who were not entitled by reason of their low birth to initiation and other sacred rights mentioned above which were reserved only for persons of the three higher castes who were entitled to these from birth.

The Brāhmans were the spiritual guides of the people who knew the Vedas by heart and were well versed in the sacred lore.

Hence the Brāhman caste was the highest. The Kshatriyas formed the military caste. They protected the Brāhmans and their sacred religion. Tho Vaisyas formed the trading caste who did service to society by spending moneys earned by them by trade, agriculture and so on for benevolent and charitable purposes and objects useful to society. The last caste was that of Sūdras who along with members of the other castes were also members of the body corporate which constituted the whole society as an indivisible entity. They did service to society by manual labour, mechanical occupations, and certain arts and industries specially allowed to them.

Organic unity of the castes.

According to the Vedic theory, the four castes Brāhman (priestly class), Kshatriya (military class) Vaisya (trading class) and Sūdra (servant class) constituted the four limbs viz., the head, the arms, the thighs and the feet of Virāt Purusha or the Creator of the universe, as representing learning, military strength, economic resources, and mechanical labour possessed by them respectively. The reader will thus see that there was an organic unity at the back of all the castes which were never separate or detached from one another so as to cause a breach in the homogeneity or integral unity of the society at any time. The institution of caste was a social institution which was based on the principle of division of labour, each caste being assigned certain professions which its members were enjoined to follow in the best manner and achieve perfection therein by doing some good to society as a whole by a loving co-operation with persons of other castes without any spirit of rivalry or competition with them. In short the Hindu castes were permeated with a central unity. Even tha Sūdras and backward castes were parts and parcels of the Āryan society which had an organic unity. The three higher castes lived peacefully wlth the Sūdras and backward castes towards whom they never showed any apathy or aversion at any time. Thus for example the rite of 5 great sacrifices (*Pancha Mahā Yajnas*) included a special sacrifice called *Bhūta Yajna* or the rite of making offerings of food to the poor, the outcasts, and even the untouchables (*Chāndālas*) as a part of the daily obligatory religious duties to be fulfilled by every Āryan belonging to the three higher castes who was enjoined by

a religious commandment to do some good to all the members of society including the worst sinners, outcasts, and even the untouchables (*Chāndālas*) who were not neglected by them.

The institution of the five great sacrifices (Pancha Mahā Yajnas) and social service.

Every Āryan was taught to do some kind of social service with a spirit of love and tenderness to all creatures including the mute and dumb animals, insects, birds, and even the poor and destitute by the rite of five great sacrifices (*Pancha Māhā Yajna*) which was a part of his daily obligatory religious duties. The rite of the five daily obligatory sacrifices to be performed by every Āryan thus included sacrifice to gods called *Deva Yajna* (i.e. offering burnt oblations to gods in the sacred fire) sacrifice to the sages called *Brahma Yajna* (i.e. repeating the Vedas) sacrifice to the fathers and deceased ancestors called *Pitṛi Yajna* (i.e. offering libations of water (*Tarpana*) and balls of rice (*Pinda*) with faith to the manes of deceased fathers and ancestors accompanied with dinner to Brāhmans called (*Shrāddhas*), sacrifice to living creatures called *Bhūta Yajna* (i.e. offering food to living creatures including poor or helpless persons) and sacrifice to man called *Nara Yajna* which enjoined on every householder the pious duty of giving hospitable reception to his guests by providing shelter, food, drink and good treatment. The rule laying down the duty of showing hospitality to a guest as a part of the daily obligatory duties of every Āryan is a clear extension into Hindu religion of the principle of social service which is much spoken of at present as if it were a new lesson taught by modern schools of thought only. In fact the Āryans were in advance of the people of modern times in matter of social service and it might be even said that they were more generous and liberal in showing hospitality to guests and in doing charitable and benevolent deeds than the modern-day reformers some of whom were actuated more with a spirit of self aggrandisement and pure selfishness rather than with ideas of real social service. The so called present day reformers being imbued with ideas of western culture are intent on destroying the ancient culture and civilisation of the Āryans including the institution of caste and other sacred rites and customs practised traditionally by the Hindus. With this end in view they are preaching false doctrines

and even carrying on propaganda work against caste although they do not possess even the elementary knowledge of the doctrines of the sacred laws and traditions of the Āryans. It is no doubt true that owing to a neglect of the study of the Dharma Shāstras and want of knowledge of the philosophical basis of the institution of caste, the present day castes and subcastes have multiplied to over three thousand in number having lost their original unity and co-ordination in the being of the Absolute, they are now wrongly taken as separate groups and water-tight compartments having no connection with one another. But from this, one cannot condemn the whole institution of caste as such, as it is one of the oldest institutions of the Āryans which has survived till to-day notwithstanding great obstacles and has a special efficacy of bringing about the social, economical and national development of a country. A highly talented and experienced Civilian Sir George Birdwood pays a glowing tribute to the institution of caste in the following terms. Thus he says: "The caste system of the code of Manu is the charter of the very essence of India, the breaking of which would reduce India to deadlier anarchy than that of a thousand years brought to an end by our great Victory of Plassey."

Sat-Sudras and Asat-Sudras.

The last caste was that of Sūdras (servant class) who again were of two kinds viz., *Sat-Sudras* (of pure origin and good habits) and *Asat-Sūdras* (of impure origin and bad habits). The Sat-Sūdras were born of parents of the same caste who lived generally on service of the three higher castes which was the peculiar profession allowed to them. But in case they were unable to find such service they were allowed to carry on trade, agriculture, handicrafts, and other mechanical occupations and arts such as carving, sculpture, painting, and so forth. The *Asat-Sūdras* on the other hand were born of mixed marriages between persons belonging to different castes. They were inferior to Sat-Sūdras who were born of marriages between persons of the same caste. A Hindu was enjoined to marry within his own caste by the sacred laws. However in olden times before the sacred laws were finally arranged and shaped into proper form, the conquering Āryans who wanted to multiply and settle into India contracted marriages with persons outside their own castes and sometimes even with persons belonging to the castes of the un-

Āryan aborigine natives of India and they begot offspring called *Sankaras.* Such inter-marriages between persons belonging to different castes were of 2 kinds viz, Anuloma and Pratiloma.

Mixed marriages Anuloma and Pratiloma.

If a male of a higher caste married with a female belonging to a lower caste the marriage was *Anuloma,* while if a female of a higher caste married with a male of a lower caste, the marriage was called *Pratiloma.* The offspring of such hybrid or mixed marriages were called *Varna Sankaras* who were again of 2 kinds viz., *Anuloma Sankaras* and *Pratiloma Sankaras.*

Low and backward classes or Antyajas.

Of the 2 classes of Sankaras or hybrid offspring, *Anuloma sankaras* who embraced certain low professions formed backward castes called (*Antyajas*) who had a place within the fold of Hindu Community. Seven castes were stamped as low and backward castes (*Antyajas*) and they were treated as not worthy of free intercourse with the Āryans. These included washerman, cobbler, actor, basket-maker, fisherman, flesh-seller, and hunter. They were however not so degraded as chāndālas (Untouchables) as to require bath for purification from defilement by touch with them.

Chandālas (Untouchables).

But *Pratiloma Sankaras* were considered sinful and as base born of whom one variety in particular known as *Chāndāla* was the basest being born of the union of a Sūdra male with a Brāhman female. The Chāndālas were of several kinds viz., those by birth and those by bad and sinful conduct. The Chāndālas formed a separate class by themselves. They were untouchable and beyond the pale of caste. The existence of the class of Chāndālas (untouchables) is traced so far back as the Vajasaneyi Saṁhita or the white Yajur Veda. Several Jātakas in the Buddhistic literature, distinctly allude to a separate residence of the Chāndālas in secluded places far away from the habitations of the Āryans and they were also described as unworthy of all intercourse with the high born Āryans on account of their degraded modes of life. The opinion therefore expressed by some scholars belonging to the school of reformers to the effect that the rule of untouchability had no sanction in the Vedas or ancient literature and that it was

a modern innovation is clearly unsustainable. The class of Chāndālas or untouchables included in its fold *Pukkasas* and *Svapachas* (eaters of dog's flesh) as described in the Smritis and the present day *Doms*, *Bhangis* (carriers of night soil and filth) *Dheds* (Sweepers) and *Chamārs* (carrying on the profession of preparing hides from dead animals etc.). The Chāndālas could never be raised to the status of Āryans all at once in this life until all their sins were purged off by taking repeated births in succeeding generations and they were fitted to attain the elevated position of *Sat-Sūdras* by leading a pure and moral life.

Fundamental difference between backward classes and untouchables.

A great confusion seems to prevail at present in the minds of several persons in the discrimination of backward classes and untouchables and these two classes are often interchanged by them. Although the untouchables are backward classes, the backward classes are not necessarily all untouchables like Chāndālas with whom the Āryans had no social intercourse of any kind. The statements made by the reformers from the platform as well as the press to the effect that there are about 4 crores of people in the Hindu community of India who are all untouchables and who would be lost to the Hindus unless they were given all the rights, religious or secular, as are enjoyed by the caste Hindus, are not correct as would appear on an examination of the statistical figures in the last census return of 1931. These figures show the total number of persons not following the Brāhmānical religion including the untouchables as amounting to about $1\frac{3}{4}$ crores only. They also contain certain aboriginal and other tribes which do not follow the Hindu religion. Therefore the total number of untouchables in the Hindu community would hardly amount to even a crore of persons. While persons belonging to the caste of Chāndālas were untouchable and were considered unworthy of all social intercourse, persons belonging to the backward castes (*Antyajas*) were not necessarily so in all respects so as to require an immediate bath for purification as in the case of untouchables, but social intercourse with some of them was prohibited on account of the low professions carried on by them and their impure and unclean modes of life.

Uplift of backward classes and elevation of their social status.

Although in Vedic times in the beginning, the conquering Āryans who penetrated into India subjugated the aboriginal natives of India called *Dasyus* and *Dāsas* and even reduced them to slavery, yet in course of time they imparted to them higher ideas of civilisation and culture and better modes and habits of life and elevated their social status. "After some generations the conquered natives began to be called *Sūdras* and they gained a recognised position in society being worthy of being prayed for their welfare by a Brāhman sage and were almost bracketted together with the *Vaisyas.*" However certain restrictions were placed against their participating in the religious sacrifices and rites performed by the high caste Hindus. But even as regards Sūdras and persons of low castes, exceptions were made in the case of a few persons who were elevated to the status of *Sat-Sūdras* due to their pure habits and special rights were accorded to them by way of exception. Thus *Kakshīvān* and *Kavasha Ailusha* who were begotten by certain sages on maid servants were respected as Ṛishis on accout of the superior knowledge possessed by them. Similarly *Vidur* who was the son of a maid servant and *Dharma Vyādha* who was a flesh vendor and belonged to a low caste were also highly respected by the Āryans on account of the pious and moral life led by them. Further as regards certain Āryans who had been made outcasts for leading a sinful and degraded life or were converted to other faiths and religions, a special ceremony called *Vrātya Stoma* was laid down to purify them by a prescribed penance after undergoing which the outcast was entitled to enjoy all the social and religious rights possessed by the Āryans. This was *Shudhi* or the special mode of purification which was prescribed in the Scriptures and the Hindu Shāstras. It will be thus seen that the Āryans were not lagging behind in ameliorating the social condition of the backward classes but too much mixing with these classes led to the introduction of several evil practices and customs in the Hindu society. Thus the Āryans adopted certain evil customs and practices prevalent in certain communities of the aboriginals such as worship of phallus, serpent, birds, monkey, tree and so on. The practice in an extreme form of the rule of untouchability as observed in Southern India seems to have been

copied from the Pre-Dravidians. The law-givers therefore with a view to preserve the racial purity and high culture of the Aryans framed stringent rules and laws to stop the evil practices which had crept in Hindu society. The rule was also laid down by the law-givers insisting on marriage within one's own caste. Niyoga or the practice of begetting offspring by a person on the wife of another who had no issue was also censured by Manu and other law-givers as a beastly act. Special rules and restrictions were also made by the law-givers in matters relating to bath, food, drink, touch, purification, penance and so on, which were put on a truly scientific and philosophical basis but which were more rational than those observed by some of Pre-Dravidian aboriginal tribes of Un-Āryan origin in southern India among whom the rules of untouchability were most rigid and prevailed to a bewildering extent.

(17) Hindu Ethics.

Ethics has always occupied an important place in Hindu religion and philosophy and it was never divorced from religion. No true religion could ever exist without Virtue. In fact morality had been a part and parcel of the Hindu religion from the very earliest times. Thus in the Vedas, the Brāhmanas and the Upanishads, we find occasional praises on virtues such as gift, love, truth, righteousness abstention from injury (*Ahinsā*), purity, austerities, and so on, and exhortations to lead a life of virtue and good conduct. Thus it was said in the Upanishads: "Truth alone conquers, not falsehood. Virtues were praised and Vices were condemned. The supreme purpose of life however according to the Upanishads was not Ethics but realisation of the true self (Ātman) by means of knowledge and devotion. Ethics was a means only to the supreme end of self-realisation which could not be achieved unless one had purged off all selfish impulses and purified his mind by leading a moral and well-disciplined life. The Bhagwad Gitā also teaches the same lesson and enjoins a man to lead a life of Virtue coupled with devotion to God by doing disinterested work of service, piety, and benevolence without any eye to fruit. However although the Gitā recognises the value of ethics for purification and discipline and enumerates long lists of virtues and vices for one's guidance, yet according to the Gitā, self-realisation was the supreme purpose of

Ethics which was a means only to the said end and not an end in itself. The Gitā was not merely a book of ethics as understood by certain scholars, but it was a philosophical and religious treatise of great value which taught lessons of highest truth and religion. However the the position was altered in the times of the 2 Epics, the Rāmāyana and the Māhābhārata, wherein great emphasis was laid on the value of ethics and moral virtues. The Rāmāyana is a record of the highest moral ideas and it depicts virtues of an ideal king, an ideal husband, an ideal wife, an ideal son, and an ideal brother. The Māhābhārata is a didactic work which is full of long dissertations and didactic sermons with mythological anecdotes and praises on good conduct and moral virtues such as truth, abstention from injury (*Ahinsā*), honesty, righteousness and so on. It preached that " the path of virtue was a stepping stone to religion and philosophy. " In an important passage in the Māhābhārata, Yudhisthira makes the following observations on virtue : " I follow *Dharma* (religion or virtue) not because I see any immediate profit from it but from a conviction that virtue is to be followed for its own sake. The vicious man may prosper for a time but virtue's reward is sure to come though now invisible. " Similarly in the Dharma Shāstras, we find the highest encomium paid to virtue. The revered sage Manu teaches that *Dharma* (Virtue) is divine law which is laid down for the guidance of man. Thus he says: "Alone man is born, alone he dies; alone he reaps the fruit of good and evil done by him. Righteousness alone follows the soul as a companion after one's death here. Righteousness being violated destroys; righteousness being preserved preserves. Therefore righteousness must not be violated lest violated righteousness destroy us. The only friend that follows a man even after death is righteousness, for every thing else is lost at the same time when the body perishes." Far above the performance of sacrifices and other rites and rituals, was esteemed the possession of virtuous and good conduct which led one to Heaven. It was laid dawn by the law-givers that even a Sūdra keeping himself free from every vice, if he imitates the behaviour of the virtuous, gains exaltation in this world and even enjoys the celestial region by following his own religion. Thus a life of virtue was laid down in the Dharma Shāstras as the supreme religion for all, irrespective of considerations of caste, creed, sect or community.

Theistic basis of Ethics of the Dharma Shāstras and restraining influence of the latter.

The Ethics of the Dharma Shāstras was put on a theistic basis and any infraction of the moral laws therein was considered a religious offence against God and a sin which always entailed punishments which were meted out to the delinquent by God as the dispenser of Divine Justice. The authors of the Dharma Shāstras pointed out that upon a strict observance of virtue depended all worldly prosperity and the final beatitude or emancipation which was the sumum bonum of human life. The offender who committed sin was made to take fresh cycles of births in different bodies of persons of low castes as Chāndālas and even animals as vulture, ass, wolf, serpent, and so on as a punishment for the sins committed by him, until he had completely purged off all his sins by leading a moral and religious life. The doctrine of transmigration of souls was a fundamental part of the Dharma Shāstras which was accepted by all religiously minded Hindus as an axiomatic truth. It afforded a great solace to thousands of Hindus in their several misfortunes and afflictions of life. Even untouchables and the backward classes never murmured or complained against the justice of God in creating them in low existences as they had implicit faith in the Divine law according to which they were created by God in low conditions of life as a punishment only for some sins committed by them in their past lives and that no injustice was done by God at any time as He was always just and merciful. The new path of devotion as taught in the Bhagwad Gitā was open to all, including women and even the worst sinners, who derived great consolation in their worldly miseries and afflictions of life by having a sole refuge in God as their saviour and an implicit faith in His wise sense of justice and His power of conferring Grace on all who approached him with love and humble devotion which could purge off all their sins. This led to a moral regeneration and an uplift of the devotee who scrupulously carried out the duties as laid down in the sacred laws, the Scriptures and Shāstras in a disinterested manner and with thoughtful devotion and service to God. The paramount lesson of paying utmost respect to established authority whether of father, mother, elders, teacher or king was implanted in the mind of every Hindu from his

very birth by the Dharma Shāstras which were capable of exercising a very healthy and restraining influence on society by combating the present day disruptive forces leading to communism, Bolshevism, and even anarchy. The theory of extreme individualism giving rise to a false sense of an unrestrained license and egotism in the pious name of liberty, fraternity and equality has no place in the Hindu Dharma Shāstras which have proclaimed in loud terms that every man shall fulfil the duty (*Dharma*) imposed on him, without clamouring for rights. Rights and duties are always correlative. One man's duty always corresponds with the right of another. If all men carried out the duties laid down for them, they would soon realise that they are already enjoying the rights for which they were clamouring all along and all social discords and disputes that are found prevailing at present between persons and persons and classes and classes as in the case of capitalist and labourer, landlord and tenant, master and servant, father and son, and ruler and ruled would disappear and complete peace, happiness, and order would be restored everywhere in society as a universal fellowship and brotherhood under the kingdom of God.

(18) Catholicity of the Hindu Dharma Shāstras and adaptation of law to changed circumstances.

It is believed by some that the sacred laws in the Dharma Shāstras as observed by the Hindus traditionally are rigid and inflexible and they are not capable of being changed at any time. But this belief would be found to be incorrect on an examination of the Dharma Shāstras themselves. In fact different sets of duties were prescribed in the law books for different ages. Thus in the Satya age, the chief virtue was austerity (Tapa), in the Tretā, knowledge (Jnāna), in the Dvāpara, sacrifice (Yajna), and in the Kali age, liberality (Dāna) alone was the chief virtue. The sage Pārāsara has further observed that " the law-givers have made a gradation in the practice of expiatory penances according to the capacity of the penitent in each age but those laid down by the holy Pārāsara should be observed in the Kali age. That the rules of piety etc., are also different in the succeeding ages of Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali according to the exigencies of each age."

Similarly different law books are prescribed for the different ages viz., that of Manu for Satya age, that of Gotama for Tretā, that of Sankha and Likhita for Dvāpara and that of the sage Pārāsara for the Kali age. This clearly shows that the Code of Manu which was meant for the Satya age was not suitable in all respects to the present age of Kali on account of the inherent weakness of man in this age and the changed circumstances therein. The omniscient law-givers have therefore left a wide scope for changes in the practical spheres of life according to the needs of the times, in matters of food, drink, touch, cleanliness purification, penances and so on, without any detriment however to the fundamental principles of the Sanātan religion. Thus the sage Pārāsara whose Smṛiti has special application to the present age of Kali has made a considerable relaxation in the rigour of rules in matters of food, drink, touch, purity, penances and so on for the Kali age and for distressed times. Mr. Havell in his 'Āryan rule in India' makes the following observations in this connection: "In India religion is hardly a dogma but a working hypothesis of human conduct adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life." It is therefore rightly observed by Sir Rādhākrishna that "It is the intimate relation between the truth of philosophy and daily life of people that makes religion always alive and real." Hindu religion was never rigid at any time as wrongly understood by some but it had a wonderful capacity of adjusting itself to the changed circumstances. Thus for example although it was the usual practice in olden times to honour a guest visiting the house of a householder with a repast of flesh at a special ceremony called Madhuparka, yet the said practice has died away. It is observed by the sage Yājnavalkya that a new rule prohibiting flesh eating although it was once believed as conducive to religious merit, is now definitely established which is binding on all to which a gloss is added in the Mitākshara that no one should slaughter animals at Madhuparka as the practice has totally fallen into disrepute. Thus Hindu law secular as well as religious is a growing law and necessary changes are always made therein according to the exigencies of times and changed circumstances provided however they did not offend against any express commandments and precepts of the Shāstras and were not repugnant to the

fundamental doctrines of the Hindu religion. It is this element of catholicity and adaptability of law to changed circumstances that has kept up and preserved the Hindu religion, since ages past. It is however unfortunate that of late we see all around signs of a growing tendency on the part of certain schools of reformer to interfere with the freedom of conscience and liberty of faith of the Hindus in religious matters by forcing social reforms on the Hindu community even against their wish by medium of Legislation in religious or socio-religious matters such as Divorce, Untouchability-removal and so on even though the proposed reforms may be directly opposed to the Shāstras. It is submitted that it is not competent to the present day heterogeneous Legislatures composed as they are of persons belonging to different castes, creeds, and religions to pass any laws on any religious or socio-religious questions affecting the peoples of India. According to the Hindu orthodox view it is only for the synod of Pandits and scholars well versed in the sacred lore to pronounce an authoritative opinion as to whether a particular question is religious or socio-religious, and whether the proposed changes in the law are formal only or are substantive, and if they are formal, whether they are warranted by the Hindu Shāstras. It is highly desirable in the interest of peace and good Government that Government should intervene in such matters and prevent an abuse of the power of the Legislature to legislate in such matters by declaring a definite policy, as it did recently in the case of the Temple Entry Bill, which as a result had to be withdrawn by the sponsor of the Bill.

It is a happy augury of the times that the League of Nations that met at Geneva, in which India was also represented, passed a resolution recording the need of recognising the fundamental rights of all minor communities including the right of freedom of conscience and liberty of action in religious matters and it is hoped that the said resolution would be shortly adopted by the Government of India in the interest of the future peace of the peoples of India.

BOOK I

VEDIC PERIOD

CHAPTER II

SAMHITAS & BRAHMANAS.

I. Introductory.

(1) General.

The Vedas are the fountain source of highest authority to all the orthodox Hindoos. They contain the earliest record of the germs of thought which later on developed as full fledged philosophies in the classical period. In short in the Vedas we find "a common fund of what may be called the national or popular philosophy, a large Manasa lake of philosophical thought and language from which each thinker was allowed to draw for his own purposes." The Vedas are the most sacred of all religious literature of the Hindus being their Revealed Texts of highest authority. The Vedas contain the divine wisdom and knowledge of things directly seen by the Rishis or seers of hoary antiquity by intuition and are called Shrutis i.e. what is directly heard, or experienced by intution. The Vedas are therefore called Apaurusheya, i. e. not composed by any human being and being free from all subjective element they are deemed infallible and as containing absolute truths. Prof. Maxmuller has bestowed the highest praises on the Vedas as will appear from the following remarks in his History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature. "In the history of the world the Veda fills a gap which no literary work in any other language fills. It carries us back to times of which we have no records anywhere and gives us the very words of generation of men, of whom otherwise we could form but the vaguest estimate by means of conjectures and inferences. As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind belongs for ever to the Rig Veda the most ancient of books in the libraray of mankind which is more ancient than the Zend Avesta and Homer. Professor Macdonald also speaks of the Vedas in very high and

glowing terms as appears from his observations:—"This lyrical poetry far older than the literary monuments of any other branch of the Indo-European family is already distinguished by refinement and beauty of thought, as well as skill in the handling of language and meter."

(2) The age of the Vedas.

As regards the age of the Vedas, European scholars and critics like Professors Maxmuller, Macdonald and others have stated that the Rig Veda Samhita which is the oldest of all the four Vedas in its present from must have been composed between 1500 to 1000 B. C. But this view is not accepted by Indian Scholars as Messrs. Tilak, Vaidya, Dixit and others who have proved by internal evidence and arguments based on Astronomical and Mathematical proofs which are unassailable, that the later Rig-Vedic hymns must have been composed between 4000 and 3000 B. C. while the older hymns are traced so far back as 6000 B. C. when the Indo-Aryans had not separated from their Indo-Iranian Brethren and had not come to India. The great German research scholar Prof. Jacobi agrees with the last view and he thinks that the Vedic period goes back to 4000 B. C., "a theory based on astronomical calculations connected with a change in the beginning of the seasons which he thinks has taken place since the time of the Rig Ved period." Mr. Vaidya divides the history of Sanskrit literature into three periods viz. (1) The Vedic and post Vedic period (c. 4500 B. C. to 800 B. C.) called shruti period, (2) the classical period (c. 800 B. C. to 800 A. D.) and (3) the modern period (c. 800 A. D. to 1500 A. D.) which is also called the Bhashya period or the period of commentators.

(3) The Field of Vedic Subjects.

The Vedas consist of Samhitas which constitute the earliest religious poetry and Brahmanas which are in prose and which include the Upnishads or Vedanta as the closing portion. The Brahmanas range in date between 3100 B. C. and 800 B. C. The Samhitas, the Brahmanas and the Upnishads are called Vedas or Shrutis. They constitute the Revealed Scriptures of the Hindus and are of divine authority. They are the most ancient and sacred literature which contains the oldest germs of Indian philosophy.

(a) The four Vedas.

The Vedas are four in number, viz., the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda which is subdivided into black and white—Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and Atharva Veda. Of the four Vedas, Rig Veda is the oldest. It consists of Riks, or hymns in the form of poetry which are either simple prayers to Gods or which accompanied sacrifices for religious purposes. They also contain various other topics such as praises for charity, truth speaking, social customs, ceremonies relating to marriages and deaths and fights between the Aryans and the Dasyus etc. The Yajurveda in addition to containing the usual hymns and prayers to Gods also consists of Yajus or formulas and directions for use in the sacrifices. The Samaveda contains hymns which were usually sung. The Riks or hymns of the Rig Veda which were set to signing were called Samans or good verses. These Samans were sung at the sacrifices or at the pressing of the Soma Juice. Prof. Macdonell believes that the Samaveda is older than the Yajurveda black and white. But Professor Maxmuller is of opinion that all the three Vedas viz. Rig Veda, Yajurveda and the Sama Veda must have been compiled at the same time probably when the Shatapatha Brahmana was composed by the sage Yajnavalkya in about 3100 B. C. These three Vedas alone were recognised at first. They were called Trayi Vidya in the Shatapatha Brahmana. The fourth Veda known as the Atharva Veda was not recognised as Veda at all in the beginning as it consisted mostly of magic spells, sorcery and incantations which were used by the un-Aryans and the lower classes to achieve worldly good as wealth, riches, children, health, freedom from diseases etc. The magi of the Indo-Iranians were also known as adepts in the art of magic and sorcery. The Atharvaveda was recognised later on when hymns relating to sacrifices seem to have been added to it to gain recognition from the orthodoxy. Professor Bloomfield however is of opinion that the Atharvaveda contains some hymns which are as old as those of the Rig Veda.

It may be stated generally that the system of sacrifices was already in vogue with the Aryans before the Rig Veda was compiled in the form in which it is found at present. But the

rituals of the sacrifices then were simple and not so complicated and elaborate as in later times. Besides some hymns of the Rig Veda contain simple prayers and worship of gods without admixture of the sacrificial rites. Ashvalayana quotes passages from the Rig Veda to show that Gods do not despise those simple offerings; Nay mere prayers will secure their favour and hymns of praise are as good as the sacrificial offerings of bulls and animals. He quotes Rig Veda 8–19–5, 6 and 8–24–20. In later times however and particularly in the time of the Yajur Veda the formalism and rigour of the sacrifices increased and they became more bloody by the sacrifice of hundreds of animals offered as oblations in the holy fire.

(b) Brahmanas.

Each Veda has got its own separate Samhita or compilation of Mantras and metrical songs in the form of a prayer book as also Brahmanas containing a critical exposition of the rituals relating to sacrifices and other miscellaneous subjects such as grammar, etymology, astronomy, logic, meter, philosophy etc., Thus the Rig Veda has got attached to it two Brahmanas known as the Aitareya and the Kaushitaki Brahmanas, while the white Yajur Veda has the Shatapatha Brahmana which is the most important of all the Brahmanas. The Samveda has got 3 Brahmanas known as the Panchavimsha, Jaiminiya and the Chhandogya Brahman, while the Atharvaveda has got the Gopatha Brahmana.

(c) Angas.

Each Veda has several shakhas or branches and charanas or schools where knowledge of the Veda was orally imparted by teachers to pupils by the traditional method without any break in continuity. The different Vedic schools had their own readers or text books called Pratishakhyas. The knowledge of the Vedas would be incomplete without a knowledge of the Angas and Upangas (i. e. appendages of the Vedas) and the Upavedas which are also treated as part of the Vedic literature. The Angas are six in number viz. (1) Shiksha which means the art of committing to memory and studying the Samhitas (2) Kalpas which contain rules relating to the performance of Vedic sacrifices and explanations of

the rituals and dogmas contained in the Brahmanas. They were framed later on in the form of Sutras, called the Shrauta Sutras. There were also two other kinds of Sutras called the Grihya Sutras dealing with the rules of domestic ceremonies such as the initiation ceremony of Upnayan or sacred thread, vivaha or marriage ceremonies etc., and the Dharma Sutras dealing with rules of conduct, social order and law. (3) Vyakarana or grammar composed by Panini which is the oldest Vedic grammar. (4) Nirukta or etymology composed by Yaska. (5) Chhandas or meter and rules of the metrical utterances of the Vedas composed by Pingala Naga and (6) Jyotis dealing with the subject of astronomy composed by Garga Acharya. Astronomy was treated as a part of the Vedas as the Rishis were particular about the exact time of performance of the sacrifices.

(d) Upangas.

The Upangas were four viz. (1) Nyaya or Anvikshi dealing with logic composed by Gotama (2) Mimansa dealing with rules of interpretation of the Vedic Brahmanas in relation to the Vedic rites and rituals composed by Jaimini (3) Dharma Shastras dealing with law and rules of conduct and social order such as those of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Narada and others and (4) Puranas which are 18 in number. They contain discussion of various subjects such as theories of creation, dogmas of theologies, prayers of various Gods and some philosophical speculations explained in a homely and and interesting manner by the aid of legends and fables specially for the benefit of women and Sudras and the laity who were not initiated in the sacred lore. The Upangas did not really form part of the Vedas or Shrutis but they came under the category of Smritis which were composed subsequently by learned authors from memory and recollections of Vedas or Shrutis some of which were lost or forgotten in course of time.

(e) Upavedas.

The Upaveds were also four in number viz., (1) Ayurveda or medicine composed by Charaka. This belongs to the Rig Veda. (2) Dhanurveda or archery composed by Rishi Vishwamitra. This belongs to the Yajurveda (3) Gandharva Veda or the science of

music, dancing, drama etc. composed by Bharata. This forms part of the Samaveda and (4) Artha Veda or the science of arts including sculpture, carving etc. which were about 64 in number. This formes part of the Atharva Veda.

It will appear from the above that the Vedic religion was not confined to certain dogmas of theology for the benefit of a certain class of persons only but it was very comprehensive in nature and embraced various topics and subjects which covered even those relating to the ordinary affairs of daily life and were of practical importance to persons of all classes including the laity. Even a cursory perusal of the vast Vedic literature will convince any one that the people of the Vedic age had attained a very high stage of civilisation and culture and had an intimate knowledge of various subjects of general public importance. It is therefore evidently wrong to style and characterise their utterances as those of mere children in infancy as some Western critics have done. It may be stated in general that the Vedic literature and religion consists of two strata of thought which were meant for two classes of persons viz. (1) the upper classes which included the class of Brahmins or the priestly caste, the Kshatriyas or the warrior caste, and the Vaishayas or the trading caste who formed the third caste. They were called the Traivarnikas or the three higher castes who were initiated in the sacred lore and the fire cult as taught in the Brahmanas and (2) the middle classes which included the uninitiated Vaishayas who lived on agriculture and trade and were engaged in other occupations prescribed for them and the lower classes or the Sudra caste who lived on service to the three higher castes.

The fire cult and the sacred lore were meant for the three higher castes. The Brahmanas prescribed certain formulas and procedure for the sacrificial rituals and dogmas of theology which involved high technicalities and were too elaborate and expensive for the average middle class persons for whom there was the Puranic religion which was based on Smritis and traditions. It was not so elaborate and expensive as the Srauta Religion.

II Vedic Karmas or actions.

(1) Sacrifice as Dharma or Religious duty.

I have already mentioned above that the two main divisions of the Vedas were the Mantras and the Brahmanas. The Mantras mostly consist of prayers offered to various deities such as Indra, Agni, Surya, Varuna, Rudra, Vishnu and others. The Brahmanas consist of expositions of the Procedure about the performance and technique of the fire sacrifice which was considered the highest duty of every Aryan. It may be stated that the idea of sacrifice as entertained by the Aryans was distinguished from that seen in other religions such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Islam, by the fact that the Aryan sacrifice was always performed in the holy fire (Agni) which was a Vedic deity in which various animals, butter, grains and other articles were offered as oblations to different deities. This was accompanied by utterances of the holy Mantras and formulas contained in the Vedas to secure an eternal abode in the heaven as fruit of the said sacrifices by the medium of Apurva or unseen supersensuous religious merit which always accompanied the soul of the person performing the sacrifices on his death. It was the highest duty of every Aryan to perform sacrifices with all the formalities as laid down by imperative texts contained in the Brahmanas and for which various rules were prescribed. Suffice it to say for the present that the said rules all related to actions sacrificial, social or moral. The performance of sacrifices however was enjoined as indispensable to secure Swarga or a celestial abode which was considered the summum bonum of life by the Vedic people.

The Brahmanas generally treat of the following four subjects viz. (1) Vidhi or commandments which enjoined the performance of certain obligatory actions as sacrifices the fruit of which was acquisition of the heaven. (2) Artha Vadas or explanatory statements or statements in euology of the obligatory actions (3) Nishedhas or prohibitory statements forbidding sinful actions which lead to hell, and (4) Miscellaneous subjects. Of the above four subjects the first and the third relate to sacrifices and ethics which constitute the principal aim of a man's life, while the second relates to a bare statement of facts, principles or truths as detached from actions which were treated as subsidiary to actions.

(2) Rules relating to the social order of castes and stages of life.

Institution of castes (Varnas).

We have seen above that the main purpose of the Brahmanas was to teach the performance of sacrifices which consisted mostly of animal sacrifices as the highest Dharma or religious duty which was the instrumental cause of a heavenly abode. But there were also other duties laid down in the Vedas for the welfare and good of individuals and society viz. social duties and duties relating to conduct. In the Brahmanas we find a distinct advance and development of the idea of society, which for the first time appears in the famous Purusha Sukta in the last Mandala of the Rig Veda.[1]

In the Purusha Sukta the gods are the agents of the act of creation, while the the material out of which the world is made is the body of the primeval person called Virat Purusha. The act of creation is treated as a sacrifice in which the evolved person is the victim whose several parts when cut up and offered as oblations in the holy fire became portions of the universe. In verse 12, it is laid down that the mouth of the victim became the Brahmana or the priestly caste; His two arms became the Kshatriya or the warrior caste; his two thighs the Vaishyas or the mercantile caste; while his two feet generated the Sudra or the servant class as the fourth caste. This was the beginning of the caste system of India which consisted at first only of four castes having distinct duties as learning, fight in the bottle, trade and service, corresponding to the limbs of the evolved person namely the head, the two arms, the two thighs and the two feet respectively which were sacrificed in the fire. The above hymn is really pantheistic in strain teaching the doctrine of the synthetic unity of the world including the four castes but the idea of unity was lost sight of in course of time and the castes became exclusive and even apathetic towards one another and in course of time the four main castes became divided and sub-divided into innumerable castes and sub-castes which had no synthetic cohesion.

1. (10-90)

From the Zend Avesta we find that the Indo-Iranians had also three castes, called Atharvas, Rathastas and Vastryas or Shuyans corresponding to the three castes Brahmins, Kashatriyas and Vaishyas of the Indo-Aryans. Dr. Haug is of opinion that there was already a division of the four castes in Vedic times thus differing from Prof. Roth, Dr. Moor, and Mr. Dutt who believe that the division of the four castes did not exist in Vedic times but was formed subsequently.

Stages of life (Ashramas).

Similar to the institution of castes there is another institution known as the Ashramas which also developed in the time of the Brahmanas along with the former. The Ashramas are four in number viz. (1) The Brahmacharya or the stage of studentship which enjoins on the student the study of the Vedas and a life of strict Brahmacharya or celibacy and discipline as also the observance of certain other rules (2) the Grihasthashrama or the stage of a house-holder or a married man which enjoins the observance of certain duties as the begetting of a son, the performance of five daily sacrifices, entertaining a guest, maintaining the ascetic etc. (3) The Vana-Prastha Ashrama or the stage of an anchorite which enjoins compulsory retirement from the worldly life and embracing the life of an anchorite preparatory to renunciation accompanied with all sorts of austerities and penances and (4) lastly the stage of an ascetic which enjoins complete renunciation of the duties laid down for a family man and all obligatory actions.

The above eightfold Dharma known as Varnashrama Dharma or the duties of the four stages of life is enjoined by the Vedic religion for the good of the individuals and society as a part and parcel of the whole social order equally as the performance of sacrifices. The caste order is of divine institution as taught in the Purusha Sukta of Rig Veda. Each man is born in that family whose place in society accords with his deeds in the previous life. The above duties relating to the social order are based on the Vedas and are treated at great length in the Dharma Sutras as an appendage to the Kalpa Sutras which form one of the six Angas of the Vedas as stated above. They also form part of the Smrities or Dharma

Shastras which are treatises dealing with law, rules of conduct, social order etc. as those of mauu, Yajnavalkya, Narada, Parashara and others.

(3) Rules of Good Conduct and ethics.

Lastly we find in the Vedas and the Brahmanas a casual discussion on ethics and rules of good conduct. One is enjoined to lead a moral life and show good conduct if he wants to secure heaven after death. If he leads a wicked and sinful life he has to undergo suffering in hell and after undergoing punishment there he is reborn on the earth being invested with a suitable body to further suffer the consequences of his past misdeeds. Rules of good conduct including the customary practices and observances are laid down in the Vedas and Smritis. The Smritis are based on the Vedas They also include rules for purity and those regulating baths, diet, penances etc. Good conduct is a necessary qualification to the successful performance of the holy sacrifices as enjoined by the Veds and Brahmanas and is of instrumental value subserving the means of procuring heaven as the highest fruit of sacrifices after death. Rule of good conduct is transcendental law according to Manu.[1]

(4) Kamya Yajnas or sacrifices with desire.

We have seen above that the Vedic religion was primarily a religion of Dharma or righteousness and duty. It enjoined the performance of sacrifices and the observance of rules relating to the social order and good conduct as the duty of every man. Obligatory sacrifices were called Vihita Yajnas. More attention was however paid to the performance of such sacrifices rather than their fruit. As distinguished from the above there were certain other kinds of sacrifices which were called Kamya Yajnas or sacrifices done with a desire for rewards. Several sacrifices with desire for rewards are mentioned in the Brahmanas as performable only by persons having desires for special rewards. Thus if a king wanted to have universal sovereignty he had to perform the Rajasuya Yajna. Similarly if a person desired to have sons, riches or sovereignty he performed an Ashvamedha Sacrifice. These sacrifices were Kamya Sacrifices as performed with a desire for rewards. It may be mentioned here that the fruit acquired by the performance of sacrifices with desire was of less duration than

1. (M. S. 1-108)

that by the performance of the obligatory sacrifices which were enjoined by the Vedas. The theory of sacrifices was elaborated to such an extent in the Yajurveda and the Brahmanas that hundreds and thousands of animals were sacrificed, in the altar of the holy fire. It was believed that the potency of sacrifices was so great that a man could command the services of the vedic gods as the fruit of performing sacrifices in the prescribed manner. He could thereby also acquire even the position of a god after death. Thus if a man porformed 100 Ashvamedha or horse sacrifices he could acquire the suzerenty of Indra as Lord of the other gods. A feeling of revolt however soon arose against animal sacrifices in course of time on the establishment of two new religions viz. Buddhism and Jainism which laid particular stress on Ahinsa or abstention of injury and tenderness or love to animals.

III Theology of the Vedic Deities.

(1) Major deities.

Having described above the value of the various Kinds of sacrifices and duties as taught in the Vedas we shall now examine the theology of the Vedic Devatas (deities) who also formed an Anga or part of the sacrifices. The Vedas are concerned mainly with the worship and prayer of different gods. The hymns of the Rig Veda are mainly invocations of the several gods which always accompanied the offering of oblations in the sacrificial fire. There is a great misconception on the part of Western scholars and critics as regards the nature of Vedic gods. They believe that the Vedic gods are personifications of the various powers of nature and natural phenomena. This however is quite a faulty notion as the Vedic gods are always conceived to have a life and a definite personality. They are also conceived as human in appearance having arms, mouth, tongue, ears etc and the other parts of the human body. The Vedic deities vere probably conceived as the presiding deities of certain natural phenomena such as fire, wind, water, rain, lightning etc. The sun and the moon also were conceived as presided over by distinct deities which controlled their activities. These deities regulated the order of nature and they also held sway over all creatures. Prayers were and are still offered to them with the oblation offered in the

sacrificial fire which are carried to heaven by the god of fire. Some libation is also offered to them. Sometimes it is considered that the said deities themselves come here in their cars and sit on the Barhis or grass spread out for their reception and they partake of the offerings made to them. The fulfilment of the desires of the devotees such as long life, riches, children etc., is dependent on the favours of these deities. The Vedic deities are friends and protectors of the good and the righteous but they are enemies of the wicked and the sinful. No one can defy their immutable ordinances. Vedic people had great faith in the divine moral law that virtue will triumph at last.

(a) Varuna.

They offered most reverential prayers to god Varuna who was held in the highest esteem as a moral deity. He was also the presiding deity of Ruta or harmony and order and was mainly praised as an upholder of the physical and moral order. He is called Dhrutavrata i.e. one whose vows are firm. The other gods follow his ordinances. The wind which resounds through the air is Varuna's breath. Varuna is the lord of light by day and by night. He is omniscient or all-knowing god. He knows the flight of the birds in the sky. He beholds all secret things that have been or shall be done. He is the moral governor of the universe. He binds the sinners with his pashas or fetters. The spies of Varuna are always moving about observing the two worlds. Varuna is also known for his mercy and he is always gracious and kind to the penitent who confess the sins committed by them. He releases men even from the sin committed by their fathers. All the hymns to Varuna contain a prayer for forgiveness of guilt of sins committed through ignorance or recklessness. He is the friend of the worshipper who communes with him. The later schools of the Vaishnava theists trace their doctrine of Bhakti or devotion to the Vedic god, Varuna. The conception of Varuna is very old and goes back to the Indo-Iranian period. The conception of Ahuramazada or the wise spirit of the Avesta resembles that of the Indo-Aryans who also describe God Varuna as Asura which corresponds with the word Ahura in Zend Avesta. In course of time Varuna fell into the background being ecclipsed by other deities and he was consigned to the ocean as its presiding deity.

(b) Sun.

Next to Varuna as the deity of worship was the Sun god who was the most prominent object of worship in Vedic times. He was called Surya by which name he was worshiped. Another name for the same deity was Savitri who is very famous as the subject of the sacred hymn of the Gayatri which is chanted every morning by all pious Brahmins as a part of their sacred duty which consists in saying the Sandhya or morning prayer. Any ommission in performance of this sacred duty was considered very sinful for the atonement of which one had to undergo the prescribed penance. The Gayatri Mantra of which the seer is sage Vishvamitra, when translated runs as follows:—

" We meditate on the adorable light of the divine Savitri who incites our intellect to activities. "[1] Of the other names of the sun I may mention here only Vishnu who though a minor deity in Vedic times assumed a very high position in later times and has been the supreme divinity of worship of the Vaishnava theists till to-day. He is well known for his three steps, with which he traverses the earth. Two of his steps are visible to men but the third which was the highest step is invisible to the human eye. The highest step is like an eye fixed in the heaven. It is his dear abode where pious men and gods rejoice. The three steps refer to the course of the sun and its passage through the three divisions of the world viz., earth, air and heaven. The above are some of the important deities of the celestial region.

(c) Indra.

We shall now consider the chief deities of the intermediate or atmospheric region. Of these the most important is Indra who was far more adored than any other deity in the whole of the Rig Veda, about one fourth of the hymns having been devoted exclusively to him. Indra the national God of the Vedic people possessed great martial spirit. He is the God of battle who helped the Aryans in their fight with the aboriginal tribes and the Dasyus who opposed the Aryans. He was therefore naturally their great favourite. He is also the God of rain

1. (R. V. 3-62-10.)

and thunderstorm. He is well known for his great powers of drinking soma libations which are therefore liberally offered to him by the devotee along with the other offerings in the sacrificial fire to propitiate him. He is more anthropomorphic than any other Vedic deity. He is well known by the epithet of Vritrahan which means destroyer of the demon Vritra. Indra's fight with Vritra is well known in the Rig Veda, in which he comes out triumphant having slain the demon with his Vajra or thunderbolt. He thus releases the cows which are the symbol for waters from the mountains which stand for clouds in which the demons lie. The cows may also mean the morning beams which are compared with cattle coming out of their dark stall. Indra is known for his physical valour and rule over the physical world. He is a stern fighter and he vanquishes his enemies by his superior strength. At the same time, he is sensual in some ways. He is intemperate and is known for his excesses in eating and drinking.

(d) Rudra.

God Rudra occupies a very subordinate place in the Vedic pantheon being sung only in three entire hymns in the Rig Veda. He has a dazzling form and beautiful lips. His colour is brown. He wears golden ornaments. He holds a thunderbolt in his arms and is also armed with a bow and arrows which are swift. He is the God of storm and destruction, very fierce and strong. He is called a bull. It is however worthy of note that Rudra is not malignant like a demon. But he is a beneficent God known for his healing powers like a physician. He is also bountiful and is easily invoked by prayers. He readily fulfills the desires of his worshipper. He is also implored not to kill or injure in his anger. Though Rudra occupies a subordinate place in the Rig Veda he slowly began to rise in supremacy until by the time of the Yajurveda his supremacy was undoubtedly recognised. The white Yajur Veda samhita has two whole chapters containing litanis devoted to his worship. They are known as the Shatarudriya prayers supplicating the God by several names by which he became known. The Shatarudriya litanies of the Yajurveda Samhita are even now chanted all over India by the orthodox Brahmins who are the devotees of Rudra-Shiva. In course

of time Rudra worship became the most popular form of worship in the whole of India. Rudra soon became identified with Shiva or beneficient God. He was also called Mahadeva or the Supreme God. He acquired undoubted supremacy over all other gods including even Vishnu, who was then his only rival.

(e) Agni.

Lastly we come to terrestrial gods who were worshipped by the Vedic people. Of these Gods, Agni and Soma were the most important. Next to Indra in importance comes Agni or fire god who is praised in about 203 hymns of the Rig Veda. His anthropomorphism is however only rudimentary. As fire cult was the creed of the Vedic people it is but natural that Agni should be very popular with them. In addition to his terrestrial origin by friction of two aranis or kindling sticks, he has also a celestial origin. He is described as brought down from heaven by Matarisvan the Indian Prometheus. He takes the sacrificial offerings of men to the gods and brings the gods to the sacrifice. He is therefore called a messenger of gods and men and also a priest. Agni is further known for his great wisdom as knowing all the details of sacrifice and is called JataVedas i.e. one who knows all created beings. The ordinary sacrificial Agni who conveys the offerings to gods is called havyavahana. There is another kind of Agni called the Kravyad which is distinguished from the above as a corpse devourer. It burns the dead body on the funeral pyre. The Vedic idea of Agni as a beneficient god may be traced so far back as the Indo Iranian period when the forefathers of the Indo-Aryans lived with those of the Indo-Iranians who also worshipped fire as a personified being. The modern Parsis also worship with offerings of incense and other costly articles, the holy fire called Athra which is set up, and installed in special altars erected for the purpose in fire temples and maintained there permanently.

(f) Soma.

We shall now consider the Vedic worship of the other terrestrial god Soma who also occupied a very important place in the pantheon of the Rig Veda, particularly in connection with the soma sacrifices which were performed with great celebrity and pomp. There are over 100 hymns specially devoted to Soma in the ninth

mandala of the Rig Veda, the rest amounting to about a dozen being scattered in the other mandalas. Soma was a peculiar plant known to the Vedic people and its Juice was valued most on account of its exhilarating effect. The Soma Juice was a sweet and intoxicating draught which was frequently called madhu. Soma has a heavenly car in which he rides like Indra. Soma is brought to the sacrifical ground in a special cart. It is pounded by stones and the juice is pressed through a Woolen Strainer when it flows into vats called Dronas. Soma pressed Juice as it passes through the filter is called pavamana which means flowing clear. Soma is specially offered to god Indra with water and milk. Soma is pressed three times a day viz; in the morning, the midday and the evening for the three daily prayers called Pratassavana, Maddhyandina Savana and Sayama savan. On account of its exhilarating powers, Soma is called Amrita or draught of immortality bestowing immortal life. All the gods drink Soma to gain immortality. It also confers immortality on men who therefore freely drank the Soma Juice. In fact the uppermost desire of the Vedic people was to secure celestial abode and eternal happiness in the heaven. Hence it is stated in the Rig Veda "Apama Somam Amrita Abhuma–we have drunk Soma and have become immortal."[1] The intoxicating effect of Soma stimulates god Indra in his fights with the enemies of the Aryans. Soma corresponds with the word Homa in tha Avesta. It carries us back to the Indo–Iranian period when the Indo Aryans and the Iranian Aryans lived together having several religious beliefs and practices in common. In both Rig Veda and the Avesta, Soma draught was considered very valuable and highest praises ara bestowed on him as a mighty king and god.

(2) Minor Deities.

Besides the higher gods mantioned above there are also a number of minor deities mentioned in the rig Veda such as Mitra–Varuna (sun of day and night) and Dyava–Prithivi (sky and earth), the Rubhus having divine powers, Maruts (winds) who are the sons of rudra and attendants of Indra found in troops or ganas, twelve Adityas (sun gods) having Varuna as their chief, Vasus under the leadership of Indra and Vishvedevas who form a minor group. There are also found in the Rig Veda a few goddesses who

1. (8-48-3)

play a very minor part. They are Usas or dawn about whom there are some beautiful descriptions in the Rig Veda, Sarasvati a holy river, Vac or goddess of speech, Prithvi or goddess earth, Ratri i.e. shining night and Aranyani or goddesses of the forest. There are also some other goddesses named Indrani, Varunani and Agneyi who are the wives of the great gods Indra, Varuna and Agni respectively. Their active part however is insignificant.

(3) Aryan deities and the deities of Dasas and Asuras.

While dealing with the Vedic pantheon and the gods and divinities worshipped by the Vedic Aryans, it may be mentioned that we find references being constantly made in the Vedic hymns to the fights between the Aryans and the Dasyus and Dasas. The latter were the aborigines of dark complexion who offered great resistance to the entry of the Aryans into India. They were sometimes described as Danavas or demons who fought hard with the Aryans. They were headed by several leaders and chiefs known as Vritra, Vala and Sambara. The Aryans under the leadership of Indra attacked the strongholds of the aborigines who were led by their above named chiefs and defeated them in regular battles. The fight between Indra as leader of the Aryans and Vritra as leader of the aborigines ultimately resulted in favour of the Aryans. It is described in glowing terms in the Rig Veda and the Brahmanas. Sometimes we find the enemies of the Aryans described in the older parts of the Rig Veda as Asuras. But they are distinguished as belonging to a higher and superior class from the dark-complexioned Dasyus or aborigines. It is probable that the Asuras refer to the Indo Iranians who worshipped God as Ahura Mazada. The latter corresponds with the Sanskrit word Asura which is sometimes used for god Varuna. Asura here means giver of life. But subsequently it came to mean devils. The Indo Aryans at one stage lived together with the Iranian Aryans with whom they had many beliefs and practices in common before the former separated from the latter probably due to some schism on account of differences in theological views. The Asuras should not therefore be confounded with Dasyus or Dasas who were the dark complexioned aborigines and were possibly the illiterate and uncultured Dravidians who occupied

India before the advent of the Aryas. The aborigines were therefore called Anaryans as distinguished from the Aryans who had a white complexion and were civilised and who knew ploughing and various other arts as carpentry, smithing, chariot-making, manufacture of arms of war etc. The Dasyus are sometimes called Anasas which means persons who could not utter civilised language. The Anaryan Dasyus did not worship the Devas or the bright gods of the Aryans as the sun, fire, Varuna and Indra nor did they offer any sacrifices to these gods. They were savages and barbanians and had no religion and culture like the Aryans. The dasas had also a class among them called the Nagas or serpants perhaps because they worshipped serpants or it was their emblem. The Nagas were less hostile than Dasyus. The Dasas were also phallus worshippers as they are styled Shisnadevaha in the Rig Veda and were treated most disparagingly and with contempt. Ultimately however, on coming into closer contact with the aborigines the Aryans educated them and made them into a better condition. There were then called *Sudras* while those who were uncultured were called *Panchamas or Nishadas,* which term included the *Chandalas* and the present day untouchables who were beyond the pale of caste being devoid of clean habits and culture. The Aryans however mixed with the reclaimed classes who were called Sudras and they even admitted some of the gods and deities worshipped by the Dasas as phallus, serpent etc. into their own pantheon. The worship in course of time and particularly in the time of the Mahabharata became the popular form of worship of the Hindus. The phallus however was ultimately identified with the Vadic god Rudra who also became the ruler of the demons and goblins. These latter were already worshipped by the non-Aryans. In this connection we might mention that the non-Aryans also believed in magical practices and spells and possibly the Aryans adopted some of their practices and customs. Thus we find in the tenth Mandala of the Rig Veda and particularly in the Atharvaveda references to such magical practices, spells and incantations which were freely used by the Indo Aryans as means for averting evil, sickness and disease. There were also a few incantations to preserve life,[1] to induce sleep and to procure offspring.[2]

1. R.V. 10-58. 2. R.V. 10-183.

(4) Abstract Deities.

On examining the worship of deities in the Rig Veda one finds a tendency later on to worship abstract deities instead of concrete deities. This tendency is however to be found mostly in the tenth Mandala of the Rig Veda. Thus we find that qualities like Shraddha (Faith) and Manyu (Anger) are personified as deities. In the Atharva Veda, Kama is made into a deity of love who is vividly described as darting arrows in the Puranic mythology. Similarly certain activities and qualities of the old Vedic gods are also turned into deities. Thus the idea of the deity Dhatru or creator seems to have been suggested from the act of creation. Similarly the idea of Prajapati or lord of the universe seems to have been suggested from the quality of rulership that was attributed to the Sun. In later times, the place of Prajapati was taken by Brahma. Another god of an impersonal nature is Brihaspati which means the lord of prayer. In later times, Brihaspati is described as the priest of the gods and he is also identified with the planet Jupiter. The word Jupiter is derived from the Indo European word Zeus-pater or sky-father. Another diety is goddess Aditi which according to Professor Macdonald means that which is unbound, i. e., liberation or freedom. She is called the mother of Adityas (gods) who were her sons, i e., sons of liberation. As opposed to Aditi is goddess Diti which means that which is bound and her sons are called Daityas or demons who were bound due to their ignorance. They always opposed the devas or the shining gods. Both the Samhitas as well as the Brahmanas abound in vivid descriptions of the perpetual fights between devas or bright gods and danavas or devils. Professor Macdonald is of opinion that the above conception of Aditi must have arisen later on after the Aryans separated from the Indo-Iranians and she is therefore younger in age than some of her sons called Adityas of whom Mitra is one. Mitra or the morning sun corresponds with the Indo-Iranian Mithra. Mitra is therefore of older date than Aditi. Professor Maxmuller however is of opinion that the name of goddess Aditi must have suggested itself to the Rishis of the Rig Veda from the idea of infinite space beyond the earth, the clouds and the sky.

It may be stated in short that the raligion of the Vedic people consisted mainly of sacrifices in the holy fire with simple prayers to gods. These sacrifices at first were very simple and became complicated only later on with the increase of sacerdotalism of the priests. The Vedic people were religiously minded and had great faith in the deities worshipped by them. Vedic gods were worshipped as manifestations of the natural powers of the supreme divinity. They were not merely deities of nature as believed by some Western scholars. Several deities were worshipped by the Aryans as protectors of the moral law. The conception of Varuna as a moral god was very high and sublime and it shows the high moral level reached by the Aryans. They loved to speak the truth and lived a pious and moral life. They had a clear conception of sin which they believed was the result of transgressing the commands of God. They therefore propitiated God by fervent and suppliant prayers for forgiveness and mercy. They believed that the divine ordinances were inviolable. They had faith in the divine law that God will protect the righteous and punish the wicked. Therefore they always tried to regulate their lives accordingly. They believed that the reward of righteousness would be heaven while the punishment for wickedness would be the dark abyss which in subsequent mythology was described as hell.

We do not find in the Vedas any description of the mythological horrors of hell as found in the Puranas. In Vedic times the people were free from the spirit of pessimism which obsessed them in later times by the growing fear of metempsychosis and the endless cycles of births and deaths through which the transmigrating soul had to pass before reaching the final Moksha. They took an optimistic view of life. They prayed for long life of 100 years and material comforts of life as riches, wealth, cattle and children, their highest desire being for an eternal abode in the heaven to enjoy celestial happiness there after death.

IV. Vedic Philosophy.

(1) Classification of the Vedic gods.

After having examined the Vedic religion and the theological beliefs and practices of the Vedic people, we shall now examine what philosophical system can be deduced from the Vedic religion. Vedic

religion was essentially a polytheistic religion at least in the beginning. The gods mentioned in the Rig Veda appear to be 33 in number. There appears however a tendency even in the Rig Veda to classify the different gods worshipped by the Aryans, thus showing that the Vedic people even at that early period in the history of the world had a philosophical turn of mind to evolve a system as the basis of their philosophy. The Vedic gods may be divided into three classes as celestial, atmospheric and terrestrial gods. (1) The celestial gods are Dyaus, Varuna, Mitra, Surya, Savitri, Pusan, the Asvins, Usus (dawn) and Ratri (night) (2) The atmospheric gods are Indra, apam–napat, Rudra, Maruts, Vayu, Parjanya and Apas (waters) and (3) The terrestrial gods are Prithvi, Agni and Soma.

(2) One God having three forms (Trimurti).

These three classes were at first represented by Surya (Sun) Indra and Agni (fire) as the three leading gods representing the said three classes respectively. The places of these three gods were subsequently occupied by Surya (sun) Vayu and Agni (fire) in later times of the Rig Veda, and by Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in the Puranik times. The last three gods combined give us the picture of the Supreme God called Trimurti (having three forms) as believed by the present day Hindus. The source of this modern conception of God as Trimurti in his three aspects of creation, preservation and destruction of this universe can thus be traced to the above Vedic conception of the three aspects representing the three classes of celestial, atmospheric and terrestrial gods.

(3) Polytheism and pantheism.

The same idea is expressed in a different way in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the dialogue between Shakalya and the great sage and philosopher Yajnavalkya. The latter by his answer to the first question put to him by Shakalya says that the gods are 33 in number viz. 8 Vasus who are gods belonging to the terrestrial region, 11 Rudras who are gods belonging to the atmospheric region, 12 Adityas who are gods belonging to the celestial region, which with Indra and Prajapati make up 33 gods. Then by his second answer he says that there are three gods corresponding to the terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial worlds. Ultimately by his last answer the sage

says that there is only one God who is called the Supreme Being whose body is the earth, eye the fire and mind the light and who is the final goal of all, thus establishing the Vedantic doctrine of the spiritual unity of the Universe having the Supreme Being as its fountain source. This pantheistic conception however was not worked up atonce from the beginning in the Vedic period but was evolved slowly by gradations. At first we have polytheism in the Rig Veda with its pantheon of different gods existing side by side and having certain distinguishing features. These gods had also certain common features. Although we generally find the several gods of the Vedic pantheon described as existing separately, yet we clearly find in the Rig Veda early attempts to classify these gods and a tendency to evolve a system of unity. Thus at first we find several minor deities grouped together under one class as Marut ganas or troops of wind, and Vasus or the terrestrial deities etc. Sometimes even gods of different classes are brought under one head as Vishvedevaha. There is further another tendency seen in the Rig Veda of describing several gods as performing the same acts and the same functions. Thus God Agni performs the acts which are attributed to god Indra and god Soma performs the acts done by god Agni. Similarly the act of creation and government of the Universe is attributed alternately and by turns to Gods Soma, Agni, Surya (sun), Vishnu and Varuna. Sometimes one god is called by a name which is generally used for another god and there is an interchange of names. Thus god Indra is addressed by the name of sun, and god fire is addressed alternately by the names of Indra Vishnu, Varuna, Mitra, Rudra, Savita etc. Hence we often find dual gods worshipped together i.e, Indra and Agni, Mitra and Varuna, Agni and Soma, and the pair of Ashvins. We further find that sometimes the quality of omnipresence or all pervadingness which is generally the quality of the supreme God is attributed to the different gods individually and separately. Thus we find in several hymns of the Rig Veda that the quality of omnipotence is attributed separately to the deities Vishnu, Indra, Agni, Ashvinikumar, Surya, Brihaspati and Aditi. From the above discussion one can easily understand that though the deities of the Vedic pantheon apparently seem dissinct and separate from one another there is a clear tendency to integrate a synthetic and organic

unity among them, and evolve one uniform system which ultimately culminated in the Vedantic pantheism.

(4) Henotheism.

There was at first a belief of plurality of gods each having a distinct personality with distinct qualities. The idea of oneness however after which the Vedic Rishis were yearning slowly developed from polytheism to henotheism as stated by Professor Maxmuller whereby several deities were addressed separately as the only god with an entire forgetfulness of all other gods for the time being.

(5) Monotheism.

The idea of monotheism then took the shape of one Supreme God as having a unique personality and without an equal, who rules over all beings including men, gods and the whole universe. This is the stage of monotheism as is typified by the hymn of Hiranyagarbha contained in the Rig Veda[1] which gives us an excellent idea of God as the creator and ruler of this universe and as a worthy object of devotion. It was commonly believed that the Vedic people knew only polytheism or plurality of gods and that the belief of the unity of God was only the last stage as with the Greeks who ascended to monotheism from polytheism. But this has been shown to be false by Prof. Maxmuller who states that though with the Aryans belief in a Supreme God above all may seem later than the belief in many gods, yet they were drawn to the divine by the same feelings as towards one's father as contrasted with the Semitics who seem to have relapsed into polytheism from time to time. "There is a decided preponderence of monotheistic ideas in the chhandas period. It is monotheism which precedes polytheism of the Vedas. Remembrance of one and Infinite God breaks through the idolatrous mist like the blue sky hidden through the passing clouds." One of the oldest hymns of the Rig Veda[2] sung by Rishi Dirghamtamas bears witness to the truth of the above statement. The original verse of the hymn runs as follows:—"Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti, Agnim Yamam, Matarishvanam ahuhu" i.e. "The wise invoke the one Being in various ways and call Him Agni, Yama or Matarishvan". It boldly declares the existence of one Divine Being though invoked under

1. (R. V. 10-121.) 2. (I-164)

different names. The Hiranyagarbha hymn contained in the Rig Veda[1] also affords another instance to refute the charge levelled by some Western critics against the Vedic Aryans that they knew only polytheism or plurality of gods and had no idea of monotheism. Prof. Maxmuller however gives a direct lie to the above charge by his remarks made in connection with the above hymn. "The idea of one God is expressed with such power and decision that it makes us hesitate before we deny to the Aryan nations one instinctive monotheism."

(6) Philosophical inquiries after discovery of the Supreme Being.

The Vedic Aryans were of a philosophic turn of mind and they were not satisfied merely with the theistic idea of a personal God as it did not satisfy the inner craving of the human mind to find out a true philosophic basis for the unity of the whole universe and the exact relations between God, man and nature. The Vedic seers therefore made constant attempts to discover what was the ultimate reality and what was its real nature. Their thoughts centered on the one all absorbing problem of discovering absolute truth. At the earliest period in the history of civilisation of the world they concentrated their thoughts to find out the answsrs to several abstruse metaphysical problems such as "who am I"? "Is there a first cause"? "Is there a creator of the world"? Is the world real or is it an illusion"? Thus we find various attempts in the hymns of the tenth mandala of the Rig Veda to discover one Supreme Deity. This at first led to hymns to Vishvedevaha which were addressed to several gods belonging to different classes but which were grouped together as belonging to one group as stated above.

Then the mind was fixed to the idea of one personal supreme being called Prajapati or lord of the universe who was conceived under different names as the creator and ruler of this universe. Thus he was called (1) *Daksha*[2] or one possessing skill from whom was born Aditi who was the mother of all gods (2) *Twastru*[3] i. e. a workman or a carpenter who created the world including even the

1. (R. V. 10-121), 2. (R. V. 10-72) ,3. (R. V. 10-110.)

Vedic deities Agni, Indra and Brahmanaspati (3) *Brahmanaspati*[1] or Lord of Prayer who then became Brihaspati or the priest of Gods. (4) *Vishavakarma*[2] or maker of all and creator of the Universe as the only God. He is described as all seeing, having eyes, mouths, arms and feet on every side, and forging with 2 arms as wings like a smith; the father, creator and generator and the unborn sustainer in his navel of the primeval germ of the Universe wherein all the gods were seen together and which was held by the Apaha (waters) in their womb,[3] and lastly (5) *Hiranyagarbha*[4] the golden germ which is described as the supervisor of the primeval waters and which rose from them as the golden germ and as lord and sustainer of this universe. He is also described as superior to all the deities. He is identified with Prajapati (lord of the universe) in the last verse. The above hymns give us a clear idea of God as a Supreme personal Being and as the creator and ruler of this Universe as evolved by the Vedic Aryans.

(7) Cosmogenic hymns.

The idea of God as a personal being and a creator and ruler did not however satisfy the inquisitive mind of the Vedic Aryans who yearned after discovery of the philosophic truth of Absolute reality and we find a reflection of this philosophic inquisitiveness of the human mind in the most beautiful cosmogenic hymn in the whole of the Rig Veda known as the Nasadiya Sukta[5] which is the earliest Vedic source of Maya Vada or the doctrine of the illusion of the world which was subsequently evolved in a most able manner by Shankaracharya. This hymn is of the greatest philosophical interest as it contains clear germs of the later Upanishad philosophy. I shall therefore reproduce here a verbatim translation of the same for information of the reader :—

(1) There was not then the non-existent nor the existent then; There was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond. What did it contain ? Where ? In whose protection ? Was there water unfathomable profound ?

1. (R. V. 10-72), 2. (R. V. 10-81), 3. (R. V. 10-82), 4. (R. V. 10-121). 5. (R. V. 10-129)

(2) There was not death nor immortality then. There was not the beacon of night nor of day. That one breathed windless by its own power. Other than that there was not anything beyond

(3) Darkness was in the beginning hidden by darkness. Indistinguishable, this all was water. That which, coming into being, was covered with the void, that one arose through the power of heat.

(4) Desire in the beginning came upon that. That was the first seed of mind. Sages seeking in their hearts with wisdom found out the bond of the existent in the non-existent.

(5) Their cord was extended across: was there below or was there about? There were impregnators, there were powers; there was energy below, there was impulse above.

(6) Who knows truly? who shall here declare, whence it has been produced, whence is this creation? By the creation of this (Universe) the gods (came afterwards.) Who then knows whence it has arisen?

(7) Whence the Creation has arisen? Whether he founded it or he did not? He who is in the highest Heaven, is its surveyor, he only knows or else he knows not.

The above hymn contains several beautiful thoughts of mystic philosophy and gives us a clear insight into the inner working of the mind of the seer and his thoughts about the true philosophic conception of the nature of the Supreme Being both as a personal Creator and Ruler of this Universe called GOD by the theologians and also as a pure spirit of pristine purity detached from the relations of this phenomenal world. The seer is sceptic at the end about the nature of the first cause from which the universe emanated as to whether it was personal or impersonal. He is not dogmatic on the point and rightly so as it is impossible to define God exactly, as to do so would be to limit His perfection and completeness. He however seems to suggest after mature deliberation and deep reflection that it is a super personal cause

from which the Universe emanated. The Rishi tries to reach the impersonal from the personal. The line "anidavatam Swadhaya tadekam" (it breathed windless by its own power) also supports the conclusion that the Rishi had in his mind the idea of an impersonal supreme being. In the above cosmogenic hymn the origin of the world is explained as an emanation of Sat or the manifest from Asat or the unmanifest. The first object that came into being was water from which desire evolved as the first seed of mind. Desire was the first seed of creation of the concrete from the abstract. In desire or love was discovered the bond between the created and the uncreated. Then the poet gives a description of the male and female powers just before describing the generation of this universe whose source is a mystery The gods are born after the creation of the universe. Hitherto was a mere evolution or emanation of the manifest from the unmanifest by the union of the male principle and the female principle. In fact this is the starting point of the classical Sankhya philosophy started by Kapila which was atheistic and according to which the Universe is believed to be a natural evolution by the spontaneous combination of Purusha and Prakriti or the male principle and the female principle without any third principle as a connecting link. But this atheistic conception of natural evolution of the Universe is repugnant to the spirit of the Vedic religion and is therefore contradicted by the Seer in the very next verse in which an entirely new thought is set out. It postulates definitely that there is a superintendent and overseer of this Universe in the highest heaven who surveys it and he knows whence this Universe is created and whether he created it or not. Thus the existence of God as a Supreme Being and overseer of the Universe is clearly established. In the last verse however a doubt is created by the Rishi not about the existence of the Supreme Being and Overseer of the Universe who is already postulated but about the exact process of creation as to whether He created the Universe from Himself or from nothing as believed in the Christian religion or from matter existing by itself. The poet first asserts that the Overseer of the Universe knows whence this creation has arisen and whether He is its creator or not as the creation has come from him. Then he immediately corrects himself and raises

a doubt whether the said overseer of the universe knows the mystery of creation. Prof. Maxmuller gives two interpretations of the last sentence of the last verse which reads 'or else does not know?' as meaning either (1) that it would be a defiance to doubt the former assertion giving the mystery of creation as having arisen from God or (2) that he knows not the mystery of creation thus showing a doubt as to the correctness of the above assertion which according to Prof. Maxmullar "is not irreconcilable with the spirit of timidity which shrinks at asserting anything on a point where human reason can only guess and hope and if it ventures onwards it can say in the last resort 'behold, we know not anything."

(8) Philosophical conception of the Supreme Being in the Purusha Sukta.

Another cosmogenic hymn of great importance from a philosophical point of view is the famous Purushasukta or hymn of man contained in the Rig Veda.[1] This hymn relates to the creation of the material world including objects of nature and gods, men and beasts etc. from the Supreme Being called the primeval person who is described as having a thousand heads, thousand eyes and thousand feet. The agents of creation were the Gods while the material stuff out of which the world was created is the body of the primeval person or Purusha from whom Virat an evolved person also called Purusha was born. The act of creation is treated as a divine sacrifice in which the evolved person or Purusha is the victim whose body was cut up into several parts which were then offered as an oblation in the sacrificial fire and they became portions of the Universe. The origin of the four castes is also traced to the above Vedic hymn. The four castes are represented as having been born from the four parts of the body of the victim Purusha which respectively became the four castes. Thus his mouth was the Brahmin or priestly caste, his two arms were made Kshatriya or the military caste, his two thighs the Vaishya or the merchant caste, while from his two feet the Sudras or the servant caste was born. The act of sacrifice was described as the first Divine ordinance an observance of

1. (R. V. 10-90)

which gave the fruition of celestial abode which was Moksha or final emancipation of the Vedic people as the summum bonum of life. Though the above hymn lays down sacrifice as the highest religion and duty, the philosophic view is quite different from that of the old hymns of the Rig Veda as it is distinctly pantheistic in strain as will appear from verse two which states that "Purusha or God is this all that has been and that will be." The creation with its innumerable names and forms of this variegated world full of diversity is described as the greatness or glory of Purusha. The description of the highest divinity as a Purusha is unique from a philosophical point of view. It gives us a true philosophical insight into the real nature of the Supreme person who is not identical with the world in the literal sense as wrongly understood by some misguided persons from a superficial consideration of the immanent aspect of God and without proper knowledge of the doctrine of monism. The Supreme person has also another transcendental nature of pristine purity and great excellence. The real nature of the Supreme person exceeds by far the glory of this whole universe which is comprehended within only a fourth of Him while three-fourths of Him which is immortal and in heaven is concealed from the sight of the ordinary worldly people, who are not initiated in the esoteric doctrines of philosophy. This picture of the Supreme person as the highest Being having immortality as his essence became the true basis of the pantheistic philosophy of the Upanishads or Vedanta which arose later on and became the central pivot round which the exuberent labyrinth of the innumerable schools of philosophy that grew in the scholastic period entwined their multitudinous branches far and wide. It is important to note that the above ideal picture of the highest spiritual divinity as having a dual aspect of immanence and transcendence and the source of the vast cosmos has harmonised the two most important branches of theology and metaphysics contained in the Upanishads so thoroughly and distinctly as to leave no scope whatever for the unhappy conflicts between the said two branches of philosophy as are seen in the West, where religion is divorced altogether from philosophy. I shall deal with this part of philosophy later on when I discuss the principles of the Upanishada Philosophy.

V. Vedic Eschatology.

(1) Reward of heaven after death for good works.

We have already seen above that the highest aim of life to the Vedic people was to secure an immortal place in the paradise after death and enjoy celestial happiness as the fruit of sacrificial and virtuous deeds done by them in life. The hope of enjoyment of eternal happiness in the paradise cheered the last moments of the Vedic Aryans. They had full faith in the divine moral law that the righteous would be rewarded while the sinners would be punished as clearly appears from their suppliant prayers to god Varuna full of confessions for the misdeeds and sins committed by them in life thoughtlessly in ignorance so as to incur the god's displeasure and craving for mercy. In the Rig Veda, we find a belief of the yonder world of the pious called Sukruta loka[1] as a reward for righteous and virtuous deeds and of abyss of blind darkness into which demons and sinners were plunged as a punishment for their misdeeds.[2] The virtues which are rewarded by admission to heaven are liberality, austerity or self-restraint and heroism in the battle.[3]

(2) Celestial pleasures of the deceased Fathers (Pitris) in Company with gods.

The Rig Veda contains five hymns on death and the future life,[4] from which it appears that cremation was the usual method of disposing of the dead with the holy Mantras as one of the sacraments. Hymn X-14 is addressed to god Yama. Fire conveys the spirit of the deceased called Preta to the Yonder world of Pitars or (the fathers) and the gods. Passing along by the path trodden by the Fathers, the spirit of the dead man goes to the other world where he meets with the Fathers who revel with Yama in the highest heaven. Here uniting with a glorious body he enters upon a life of bliss which is free from the bodily infirmities and in which all desires are fulfilled, in company with the gods and the two kings Yama and Varuna. It may be noted that in the Vedas, Yama is the king of the blessed world of the Fathers in the Heaven and not a king of hell as depicted in the Puranic Mythology.

1. (R. V. 10-16-4); 2. (R. V. 10-87); 3. (R. V. 10-154); 4. (R. V. 10-14 to 18).

(3) Enjoyment in company with deceased relations.

The next Hymn X–16 points out the places where the various parts of the dead man's body were directed to go while being consumed by fire. The above Mantra is uttered while the body of the dead person is being partially consumed on the funeral pyre. The translation of the relevant verses of the hymn runs as follows:—

"The Sun receive thine eye, the wind thy breath; go according to thy nature to earth or heaven, go if it suits you into the waters; go make thine home in plants with all the members ".[1] Thus the eye went to god sun and the breath went to god wind. The spirit of the departed soul after death either went to earth or heaven or to waters or to plants. It was further believed that on death, a man was divided into three separate parts. One part was burnt and its remnants such as bones were buried in the earth. Another part went to the deities of nature as sun, wind etc., while the third part which was unburnt went beyond the first heaven which is watery, and the second heaven which is starry, further on to the third heaven which is the abode of the Fathers.[2] Then the spirit being invested with a body of light went in a car or on wings[3] to the land of eternal light.[4] There fanned by delicious winds, and cooled by showers he recovers his complete form, body, mind and life[5] and reaches the celestial abode of god Yama under the Ashvattha tree[6] drinking with the gods and the minstrels playing on the flute and singing his praises.[7] This is the region of Vishnu's highest step.[8] There the departed souls join the company of the Fathers and lead a happy life reunited with Father, mother, wives and children.[9]

(4) Invocation of the deceased Fathers (Pitris) for blessings (Shraddhas).

Hymn X–15 in the Rig Veda is addressed to the Pitaras or Fathers who dwell in the third heaven which is the highest step of Vishnu. Various groups of ancestors are invoked for benediction,

1. (R. V. 10–16–3) 2 (A V. 18–2–48); 3. (A. V. 4–34–4); 4. (R. V. 9–113–7); 5. (A. V. 18–2–24); 6. (A. V. 5–4–3); 7. (R. V. 10–135); 8. (R. V. 1–155); 9. (A. V. 6–120); (12–3–67).

as Angirasas and Atharvans; the Brighus and the Vasisthas and others. The Pitaras or the Fathers are classed as higher, middle and lower. They revel with Yama and feast with the gods. They are fond of Soma and desire libation of the same. They eat the offerings made to them along with Yama. They come here on the same Cart as Indra and the gods and receive oblations as their food. They are entreated to intercede for their worshippers and implored not to injure their descendants for any wrong done against them, and to show their good graces by bestowing upon them long life, riches, children etc. The path trodden by the Fathers as the reward of good deeds is called Pitriyana while that as the reward of prayers and devotion to the gods is called Devayana.

The Shraddha ceremonies which are performed by the Hindus for invoking the benedictions of their deceased ancestors and their blessings suggested in the verses of the Rig Veda, are the same even to-day and they give us an idea of the views held by the Vedic Aryans on eschatology. The Zorostrian Parsis of India to-day also observe ceremonies similar to the Shraddha ceremonies of the Hindus which are called Muktad ceremonies whereby they piously invoke the spirits of their departed relations called Farvars.

(5) Consignment to the infernal region of the sinners.

Though the idea of hell with all the horrors thereof as depicted in subsequent Puranic mythologies was not known in the period of Rig Veda, they did conceive the idea of an abyss of darkness to which the sinners were consigned along with those who broke the divine laws and traditions and transgressed the injunctions relating to sacrifices and the worship of gods, as appears from the following texts of the Rig Veda which allude to a place of future punishment. The said texts run as follows :—

> "Like brotherless females, unchaste, like evil women who hate their husbands, wicked, unrighteous and liars, they are destined for that deep abyss "[1]

" Knowing, he beholds all creatures, he hurls the hated and irreligious into that abyss".[2] In the Atharvaveda and the Brahmanas

1. (R. V. 4-5-5); 2. (R. V. 9-73-8).

the picture of hell with its horrors and sufferings became more and more dreadful. It is stated in the Atharvaveda that evil people went to Naraka or hell, the house down below.[1] There the wicked offenders sit in the middle of a stream running with blood, devouring.[2] It is the lowest darkness full of demons[3] and Yatudhanis or female goblins.[4]

(6) Genesis of the law of Karma or retribution.

The idea of the requital of virtues and misdeeds by rewards and punishments is developed more in the Brahmanas "For whatever food a man eats in this world by the same he is eaten again in the other."[5] In the Shatapatha Brahmana,[6] we find a vivid picture of the vision of punishment in the other world that was permitted to sage Bhrigu. The sage is taken to different regions of the hell where he sees men shrieking aloud on being hewn in pieces and chopped up limb by limb by others crying the words "Thus have they done to us in yonder world and so we do them again in this world."

VI. Interpretations of the Vedas.

(1) Different methods of interpretation.

To enable us to have a thorough knowledge of the religious and philosophical views contained in the Vedic literature it is of the utmost importance that we should first have a knowledge of the different methods of interpretation employed by various Vedic scholars, Western as well as Oriental, for arriving at a correct meaning of the Vedic Texts. The standpoint adopted by the European scholars in interpreting the Vedas is quite different from that of the Oriental scholars and the Mimansakas. The former look on the Veda as the earliest piece of literary document, while the latter hold the traditional view of interpretation and treat the Veda as Revealed Religion and eternal authority on Dharma or religion. The meanings of a considerable portion of the hymns of the Rig Veda are clear but still many passages and verses are obscure and unintelligible.

1. (A. V. 2-14-3); 2. (A. V. 5-19-3); 3. (A. V. 9-2-8); 4. (A. V. 2-14-3); 5. (S. B. 12-9-1-1); 6. (S. B. 11-6-1).

(2) Etymological method of interpretation.

It has been objected by some that the Veda is not worth interpretation as some Mantras do not convey any meaning whatever while others are ambiguous and absurd and sometimes even mutually contradictory. As a matter of fact, Yaska the author of Nirukta which is the oldest commentary extant on the subject of Vedic interpretation quotes the opinion of one of his predecessors Kautsa, that the Vedic hymns were obscure, devoid of meaning and contradictory of each other. Yaska has however repudiated the above charge of the objector and shown by reasons how to interpret correctly the Mantras which are regarded as meaningless. The Shatapatha Brahman which is one of the most monumental works on the white Yajurveda composed by the great sage Yajnyavalkya has also given interpretations of some difficult Vedic hymns so as to deduce therefrom a proper meaning. In the Sutra period we find that Jaimini the author of Purva Mimansa Sutras has also laid down scientifically various rules for a correct interpretation of the Vedas to which I shall advert when I deal with the Mimansa philosophy.

(3) Traditional method of interpretation.

The oldest regular commentary of the Rig Veda was written by that well-known Oriental scholar Sayana in about the fourteenth century which is of immense value to us in understanding correctly the meanings of several difficult and obscure Vedic verses. Sayana however was an orthodox Vedic scholar believing in the authority of tradition and has followed the traditional method of interpretation of the Vedas. He has also written memorable commentaries on the Samhitas of the remaining Vedas and several Brahmanas such as the Shatapatha Brahamana, Taittariya Brahamana etc. Sayana has taken great pains in explaining abstruse passages of the Samhitas and the theological and ritual texts of the Brahmanas with which he was familiar and his commentaries are invaluable guides to every one whe enters on the study of the Rig Veda and without their help it would have been next to impossible to any of us to have a correct meaning of the Vedic Texts. Professor Maxmuller has also paid a glowing tribute to Sayana for the monumental work of translating the Vedas in the following terms. "I do not wonder

that others who have more recently entered on that study are inclined to speak disparagingly of the scholastic interpretation of Sayana. They hardly know how much we owe to his guidance in effecting our first entrance into this fortress of Vedic language and Vedic religion. We ought to bear in mind that five and twenty years ago we could never at least have gained a firm footing without his leading strings."

(4) Critical method of interpretation.

Unfortunately however we do not find a continuity of unbroken tradition preserved from the time when the Vedic hymns were composed as is evidenced by a considerable difference of opinion among the predecessors of Sayana. This has made the task of the interpreter more difficult in deciding about the proper meaning of the Vedic Texts. Yaska's own interpretations which are mostly based on etymology are often misleading and they conflict with the interpretations of Sayana which often differ from those of Yaska. The renowned Vedic philologist and scholar Professor Roth has therefore substituted the critical method of interpretation for the traditional method relying on internal evidence by a comparison of all parallel words and ideas, outside evidence derived from the Zorostrian literature, and comparative philology. He has refused to accept the interpretations made by Sayana as not being free from traditional bias and prejudice and undervalued the evidence of native tradition. Mr. Roth was of opinion that a European scholar was more fitted to interpret the Rig Veda than any Brahmin Commentator as the European is free from all religious and sectarian bias and he has a more developed critical faculty and can take a broader and more comprehensive view of things. At present a great weight is attached to the interpretations of the Rig Veda by Professor Roth. They are often original and worthy of consideration. Mr. Wilson however who has also translated the Rig Veda relies more on the traditional method of interpretation by Sayana. In my opinion, both the traditional as well as the critical methods of interpretations are equally useful and important, if we want to deduce a proper and correct meaning of the Vedas and we cannot afford to neglect either method.

CHAPTER III

PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS

I. Introductory.

We have already seen in the last chapter that the Vedas consist of 2 parts viz., the Samhitas and the Brahmanas and that the concluding portions of the Brahmanas are called the Upanishads which begin with Aranyakas. The Samhitas of the four Vedas which consist of Mantras or hymns were studied and repeated orally by students belonging to the first Ashrama called Brahmacharya Ashram or the stage of students. The Brahmanas deal with the sacrificial rituals that were to be performed by householders belonging to the second Ashrama or the stage of life called the Grihasthashrama as a part of their sacred Dharma or religion. The Aranyakas or forest books were intended for the study of the anchorites in the woods belonging to the third stage of life called the Vanprastha Ashram. The Aranyakas lead ultimately to the Upanishads or Vedanta as the concluding portions of the Vedas which were meant for the ascetics belonging to the fourth and the highest Ashram called the Sanyasa Ashram or the stage of asceticism. The Upanishads were treatises which particularly dealt with abstruse metaphysical and psychological problems. Their attitude towards Vedic ritualism was at first one of opposition. They regarded the Vedic ritual as insufficient to lead to Moksha or final emancipation as the main aim of the Vedic rituals was to obtain worldly welfare. The Upanishadas on the other hand preached the new doctrine of eternal bliss and peace called Moksha which was the summum bonum of life which could not be obtained by mere observance of Vedic rituals but by the saving grace of philosophic knowledge alone. Ultimately however, their attitude towards Vedic ritualism became more conciliatory. The Upanishads contain the essence of true wisdom and philosophy that dawned upon the seers of the Bharat-varsha in the quiet retreats of forest far away from the humdrum of city life. They are the fountain source of the orthodox schools of Indian

philosophy which were started later on claiming their foundation on the rock bed of Upanishads. The Upanishads have been the source of the highest inspiration and intellectual resting place not only to millions of thoughtful Hindus but also to several eminent scholars and philosophers of the West as will appear from the following quotations. The philosophy taught by the Upanishads has been the source of solace to minds like Schopenhauer the great German philosopher as would appear from his following remarks " There is no study more beneficial and elevating to mankind than the study of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life and it will be the solace of my death." Another German Professor Paul Deussen was so much interested in the Upanishad philosophy that he specially came down to India and critically studied the Sanskrit language and the Upanishads for a number of years. He makes the following observations: "God the sole author of all good in us is not as in the old Testament a Being contrasted with and distinct from us but rather our divine self. This and much more we may learn from the Upanishads." Victor Cousin the well known French writer on philosophical history has said " when we read the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East above all those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth, and truths so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy." The above few quotations would satisfy the reader as to what deep impressions were created on some of the ablest minds of the West by the Upanishad philosophy. Etymologically the word Upanishad comes from the root 'sad' to sit which with the prefixes Upa and Ni would mean "a sitting beside" i.e. a lesson taught by the teacher to pupils sitting close by him. According to the traditional interpretation however, it means a mystery or secret science contained in enigmatic formulæ in which they taught the esoteric doctrines to the few select students who were initiated and qualified to receive the highest knowledge. The materials of the Upanishads give rise to two systems one esoteric or philosophical, containing the metaphysical truths for the select few who were qualified and another

exoteric or theological for the average persons who could not grasp abstract truth and principles but who wanted a concrete picture of God for worship. I shall discuss below the main subjects forming parts of the Upanishad philosophy from the two above standpoints for the sake of clearness and to avoid confusion which is likely to arise otherwise. The main subjects generally treated in the Upanishads are ontology, theology, cosmology, psychology and eschatology. There are also casual statements made about rules of Ashrama Dharma and good conduct but which form a very subordinate part. Besides this the Upanishads and particularly the older ones as the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads contain several instructive dialogues, anecdotes, and parables which seem to have been specially meant to elucidate and illustrate in a homely and interesting manner abstract philosophic principles.

I. Classification of the Upanishadas.

There are extant at present about 112 Upanishads in all but most of them are modern except about fourteen Upanishads which are older in date. Out of these, the well-known scholiast and philosopher Shankaracharya has written commentaries on about 11 of them. Professor Paul Deussen divides the Upanishads into four classes and distinguishes them as of four successive periods of time as follows:—

I. The ancient prose Upanishads:—

1. Brihadaranyaka
2. Chhandogya.
3. Taittariya.
4. Aittareya.
5. Kaushitaki and
6. Kena or Talvakar (partly in prose and partly in poetry).

The order shown above is chronological. It will be seen from the above that the Brihadaranyaka and the Chhandogya Upanishads are the oldest of all the Upanishads and the most important as being constantly referred to in the Brahma (Vedant) Sutras which are short aphorisms dealing with the Upanishadic doctrines of

philosophy known as Vedanta composed by the Venerable sage Badarayana on which Shankara and several other Acharyas have written commentaries in the scholastic period.

II. The Metrical Upanishads:—

7. Kathaka
8. Isha
9. Svetashwatara
10. Mundaka and
11. Mahanarayana.

III. The later prose Upanishads:—

12. Prashna
13. Maitrayana and
14. Mandukya.

IV. The last in date are Atharva Upanishads dealing with Yoga, Sanyasa (Asceticism) and devotion to God, Shiva or Vishnu. They were mostly composed in prose at a considerably later period than those of the first three classes. Nor were they recognised by the leading theologians of the Vedanta.

I shall now classify the 14 main Upanishads according to the Shakhas or branches of the 4 Vedas :—

I. Rig Veda Upanishads:—

1. Aitareya and
2. Kaushitaki.

II. Samaveda Upanishads:—

3. Kena or Talvakara and
4. Chhandogya.

III. (a) Black Yajurveda Upanishads:—

5. Taittareya
6. Kathaka
7. Mahanarayana
8. Svetashwatara and
9. Maitrayana.

(b) White Yajurveda or Vajasaneya Upanishad:—

10. Brihadaranyaka and
11. Isha.

IV. Atharva Veda Upanishads:—

12. Mundaka
13. Prashna and
14. Mandukya.

Principal Topics of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads generally deal with the following topics, viz. :—

1. The nature of Nirguna Brahman or the impersonal and attributeless Absolute of Metaphysics. 2. The nature of Atman or self and the doctrine of immortality of the soul. 3. The ideal relation between Brahman and Atman. 4. The nature of Saguna Brahman or personal God with attributes. 5. Upasanas or modes of worship of the personal God. 6. Cosmology and theories of creation and causation. 7. The theory of Mayavada or illusion of the phenomenal world, and the apparent plurality of names and forms. 8. Psycholcgy or the doctrine of the individual soul and his relations to Brahman. 9. The doctrine of Pantheism or the unity of the universe of nature, souls and Brahman. 10. The science of Eschatology dealing with the fate of souls after death and the description of the various paths by which they travel after death. 11. The doctrine of transmigration of the souls. 12. Ashrama Dharma or duties relating to the four stages of life. 13. Preparatory means for Sanyasa or asceticism. 14. Ethics or rules of good conduct. 15. Relation of knowledge and action and 16. The Doctrine of Moksha or emancipation.

II. Ontology.

In the Upanishad period we find a growing reaction and dissatisfaction against the entire ritualistic system of the Brahamanas and a greater yearning after acquisition of knowledge of the Supreme Being and Reality beyond the phenomenal world. Deep speculations were started on the Vedic conception of paradise as the summum bonum of life and doubts were raised against the belief of eternity of Celestial happiness. The stay in the heaven as the highest fruit

of sacrifices was believed to be only transitory and not permanent and the conception of Moksha or emancipation was radically altered. It was believed that sacrifices and good works give admission only to Pitriyana or the way of the Fathers which after a temporary sojourn in the moon leads back to a new birth on the earth while knowledge of the Supreme Being leads to Salvation and eternal happiness. They therefore concentrated all their thoughts to the determination of the nature of the Supreme Being or Reality, called Brahman or Atman.

1. Nature of Nirguna (attributeless) Brahman or the Absolute.

All the thoughts of the Upanishads turned round the above two fundamental objects viz. Brahman and Atman. As a rule these terms were employed synonymously in the Upanishads. The Supreme Being is sometimes called Brahman and sometimes Atman. Brahman is a neuter noun which stands for Nirguna (attributeless) impersonal Supreme Being. The word Brahman is derived from the root Brih which means what grows &c. or is spirited. According to Prof. Deussen it first meant a prayer and then the object which is prayed to. The above derivation of Brahman is ritualistic and it was followed by Mr. Roth. Professor Maxmuller however does not accept the above derivation and he offers a different explanation of Brahman deriving it from Brihas which means word or speech as in the word Brihaspati (Lord of the Speech) and it means that which utters or manifests or creates. The idea of Brahman as an impersonal Supreme Being in its essential form or nature was evolved in the Upanishads by slow degrees as meaning Sat, (being) Chit, (consciousness or thought) and Ananda (bliss). In later Vedanta Brahman is described as Sachhidananda by a combination of his above three essential attributes, of Sat (Being) Chit (thought) and Ananda (Bliss). Another definition of the impersonal Brahman is given in the second chapter of the Taittariaya Upanishad called the Brahmananda Valli. Brahman or the impersonal Supreme Being is there defined as Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam that is existence, knowledge and infinity. The whole text explaining the meaning of the above definition of Brahman runs as follows:—"Who knows Brahman who is existence, knowledge and infinity, as

dwelling within the cavity of the heart and in the infinite ether, enjoys all desires at one and the same time together with the omniscient Brahman." The nature of Brahman being infinity, it is not possible to describe it in positive terms but it is described negatively as 'not this,-not this'. All the other predicates of truth, knowledge, infinity and bliss are combined in a fresh definition of Brahman given in the later Upanishad called Sarvopnishadsara. It may be noted here that the above predicates are not attributes of Brahman which is Nirguna or attributeless but they constitute the essential nature of the Being of Brahman ontologically. Brahman by essential nature is infinity. It is therefore impossible to limit Brahman by defining it as possessing attributes or qualities which constitute limits or Upadhis to its essential nature. The Upanishads therefore distinguish two forms of Brahman called the higher (Para) Nirguna (Attributeless) Brahman and the lower (Apara) Saguna Brahman possessing attributes, from two different standpoints of Esoteric Metaphysics and exoteric theology which are kept entirely distinct. It is not given to all to understand the Esoteric or secret doctrines of the Upanishads and so the Upanishads give an exoteric description of Brahman as possessing attributes and forms for satisfying the practical needs of worship as required by theology. It would be however wrong to suppose from the above description of Brahman that it is two-fold in nature as taught by Vallabha the founder of one of the sects of Vaishnavas born in about the fifteenth century, relying on the novel doctrine of Viruddha Dharma ashraya (substrate of opposite attributes) according to which all contraries can co-exist at the same time in Brahman. But this is on the face of it absurd as one and the same object cannot be with and without attributes and with and without form in itself. The truth is that Brahman by nature is attributeless and only one but it is only viewed from two different stand points as attributeless for the purpose of the highest metaphysical knowledge and with attributes for the purpose of theological worship and is described as Higher Brahman and Lower Brahman esoterically and exoterically respectively. The attribution of predicates or qualities to the Higher Brahman who is attributeless cannot for a moment

detract from or contaminate the essential nature and purity of Brahman as it is attributeless and transcendental. The limiting attributes are ascribed to Brahman only for the practical purpose of worship which requires the positing of some objective with a distinct shape and form but they are to be transcended ultimately when the devotee is initiated and thoroughly qualified for esoteric knowledge and realises by intuition that all sense of duality between the the subjective and the objective or the devotee and the object of devotion is an illusion and that spiritual unity alone is real. It would be also necessary to clear here another misconception about the nature of Brahman. Brahman is pure and infinite spirit of an immaterial nature. From this some persons have wrongly concluded that Brahman is only an abstraction of truth, thought and bliss. In their opinion Brahman is a mere ideal existing in our mind as an abstraction of the above predicates having no personal objective existence just as we have an abstract notion of the class concept of cow separately from individual cows belonging to the cow class. This is however, an entirely false notion. Brahman or the Supreme Being is not a mere abstraction but has an objective supra personal nature which is real. The only thing that can be predicated of the attributeless Brahman for certain is that it is not asat, that is, non-existence, but it is sat or essential existence. It means that Brahman is a Being having existence as its nature but not as its attribute or quality. It may be stated here that the empiric world of names and forms is also called Sat or real from the standpoint of experience. But Brahman is distinguished from all natural objects called real from the empirical point of view by the predicate of eternity or indestructibility without undergoing any change whatever in its pristine nature and from all embodied souls by the predicate of immortality being neither born nor undergoing death. Thus in the Brihadaranyka Upanishad, Brahman is called Satyasya Satyam that is truly real in this world of empiric reality for which the simple word Satya is used.[1] This doctrine of Asat (unreal) and Sat (real) may be traced back to the famous Nasadiya hymn of the Rig Veda which is already explained at great length in Chapter II,[2] and which also

1. (B. U. 2-1-20.) 2. (R. V. 10-129.)

contains the earliest germs of the doctrine of Mayavada or illusive theory of the world. The second essence of Brahman is thought or intelligence which is also not its attribute but its nature. This should not be taken to mean that the attributes of existence and thought are separately ascribed to Brahman as there is no duality in the integrity of Brahman and both the attributes are identical. As a matter of fact the essence of being is identical with intelligence and that of intelligence is identical with being. The attribute of thought is ascribed to Brahman to distinguish it from inanimate objects thus suggesting that it has life or self-consciousness as its essential nature. This might however lead one to suppose that the embodied soul is Brahman. To remove such a misapprehension, the third attribute of bliss or happiness is ascribed to Brahman as constituting its essential nature, thus distinguishing it from man of the empiric world who undergoes many sufferings and miseries, in the trials of life in this world. In short, we may say that the esoteric conception of Brahman is one Supreme Being having a distinct objective existence separate from nature and man and having the predicates of existence, thought and bliss constituting its essence and real nature and not as separate attributes, their relationship being one of identity and non-separateness or Advaita.

2. The nature of Atman or Self.

We have already seen above that of the fundamental concepts of the Upanishadas, we find two of them expressed by the terms Brahman and Atman which are as a rule used synonymously for one and the same object ontologically. The word Brahman however is generally used as the cosmical principle of the Universe, while the term Atman is used as the psychical principle. But there is no difference in the fundamental concept of these two terms, which mean the same object. As a matter of fact we often find the two terms equated and interchanged with each other in the Upanishads. The word Atman is a masculine noun while Brahman is a neuter one. The word Atman was derived etymologically from the verb 'an' which means 'to breathe.' It meant breath. Then it meant vital breath, life, soul or self constituting the innermost nature of everything and particularly of man. Then the verb 'an' was changed to 'at'

which means ' to pervade ' and Atman meant the highest person who is all pervading. The word Atman however related more to the personal aspect of the Supreme Being while the word Brahman related more to the impersonal or abstract aspect of the Supreme Being. However there was no difference whatever in the meaning of the said two terms as pointed out above. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Atman is described as the highest Being and the summum bonum and goal of all philosophical inquiry. It is stated in the said Upanishad that "Atma should be seen, heard, thought, and meditated. By perception, hearing, thought and knowledge of Atman (self) all this universe is known".[1] The same Upanishad describes Atman as the Supreme Self and inner soul which is within all and which rules them from within. Thus:—"He is thy Soul, the inner guide, the immortal. He sees but is not seen. There is none beside him that sees".[2] This Atma who alone exists is the knowing subject in us and he sustains the whole universe which is comprehended within it and beyond which there exists nothing. With the knowledge of Atman everything is known. The oldest Upanishads recognised only one Supreme Soul which alone existed and created the Universe and as Atman it entered the Universe created by it. The original conception of Atman was purely idealistic which denied the separate existence of the manifold Universe. Then the idea underwent a change and it became cosmogenistic and pan-theistic which allowed relative existence to the Universe within the Atman as its supreme self whose unity was however maintained throughout. In course of time a distinction was made between the supreme soul and the individual soul. The supreme soul or pure spirit is designated as the light while the individual soul is called the shadow.[3] The Individual soul was then called Bhokta or enjoyer. He resulted from the union of supreme soul with the organs, Manas (mind) and senses by the Maya Shakti or mysterious power of the Supreme soul. The individual soul as enjoyer is further brought out in the Shvetashwatara Upnishad.[4]

The Upanishads have further shown a distinction between two kinds of souls viz. the soul in bondage and the emancipated

1. (B. U. 2-4-5). 2. (B. U. 3-7). 3. (K. U. 3-4). 4. (S. U. 1-8, 9; 5-7).

soul. The first is the embodied soul who is migrating in the Sansara or world of births and deaths which is endless and is imprisoned there until he acquires the light of true philosophical knowledge when he is finally released from the bondage of births and deaths in the Sansara and he realises that he is the emancipated soul or highest Supreme Being. Tne Upanishads have given a beautiful picture of the divine souls who are delivered from the Sansara and have an abode in Brahma Loka. I shall deal with the subject more when I treat of Eschatology of the Upanishads. These divine souls get final emancipation on having a true vision of their whole being in the Supreme Being and the highest metaphysical knowledge at the time of the Mahapralaya or destruction of the cosmos. The above distinction between individual and supreme souls is not final according to the Upanishad doctrine of Advaita or monism but is only transitional and is ultimately transcended in the ultimate unity of Parabrahman or the Absolute.

In short it may be stated that the essential nature of individual souls is Atman or the Supreme self, which is identical with Brahman ontologically. The individual soul even in the empiric state is not separate from the Supreme Being and his apparent duality from the Supreme self and the other souls and nature is due to avidya or ignorance which is not real but is finally destroyed by a true spiritual enlightment.

3. The Doctrine of Advaita or non-dual monism.

We have already stated above that the only reality in this universe from a philosophic point of view is the Supreme Being called Brahman or Atman. There is an organic unity of the whole which is ever maintained by the miraculous power of the Supreme Being. The whole of the Universe consisting of the innumerable inanimate objects of nature as well as the migrating souls is comprehended within the Absolute having their essential being within the latter by an organic unity which never allows the universe any independent existence apart from Brahman or the Supreme Being. Neither the objects of nature nor the migrating souls can exist or perform their functions on their own account as detached from the Supreme Being who as a matter of fact always controls the universe from

within by immutable laws, preserving a synthetic unity of the cosmos or the universe as a whole in all its three states of origination, preservation and destruction. This cardinal doctrine of unity is known as Advaita or non-dual monism which is stated in the Chhandogya Upanishad as follows :— " Before, Oh Child all this universe was only Sat (Being) having its existence in the Absolute Being one only and without a second " " All this universe is verily Brahman ".[1] This doctrine establishes the unity of the whole universe as having its true spiritual basis in Brahman or Atman.

4 Absolute Idealism & unity of the world.

Absolute idealism or monism should not be confounded with the doctrine of pan-theism which holds good only in the empiric world of reality. Pantheism does not give the whole metaphysical truth. Pantheism seeks to establish an identity between the Supreme Being and the Universe of nature including the migrating souls with their names and forms as seen functioning in the world. It obliterates all distinction between spirit and matter, cause and effect, and subject and object of the empiric world. The real identity however according to the Advaita doctrine of monism is not between pure spirit and matter in its manifest condition as seen in the world. Pure spirit is always immaterial and it cannot be identified with crude matter which is not real but is effete and a product from mere energy as is now proved by science according to which all matter is made up of innumerable points of electric energy called ions which are surcharged with forces of positive and negative electricity. As this subject relates to the subject of cosmology and the theory of causation I shall deal with it more at length later on. It may be however stated here in short that the doctrine of Advaita really establishes the relation of identity between individual soul and the Supreme soul and the relation of non-separateness between the self and nature, the individual souls as well as matter having their being in pure spirit thus preserving the unity of the world. This ideal relation of identity between the individual soul and the supreme soul was proclaimed by all the Upanishads as typified by the

1. Ch. U. 6-2-1; 3-14-1.

four Mahavakyas or supreme propositions contained in the four Upanishads viz. the Aitareya, the Brihadaranyaka, Chhandogya, and the Mandukya Upanishads attached to the four Vedas, Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and the Atharvaveda respectively. These four propositions proclaiming the identity of the individual and the supreme souls are contained in four leading pithy sentences (Maha Vakya) of the above four Upanishads which are quoted below for information of the reader. The pithy sentence of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishada runs as " Aham Brahmasmi " which means "I am Brahman".[1] He who realizes such knowledge attains the state of all and unity in the differences of the manifold objects which do not appear to him as separate from or independent of Brahman but simply as Brahman's nature. Thus the sage Vamadeva had attained to the highest stage of self realisation and the knowledge of unity. The pithy sentence of the Chhandogya Upanishad runs as "Tattwamasi" which means "That (i. e. the Supreme soul) thou (i. e. the individual soul) art". The pithy sentence of the Aitareya Upanishad runs as "Prajnanam Brahman" which means " Brahman is knowledge or consciousness ". Lastly the pithy sentence of the Mandukya Upanishad runs as " Ayam Atma Brahma ". All these four pithy sentences practically convey the same meaning and reproduce the highest philosophical knowledge taught by the Upanishads viz. that the self of the individual soul is identical with the self of the supreme soul.

The proposition 'That thou art' (tat twam asi) is repeated nine times in the Chhandogya Upanishad and its lesson is brought home by demonstrations, experiments and homely illustrations as taught by the sage Uddalaka to his son Shvetaketu. The boy Shvetaketu on returning home from his tutor after studying all the Vedas for twelve years began to show conceipt and arrogance, feeling confident of his knowledge of the Vedas. His father thereupon asked him whether he had learnt from his tutor the lesson by which one can hear what was unheard before, perceive what was unperceived before and know what cannot be known. The son expressed his ignorance and his father thereupon

1. B. U. 1-4-10.

instructed him by giving three illustrations of clay, gold and nail-scissor as to the highest lesson of the unity of the whole world as having its being within the Absolute or the Supreme Being which alone is real and by a knowledge of which everything becomes known. He demonstrated the above truth in the following manner viz. that just as by knowledge of one clod of clay, all objects made of clay become known, the difference or change by name and form being only a name arising from speech, the unity of clay of which all the objects are made and in which they subsist, alone being real. In the same way the unity of the world which has its being in the supreme self and in which it exists is alone real. The father then demonstrates the above truth by apt experiments and parables and teaches Shetaketu the great lesson " Tat Twam Asi" That (i.e. Supreme soul) thou (i.e. individual soul) art. The above lesson may be taken to reproduce in three words the substance of the teachings contained in all the Upanishads and is the key note of Vedanta. It definitely establishes the doctrine of Absolute idealism and unity of the world as the fundamental conception of the Upanishads by identifying Brahman as the one cosmic principle or self of the universe with Atman as the subjective principle or self of the individual soul. The Chhandogya Upanishad expresses this unity of the world as the cardinal doctrine of all the Upanishads as stated above.[1] The objective universe of names and forms exists, as an idea only of the universal spirit which is identical with the spirit or self of the individual soul as abstracted from the organs, mind and senses and which alone is real. Hence all phenomena of names and forms of the world of experience become known when their substrate Brahman which alone is real in its entirety is known as the self of the knower as assured by the Chhandogya Upanishad.[2] The same Upanishad in the Chapter of Dahara Vidya[3] further teaches the principle that there is present in the heart of man the whole macrocosm together with the universal self. Hence whoever knows the self has absolute freedom. This knowledge unites our self which is consciousness with the universe and gives control of all things from their source,[4] as nothing exists outside and independent of Atman which is our very self. It is further taught in the

1. (Ch. U. 6-2-1; 3-14-1); 2. (Ch. U. 6-1).
3. (Chh. U. 8-1-6); 4. (B. U. 2-4-5).

Chhandogya Upanishad[1] that the goal of all knowledge is Bhuma or infinitude which is illimitable ideation of the universal self within us in all directions and outside which nothing exists. The infinitude of the whole is alone real, and things piecemeal are unreal, by themselves alone as detached from and independent of Brahman. On realising knowledge of this unity, the individual soul wins absolute freedom. There is really no plurality and no becoming which is all an illusion or Maya. All sense of duality or otherness constituting a limit to the self, is repugnant to the teachings of the Upanishads and is censured by them in strong terms as would appear from the following statements :—

"In the mind it should be perceived. Here there is no plurality anywhere. From death to death is he led blindly, who here gazes on a plurality."[2] "Change is mere matter of words; a simple name."[3] The later Upanishads teach that the entire universe should be immersed in God.[4] In the Upanishads referred to last, the Absolute is described as a personal God with whom loving relations are formed by men for purpose of devotion. This led to the development of several theistic schools of philosophy later on.

III. Theology.

Having determined the exact nature of the Absolute or Supreme Being as conceived in the Upanishads philosophically, it would be necessary to consider the theological conception of the Supreme Being in relation to the empiric world of reality. The Supreme Being is viewed from two different standpoints viz. metaphysical and theological. From a metaphysical point of view, the Supreme Being is the object of knowledge. He is described impersonally and is realized by intuition. He is attributeless and he transcends all relations of time, space and causation of the phenomenal world. From a theological point of view however, the Supreme Being is conceived as the creator, protector and destroyer of the universe,[5] as also its Ruler, Governor, and Controller.[6] The Supreme Being is called God by the theologians and He is

1. (Ch.U.7-23 to 25). 2. (B. U. 4-4-19); 3. (Ch. U. 6-1-4); 4. (I.U.1; S.U.1-7). 5. (Ch. U. 3-14-1 T. U. 3-1.) 6. (B. U. 4-4-22; 3-8-9; 3-7-3 to 23).

worshipped by the devotee as possessing several Divine qualities[1] and as dispensing justice by giving rewards and punishments.[2] We have seen above that the Vedic religion was mostly theological. The Rishis of the Vedic period at first worshipped different deities and they were therefore called polytheistic. But subsequently they attempted to discover one Supreme God and they classified the several deities worshipped by them as comprehended within the unity of the Supreme Being. They made various attempts to evolve a system. As a result, by slow degrees through an intermediate stage of henotheism, they came to realize that there was ultimately one Supreme Being who was the source of this universe and its ruler. He also ruled the several gods worshipped by men. From the numerous cosmogenic hymns in the Rig Veda, it appears that their first conception of the Supreme God was as a creator who was called Prajapati (ruler of the world) though they gave him different names. Their idea of the Supreme God was not however totally free from anthropomorphism and in the famous Purusha Sukta,[3] they described the Supreme Being as a person having 1000 heads 1000 eyes and 1000 feet. In some of the hymns of the Rig Veda we also trace the first germs of the Doctrine of pantheism and monism as in the Purusha Sukta and the hymn composed by Dirghamtamas. These Doctrines were developed in their full form in the Upanishads. I have stated above that search after one Supreme God resulted in the conception of Prajapati. But Prajapati was shortly displaced in the Upanishads by the Brahman and Atman who occupied his place. The most definite expression for the object of man's search was thus found in the conception of Brahman and Atman. The terms Brahman and Atman both denoted the first principle of the universe and were used synonymously. Both expressions however were too indefinite to satisfy the needs of worship of ordinary persons of the world who had not attained to a high level of spiritual culture.

(1) Search for God of worship.

Various attempts were therefore made to make the Supreme Being an object of worship by ascribing to it attributes borrowed

1. (Ch. U. 3-14-1. 2. (Ka U. 3-9). 3. R. V. X.-90.

from the empiric world. These attempts were however imperfect. Thus we find from the dialogue between the proud Brahmin Balaki and King Ajatasatru[1] how the latter confuted the false definitions of God given by Balaki who pretended to know the essential nature of Brahman and defined Brahman as the purusha (soul) in the Sun, moon, lightening, ether, wind, fire, water etc. This was pantheistic conception of God which identified Him with the universe but which was imperfect. The King pointed out to Balaki that the Purushas pointed out by the latter occupied a subordinate position in the universe and that the definitions did not express the whole view of the Supreme Divinity. Balaki considered only the immanent aspect of God as manifested in the universe but he took no account of the transcendental aspect of God which was not visible in the world. Similarly it was pointed out by Yajnavalkya to Sakalya[2] that the definitions given by the latter of the Supreme Being as the highest goal (Parayanam) of man were all one-sided and imperfect and Sakalya had to atone for propounding such false knowledge of God by his death.[3] Similar unsuccessful attempts at defining the essential nature of the Supreme Being were controverted by Yajnavalkya in the disputations he had with six combatants in the public assembly of learned scholars held by King Janaka, when he vanquished his opponents by advancing most learned and scholarly arguments. Yajnavalkya's said opponents gave 6 definitions of Brahman as speech (vac), vital breath (Prana), eye (chakshu), ear (shrotram), mind (Manas), and heart (hridayam). But Yajnavalkya subjected these definitions to a searching criticism and he pointed out that they were mere supports by means of which the six corresponding attributes were assumed to belong to the Supreme Being. These were only empirical attributes corresponding to the phenomenal forms of experience and did not give the whole nature of the Supreme Being. Another attempt at discovering the real form of worship of the Supreme Being is found in the dialogue between Narada and Sanat-kumara in the Chhandogya Upanishada.[4] In the above dialogue we find that Narada though he was well versed in the knowledge of the sacred Lore of all the Vedas, history, Puranas, logic, art, devotion and several other sciences, yet he manifested profound ignorance of the knowledge of

1. (B.U. 2-1 and K.U. 4), 2. (B.U. 3-9), 3. (B.U. 3-9). 4. (Ch.U. 7-1 to 26).

the Supreme Being as the object of worship whereby the devotee could surmount all the sorrows of the heart. He therefore reverentially approaches Sanat-Kumara with a request to impart him instructions about the nature of the Supreme Being to enable him to remove the sorrow. Sanat-Kumara then begins his instruction by declaring that the whole of the knowledge that was already acquired by Narada was empiric and a mere name. Then he taught Narada the knowledge of the highest Brahman by leading him to worship it by different names representing different objects of the world of experience advancing in greatness stages by stages successively. The revered teacher thus taught Narada to worship the Supreme Being in the following forms, each rising in greatness, by a regular gradation viz. name, water, heat, space, memory, hope, upto Prana or individual soul. Sanat-Kumara then ultimately taught to Narada the highest lesson about the Supreme Being as Bhuma i.e. the unlimited which comprehends all and beyond which there exists nothing separate from him. Yet Bhuma is identified with Ahankara (self-consciousness) and with Atman (soul) in us. The above chapter in the Chhandogya Upanishad constitutes one of the highest kinds of the Supreme Divinity called the Bhuma Vidya whose fruit is emancipation and absolute freedom. The teacher here incidentally admits the possibility of worship of the Supreme Divinity by symbols for ordinary men who were not totally free from empiric conceptions and who were not qualified to have the highest metaphysical knowledge of the essential nature of the Supreme Being. The fruit however of worshipping God in the form of smaller divinities was small. This led to the mode of worship of God by symbols which was called Pratika Upasana or idol worship in subsequent times.

(2) Upasanas or Meditations-Symbol Worship.

This introduces us to the subject of the different modes of Upasanas or Meditations as conceived in the Upanishads. The word Upasana is derived from the verb 'As' to sit which with the prefix 'Upa' (towards) means postures for worship and practices for meditation of God. The lowest form of worship prescribed for those who were not initiated for the higher kinds of recognised meditations

was Pratika (symbol) worship. The word Pratika meant the visible face of an invisible object turned towards us. Symbol was understood to be the visible sign of an invisible object. Thus Brahman whc was without any form and was invisible was worshipped under some form preceptible to the senses as Life, Space, Moon, Sun, Speech etc.[1] These forms were regarded as the images of Gods and they were understood as symbols representing the highest Brahman. The worshippers of symbols or idols never got the vision of the Supreme Divinity. Their fruit was only limited and of short duration.

(3) Meditations of God with Attributes.

There was however a higher kind of meditation of God as endowed with attributes called Saguna Upasana which was allowed as a recognised mode of worship of the highest Divinity in the Upanishads. Thus it is enjoined in the Chhandogya Upanishad that one should meditate on the Supreme Being as creator, ruler and destroyer of this Universe and as a Moral Being in silence.[2] These modes of worship were always accompanied by a knowledge of Brahman and their fruit was an abode in the Brahma Loka or abode of the conditioned God called Hiranyagarbha to which an access was had after death by the path of Gods called Devayana The following cognitions (Vidyas) for worship of the supreme Being with attributes were recognised in the different Upanishads as means for approaching the Supreme Divinity viz., (1) The Paryanka Vidya[3] (2) Panchagni Vidya[4] (3) Upakosala Vidya[5] and (4) Dahara Vidya[6] For the above Meditations, abode in the Brahma loka by the Devayana or path of the Gods, is mentioned as the reward after death in the above Upanishads. The following cognitions are also mentioned in the Upanishads for the worship of Saguna God. They are (1) Sandilya Vidya[7] (2) Vaishvanara Vidya[8] (3) Madhu Vidya[9] and (4) Shodasha Kala Vidya.[10] As these cognitions are also accompanied by a knowledge of the Supreme Being, the devotee gets the reward of Brahmaloka as fruit by the

1. (Ch. U. 4-10-5, 3-19-1, 7-2-2). 2. (Ch. U. 3-14).
3. (K. U. 1-1 to 7). 4. (Ch. U. 5-3 to 10; B. U. 6-2-9 to 16)
5. (Ch. U. 4-10 to 15). 6. (Ch. U. 8-1 to 6). 7. (Ch. U. 3-14).
8. (Ch. U. 5-11 to 18). 9. (Ch. U. 3-1 to 11; B. U. 2-5). 10. (P. U. 6).

path of Gods although the latter is not mentioned in the Upanishads describing the said cognitions. It is very important to note here that the above modes of worship of God mentioned in the Upanishads were quite different from those of popular worship where the Divinity as the object of worship was considered different from the devotee or the worshipper who was not free from the empiric conception of duality. As however monism was the cardinal doctrine of the Upanishads, they denounced all idea of duality as an illusion and as unreal. Duality in worship was censured in rather strong terms. In fact it is stated deridingly in Brihadaranyka Upanishad that " He who worships another divinity (than the Atman or self) and says ' it is another and I am another' does not know. Like a beast he is used by the Gods. Therefore, just as many beasts are useful to men, so every individual man is useful to the gods. Now the theft of only one beast is displeasing; how much more if of more ? Therefore it is not pleasant to the gods that men should have true knowledge. "[1] The above modes of worship of God with attributes as prescribed in the Upanishads were therefore always accompanied by knowledge of the spiritual unity of the devotee and the divinity and they were called Aham-graha Upasanas. The prayers were in the following forms. " Revered divinity, I am thyself and thou art myself. " "Just as thou art Brahman so I am Brahman."[2] The conception of God in the above Upasanas or modes of worship was lofty and sublime and was calculated to lead to the practical result of achieving blissful peace by concentration and a gradual moral uplift and elevation of the devotee to the state of Godhead. I shall refer the reader to only one mode of worship known as Shandilya Vidya which is contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad to give him an idea as to how lofty and sublime were the Vedic meditations contained in the Upanishads. I have quoted below in the foot-note the whole prayer which may be read by the reader.[3]

1. (B. U. 1-4-10), 2. (Ka. U. 1-6).

3. "Varily this universe is Brahman. In silence one should meditate on him as creator, ruler and destroyer of this universe. Now man is formed out of will. According to what his will is in this world he will be when he has departed. Let him then seek (the good) will. Spirit is his substance, life his body, light his form,

(4) Worship of Atman or Self.

We have seen that the Upanishads have laid down two modes of worship for the lower and middle classes of persons who were not enlightened for true spiritual knowledge. For the lowest class of persons who desire worldly pleasures, symbol-worship of God with forms was prescribed. The devotee worshipped images of different gods who appear to him endowed with physical forms each capable of fulfilling his desires. The fruit of such worship was however limited and of short duration. But there were persons of a higher type who were more enlightened. For them the Upanishads prescribed various modes of meditation of God with attributes. To these people, the gods who were worshipped appeared not as independent deities but only as manifestations of one Divine power working within and through the said manifestations. The prayers of such persons were always accompanied by knowledge of the Supreme Being. But there was still a higher class of persons who had attained to a higher stage of spiritual culture. For such persons the Upanishads prescribed a third mode of worship of the Supreme Divinity as the Atman or Self of the devotee without attributes, by contemplation of his essential nature both in his transcendental and immanent aspects.[1] Thus in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad we find that the sage Yajnavalkya has taught to his enlightened wife Maitreyi the true philosophy of the love of Atman, viz. that one loves another not because he loves him as a relation or an object existing separately from him in space but because he loves his own self or Atman in his said relation. The love of Atman

his thoughts truth, and his self infinity. All-effecting, all-wishing, all-smelling, all-tasting, embracing the universe, silent, unperturbed—this is myself in the inner heart, smaller than a kernel of rice, smaller than a grain of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a grain of millet, even than a husked grain of millet, this is myself in the inner heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds. The all-effecting, all-wishing, all-smelling, all-tasting, embracing the universe, silent, unperturbed—this is myself in the inner heart. This is Brahman. When I shall depart from here, I shall enter into it. He who knows this has no doubt. Thus spake Shandilya." This is the well known doctrine of Shandilya in the Chhandogya Upanishad. (Ch. U. 3-14).

1. (B. U. 1-4-7).

as universal self teaches us the spiritual significance of universal brotherhood. This is what Yajnavalkya said, "Behold, oh Maitreyi, not for the sake of the Universe, the universe is dear but for the sake of the self, the universe is dear. Behold, the self (Atman) is verily to be seen, heard, thought, and meditated upon. Behold Oh Maitreyi, by seeing, hearing, thinking and knowing the self, all this universe is comprehended."[1] The fruit awarded to the above class of persons was the highest. They achieved immediate emancipation or absolute freedom even in this life called JivanMukti. They have not to wait till the end of life. This was the lesson taught by the sage Yajnavalkya.[2]

(5) Theism.

Before closing the subject of theology it would be necessary to consider here whether theism formed part of the religion of the Upanishads and what views were held by the seers on the subject. In theism, God is believed and worshipped as a personal Being and as creator of the universe and the embodied souls and their ruler. God as a moral guide regulates the course of works for men which are predestined by Him and have their requital in due season and form. The universe and the individual souls are however treated as distinct from God who is distinguished from them. An opinion prevails that the Upanishads, and particularly the older ones, are opposed to ethical theism and are antitheistic in religion. I shall presently point out that this opinion is false. No doubt the fundamental conception of the older Upanishads was mainly idealistic which refused to believe in the reality of the universe as independent of Atman or the universal soul which alone was real and they did not propound the doctrine of theism as stated above, based as it is on the principle of dualism. But a concession was already made by the Upanishads at an early date to the empiric conception of the world of experience which viewed the world as real and the original strict conception of absolute idealism took the shape of pantheism which conceded the relative reality of the world as a phenomenal form of the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being was however regarded as Atman or self and the self of the objective Universe

1. (B. U. 2-4-5), 2. (B. U. 4-4-6, 7.)

was considered identical with the subjective self of the individual. The doctrine of pantheism was thus made consistent with that of idealism. The doctrine of Monotheism however in the form in which it is found in some of the later Upanishads had not then developed. But we do find in the old Upanishads ideas similar to theism which formed the basis of several Upasanas or meditations of Saguna Brahman as qualified by certain attributes as in the Shandilya Vidya of the chhandogya Upanishad already cited by me Verbatim above to which the reader's attention is invited[1]. Similarly we find in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishada a description of Atman as Antaryami or inner guide of the universe and of mankind,[2] governor of the universe and protector of living things,[3] and qualified by the attribute of prashasana or commanding and regulating the gods of nature as sun and moon[4] who work in order out of fear of Brahman[5] and who are entirely dependent on him.[6]. The above conception about the divine attributes and worship of God with attributes which appertained to the domain of theology as distinguished from metaphysics paved the way of theism, when the doctrine of pantheism was modified by the several theories of creation based on the law of causality as will be pointed out hereafter and different conceptions about the relations between God, man and nature began to be formed later on. A definite advance was made in the same direction in the Katha Upanishad, where we find the supreme soul contrasted with the individual soul as light and shadow[7]. The doctrine of Divine grace was also recognised in the same Upanishad where it is stated "only by the man whom He chooses is He comprehended. To him the Atman reveals his essence[8]. The doctrine of monotheism was however formulated distinctly in the Svetasvatara Upanishad, in which God, Nature and the individual soul are distinguished from one another[9]. We also find the following verses in the same Upanishad. "Two birds (the supreme and the individual souls), bosom friends of equal name, dwell upon one and the same tree (the body). The one of them (individual soul) enjoys the fruit of the fig-tree; the other (the supreme soul) without eating

1. (Ch U. 3-14). 2. (B. U. 3-7-3 to 23.) 3. (B. U. 4-422.)
4. (B. U. 3-8-9.) 5. (K. U. 6-3 T. U. 2-8.) 6. (Ke. U. 14-28.)
7. (K. U. 3-1.) 8. (K. U. 2-33.) 9. (S. U. 1-12.)

merely gazes. On such tree the deluded soul (individual soul) immersed (in wordly relations) is grieved for want of power. But when it sees the other the long worshipped ruler as different (from all wordly relations) and his glory, then its grief ceases".[1] But in this Upanishada we also find traces of idealism and pantheism existing side by side with theism. The Katha and Mundaka Upanishads also are theistic. An advance was made in the Isha Upanishad where the Supreme Being is called Isha i. e. lord of the universe. It may be mentioned here that theism meets with the wants of the devotee and satisfies his ardent desires to propitiate a personal God, by fervent prayers and supplications so as to induce Him to grace the Devotee by delivering him from sins and unites him in blissful communion with God. For this purpose, the Upanishads taught various meditations and prayers to God with attributes as stated above. The embodied soul was treated as subordinate to God and various injunctions were laid down in the Upanishads enjoining him to worship the Supreme Brahman as imperishable and Antaryami or inner guide and controller of the whole universe. The conception of a personal God for devotion and worship in the Upanishads, was rather distinguished from that of the theists. It was never inconsistent with the idealism as taught in the Upanishads. It was therefore more subjective than objective as contrasted with that of the theists whose conception of God was more objective. The Theism of the West has always shown a greater leaning towards deism and God was ultimately pushed aside altogether outside the universe. He has no relations with the world except artificially. The doctrine is unsound philosophically. From the above discussion one could easily see that the theological conception of God in the Upanishads as the internal ruler of the universe and a moral guide and friend as seen in the several prayers and meditations was better and more philosophical than that of the theists and the charge levelled against the Upanishads that they are opposed to ethical theism and they show a lack of theistic religion is unsustainable and falls to the ground. In the Upanishads, we do not find any conflict between theology and metaphysics as seen in the West. But they are found to exist side by side with the result that religion has always formed a part and parcel of

1. (S. U. 4-6,7).

philosophy from the earliest times down to this day. I shall point out hereafter in the chapter on Vedanta, how the great scholiast Shankara has reconciled some apparent conflicts of certain passages in the Upanishads so as to deduce one uniform meaning. The theism of the Svetasvatara Upanishad became a popular form of religion and the starting point and source of several schools of theology which arose later on. The Vedic deity Rudra then called Rudra-Siva had risen to great prominence and popularity in the time of the Svetasvatara Upanishad and he became identified with and worshipped as the Atman or Universal self of the Upanishads. The same theistic current thereafter also led to the identification of Atman with another Vedic deity Vishnu who was also slowly rising into greater prominence. Thus arose the two great cults of Shaivas and Vaishnavas which have since been the most popular forms of religion till to day. Several other schools of theology also arose later on of which the most important was the Bhagwad Gita which was a compromise between the idealism of the Upanishads and Sankhya physics and rational theism. In Gita one finds a development of the idea of love and practical faith in a personal God who incarnates himself and takes several bodily shapes from time to time to protect the righteous and destroy the wicked. The Bhagwad Gita in its present form has presented to us non-sectarian theism of a most comprehensive type based on the Upanishad doctrine of idealism with which it is throughout consistent. It is at present one of the most popular and valuable books in the religious literature of the world that has captivated the minds of not only the Indians but also of several eminent scholars of the West. A controversy was started in the scholastic period by certain Vaishanva theologians who started new creeds and cults of their own about the rank and precedence among the impersonal and personal Gods. According to Vallabha, Purushottama or Personal God with divine attributes is superior to the Impersonal Brahman called Akshara or the imperishable. This belief had no basis in the Upanishads nor in the Gita but was the result of only a sectarian bias and prejudice. As a matter of fact, we find it clearly laid down in the Taittariya Upanishad that, " whoever makes even a particle of distinction in the essential nature of the Supreme Being which is invisible, incorporeal, undefinable and unsupportable, he is sure to be afflicted.[1] In the Gita, Lord Krishna

1. (T. U. 2-7)

teaching the Upanishad doctrines, identifies his own essential nature with Atman or the Universal Self of the Upanishads. Thus there is no question of any distinction between the essential nature of the impersonal Supreme Being and the personal God or superiority of the latter over the former in virtue of the cardinal doctrine of non dual monism of the Upanishads which has preserved the integrity and solidarity of the Absolute as a whole, and in which there is no duality whatever. As a matter of fact, the personal God of the theologians is no other than the impersonal Atman or Self who is worshipped with forms and attributes which are ascribed to him only for purposes of worship.[1]

IV. Cosmology.

(1) Creation of the Universe.

I shall now deal with the subject of Cosmology which treats of the problem of creation and the exact relations subsisting between nature and God. Philosophical speculations had already started so far back as the Vedic period as appears from the several cosmogenic hymns of the Rig Veda dealing with the problem of creation. Various attempts were then made to solve the problem of cosmology by discovering the first principle which was the cause of the whole universe. In the Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda[2] creation is explained as an act of sacrifice by the Gods wherein the evolved person who was born from the primeval person was offered as an oblation to the primeval person and from whose several limbs, all natural objects, gods, men and animals were created. In the Nasadiya hymn of the Rig Veda,[3] creation is described as resulting from the unmanifest waters by the germ of Desire that arose in the mind of the Supreme Being called 'that one'. This idea of creation by desire in the mind of the Supreme Being was worked up more definitely in the Upanishads.[4] The motive of creation was recognition of the first principle of the universe which at first was more personal as Prajapati and was later on identified with Atman or Soul (universal and individual). The idea then arose that the Primeval Being created the universe and he entered into it as the first born. This was the traditional view of the Vedas which was followed in the Upanishads.

1. (R. Pt. U. 1–7.) 2. (X–90.) 3. (X–129.) 4. (B. U. 1–4–3; Ch. U. 6–2–3; T. U. 2–6; A. U. 1–1.)

Thus we find in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that Brahman or Atman causing the unconditioned universe to become conditioned as names and forms entered into it upto the nails as immanent soul.[1] This idea was clearly pantheistic as Brahman is wholly present as itself (Atman) in every living thing.[2] The cosmic soul Hiranya-garbha or Brahma (Masculine) enters into creation as first born of Brahman (Neuter). Brahma masculine is Cosmic Mahan Atma or the universal subject of knowledge from which arise the principles of finite thought, intellect and mind. The world is created from and by Brahman as the web from the spider, and sparks from the fire.[4] Brahman is the eternal cloaked by empiric reality.[5] The embodied soul according to the Upanishads does not exist previous to the creation by Brahman.

(2) Idealism, pantheism and causation.

We have already seen above that the conception of the Upanishads at least of the older ones was absolute idealism, according to which Atman was the sole reality and that there was nothing outside Atman. Therefore with the knowledge of Atman, everything is known. From the point of view of the theory of absolute idealism there could be really no creation as there is no universe outside of Atman or universal self. Such creation outside of the Atman or universal self was believed to be unreal. But the theory of absolute idealism was not acceptable to those who were of an empiric turn of mind and who asserted that the universe had a reality. These persons therefore substituted the theory of pantheism by which the relation of identity was established between Atman and the Universe and the Universe was believed as real as the Atman. The theory of reality of the world was thus reconciled with the idealistic theory of Atman as the sole reality. But even according to pantheistic conception, no creation of the universe was really possible on account of the identity of Atman and universe. The theory of causation was therefore substituted to explain the universe as creation as a concession to the empirical conscious-

1. B. U. 1-4-7; Ch. U. 6-2-3 and T. U. 2-6.
2. B. U. 2-1-16; Ch. U. 6-8 to 16. 3. K. U. 3-10.
4. B. U. 2-1-20, S. U. 6-10, M. U. 1-1-7, 2-1-1.
5. B. U. 1-6-3, cf 1-4-7, 2-4-12, Ch. U. 3-14-1, 6-13.

ness which looked upon the world as real. These persons were not satisfied with the relation of identity between the Atman and the universe and they formulated a new theory of causation, whereby they explained how the universe was created by Atman as an effect from a cause and a causal relation was established between the Atman as the first cause and the universe as its effect. To make the theory of causation consistent with the fundamental idealistic view, which was based on the traditional view of the Rig-Veda, the Upanishads taught a further lesson, that as soon as the universe was created by Atman (or universal self) as the first cause the latter entered into it simultaneously as stated in the several passages cited above. The Upanishads recognised the causal theory of creation and looked upon creation as an evolution of the names and forms of the manifold universe.[1] The evolution of the universe however was self evolution of the Atman who entered into it immediately on creating it, to become the manifold universe of names and forms.[2] By teaching the essential identity of all the phenomena of nature with the Atman, the theory of causation was made consistent with the doctrine of pan-theism. This was however only a concession to the empiric point of view in the world of experience, and was not a satisfactory solution of the problem of the universe from a philosophical point of view which looked upon absolute idealism alone as the truth.

(3) Theories of Triple and Quintuple Creation.

We find in the Upanishads discrepant cosmogenic theories one differing from the other as regards the order of creation. Thus there are two theories known as the theories of triple and quintuple creation of the elements. The theory of triple creation was first formulated in the Chhandogya Upanishad.[3] According to this theory three chief elements Viz. heat (fire) water and food (earth) were successively created by the supreme deity one from the other, in the above order after which each was blended with part of the others. The theory of quintuple creation was adopted later on in the Taittariya and Prasna Upanishads.[4] According to this theory, the elements were five in number viz. Ether, wind, heat, water and

1. R. U. 1-4-15. 2. T. U. 2-6. 7. 3. Ch. U. 6-2. 4. T. U. 2-1; P. U. 4-8.

food (earth). These were created from the first principle successively one from the other in the above order. It will be seen that by this theory two more elements of ether and wind were added to the old list of three. A great advance on the old theory was made by the addition of two more elements and the elements became five in number. This number was assumed by all the later philosophers of India. These five elements were of 2 kinds, the fine ones, and the gross ones, the latter being derived from the former. The great scholiast Shankara in his commentary on Brahma Sutras has reconciled the above discrepant theories of creation by pointing out that the triple creation should be read in conjunction with the quintuple creation and he has stated as his opinion that from Atman or Self first arises ether and then wind, fire, water and earth successively one from the other and this process is reversed on the dissolution of the universe. With the above qualification, Shankara follows the triple theory of creation laid down in the Chhandogya Upanishad and not the Quintuple theory.

(4) Destruction of the Universe.

Though we find numerous cosmogenies regarding the creation of the universe in the Upanishads based on the traditional view laid down in the Vedas, we find a lack especially in the older Upanishads of any theory regarding the periodical destructions of the universe as a whole as believed in subsequent times. A collective destruction of the universe as a whole is nowhere mentioned in the Upanishads. Universal dissolution appears for the first time in the Svetasvatara Upanishad.[1] We find in the older Upanishads only the idea of individual destruction and return into Brahman.[2] In the later Vedanta the theory of periodical cataclysms of the Universe is formulated as based on the old Text of the Rig Veda[3] which means " the creator created the sun and the moon in the same manner as he had created them in the former cycle. " But the meaning of the Text is doubtful.

Again and again the universe is created and after a time dissolved again to be created. The cycle of births and deaths is

1. (S. U. 3-2; 4-1; 4-11) 2. (B. U. 1-2-1, 1-5-3; K. U. 2-25; Ch. U. 1-9-1; T. U. 3-1; M. U. 1-1-7, 20-1-1; Ma U. I-6. 3. R. V. 190-3.

without beginning and without end. This theory gave a great impetus to the doctrine of recompense. The doctrine of dissolution of the universe as a whole is connected with that of recompense as shown in the Svetasvatara Upanishad. It is likely that the original motive for the above doctrine lay in the wish to maintain the traditional doctrine of creation side by side with the later doctrine of recompense.

(5) The Doctrine of Maya or Unreality of the Universe.

I shall now deal with the doctrine of unreality of the world as appears in the Upanishads, in connection with the subject of cosmology or creation of the universe. The doctrine of unreality of the world follows as a corollary from the idealistic philosophy of monism contained in the Upanishads. This idea is not new. Even eminent philosophers of the West have shared the same views from time to time. Thus the well-known Greek philosopher Plato believed the world of empiric reality as mere ideas which alone existed objectively. The philosopher Parmenides belonging to the neo-Platonist school also held a similar view and he asserted the empirical reality to be a mere show of puppets. The famous German philosopher Kant also came to the same conclusion and he declared that the whole universe as we know it is only an appearance and not reality. The English philosopher Bradley was also of the same view. Even the great poet Shakespere considers this life as a dream. The fountain source of the above doctrine is to be found in the Upanishads which teach us that the universe of names and forms as we see them is not the Atman or universal self but mere maya or illusion giving a false and imperfect view of things. From the use of the word Maya in the above sense in the later Upanishads e. g. the Svetasvatara Upanishad,[1] a theory has been propounded by some based on the false opinion of Mr. Colebrook in his essay on Vedanta read before a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1827, that the theory of Maya or unreality of the world was not recognised by the older Texts of the Upanishads but that it was a modern invention and was added from without in the scholastic period by the renowned scholiast Shankaracharya and his great preceptor Gaudapada Acharya. Mr. Gough however in his philosophy

1. (S. U. 4-10).

of the Upanishads advancing very cogent and unassailable arguments, in a very learned and able disquisition covering about 25 pages, has pronounced the following opinion "The tenet of Maya is no modern invention. The thought if not word, is everywhere present in the Upanishads as an inseparable element of the Upanishads. The doctrine is more explicit in systematised Vedanta. The distinction between earlier and later Vedanta is nugatory. There has been no addition to the system from without but only a development from within. There is no graft but only growth." Professor Paul Deussen who was also a critical scholar of the Upanishads and the Vedanta has expressed the same opinion and stated that "the older the texts of the Upanishads are, the more uncompromisingly and expressly do they maintain this illusory character of the world of experience."

The germs of the doctrine of Maya or the unreality of the world are traced so far back as the Rig Veda where it is said "Ekam Sad Vipraha Bahudha Vadanti.—The Rishi says that the learned give many names to that which is only one".[1] According to this verse the plurality of the phenomenal world of space, time and causation is a mere matter of words only and that unity alone is real. Thus the plurality of the manifold world is not real, but unity alone is real. This idea is repeated in the Nasadiya hymn of the Rig Veda "That one only breathed windless by its own power; the one beside which there was no other".[2] The above idea of absolute idealism which denies the existence of the manifold universe outside of the Atman which alone is real, was developed more distinctly in the Upanishads. The idealism of the Upanishads is connected with the name of the sage Yajnavalkya who taught as the cardinal doctrine of philosophy the following principles viz. that "Atman or universal self alone was real and that he was the knowing subject within us and the sustainer of the whole universe. All was dear on account of Atman only; That Atman was the sole object of all philosophic inquiry and knowledge. Any thing beside him and independent of him was unreal and was the cause of misery"[3] The Chhandogya Upanishada also developes the same

1. (R.V. 164). 2. (R.V.X. 129). 3. (B.U. 2-4-52; 2-4-14, 1-4-3, 7; 3-7-23;)

idea and definitely propounds the theory of the unreality of the universe, as detached from and independent of Atman. The same Upanishad teaches the doctrine of non-dual monism as would appear from the following extract therefrom:—

"That this whole universe existed before as Sat i. e. Supreme Being, one only without a second. That all the natural objects of the phenomenal world as sun, moon, lightening etc. are no more self-subsisting by themselves apart from the substrate or the highest divinity of threefold power. As such they are unreal and they do not exist on their own account. They constitute mere names having nominal existence only. They are modifications of speech only".[1] This clearly and definitely sets out the doctrine that the manifold world of names and forms as seen by our senses is unreal when viewed as apart from or independent of Atman or the supreme self within us which alone is real. The same idea is further repeated in the Taittariya Upanishad which teaches that "The world of empiric reality is so called by men"[2] meaning thereby that it is real only for worldly purposes but not absolutely. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad there is an emphatic denial of plurality as would appear from the following assertion "By the mind only is he to be seen. Here there is no plurality; whoever sees plurality in him proceeds from death to death"[3] The doctrine of Maya or unreality of the world is further formulated in express terms in the Svetasvatara Upanishad, as follows: "One should know nature to be Maya or Illusion and the controller of nature as the Lord"[4] The Mandukya Upanishad also describes the Atman as effacing the entire universe, calm, blissful and free from duality". From the numerous quotations cited above, the reader can at once see that the doctrine of unreality of the world was the cardinal doctrine of the Upanishads and that it was not a modern innovation. Mr. Gough in his Philosophy of the Upanishads has stated that "The doctrine of Maya or the unreality of the duality of subject and object and the unreality of the plurality of souls and their environments is the very life of the Primitive Indian philosophy and Mr. Colebrook was mistaken in denying its primitive antiquity."

1. (Ch.U. 6-2-1, 6-3, 6-4). 2. (T.U. 2-6.) 3. (B.U. 4-4-19.) 4. (S. U.4-10.)

It may be however made clear that by the doctrine of Maya or Unreality of the world, it should not be understood that the empiric world of reality has no existence at all in fact or that it is a mere phantom or that it is in our imagination only as in the case of the son of a barren woman, horns of a hare or a skyflower. The Upanishads have always recognised the relative reality of the phenomenal world of names and forms for which they have always used the expression Satyam, while for the universal self or Atman they have used the word 'Satyasya Satyam' or the essence of reality which is described as immortal. Atman is veiled or concealed by the empiric reality of names and forms.[1] There is also another test laid down in the Upanishads to distinguish the real from the unreal. Thus it is stated in the Bhuma Chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishada that "Whatever is whole, illimitable or undivided is real, blissful and immortal while whatever is divided, limited or in parts is unreal, perishable and miserable.[2] This test seems to have been the basic principle adopted by Yajnavalkya in the following assertion made by him in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad viz. "The Atman entered into this universe upto the finger tips as a knife is hidden in its sheath or the all-sustaining fire in the fire preserving wood. Therefore is he not seen for he is divided."[3] The above passage is very instructive as it teaches us that although God entered into this universe of names and forms immediately after manifesting them it is incomplete and therefore it is perishable. This is a sufficient answer to refute the theory propounded by certain modern advocates of lower pantheism belonging to the theistic schools such as Ramanuja Vallabha, Madhva and others who have scoffed at the doctrine of Maya and asserted boldly that the empiric world of names and forms as seen by us is identical with Brahman and is therefore real. The above bold assertion is without any foundation whatever and is directly contradicted by the texts cited above. It would be wrong to assert that whatever is seen or experienced by our senses is also real from a philosophical standpoint as even modern science refuses to make the above bold assertion and it only says modestly that what we see or experience is only the impressions

1. B. U. 1-6-3; 2-1-2; 2-3-6, T. U. 2-6 2. Ch. U. 7-23; 7-24-1;
3. B. U. 1-4-7.

created on our minds by the eye and the other senses and it does not vouch for the reality of the knowledge of the essential nature of the said objects.[1] Philosophically that only is real which subsists in the same form in all times without undergoing any change in its substance. All phenomenal objects are undergoing a change every moment, being subject to the law of constant flux and are not therefore real. Although this world is informed by the divine immanence of God who has entered into it, it has only a relative value, and it does not give us any idea of the transcendental aspect of God which is unseen nor of the whole truth. It would be therefore presumptuous on the part of any one to identify the gross world of nature consisting of names and forms with the supreme divinity under the shelter of the Upanishad doctrine of Advaita or monism. The very term Advaita suggests that the relation between God and nature is not one of identity as wrongly understood by lower pan-theism. If such a relation was at all intended to be established by the Upanishads, they would have used the word 'Aikya' or 'oneness' instead of Advaita. The term Advaita really means only non-dual or non-separate thus suggesting that the world of names and forms is never separate from or independent of God in all the three states of creation, preservation and destruction but is ever dependent upon God for its existence. If anyone asserts that the world exists independent of God on its own account, this is an illusion pure and simple and incorrect. This is exemplified most beautifully by the illustration of clay and its products in the Chhandogya Upanishad. It is throughout maintained in the said Upanishad that the various objects made of clay such as pots, cups, saucers etc. of various designs, shapes and colours exist as such only on account of the substrate clay which alone is real and which allows them to function, while the shapes and colours are adventitious and unreal. If you remove the whole stuff of clay of which they are made, they cannot subsist on their own account in the form of bare shapes and colours. Nor the said shapes and colours can be said to be identical with the stuff of clay. In the

1. (See Holleman's Inorganic Chemistry).

same way, the phenomenal world of names and forms cannot subsist on its own account as detached from or independent of God who is the real substrate of this universe nor the names and forms of the manifest world can be identified with or said to be products of the Supreme Being by a process of change or conversion as propounded by Vallabha by the doctrine of Parinama-vada as opposed to the doctrine of Vivarta-vada or Maya-vada propounded by Shankara as God is Akshara (never changing) but is constant or Kutastha nor is He a material being but He is always spiritual and self-conscious Being.[1] The above illustration fully explains the gist of Maya-vada or the illusion theory which was developed later on in its full form by the great scholiast Shankara in about the eighth century with all its implications. Prof. Hirayanna has rightly observed in his Elements of Indian Philosophy that Shankara has taken particular pains to refute the doctrine of Parinam-vada.

(6) Criticism of the theories of Creation.

In dealing with the subject of cosmology a question arises for our consideration whether any creation in the strict sense of the term is possible consistently with the Upanishadic doctrine of idealism. The answer is in the negative, notwithstanding an assertion to the contrary on the part of the theists. While discussing the problem of cosmology in the several hymns of Rig Veda, I have stated that it is possible to conceive of three theories of creation viz. (1) That God created the Universe from nothing (2) That He created it from matter existing by itself separately from Him and (3) that He created it from Himself. The first theory which is relied on by the theists as their bulwork may be dismissed summarily without any serious consideration as it is absurd on the very face of it. The Upanishads have throughout maintained that it is impossible to get something out of nothing as appears from the very interesting discussion in the Chhandogya Upanishad where a prima facie assertion of the opponent's view is first set out, that at first there was only Asat i.e. not being, one only without a second, to which the teacher replies in the form of a question 'how can something come out of nothing ?' and says that all this in the beginning was only Sat i.e. Being, one

1. Ch. U. 6-1.

only without a second and stating further that the world of names and forms has come out of the one Being only that existed from eternity.[1] In the Taittarīya Upanishad however in the Chapter called Brahmānanda valli, it is taught that all this universe was before, only Asat that is non-being.[2] Now looking to the context and the previous passages it appears that the term Asat did not mean nothing but it referred to Brahman or the Supreme Being which is the subject matter of the chapter. The word Asat is mentioned there only in contrast with the term Sat which in the previous passages means the empiric world of 'so-called reality'. The word Asat therefore only means that Brahman was not identical with the empiric world of reality or Sat as we see it. The same idea is expressed in the Rig veda where it is stated that 'in the former age, the empiric world of reality came out of the unmanifest Supreme Being.'[3] Having disposed of the first theory I shall now examine the remaining theories. We have seen above that Advaita or idealistic monism is the cardinal doctrine of the Upanishads and it is not therefore possible to conceive of creation out of matter existing by itself as detached or separated from the Supreme Being, which alone is real. This disposes of the second theory. Now remains the last theory of creation according to which God created the universe from Himself. I shall first examine whether the word 'creation' could be at all applied to express the act of bringing into light the empiric world. The word 'creation' really expresses the idea of bringing into light something new which did not exist before. From the passages cited above it will appear that according to the Upanishads the world of names and forms always existed in the Being of the Supreme Self even before this world came to light in the form of creation. It was however then not in a manifest or developed form. It was therefore called Asat or unmanifest and came to be as it were identified with the Supreme Being who is always self subsisting or 'Sat'. The term 'Avyākrita' was also used sometimes to denote the state of the unmanifest world of names and forms which was about to be evolved elsewhere called 'Asat'. Thus it is stated in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad "All this universe then existed in it (i.e. the Supreme Being) and was unmanifest. It then evolved

1. Ch. U. 6-2. 2. T. U. 2-7. 3. R. V. 10-72.

in the shape of names and forms."[1] Thus the act of creation of the Universe in the Upanishads meant only an evolution or manifestation by the Supreme Being of names and forms which were involved and unmanifest in the Being of the Supreme Self before creation. From an empiric point of view therefore creation by the Supreme Being was only one continuous process of evolution controlled by the Supreme Being which goes on continuously from the unmanifest to the manifest and from the manifest to the unmanifest and so on until it achieves its final purpose by having its Being within the Supreme Self. Subsequently however the problem of cosmology was explained differently by theistic Upanishads like the Svetāsvatara Upanishad and the same attributeless Supreme Being was then conceived as a personal God who by a mysterious power called Parā-shakti created and ruled the phenomenal world of Māyā or illusion controlling its activities mysteriously from within by making one seed, Manifold.[2] He also gives recompense to the embodied souls who are under his control according to their deeds,[3] and finally emancipates them by a true spiritual enlightenment.[4]

(7) Esoteric Doctrine of Cosmology.

According to the esoteric doctrine of the Upanishadic philosophy Ātman or the universal self is the only reality while the whole phenomenal world of names, forms and plurality has no existence outside of Atman and as such it is Māyā or a mere illusion having only a temporary reality which is transcended ultimately in the being of the Supreme Self by true spiritual enlightenment which is acquired only by intuitional inner experience. It has been proved scientifically after a most critical examination by the great German philosopher Kant, that the three essential elements of the empiric world of reality viz., space, time, and causation are not eternal fundamentals of an objective reality but are merely subjective innate forms of our own intellect. This leads to the conclusion that the phenomenal world extended in space, running on in time and governed by the Law of causality is merely a presentation of mind only and nothing more and that therefore it is a mere illusion, appearance, or shadow and is unreal. The same lesson is taught by the Upanishads

1. (B. U. 1-4-7). 2. (S. U. 1-3; 4-10; 6-11. 12.) 3. (S. U. 6-13.) 4. (S. U. 6-16.)

more clearly with an improvement that the empiric world is not the subjective creation of any single individual soul but the creation of one universal self whose essence consists of self consciousness. The Upanishads teach us to ponder deep over the unreality and illusoriness of the phenomenal world and extricate ourselves from its enchanting meshes by deep contemplation of a spaceless, timeless and changeless reality within the calm inner recesses of our heart. In the result one gets intuitional awakening and a flash of true spiritual light which leads to Mukti or emancipation by revelation of the highest self within us in the form of infinite ideals of truth, beauty and goodness.

V. Psychology.

(1) Individual Soul.

We have seen above that according to the Upanishad teachings the phenomenal world of plurality and relations is an illusion and as such unreal. But there is one object which is always real and that is the universal self in its full splendour which is within us wholly and fully and whose existence cannot be doubted by any one as the doubter even will never doubt his own existence. According to the four Mahāvākyas or the pithy sayings in the Upanishads quoted by me above, the relation between the individual self and the universal self is one of complete identity. This principle of identity was well established in all the older Upanishads by their philosophy of absolute idealism and pantheism. A distinction however subsequently came to be made between the individual and the supreme souls by development of the theory of causality and the doctrine of theism which necessitated a difference between the embodied soul and the supreme soul. The supreme soul was always free and independent while the embodied soul was in bondage due to ignorance and lack of a true knowledge of the essential nature of self which was concealed by Māyā or the mysterious power of the Supreme Being. This distinction between the individual soul and the supreme soul was not however ultimate. It proceeded on the distinction between mind and body and spirit and soul. The individual soul is philosophically no other than the supreme soul nor separate from him and as such he is a pure spirit. But he is distinguished from the

supreme soul by being endowed with body, mind and senses with which he identifies himself in ignorance and believes himself as enjoying sensual pleasures.[1] He soon forgets his divine nature and his ideal unity with the universe and begins to think and act with a sense of aloofness from, and opposition to, the rest of the world with the result that he is in bondage and he believes himself poor, sickly, and unhappy. So long as he identifies himself with body, mind and organs as separated from others and leads a mere animal life of sensuality, he is not free from misery and unhappiness.[2] But the moment he realises his true spiritual unity as the only reality as detached from the temporary relations of the phenomenal world he is free and emancipated.

(2) True and false self.

The Chhandogya Upanishad has taught us in this connection the discrimination of the true and the false self in the form of an interesting dialogue between Prajāpati and Indra the leader of the gods on the one hand, and with Virochana of the Asuras on the other hand, to which reader's attention is invited. The supreme soul is described as bodiless self distinct from body and mind, which is untouched by the sensations of the worldly pleasures and pains while the individual soul is described as embodied self which is not free from such influences due to a false sense of identification of of his true self which is pure spirit of infinite consciousness with the false self of ego which consists of finite consciousness and his three bodily states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. It has been explained in the above dialogue between Prajāpati and Indra and Virochana that the true spiritual self is not the same as or identical with the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping of the individual soul as wrongly understood by lower pantheism but it is distinct from the three states.

(3) Gross, subtle and causal bodies.

This leads us to consider the subject of Rational psychology which treats of the whole psychological apparatus consisting of body, senses etc. The body consists of three parts, gross, subtle and causal. The gross body with its physical organs, the eye, ear, hands,

1. (K. U. 3-4). 2. (Ch. U. 8-12-1.)

feet, etc., is made up of five elements, ether, wind, heat, water and earth. It is resolved on death into the said elements. The subtle body which is called Sūkshma Sharīra is made up of the subtle parts of the elements forming the germ of the body. It is accompanied by the whole psychological apparatus consisting of, the senses, the mind, and the Breaths. The whole apparatus together with another variable body called Karmāshraya i. e. substrate of actions accompanies the soul in its migrations of endless births called (Sansāra) until he achieves final emancipation. The subtle body is material but is not seen at the time of death. The senses function through sense organs called Indriyas which are of 2 kinds viz. Jnānendriyas or perceptive faculties and Karmendriyas or faculties of action. The faculties of perception are five in number viz. seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touch. The faculties relating to action are also five in number viz. catching, moving, speaking, generating and evacuating.[2] These ten Indriyas or faculties are governed by a central faculty called Manas (mind) which is the organ of thought and converts the data of the sense organs into conscious modes of thought and volition.[3] The sense organs are compared to horses drawing the car of the body and mind to the bridle.[4] The breaths (Prānas) as usually given are five viz. (a) Prāna or the wind which at first denoted expiration and later on expiration and inspiration together. (b) apāna or the wind which at first denoted inspiration and later on the wind causing evacuation (c) Vyāna or respiratory wind connecting Prāna and Apāna. It maintains life when breathing is momentarily suspended. (d) Samāna or the wind which digests food and (e) Udāna or the wind which takes the soul out of the body. The Prānas taken collectively denote the life energy upon which depends the regulation of physical life. Along with the soul, the sense organs, mind and breaths, leave the body. They constitute the germ from which the organs of the body again grow at each new birth.[5] To the psychical organism which permanently accompanies the soul in its migrations is also attached another body called Karmāshraya or moral substrate

1. (Ch. U. 8-7 to 12.) 2. (B. U. 1-4-7, 2-4-11, 4-5-12.)
3. (B. U. 4-2. B. U. 1-5-3, 4-1-6.) 4. (K. U. 3-2. 3-3.)
5. (B. U. 4-3-12, Ch. U. 6-2, P. U. 3-7, 4-2 4-2.)

which is the store of actions collected during life. This moral substrate goes out with the soul, and conditions the future existence of the soul. It determines the form of birth in the next incarnation.[1]

(4) The Theory of five sheaths of self.

Closely connected with the three-fold division of the self of an individual soul as physical, psychical, and causal is another five fold division of Atmans or five purushas. These five divisions of Ātmans or purushas correspond to the divisions of individual souls as physical, psychical and causal which regulate the principles of life, will and knowledge respectively. These five Ātmans are called Annamaya, Prānamaya, Manomaya, Vijnānamaya and Ānandamaya which are manifested both in mankind as well as in nature. These were later on called koshas or sheaths by Shankara. The first four sheaths surround the fifth as the real Kernal which stands for the highest spirit. Stripping off these sheaths one by one and penetrating deeper, one reaches the innermost recess of the essential being of man and nature[2]. *The Annamaya sheath* is formed of food and it represents the material nature of human body with its organs.[3] Within Annamaya is the *Prānamaya sheath* formed of life breaths.[4] This corresponds to the principle of natural life upon which depends the activity of the gross actions in man and nature. Within the last mentioned sheath comes the *Manomaya* which is formed of mind or volition.[5] By this, we have to understand the principle of will which directs men and gods to perform selfish actions as Vedic rituals etc. Within the Manomaya Sheath is placed the *Vijnānamaya sheath* formed of knowledge or consciousness, which substitutes knowledge for sacrifice.[6] But it is not free from dualism and it recognises the deity as a separate and independent being. The last and innermost Kernel which is reached on penetrating the above 4 sheaths, is the *Ānandamaya Ātman* which consists of bliss.[7] This represents the highest self which is incognitable spirit of infinite peace and joy in which there is no sense of duality or separateness of the world.[8]

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1. (B. U. 3-2-13, 4-4-2 to 6, Ch. U. 3-14-1.)
2. (T. U. 2-7). 3. (T. U. 2-1). 4. (T. U. 2-2). 5. (T. U. 2-3).
6. (T. U. 2-4). 7. (T. U. 2-5). 8. (T. U. 2-7).

(5) Waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

The Annamaya (food) which is the lowest of the five sheaths mentioned above represents the cosmic gross state or body and it corresponds to the state of waking (*Visva*) in the individual. The next three sheaths viz. the Prānamaya (breaths), Manomaya (mind) and the Vijnānamaya (intelligence) constitute together the cosmic subtle body or Sūkshma Sharīra which corresponds to the state of dreaming (*Taijasa*) in the individual soul. The last Kernel or Ānandamaya (joy) constitutes the cosmic body (causal body) of the Supreme Being of power and knowledge, or the Universal Spirit which corresponds to the state of dreamless Sleep (*Prājna*) in the individual soul. In the waking state, the soul which dwells in the heart rules the whole body and works bodily through the senses and the mind. In dreaming, the soul pervades by means of the veins in the body. In deep sleep, the senses and the mind cease their activities and they enter the veins or the pericardium of the heart and thence to the chief breath (mukhya Prāna) which continues to act. The soul enters into temporary union with God through the ether of heart. But on waking the temporary union of the soul with God ceases on account of Vāsanās or attachments with the relations of phenomenal world and it commences its individual activities as before.

(6) Triune Unity of the Supreme Self.

From the above, one will find that there is only one Supreme Being according to the Upanishads having a triune unity with distinct conceptions of spirit, mind and body, the first being immaterial, while the latter two being material. Spirit alone is conscious and real while mind and matter have no self consciousness. According to the Upanishads, mind is material.[1] Mind is subjected to spirit and is impersonal. It is passive and receptive. It is a blind force without knowledge. It is the servant of the spirit and a doer only. It is the medium of thought, power, and action. Body is the cosmic stuff which is the manifest form of energy which works through the medium of the causal law of the supreme spirit for a definite purpose. The body is ever changing. Ultimately there is only one universal body, one universal mind

1. (Ch. U. 6-5-4)

and one universal spirit. Matter was formerly divided into about 80 or 90 distinct elements subdivided into atoms which were again broken up and traced back to one root cause consisting of a fine imponderable substance resembling ether. It has now been proved scientifically by spectral analysis that atoms are not final and distinct and they are subdivided into still finer substances which are all derived from one universal final substance as an integration of one mass of potential energy. Every atom is made up of innumerable units of energy all surcharged with electricity, positive and negative called electrons which are constantly whirling round so as to annihilate all space. The seers of the Upanishads in their quest after the Absolute penetrated even beyond ether and its source the universal energy and traced a still higher principle called the Supreme Spirit or Ãtman from which the whole universe was evolved beginning with ether as the first evolute. The result therefore is that ultimately there is one supreme reality called the Absolute, the self conscious intelligence or supreme spirit for whom they interchangeably used the terms Brahman or Atman. There were thus not 3 gods but only one God of a triune nature which permeates the soul of the Universe and eternally impregnates it with ideas.

VI. Eschatology.

(1) Immortality of the Soul.

The seers of the Upanishads have taken great pains in discovering the state of the soul after death, by what paths it travels, and its Ultimate fate as contrasted with the philosophers of the West who seem to have paid very little attention to the subject of eschatology which is almost neglected by them as unknowable as in the case of Herbert Spencer. Some of the Western philosophers belonging to the materialistic school do not even believe in the doctrine of immortality of the soul. The philosophers of the Upanishads on the other hand were all religiously minded persons and they believed in the doctrine of immortality of the soul as an axiomatic truth. See in this connection the interesting dialogue between Yama and Nachiketas in the Katha Upanishad where Yama anticipates and presages as it were, the view of the modern materialists and atheists that the

soul does not exist after death.[1] Soul is not a material object that could be seen by the eyes. "He is perceived by the heart, by wisdom and by the mind. Those who know this are immortal."[2] According to the Shvetāsvatara Upanishad the soul is described as "the great spirit always dwelling in the hearts of all"[3] and he is identified with the individual soul or purusha not larger than a thumb.[4] In essential nature, there was no distinction whatever between individual soul and supreme soul in the Upanishads. The seers of the Upanishads after deep meditation and contemplation realised the supreme truth that there was one object in the whole universe which was real beyond doubt and that was Ātman or soul which was the principle of self-conscious intelligence. "There is one ruler who is the inner self of all and who is eternal."[5] He cannot be apprehended by the senses or the eye and it is not possible to describe him in positive terms except in the form "that he exists."[6] The whole universe of names and forms is changing at every moment but spirit or soul is always enduring being untouched and unaffected by the said changes. The identity of the individual spirit with the supreme spirit is realised by intuition and self experience. Thus a doubter may doubt everything in nature as being illusory but he will never doubt the fact that he exists as propounded by the French philosopher Descartes who is called the father of modern philosophy by his famous maxim "cogito ergo sum i. e. I think that I exist. The same principle was taught in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad where it is said: "In the beginning this was self alone in the shape of a person (Purusha). He first said 'This is I.' Therefore he became 'I' by name. Even now if a man is asked his name he first says 'This is I' and then pronounces his real name."[7] 'I' here means Ātman or self-conscious intelligence which constitutes the essential nature of soul whether individual or cosmic and which is eternal and immortal. The doctrine of immortality of the soul was further proclaimed in the same Upanishad by Yājnavalkya in his dialogue with Maitreyi by the words "This soul is immortal and by nature it is indestructible.

1. (K. U. 1-20.) 2. (K. U. 6-9.) 3. (S. U. 4-17.) 4. (S. U. 3-13.)
5. (K. U. 5-13.) 6. (K. U. 6-13.) 7. (B. U. 1-4-1)

It is untouched by the objects of the senses ".[1] The Katha Upanishad further teaches that "the soul is neither born nor it dies."[2] This however refers only to the pure immaterial spirit. The migrating soul on the other hand is said to be born and to die only with reference to the body and not with reference to the spirit which is identical with the universal spirit. The doctrine of immortality of the soul has its germs in the Vedic period as the Rishis believed that the soul, of the person performing Vedic sacrifices who went to heaven on death was different from his gross body which alone was dissolved on death and not the soul. But the doctrine was established definitely and in its full form in the Upanishad period as stated above.

(2) Transmigration of the soul.

The embodied soul who has no spiritual enlightenment has to whirl round innumerable turns of births called Samsāra to get a requital and recompense for the deeds done by him in a former life until he achieves final emancipation. This doctrine was called the doctrine of transmigration of the souls and it ows its rise in the Brāhmana period when the idea of heaven and hell was first set up definitely. It occupies the foremost place in Indian philosophy and is believed by almost all the schools whether orthodox or heterodox. Even the Jainas believe in this doctrine. The above doctrine is based on very sound and rational principles. It explains the working of the law of cause and effect which governs the whole universe. It is the source of real consolation to all men in their sufferings of life which are the results of their own misdeeds done in the past life. According to this doctrine, every man is born in the world fashioned by himself. Each life with its happiness and sufferings is in exact correspondence with the life led by him in a former birth. In the Ṛig Veda, we only find a belief of celestial happiness in heaven as reward for good deeds done in this life. There was further a belief in the fathers' world which is akin to heaven and in which deceased persons enjoy happiness in company with Gods as a reward for the good deeds done by them. As regards the fate of the wicked, we are told that they are thrown

1. (B. U. 4-5-14) 2. (K. U. 2-18).

into an abyss of bottomless darkness in which demons are to be plunged.[1] Professor Deussen is of opinion that the Vedic people had no idea of hell and the horrors thereof as believed in later times and that dark regions then only meant this world in which we live. This is however only a matter of conjecture and nothing definite can be pronounced. In the Brāhmanas however we do find a definite mention of hell and the sufferings of hell as appears from a passage in the Satapatha Brāhmana already cited by me in the Vedic period.[2] It seems in the Brāhmana period they had a primitive idea of retribution in the form of punishments in hell in proportion to the wickedness of the actions done by men in this life. From this the idea of an equalising justice was developed later on by degrees as appears from the following Text "For they lay it (the good and evil) on the scales in yonder world and whichever of the two sinks down, that will he follow, when he departs hence, but bewildered by the fire (at the corpse burning) and clouded smoke, he fails to find out his place"[3] The doctrine of transmigration by repeated births and deaths in this world, was not however definitely formulated until we come to the Upanishads.

(3) The doctrine of five fires: Panchāgni Vidya.

The chief texts that set forth the doctrine of transmigration are found in the Brihadāranyaka and the Chhāndogya Upanishad in connection with the doctrine of the five fires or *Panchāgni* Vidya.[4] The fullest eschatalogical scheme is given in the parallel passages in the above two Upanishads. The first half of these sections sets forth the theory that on death the soul goes to heaven in a very fine form enrapped in waters and faith which terms correspond to the two ideas of subtle body and works. Then the soul returns from heaven to earthly birth in a very short period being sacrificed by the gods successively in the fires of heaven, the atmosphere, earth, man and woman.

(4) Devayāna and Pitṛiyāna or the Paths of Gods and Fathers.

Upto this there is no idea of requital in any world. But further on, a very complicated theory of double requital is expounded

1. (R. V. 10-89-15; 10-103-12). 2. (S. B. 11-6-1)
3. (S. B. 11-2-7-33) 4. (B. U. 6-2, Ch. U. 5-3).

viz., in the other world and this world. The souls of the sages who worship Faith as their mortification in the woods (i. e. those who have acquired the saving knowledge) ascend by a series of stages which lead to the sun, the lightning and thence to Brahman the Supreme Light from which they never return to this mortal life. This is the famous *Devayāna* or the path of the gods which leads to Brahmaloka or the abode of Brahman. This path is laid down only for those who worship the Supreme God by the recognised modes of cognition as prescribed in the Upanishads with proper knowledge. There is also another path called *Pitriyāna* or path of the fathers which is prescribed for the souls of those who do pious works in the village but have not won full enlightenment nor have withdrawn from the world and embraced renunciation. This path leads finally to the moon where in the company of the gods they enjoy the full recompense of their good deeds. Thence they pass down to a fresh rebirth on earth through ether, wind, smoke, mist, cloud, rain, vegetation, food and seed successively by stages. This clearly indicates a double retribution, first by enjoyment in the heaven for a limited period and then by a rebirth in this world to have a second requital for the deeds done in the former life.

(5) The doctrine of transmigration based on The law of Karma and retribution

There is also a third path by which the sinners who do not ascend to the moon return from the moon and are reborn on the earth in the forms of base animals or equally degraded races of men. It seems there is a bifurcation of paths from the moon. Some souls of good conduct ascend to the moon by the way of the Fathers and after enjoying the fruits of their good works for a period varying with the amount of the works done by them, they return on the earth to be born again in one of the three higher castes of Brāhmana, Kshatriya or Vaisya. But others of bad conduct enter the bodies of *chandālas*, i. e. out-castes and sinners and animals as dogs, pigs etc[1] Here the doctrine of transmigration of souls was distinctly based on the law of retribution or Karma according to which rewards were given for good deeds by giving them a birth in the three higher castes, while punishment was given for bad

1. (Ch. U. 5-10-7)

deeds by giving them a birth in low castes and animals. This idea was carried further by the Katha Upanishad in which it is stated that a man may also assume the form of plants as merited by his actions.[1] In the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad the law of Karma was definitely formulated by one's actions. "He whose works are good becomes good; he whose works are evil becomes evil. By holy works, one becomes holy; by evil works evil. Likewise others say a person has the nature of desire. As is his desire so is his reward".[2] The law of Karma is misunderstood by some who criticise it as based on fatalism and predestined necessity and further say that it leaves no scope to the freedom of the will. This is however far from correct. There is nothing fatalistic in the Law of Karma which only means that those things which the individual sets in motion by his conduct in life must ultimately come back to him. It is only another form of the law of cause and effect. Every action done in life generates a tendency which if once set in motion is bound to objectify into a concrete shape and give its fruit exactly corresponding to the act done. Every man is responsible for the acts done by him and he suffers misery, because he had the ability to choose the right but has failed to adopt the right course. Karma is not fate. It is only a mental law which can be changed by right thinking and right action. The very force that makes one sick and miserable, can make him healthy and happy, by right thinking and by right action. Mrs. Annie Besant has said of the Law of Karma that "it binds the ignorant but frees the wise."

VII Emancipation.

(1) Oneness with the Supreme Being.

The main object of the vast intellectual activities of the sages of the Upanishads was to seek a restive place of eternal peace and happiness as a means to overcome the fetters and bonds of rebirth in endless succession in this empiric world of miseries and sorrows. The rigid system of the cumbrous ceremonials and rituals of the Vedic sacrifices had outgrown the needs of the times and brought about a natural reaction. A life of quiet contemplation in the quiet

1. (K. U. 5–7) 2. (B. U. 4–4–5)

recesses of the forest far removed from the humdrum of city life was preferred thenceforward to that of sacrifices in the fire. The Vedic conception of emancipation was to secure an eternal abode in the heaven and there enjoy the nectar of celestial happiness in company with the gods. Life in the heaven was believed to be immortal. In the Upanishad period however, there was a sudden change in the above conception of emancipation and it was believed that the abode in the heaven was not eternal and that it did not conduce to true spiritual freedom and immortality. The above idea was expressed in the Chhāndogya Upanishad "And as here on earth whatever has been acquired by exertion perishes, so perishes whatever is acquired for the next world by sacrifices and other good actions performed on earth. Those who depart from hence without having discovered the self, and those true desires, for them there is no freedom in all the worlds."[1] Realisation of Ātman or the true self was considered the only goal and summum bonum of human life which secured true spiritual freedom and happiness. Emancipation was not something to be effected by entry into any particular region as heaven but it was unlimited and eternal. ' It effected an immediate relief and deliverance of the suffering soul from the bondage of these endless cycles of births in this world of miseries. The idea of emancipation as Amṛitatva or deathlessness and release from repeated births and deaths was negative. But deliverance from repeated births and the sufferings of the empiric world was not the motive of emancipation in the Upanishads as wrongly understood by some. It was rather the consequence of the doctrine of Idealism and the philosophy of non-dual monism, which was positive and not negative. The doctrine of emancipation is older than that of transmigration as pointed out by Prof. Deussen who has further stated that "Buddhism was the first to transform that which was a mere consequence into a motive and by conceiving emancipation as an escape from the sufferings of existence, to make selfishness, the ultimate mainspring of existence." The conception of emancipation of some of the modern sectarian creeds and cults as an entry into Vaikuntha the abode of Vishnu, Kailāsa the abode of Shiva and Goloka the cow settlement and abode of Kṛishna, seems to be

1. (Ch. U. 8-1-6)

equally selfish. The original motive of emancipation was in the sphere of intellect. Therefore true philosophical knowledge alone constitutes the direct means of emancipation and deliverance from death as appears from the following Text of the Shvetāsvatara Upanishad. "Only he who knows him (the purusha) escapes from the kingdom of death; by no other road is it possible to go."[1] The same idea is found in the Chhāndogya and Taittarīya Upanishads as will appear from the following texts. " Who knows the self overcomes grief. "[2] " He who knows Brahman attains the highest. "[3] Emancipation in the Upanishads means the realisation of oneness with the Brahman and with all. The goal of man's Knowledge was to come to Brahman or rather to be Brahman in whose Supreme Self all is included.[4] Direct knowledge of the Ātman in itself therefore constitutes true emancipation. It consists in enlightenment and intuitive vision of the eternal unity of the thinker's self with Brahman. Once the saving knowledge has been gained the enlightened man gains immortality.[5] He is no longer under the power of works which are destroyed.[6] He has everything in himself for he is one with all.[7] He obtains fearlessness and eternal peace.[8] He has no desire of the worldly objects.[9] No joys or sorrows touch him.[10] When his soul has passed off this mortal coil, it will be reborn no more.[11] It is united for ever with the Absolute Brahman.[12] The above state of emancipation in the form of oneness with God was reached only by abandoning all worldly desires which were obstacles in reaching the final goal.[13] The empiric world of names and forms was unreal. The principal aim of the seers of the Upanishads was to get away from the unreal to the real as appears from the following prayer in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad " Lead me from the unreal to the real; from darkness to light; and to deathlessness from death. "[14] A criticism is sometimes made against the above view of emancipation that it amounts to a mere abstraction into a bottomless abyss of Void or annihilation. But this is

1. (S. U. 6–15.); 2. (Ch. U. 7–1–3.) 3. (T. U. 2–1.) 4. (M. U. 3–1–9.)
5. (Ke. 11–12, M. U. 3–2–9.) 6. (M. U. 2–2–8.) 7. (Ch. U. 7–26–2.)
8. (B. U. 4–2–4, T. U. 2–9.) 9. (B. U. 4–4–12.); 10. (Ch. U. 8–12–1.)
11. (Ch. U. 6–14–2.); 12. (Ch. U. 8–12–3, M. U. 3–2–9.) 13. (B. U. 4–4–6.)
14. (B. U. 1–3–28.)

contradicted by Mr. Gough in his philosophy of the Upanishads. He says, "It is not empty abstraction in the ecstacy of the Indian. It is positive and self affirming. The last residuum of all abstraction is not non-entity but entity."

(2) Companionship with the Supreme Being.

I have pointed out above that the fundamental conception of emancipation especially in the older Upanishads was oneness with the Supreme Being. There are however some other passages in the Upanishads which show that emancipation also consists in uniting with God and acquiring a state of equality and likeness with God.[1] The aspirant seeks companionship with God, and a conscious participation in divine joys and the grandeur and glory of God. This is however on a lower plane and is meant for those who could not rise to the heights of transcendental idealism. We have seen above that the Upanishads enjoined various cognitions and meditations of God, the fruit of which was acquisition of Brahma-loka or the region of conditioned or lower Brahman which was reached by Devayāna or the path of the Gods. A vivid description of the various enjoyments in the Brahma loka is given in a section of the Kaushītaki Upanishad called Paryanka Vidyā.[2] The idea seems to be similar to that of paradise as conceived in the Vedas. The above conception is inconsistent with the higher metaphysical teachings of the Upanishads, as it clothes the Supreme Being in empirical forms and is not free from the empiric dualism. Thus God becomes an object of knowledge, which, in truth, he is not. He is also not free from relations with several devotees, which is also not correct as the supreme Being is Absolute and free from all relations which are to be seen only in the empiric world. It is stated in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad that "Where every thing has got its being in the supreme self, who can see whom.....How can he know the knower?"[3] This passage clearly means that Ātman or the self as knowing subject cannot be the object of knowledge. From the above empirical view of emancipation, follows another mistaken view that deliverance is first attained fully, only with the dissolution of the body.[4] According to this view which was

1. (M. U. 3-1-3.) 2. (Ka. U. 1-4.)
3. (B. U. 2-2-4.) 4. (Ch. U. 3-14-4; 6-14-2 and K. U. 5-1.)

subsequently maintained by Rāmānujāchārya who started a new Vaishnava sect in about the eleventh century, there can be deliverance only after death (*Videhmukti*) but not deliverance during life time (*Jīvanmukti*) which is inconsistent with the view propounded by Yājnavalkya in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad, according to which "a wise man who is freed from all desires can become immortal here in this very life and he enjoys Brahman in this body."[1]

(3) Release by Stages (Krama-mukti).

A compromise was however effected between the above two conflicting views later on by the theory of Kramamukti or release by stages, according to which, the souls that ascend to Brahman by the path of the Gods (Devayāna) are not yet emancipated as they are still lacking in perfect knowledge. However such souls who are devoted to God do not take rebirth on earth. For such souls there is no return. "But they attain eternal release in the world of Brahman on attaining perfect knowledge at the end of the Kalpa when that world also is destroyed with the other worlds."[2]

VIII. Ethics of the Upanishads.

(1) Moral Virtues.

The Upanishads being mainly concerned with the highest problems and eternal truths of philosophy, ethics plays but a subordinate part in them. However, the subject of ethics is not totally neglected and we do find occasional references to the subject in the Upanishads. Thus it was taught in the Mundaka Upanishad "Truth alone conquers not falsehood. By truth is opened the path of the Gods."[3] In the Taittariya Upanishad,[4] ten duties are enjoined along with learning and teaching of the Veda, viz. (1) Right dealing (Ruta), (2) truthfulness (Satya), (3) asceticism (Tapas), (4) self-restraint (Dama) and (5) tranquility (Shama), and as duties of a house holder (6) hospitality (Ātithya) and (7) courtesy (Manushā) and (8) duties to children (Prajā), (9) wives (Prajana) and (10) grand-children (Prajāti). In the Chhāndogya Upanishad,[5] the following

1. (B. U. 4-4-7.) 2. (M. U. 3-2-6, S. U. 1-11; 5-7). 3. (M. U. 3-1-6).
4. (T. U. 1-9.) 5. (Ch. U. 3-17.)

five are declared as rewards for sacrifices, viz. (1) Asceticism (tapas) (2) Liberality (Dānam) (3) Right dealing (Ārjavam), (4) Harmlessness of life (Ahiṁsā) and (5) Truthfulness (satyavachanam). In the same Upanishad,[1] the following four vices are condemned viz., (1) theft, (2) drunkenness, (3) murder and (4) adultery. In the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad,[2] the following virtues are taught, viz., (1) Self-restraint (Dama), (2) Liberality (Dāna), and (3) Mercy (Dayā).

Elsewhere in the same Upanishad,[3] the following three virtues are enumerated as means to self realization vis., (1) Sacrifice (Yajna) (2) Gift (Dāna) and (3) Austerity (Tapas).

In most of the Upanishads, high praises have been bestowed on the practice of asceticism (Tapas).[4]

(2) Rules of castes and stages of life (Varnāshrama).

The institution of the 4 castes or *Varnas* viz. (1) *Brāhman* (priestly class,) (2) *Kshatrīya* (warrior class,) (3) *Vaishya* (merchant class) and (4) *Sūdra* or the servant class, was already laid down so far back as the Ṛig Veda as appears in the Purusha Sūkta.[5] Subsequently in the time of the Upanishads the four castes were firmly established.[6] In addition to the four castes abovenamed there was also a fifth class called *Pancha Janāhā, Nishādas* or *Chandālas,* which included low castes and sinners who lived an unclean and impure life and were beyond the pale of castes and Aryan civilisation. They were the uncivilised aborigines of India.[7] In the Upanishads, the theory of the *Ashramas* is also seen in course of formation, with a mention of their duties. The said Āshramas were four in number viz. (1) The *Brahmacharya* or studentship (2) *Grihastha* or stage of householder (3) *Vānaprastha* or stage of anchorite and (4) *Sanyāsa* or stage of ascetic which enjoined complete renunciation of the world. Of the above four stages of life that of ascetic or Sanyāsi which was the fourth one was considered as the highest stage as it brought the highest fruit of realisation of the supreme

1. (Ch. U. 5-10.) 2. (B. U. 5-2.) 3. (B. U. 4-4-22.)
4. (T. U. 1-9; Ke. 33; S. U. 1-15; M. U. 1-2-11; P. U. 1-10.)
5. (R. V. X. 90.) 6. (B. U. 1-4-15.) 7. (B. U. 4-4-17, Ch. U. 5-10-7.)

self and the bliss of immortality. The ascetics had no fixed home and they wandered about living in alms occupying most of their time in contemplation of God and the problems of philosophy. The theory of Āshramas was developed still further later on in the period of the epics and the Smriti period of Dharma shāstras.

(3) Place of ethics in the Upanishadic philosophy.

I have already pointed out above that the supreme purpose of life in the Upanishads was realisation of one's true self. This was the highest merit called Shreyas which was reached by knowledge alone. The purpose of ethics on the other hand is quite distinct viz. mundane good called Preyas which was reached by moral actions. The two ends are therefore opposed to each other as light and darkness and they cannot coexist.[1] A man had to renounce all actions of worldly good if he wanted to achieve spiritual unity with the Supreme Being. One cannot therefore select both knowledge and action simultaneously as two ends of life as the supreme end of life can be only one. Emancipation was the direct fruit of knowledge only and not of works. The above conflict between knowledge and works was however reconciled in the Upanishads in a very satisfactory manner where the rule was laid down that works (Karmas) whether ritualistic, moral or social as enjoined in the Shrutis (Revealed Scriptures) were necessary for purification of the mind and were to be performed as means to the end of self-realisation. By constitution, man has an impulsive nature and he is not free from selfish motives in achieving wordly good. He is therefore more guided by impulses of desire for agreeable objects and aversion to disagreeable objects and for gratification of his pleasures. We therefore often find that in seeking selfish gratification of pleasures, he does not hesitate to do injustice and even wilful injury to others. It is therefore impossible to achieve the highest end of life, unless one has purged off all selfish impulses and purified his mind from their evil influences. The Upanishads therefore urge on the performance of unselfish and disinterested works of piety and philanthropy as preliminary means to the supreme end of self

1. (K. U. 2-1 to 5.)

realization but not as ends in themselves. For an aspirant after self-knowledge, work is preliminary to knowledge. Thus it indirectly co-operates with the latter for the same ultimate purpose,[1] and there is no conflict between work and knowledge. When a man has controlled his whole lower nature and destroyed all sense of egoism, by leading a high moral life, he becomes qualified for true philosophical knowledge. Then there is no need for any objective injunction for works which are superfluous for such a qualified aspirant and he is taught to abandon all works, leading a calm and peaceful life in solitude and devote his whole time in intellectual pursuits for knowledge and contemplation of the Supreme Divine Being which will ultimately lead to self realisation and emancipation as the summum bonum of life.

BOOK II

THE EPIC PERIOD

CHAPTER IV

THE EPIC PHILOSOPHY.

I. Introductory.

The Epic Period according to Mr. Vaidya extends from 3000 B. C. to 300 B. C., the Great War between the Pāndavas and Kauravas having been fought on the plains of the Kuru – Kshetra in about 3000 B. C. Mr. Tilak however assigns to the Mahābhārata War the date of 1500 B. C. The great Epic of the Mahābhārata composed originally by Vyāsa narrates the incidents of the great War. The epic of Rāmāyana which was composed by Valmīki similarly narrates the incidents of the life of Shrī Rāma which preceded the Mahābhārata War by about 800 years. It was however compiled after Mahābhārata. The Mahābhārata epic was re-cast twice after it was first composed by Vyāsa. It was first called Bhārata. The second edition was compiled by Vaishampāyana who recited it to King Janmejaya, making several additions in the original, while the third edition was re-cast between Three to one-hundred B. C. by Sautī who recited it to Shaunaka in its present amplified form making considerable additions to the previous editions. The Mahābhārata is an encyclopaedia of history, mythology politics, law, philosophy and theology. It was however considered a Dharma-Shāstra or a code of ethics and righteousness belonging to the class of books called Smṛitis. The authority of both the epics as narrating history is recognised in the Upanishads in which history along with Purānas is described as the fifth Veda.[1] Sāyana in his commentary on the black Yajurveda says that the Mahābhārata and the Purānas were designed to teach the law of duty to women and the Sudras who were disqualified from studying the Vedas. The Mahābhārata seems to have been re-cast by Sauti purposely making therein considerable additions with long dissertations on Dharma or righteousness with a view to counteract the evil influences of the two atheistic religions of Buddhism and Jainism started by Gautama and Mahā Vīra in about the sixth century B C.

1. (Ch. U. 7-1; B. U. 2-4-10).

II. The Rāmāyana

(1) The Ethics of the Rāmāyana.

The Rāmāyana relates to the period of Tretā age prior to Mahābhārata. It belongs to the ancient period when Vedic sacrifices of worship were largely in vogue. Buddhism was then unknown, and idol worship did not exist. The people observed Āshrama Dharma, i.e. duties relating to the four stages of life as laid down in the Brāhamanas and the Upanishads. Thus Rāma performed his Sandhyā every-day and was proficient in Vedic Mantras and the observance of Vedic rites. The principal mode of worship was by sacrifice. Every contemplation was a sacrifice to God. The Ashwamedha sacrifice was freely performed by the Kshatriyas for getting boundless sovereignty. In short sacrifice was the order of the day. In Rāma's time even women performed sacrifices and the daily Sandhyā or obeisance to the Sun as enjoined by the Vedas. Lovely pictures of the Āshramas of Vishwāmitra, Bharadwāja, Agastya and other Ṛishis are given in which the pupils residing with their preceptors studied the Vedas and observed the duties laid down for their Āshrama. The people were then divided into two main classes as in the vedic period, viz. the Āryans and the Un-Āryans. The Āryans consisted of four castes, viz. the Brāhamanas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sūdras, while the un-Āryans who were the indigenous aborigines of India called Dasyus, Dāsas, Asūras and Rākshasas were uncivilised and they belonged to no castes. The term Ārya then indicated all that was noble, good and moral. While the term un-Āryan meant what was sinful, base and immoral. In fact the epic of Rāmāyana is a record of the moral ideals then practised by the Āryans, as preached by the Vedic religion. The lofty and sublime character of Rāma depicts an ideal King, an ideal husband and ideal son fulfilling his duties towards his subjects, wife and father respectively in a perfect and ideal manner; so also in the character of Sita, Laxman and Bharata, we find ideals of a dutiful wife and dutiful brothers transplanted into actual life. The kingdom of Rāma or *Rāma-Rājya* is proverbial even to-day for happy and just rule. The people were well known for their moral greatness and truthfulness. In India religion was

never separated from morality and moral life was considered essential for advancement in religion and philosophy.

(2) Theology of the Ramayana.

The religion in the time of the Rāmāyana was polytheistic, and the people were still worshipping the old Vedic deities as Indra, Fire and Sun. New deities were also coming into prominence as Vishnu who was than called Upendra, i.e. the younger brother of Indra, Shiva who seems to have held the first place among the Gods before the period of Rāmāyana and so forth.[1] Besides we find that the following new deities some of whom were non-Vedic were admitted into the Āryan Pantheon as Kubera, Kārtikeya, Kāma, Gangā and Laxmī. Further certain deified animals as serpents, monkeys, bears and birds who were worshipped by the non-Āryan aborigines were given a place of worship along with the other deities worshipped by the Āryans, when the latter came into contact with the aborigines and there was an assimilation of religious beliefs of the non-Āryans with the Āryans by the close of the Buddhist period. Rāma was at first treated only as a great and distinguished hero in the Rāmāyana. He was found worshipping Vedic deities and performing the daily obeisance (Sandhyā) to God Sun and fire sacrifices. He was made an Avatāra of Vishnu only subsequently in the Purānic times.

III. The Mahābharata.

(1) Theology of the Mahābhārata.

We have seen above that in the time of the Rāmāyana, Vedic religion was still observed by the people, who were worshipping Vedic deities. But in the time of the Mahābhārata a change had already come in the minds of the public and the learning of the Vedas was being abandoned. Women then did not perform the daily Sandhyā and Agnihotra, i. e. worship of the sacrificial fire as seen in the Rāmāyana though these were practised by men. Thus we find from the Mahābhārata that Yudhisthira as well as Shrī Krishna used to perform Sandhyā and sacrificial worship before the holy Fire. There was however no idol worship in the beginning until rise of Buddhism and Jainism when the orthodox Āryans

1. (A. R. 25-45.)

imitated their example and erected grand temples for worship of their principal deities as Vishnu, Shiva and others. By the end of the epic period several temples had been erected and the people used to worship idols. Certain non-Vedic deities were also admitted into the fold of the Hindu Pantheon as Skanda, son of God Shiva and Commander-in-chief of his forces, Durgā the goddess of destruction who was invoked by Arjuna to destroy his enemies, and so forth. Pilgrimages to holy places of worship were also recognised as very sacred by the end of the epic period. Two cults of Shiva and Vishnu were formed and these deities were worshipped as supreme deities. Krishna Vāsudeva was also worshipped but only by a few. His worship had not been fully established in the time of the Mahābhārata and his right to be worshipped was even challenged then.

Shiva and Vishnu Cults.

By the end of the Upanishad period, monotheism was getting into popular favour more and more in place of the dry idealistic philosophy of the Upanishads. In the Upanishads different Vedic deities were looked upon as manifestations of one Supreme all-pervading eternal God with whom ultimately Shiva-Rudra and Vishnu came to be identified for purposes of worship. These were the two main Gods who were raised to the position of the highest dignity. All other gods including even the Vedic deities Indra and Prajāpati who were once supreme fell into the background. We find practically only two cults of worship viz. of Shiva and Vishnu who were most popular. Largest number of temples was erected for their worship.

The Indian Trinity (*Tri-mūrti*).

The idea of the well-known *Tri-mūrti* or Indian Trinity of Brahmā, Vishnu and Mahesha constituting only one Supreme God with three distinct functions of creation, preservation, and destruction seems to have originated in the time of the Mahābhārata. *Brahmā* was the Deity of creation, *Vishnu* of preservation and *Shiva* of destruction. In the other nations following the religion of monotheism one and the same Supreme Deity is the object of love as well as fear. But in India one Deity is the object of love

as Vishnu while another Deity is the object of fear as Rudra. Both these deities however were not distinct but they had their unity in the Trimūrti having three aspects as mentioned above. Brahmā or Prajāpati the creator of the Universe who had once acquired a high position in the Brāhmanas fell into the background in the Epics and was totally eclipsed by the two overpowering deities Shiva and Vishnu. Brahmā the creator is not worshipped even to-day in the whole of India there being no temples specially raised for him except one at Puskar. It may be remarked that although Vyāsa the author of the Mahābhārata had a predilection for Vishnu and Krishna, the latter being subsequently identified with Vishnu as the Supreme Deity, we find both the above cults of popular worship reconciled without any antagonism between them as in some of the bigoted sects of the present day. As a matter of fact in the Mahābhārata both Shiva and Vishnu are equally praised. A thousand names (Sahasra-nāma) were given to each of them in the Mahābhārata.

Shiva.

We are told by Vyāsa that Arjuna by propitiating God Shiva by austere mortifications in the forest, had obtained certain divine missiles called Pashupati Astra which enabled him to destroy his enemies. We also find in the Mahābhārata another account of Krishna entering on a long course of austerities for procuring a son to Jāmbuwanti one of his wives by propitiating God Shiva at the end of which God Shiva appeared before him with his consort Umā and conferred upon him the desired boon and Krishna had a son as desired by him. Vishnu was then the only rival of God Shiva. Vishnu was a beneficent God who was the object of Love. He was getting more and more into popular favour. Shiva on the other hand was a malevolent God, and the object of dread and fear. He was much feared by the devotee as a terrible God who would cause destruction and injury unless he was propitiated and supplicated by prayers and offerings. Shiva was also a beneficent God and he was therefore called Mahādeva on account his double powers. He was generous and bountiful and would spare nothing when he was propitiated. Therefore he has obtained the greatest popularity in India till to-day. He is also represented as a Yogi absorbed in deep contemplation. Rudra-Shiva was a Vedic Deity and was wor-

shipped in the Ṛig-Veda not only as a malevolent God but also as a beneficent God. He was believed to cure diseases as possessing healing powers and was considered the best physician.[1] An attempt is made by some Vaishnavas who are opposed to the cult of Shiva to prove that the idea of Shiva was borrowed from the Un-Āryans. But this is not correct as will be presently pointed out by me. The worship of Rudra was undoubtedly very old being traced so far back as the Ṛig-Veda. The character of Rudra appears in a more developed form in the S'hata-Rudrīya litanies which are even now performed by the orthodox Brāhamins all over India. Sir Rāmakrishna Bhāndārkara says about the worship of Rudra as follows:—" God Rudra attained to the whole Majesty of the God-head by the time of the Yajur-Veda and Atharva-Veda.[2] ..... Even in the Ṛig-Veda he is raised to supreme power" as appears from one of the most excellent prayers offered to him.[3] " It is on this majestic form of the God that the theosophic speculations of Shvetāshwatara Upanishad are based." According to Sir Bhāndārkara " The Shvetāshvatara Upanishad stands at the door of the Bhakti-School (devotion) and pours its loving adoration on Rudra-Shiva instead of on Vāsudeva-Kṛishna as the Bhagwad Gitā did in later times when the Bhakti doctrine was in full swing ... ... In the age in which the Shvetāshvatara Upanishad was composed Rudra-Shiva was alone in the field as the Supreme God and the germs of Bhakti or love were directed towards him ..... Rudra-Shiva was a deity whose worship was common to all the Āryans and who was at first not a sectarian God. He was in charge of the field before Vaishnava or Vāsudevic Deities came in to contest his supremacy." In Shaivism we also find the worship of *Shivalinga* or *phallus* which is even at present the popular form of worship. By the end of the epic period Linga (i. e. phallus) worship was adopted by the higher classes as appears from the Upamanyu discourse in the Mahābhārata. It seems to have crept in gradually among the Āryan people by closer communication with the uncivilised tribes as workmen, potters, cart-makers, carpenters and Nishādas who were worshipping their own peculiar gods, and who identified

1. (R. V. 1-43-4; 2-33-4). 2. (T. S. 4-5-1; V. S. Ch. 18).
3. (R. V. 1-114-8).

them with the Āryan Rudra. In the Ṛig-Veda, Shishna Devāhā or worshippers of *phallus* are represented as enemies of the Āryans who disturbed their holy rites. Possibly the Shishna Devāhā or phallus worshippers were the uncivilised non-Āryan aborigines of India who worshipped the *phallus*. It appears from the white Yajur-Veda that Rudra-Shiva had a close connection with stragglers in the forests, with Vrātyas who were outside the Āryan community and with the wild tribes of the Nishādas, who were all worshipping their own deities which seem to have been amalgamated with Rudra the Vedic deity. It is therefore not unlikely that the ordinary people who were not learned and who came into closer touch and connection with the uncivilised aborigines for trade and other purposes may have borrowed phallus worship from them just as they borrowed from them several other elements as worship of serpent and other non-Vedic deities. The learned classes however as the Brāhmins and Kshatriyas seem to have preserved the worship of the Vedic deity Rudra in the old form as appears from the images of Siva as referred to in the Mahābhāshya of Patanjali about 150 B. C. and in which there is no mention of phallus worship which seems to have been accepted only later on by the higher classes. In any event the Aryans worshipped the Vedic deity in the form of phallus as symbol of Rudra with purely Vedic conceptions. In course of time Rudra became the national God of India who was worshipped by all whether Āryans or un-Āryans without any sectarianism which was acquired only in later times by way of imitation of the new sects and creeds started by the Vaishnavas who set up God Vishnu and his incarnation Kṛishna as their Supreme Deity.

Vishnu.

Vishnu is a vedic deity who occupies a subordinate place in the Ṛig-Veda. However he is well known for his three strides by which he measures the universe. His first two steps can be discerned by men but not the third one which was his highest place in the heaven (paramam padam) where there is a well of honey and there the gods rejoice. Vishnu was called in the Vedic period Upendra i.e. younger brother of Indra and his helper. However, Vishnu began to rise in importance in the time of the Brāhmanas, while during

the Epic and Purānic periods he rose to the rank of the Supreme Deity. He is described as having four arms carrying four implements viz. conch, disc, mace and lotus. He was revered for the third step or the mysterious highest abode (Paramam padam) beyond our vision. In the Katha Upanishad the highest abode of Vishnu is described as the final goal and the abode of eternal bliss. Thereafter Vishnu became a household God. Vishnu's celestial abode of highest happiness was Vaikuntha where his devotees participate divine joys in company with Vishnu, the corresponding heaven of Shiva being Kailāsa and that of Kṛishna being called Goloka where the devotees of the respective deities got a permanent resting place. In the Epic time Vishnu was at first identified with Vāsudeva which was the name of the supreme deity in the time of Pānini, (800 B. C.), and then with Nārāyana who was the cosmic and philosophical god. In the Mahābhārat, Nārāyana figures as the supreme god in connection with the creation of the Universe. Mythologically, he is represented as lying on the body of the huge serpent called Shesha in the ocean of milk. He was the object of worship. The heaven of this Nārāyana was the S'vetadwīpa or white island. Vishnu is well known for his Avatāras or incarnations in human or animal forms. In the Mahābhārata, only six Avatāras are given viz. (1) the boar (Varāha), (2) the man-lion (Narasiṁha), (3) the dwarf (Wāman), (4) Rāma-Parasurāma, (5) Rāma, the hero of Rāmāyana and (6) Kṛishna called Vāsudeva Kṛishna. Then four more incarnations were added thus making the incarnations in all ten, viz. (7) Haṁsa (Swan), (8) Kūrma (tortoise), (9) Matsya (fish) and (10) Kalkin as the last. In the Bhāgwat Purāna, there is a slight change and Gautama Buddha who founded a new religion is mentioned as an Avtāra of Vishnu. Besides there is another list of 24 Avtāras of Vishnu given therein.

Rāma.

It may be mentioned that there is a third cult known as the cult of Rāma which exists to-day over a pretty wide area. Rāma the hero of the Rāmāyana was considered as an incarnation of Vishnu. But this was long after the time of Rāmāyana in the Purānic times.

Kṛishna.

The Vaishnavas look upon Mahābhārata as one of their holy scriptures and it is held by them in great reverence particularly on

account of the inclusion therein of the Bhagwad Gitā which is one of the most valuable jewels of the Bhārata and has obtained the greatest popularity till to-day by the monotheistic religion taught therein. Vyāsa the author of the Mahābhārata was a great admirer and worshipper of Vishnu as appears from the very first verse of invocation. Therein God Nārāyana is invoked and he is also identified with Shri Krishna. Krisha worship was however in its infancy when Vyāsa wrote the original epic. Vyāsa was however free from the modern sectarianism and he expressed his sentiments without any bias. Vaishampāyana seems to be a more pronounced follower of the Vaishnavite creed than Vyāsa. The thousand names of Vishnu (Sahasra nāma) are attributed to him. The Vaishnavas recognise the Mahābhārata and the Pāncharātra a work of their sect as of the same sanctity as the Vedas. The Krishna of Mathura gathered strength in course of time. Krishna-Vāsudeva worship was fully established in the time of Megasthenes (third century B. C.). But the worship of Shiva was also established firmly in the days of Megasthenes equally with that of Vishnu.

Sauti the author of the third recast edition of the Mahābhārata introduced therein several episodes in glorification of Shiva, at a time when he had the onerous task of defending the whole of the orthodox religion as it then existed against the attack of Buddhism. The Mahābhārata of Sauti was distinctly non-sectarian unlike that of Vaishampāyana which was clearly Vaishnavite. That is the reason why the Mahābhārata is valued as the most sacred book even to-day by Hindus of all sects and creeds. Mr. Vaidya rightly observes " it is this unifying spirit which is the charm of this vast work from a philosophic point of view." Sauti made several additions in the Bhārata glorifying Shiva as a Supreme Deity in the mouth of Krishna and praising Goddess Durgā, God Sun and Kārtikeya as different manifestations of the Supreme Being with the object of unifying the diverse sects that existed at the time. The Mahābhārata as it is cannot therefore be looked upon as Vaishnavite though it was so in the beginning. The Vaishnavite element began to increase in course of time.

(2) The Pāncharātra or Bhāgwat System.

The Pāncharātra or Bhāgwat system formed the Vaishnavism of later times. It is known as the Ekāntika or monotheistic religion having Bhakti or devotion to God as its chief element. It is also called Sātvat religion as it was followed by the tribe of Sātvatas. The Pāncharātra system consisted of the worship of Vāsudeva as the supreme deity in four forms or Vyūhas, viz. (1) Vāsudeva the supreme soul or creator, (2) Sankarshaṅa which was evolved from Vāsudeva, (3) Pradyumna which was evolved from Sankarshaṅa, and (4) Aniruddha which was evolved from Pradyumna. These forms correspond to (1) Supreme soul, (2) Individual soul, (3) mind, and (4) Ahankāra or self consciousness. The Ekāntika or monotheistic religion of the Bhāgwatas was revealed by Nārāyana to Nārada in the white island (Swetadwīpa) where Nārada had gone from Badarikāsrama. The chief deity is the god of gods who is also called Hari. He is not seen by one who follows the sacrificial mode of worship nor by those who perform long austerities but is seen by one who worships him by devotion. This religion was associated with Ahimsa or non-slaughter of animals. It is opposed to the Vedic religion of sacrifices and has created a reform therein like Buddhism and Jainism whose founders were dissenters from the Vedic religion. Sometimes one Vyūha or form of the Lord is taught and sometimes two, three or four. Thus the Pāncharātra system is inconsistent by itself. The Pāncharātra doctrine was promulgated by Sandilya who has also composed Bhakti sūtras or Aphorisms of devotion which are based on the above monotheistic religion. It is significant to note that this system is free from the Gopāla Krishna element. Rāmānujāchārya believes in the pāncharātra doctrine of four vyūhas. But this is opposed to the Vedāntic doctrine of monism in certain respects and was confuted in the Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyana as interpreted by Shankarāchārya to a certain extent. The Bhāgawata system according to Sir Bhandārkar must have developed in about the third century B. C. The authorities on which this system was based are the Pāncharātra Saṁhitas some of which are quoted by Rāmānuja, the most important being the Sātvata Saṁhitā. There is another book on the Pāncharātra System called the Nārada

Pāncharātra which contains the Saṁhita called Jnānāmṛitasāra. The glories of Gopāla Kṛishna or the boy Kṛishna are sung in this book as also of Goloka or the world of cows which is the heaven in which Kṛishna dwells and is reached by those who adore him by service through Bhakti (devotion). Bhakti or devotion alone is the highest Moksha or emancipation according to this book. In this book Rādhā is mentioned as the highest of the women whom Kṛishna loved. Nārada Saṁhitā seems to be entirely devoted to the advancement of the cult of Kṛishna of Gokula (the cow settlement) and of his beloved Rādhā now raised to the dignity of his eternal consort. The Vyūhas which form the peculiarity of the Pāncharātra school are not mentioned. The creed subsequently started by Vallabhāchārya is exactly similar to that set forth in this book. According to Sir Bhandārkara, this Saṁhitā must have been written a short time before Vallabha i. e. about the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Rāmānujas consider this Saṁhita to be apocryphal.

(3) Systems of Philosophy in the Mahābhārata

(i) Philosophical episodes in the Mahābhārata.

Unlike the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata contains several episodes and discussions which throw a flood of light on the philosophical views that were in vogue at the time. These philosophical episodes are scattered all over the vast epic. They are the Bhagavadgītā which contains the essence of the Upanishadic philosophy, the Anugīta, the Moksha Dharma section of the Shanti Parva, the Sanat sujatīya in the Udyoga Parva and the Dharma Vyādha discourse in the Vana Parva.

(ii) Five orthodox systems of philosophy.

Most of the schools of philosophy which were started later on had their foundations laid down in the Mahābhārata in the Shāntiparva. The following five systems of philosophy which were studied at the end of the epic period are mentioned in the Mahābhārata viz. Sānkhya, Yoga, Pāncharātra, the Vedas i. e. Vedānta and the Pāshupata. It is mentioned in the Mahābhārata that the Sānkhya was taught by Kapila, Yoga by Hiranyagarbha (i. e. Prajāpati) which was a suppositious person and not an historical author,

Pāncharātra by Bhagwān himself i.e. Nārāyana, Vedas i.e. Vedānt by Apāntaratamas also called Prachīngarbha and Pāshupata by Umāpati or Shiva. To reconcile these 5 systems, it is further stated that the same Nārāyana is preached and worshipped by all of them according to different methods. It may be mentioned here that the systems of Nyāya and Vaisheshika Philosophies which were started by Gotama and Kanāda during the epic period are not mentioned by name in the Mahābhārata. Perhaps they represented unorthodox philosophies. As regards the fountain source of the above five schools of philosophy it may be mentioned that the oldest system of philosophy was the Vedānta which is traced so far back as the Ṛig Veda and the Upanishads. But who the author of the Vedānta was, Apāntaratamas or Prāchīnagarbha as mentioned in the Mahābhārata, is not determined. We know that it was Bādarāyana who was the author of the Vedānta sūtras. The name of Apāntaratamas does not appear in the Upanishads. Sānkhya is also very old and may be traced to the Upanishads and particularly the Katha, Chhāndogya and Svetāsvatara Upanishads. Yoga is mentioned in the Taittarīya, Svetāsvatara and Katha Upanishads. The aphorisms of Yoga were however composed by Patanjali in about 150 B. C. The Sānkhya system in the Mahābhārata was not the classical or atheistical system which arose later on, but it was theistic Sānkhya adding one more principle of God to 25 categories of the classical sānkhya, thus making the total number 26. As regards the Pāshupata system, it must have grown round the worship of Shiva just as the Pāncharātra philosophy grew round the worship of Vāsudeva, the God of Gods. I have mentioned above the tenets of the Pāncharātra or Bhāgwat system. The tenets of the Pāshupata system appear from the Vedānta sūtras of Bādarāyana which refute them along with other systems. We also get an idea of their tenets on referring to the Sarva Darsana Saṁgraha composed by Mādhava in about the fourteenth century A. D.

(iii) Unorthodox and atheistical systems.

In the Mahābhārata, we find immense speculations about various philosophical problems touching the nature and relations of God, nature and man and various schools and sects which carried on the above discussions were found as stated above. Philosophical speculation

had already begun in the Upanishads and the same was continued in the period of the Mahābhārata to the length of even denying the existence of God. These latter ideas ultimately gave rise to atheistic schools of Chārvaka, the Sānkhya school of Kapila and the two heterodox systems of philosophy known as Buddhism and Jainism which were founded by Gautam Buddha and Mahāvīra respectively in the sixth century B. C. The Panchashikha episode in the Shāntiparva consisting of a dialogue between Janaka Janadeva and Panchashikha who was a follower of Kapila gives us an idea of the views of the atheists who believed that life was but an attribute of the combination of elements. Panchashikha refutes the arguments of the atheists.

(iv) Theistic Sānkhya.

The Sānkhyas believe two ultimate principles, viz. Prakṛiti (nature) and Purusha (Soul) which are eternal, distinct and ever opposed to each other. There are 23 evolutes from Prakṛiti which brings about the creation of the universe by combination with Purusha. Purushas are as many as individual souls. There is a twenty sixth principle called God. This is theistic Sānkhya. Prakṛiti in its primordial condition has three Gunas or constituents called Satva (Purity), Rajas (energy) and Tamas (darkness) in equilibrium which when disturbed by joining with Purusha brings about the creation of the universe. Prakṛiti is unconscious and active while Purusha or soul is conscious and inactive.

(v) Classical sānkya.

The doctrines of the Classical Sānkhya were formulated for the first time in the Sānkhya kārikās which consist of about seventy–two verses which are ascribed to Īshvara Kṛishna who flourished in about 400 A. D. This school is atheistical and it does not believe in God. It has only 25 categories as mentioned above without God.

(vi) Precursors of Buddhist & Jaina Religions

The speculations in the Upanishads had generated an increasing tendency towards extreme asceticism and renunciation from all worldly activities, which finds its echo in the Mahābhārata. From

the Upanishads we further find that even before the rise of Buddhism, there were many mendicants and ascetics called S'ramanas who were found wandering in the streets begging alms. They were the precursors of the Buddhist and Jaina Monks who had an organised and a regular institution which was started later on by Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra.

(vii) Dualism and Monism.

All the above schools were dualistic with the exception of the Vedānta School which adopted the doctrine of monistic idealism contained in the Upanishads.. This school believes that the Supreme Brahman alone is real while the manifold universe is unreal or illusory. This we find from a passage in the Sanat sujatīya dialogue in the Udyogaparva. I shall deal with these schools of philosophy in detail later on when I will expound their doctrines.

(4) Ethics of the Mahābhārata.

In the Mahābhārata we find long dissertations and didactic sermons with mythological anecdotes and illustrations on good conduct, Dharma (duty) and virtues such as truth, Ahiṁsa, honesty, righteousness etc., and particularly on the merits of gifts of various kinds. The Mahābhārata represents Dharma as eightfold, viz. sacrifice, learning the Vedas, gifts and penance on the one hand, and truth, restraint of passions, forgiveness and freedom from greed on the other. The first four lead to Pitṛi Yāna or path of the fathers while the latter to Devayāna or the path of Gods. There are also several passages teaching the duties of Varnāshrama or the four castes and the four orders or stages of life. The doctrine of virtue was a part and parcel of religion in India from the very beginning and hence we find virtue mixed up with religion. The word Dharma was wide enough to include virtue, duty, religion and worship of God. The path of virtue was a stepping stone to religion and philosophy. It was therefore essential to lead a life of Dharma to purify the mind and make it fit for devotion to God-head and spiritual knowledge. The path of virtue however was not simple but was equally difficult as the other two paths of devotion and knowledge. In the trials of life it is often difficult to determine exactly what is the right course of conduct. The Mahā-

bhārata makes fine discussions on the subject and gives us an idea of what is the true basis of Dharma. Thus Yudhisthira observes in the Mahābhārata "I follow Dharma not because I see any immediate profit from it but from a conviction that virtue is to be followed for its own sake. The vicious man may prosper for a time but virtue's reward is sure to come though now invisible." The knowledge of Dharma is obtained only from Smṛitis and Dharma shāstras which being based on Shruti (Revelation) are of binding authority. The doctrine of virtue was thus put on a very solid foundation. One is taught to lead a perfect and virtuous life at any cost, resisting all temptations of immediate gain and to suffer all privations and calamities of life as means to reach the ultimate goal of emancipation through devotion to God and wisdom. A highly disciplined life is necessary for a full development of the moral character. The Mahābhārata always inculcates this doctrine throughout and concludes with the following memorable verse known as Bharata Sāvitri:—

"Raising up both my arms I cry aloud but no one listens to me. From Virtue results wealth and fulfilment of all desires. Why should not therefore virtue be practised? Virtue should not be abandoned for desire, fear, avarice or even for life's sake. Virtue is eternal, joys and sorrows are fleeting. Soul is eternal but the root cause of its migrations is fleeting."

CHAPTER V

THE BHAGWAD-GITĀ

I. Introductory.

The Bhagwad Gitā forms part of the Bhīshma parva of the Mahābhārata. It is the earliest exposition of the Bhakti system or mono-theistic religion which was communicated to Arjuna by Lord Shri Krishna as an Avatāra of Vāsudeva Vishnu on the battle field of Kurukshetra on the eve of the great war between the Pāndavas and Kauravas. It is the most popular book in the whole field of religious literature in India and is treated as a book of great veneration and authority by persons belonging to almost all the orthodox sects and creeds to support their dogmas. Very learned and valuable commentaries in Sanskrit have been written thereon by several leading Achāryas, Shankara being the earliest. Anandagiri, Shrīdhar Swami, Madhusudana Saraswati, Jnāneshvara, Rāmānuja, Mādhavāchārya and others have also written valuable commentaries thereon. It is also translated into almost all the Vernacular languages. There are several English translations, as those of Sir Charles Wilkins, J. Cockburn, Thompson, John Davies, Edwin Arnold, Mr. Hill (Oxford Press), Mr. Justice Telāng, Mrs. Annie Besant and Babu Bhagwāndās, Mr. Brookes and others. It is also translated into German, French, Latin and Greek. Lokmānya Tilak has also written a voluminous commentary on the Gitā in Marāthi while he was in prison. The great scholiast Shankarāchārya explains the main scope of the Gitā thus:—"The famous Gitā shāstra is an epitome of the essentials of the whole Vedic teaching. A knowledge of its teaching leads to the realization of all human aspirations." Mahātma Gāndhi also deems Gitā as the source of great solace in the tragedies or life as would appear from his following remarks:—"I find a solace in the Bhagwadgitā, that I miss even in the sermon on the mount. When disappointment stares me in the face and all alone I see not a ray of light, I go back to the Bhagwadgitā.

I find a verse here and a verse there and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies and my life has been full of external tragedies, and if they have left no visible scar on me, I owe it all to the teachings of the Bhagwadgitā." There is a great controversy about the date of the Gitā. Several persons following the opinion of Professor Maxmuller have stated that Gitā was written in about 200 B. C. after the Brahma (Vedānta) Sūtras of Bādarāyana for which the date fixed is 200 B. C. Prof. Maxmuller has relied on the verse in the Gitā,[1] which refers to the word Brahma Sūtrā and from this circumstance he comes to the conclusion that Gitā was written after Brahma Sūtras. This view is however opposed to the view of Shankarāchārya, who interprets the word "Brahma Sūtra" in the above verse as referring to sentences speaking of Brahman contained in the Upanishads and not to the Vedānta Sutras of Bādarāyana. This view is accepted by Mr. Justice Telāng in his preface to the translation of the Gitā in the Sacred Books of the East series. He has pointed out that the Vedānta Sūtras were written after the Gitā as several passages of the Gitā are bodily taken in the Sūtras. Besides from Pānini (600 B. C.), we find that even prior to the Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyana, there were other sūtras called Bhikshu Sūtras which formed the basis of the former. Thus the Bhagwadgitā stands in date between the Upanishads and the Brahma Sūtras. From the nature of its contents, the Gitā seems to be decidedly earlier than Buddhism. It is also earlier than the Pāncharātra system of the Mahābhārata as neither the doctrine of the four Vyūhās nor even the name Nārāyana subsequently identified with Vāsudeva, finds any place in the Gitā. For these reasons Gitā must be placed not later than 600 B. C. Again opinions of different commentators vary as regards the ultimate teaching of the Gitā doctrine. Lokmānya Tilaka places Action in the forefront as the Gitā doctrine. Theistic Vaishnava Achāryās state Devotion or Bhakti as the ultimate doctrine of Gitā while commentators having an ascetic turn of mind state knowledge accompanied with asceticism as the ultimate doctrine of the Gitā. All these views are partial and one-sided and they do

1. (13-3).

not give the whole view. It would be wrong to reduce Gitā to the level of a mere ethical book in face of the numerous theistic and philosophical doctrines taught therein. Nor does Gita teach us the doctrine of unreasoned ecstasy divorced from the duties of practical life and the dictates of common sense or isolated knowledge divorced from devotion and action. The purpose of the message of Lord Shri Krishna as an incarnation of the Supreme Spirit communicated to Arjuna as type of the ordinary average man is to teach the lesson that knowledge, devotion and the performance of duty without desire form the threefold path to emancipation. "It has so often been stated that work and knowledge and devotion are in Krishna's view alternative and equally efficient methods leading to release, that it is important to insist that these three methods are throughout the Gitā regarded as complementary." "It was the special merit of the author of the Gitā that he applied these current methods of control to Man's whole personality bringing into their right and balanced relationship the functions of reason and will and emotion" "One of the chief causes of Gitā's age-long popularity is the fact that after centuries of pent-up emotion, it presented the worshipper with a visible object of devotion and taught the value of pure disinterested love in the religious life." Unfortunately the doctrine of Bhakti (devotion) soon degenerated in the hands of "emotionalists who began to preach that ecstasy was all; sound study was ignored; the wild hysterical dance and the passionate repetition of the sacred names began to take the place of the more unexciting duties of the home and the simple service of mankind." The Bhagwad Gitā, the Vedas and Upanishads and the Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyana constitute the Prasthāna Trayi or the three important religious books of authority binding on all orthodox schools of philosophy. The Bhagwad Gitā practically reiterates in another form the same philosophical doctrines as were taught in the Vedas and the Upanishads with special reference to the doctrine of monotheism to which valuable contribution was made by the Gitā. I shall therefore deal with the various subjects taught in the Gitā on the basis of the classification of the subjects which form parts of the Upanishadic philosophy.

II. Ontology.

(1) Discrimination of Ātman (Self) and Pakṛiti (not-self or Nature)

The very first lesson of great philosophical importance taught in the Gitā is about the knowledge of discrimination (called Sānkhya) of Ātman (self) and un-Ātman (not-self). In the Upanishads it was already taught that the only reality in this universe is Ātman or self whether of individual soul or supreme soul, while the manifold world of names and forms as detached from and outside the Ātman as its centre is Māyā or Illusion. The same principle is repeated in the second chapter of the Gitā. The first essential nature of Ātman (self) is its immortality and indestructibility.[1] Ātman is neither born nor does it die with the body which alone is perishable.[2] It is neither cut by weapons nor burnt by fire; neither made wet by water nor dried by wind.[3] It is abiding, all-pervading stable and unmoved from eternity.[4] It is sat (existence) and the uncaused reality of which our consciousness never fails.[5] The world of names and forms as contrasted with Ātman (self) is fleeting and unreal.[6] It is changing like states of childhood, youth, and old age of an embodied soul.[7] The world of sense is also compared with the Fig-tree (Ashvathta) which is ever changing.[8] This tree which stands for not-self (Prakriti) is not understood by unenlightened men. They do not comprehend its nature nor its beginning nor yet the source from which it springs.[9] This tree must be cut down with the axe of detachment (Asanga S'hastra); only so can a man win release from rebirth; only so can a man reach the Person the First cause (Ādya Purusha) of not-self's energy.[10] The world of apparent reality however is not a total phantom or a pure imagination of the mind but it has a relative reality consisting of the objects of our senses which cause Dwandwas (pairs) or opposites as heat and cold and joys and sorrows which are fleeting. These opposites are to be endured with fortitude.[11] All worldly objects are subject to changes from the unmanifest to the manifest and from the

1. (2-17). 2. (2-20). 3. (2-23). 4. (2-24). 5. (2-16). 6. (2-14, 16; 9-33). 7. (2-13). 8. (15-1). 9. (15-3). 10. (15-3, 4). 11. (2-14)

manifest to the unmanifest.[1] Whatever is born is sure to die.[2] The next essential attribute of Ātman is knowledge or self-conscious intelligence.[3] This attribute distinguishes Ātman from Nature which is inanimate. The third essential attribute of Atman is Bliss or Absolute joy as distinguished from the fleeting joys of the migrating embodied soul which are never unalloyed with miseries.[4] Thus according to Gitā the essential nature of Ātman (self or soul) is Absolute truth or immortality, knowledge, and Bliss which constitute its being in oneness similar to the teaching of the Upanishads. Lord Kṛishna further teaches us that " his essential nature is pure self or Ātman with which he identifies himself and as such he creates, sustains and destroys the universe. "[5] Now as regards the Upanishadic doctrine of identity of Ātman with Brahman, though Kṛishna has never directly stated so in express terms yet he establishes the truth of the said proposition indirectly in the following verse.[6] " Brahman immortal and indestructible abides in me together with everlasting virtue and absolute Bliss ". This clearly means that Brahman is one with Pratyagātman or the inner spirit working through Kṛishna the incarnated soul. Gitā also accepts the doctrine of Monism or absolute idealism of the Upanishads and it teaches the great lesson that the self of the individual soul is identical with that of the supreme soul, in the following verse[7] " Know also me (i. e. individual soul) to be knower of the field (i. e. supreme soul) in all fields (i. e. bodies).

(2) Ātman or True Self is not a Doer.

After stating the essential nature of Ātman, Gitā next teaches the important philosophical doctrine that Ātman or true-self is not a doer. According to Gitā, all activities appertain to the domain of the phenomenal world of relativity which is governed by the law of causality working under divine guidance and control and is relegated to the sphere of not-self or Prakṛiti (nature) which represents the cosmic power or Māyāshakti as regulating the whole universe. Ātman or pure self is only a knower or rather the eternal self-conscious intelligence, and not a doer. All activities are adventitious and attributed to it only fictitiously for a certain purpose

1. (2-28). 2. (2-27). 3. (4-33, 38). 4. (6-21, 28). 5. (10-20).
6. (14-27). 7. (13-2).

for the time being but they do not constitute its essential nature. Thus it is stated in the Gitā:—" Entirely by the strands (gunas) or constituents of nature (Prakṛiti) are works done. He whose self is deluded by egoism thinks " I am the doer."[1] " Though I have created the four castes according to qualities and actions, yet know me as no worker, and immutable."[2] " He who sees the self as not worker, he sees indeed."[3] " Though the highest self dwells in the body, he works not, nor is he polluted."[4] " Nor power of work does he create, that mighty lord, nor the world's works.....It is nature (swabhāva) that comes forth to action."[5] It should not be however understood from the above that according to Gitā, Prakṛiti, Māyā or Swabhāva which all mean nature or non-self, does works or activities independent of self as the Gitā scrupulously follows the Advaita doctrine of Monism of the Upanishads according to which nature is never an independent principle. This point is made clear in the following verse " Nature (Prakṛiti) under my guidance and rule gives birth to all existing things moveable or immoveable. For this reason the world revolves."[6]

(3) Unity of Brahman Transcendent and Immanent.

Having seen above that according to Gitā there is no difference in the essential nature of individual soul (Ātman) and the supreme soul (Brahman), we shall now consider the nature of Brahman from two standpoints, transcendental and immanent.

The supreme being is called Brahman from a transcendental point of view while he is called Īshvara or Purushottama or personal God from an immanent point of view with reference to relativity.[7] The knowledge of the Supreme Being from both the above standpoints is essential to obtain emancipation or the highest freedom.[8] The transcendental form of the Supreme Being or the Absolute is the object of metaphysical knowledge while the immanent form of the personal God is the object of theological worship. The one is ideal and Nirguna (attributeless) and relates to the supreme unity without relations, while the other is Saguna (with attributes) and relates to the phenomenal world of time, space and causal relations. To avoid

1. (3-27). 2. (4-13). 3. (13-29). 4. (13-31). 5. (5-14). 6. (9-10). 7. (13-12; 15-17, 18). 8. (18-55).

confusion of thought about the essential nature and the homogeneous integrity of the Supreme Being both the above standpoints should be kept entirely distinct. From this however it should not be understood that there is any difference or dualism in the essential nature or the integral unity of the Supreme Being who is one only without a second according to the Upanishadic doctrine of monism which is wholly accepted by the Gitā. As a matter of fact the Supreme Being is always Nirguna (Attributeless) which is Its essential nature and by describing Him as Saguna (with attributes) for purposes of worship and devotion (Bhakti) there is not the slightest change in His essential nature. The Saguna God is no other than Nirguna God. This is made clear in the following verse.[1] "Brahman is the imperishable (Akshara), the supreme. Its being is called the essential self (Adhyātmam)." It is explained by Shankara that the immanent God is in reality no other than the transcendental Brahman.[2] The same transcendental Paramātman sustains every thing in the world by His power. The Saguna God or Īshvar is only the manifest form of Brahman itself in relation to the phenomenal world and not something separate or other than Nirguna Brahman. It is not possible to regard the Nirguna and Saguna as two separate entities in monistic philosophy. It is therefore wrong to ascribe to Shankara the view as some critics have done that in his system Īshvara or personal God is something other than and distinct from Brahman, or is inferior to Nirguna Brahman. The Nirguna aspect has been mentioned to show that God is unaffected by the relations of the world while the Saguna aspect has been mentioned to show that he controls and directs all the changes and movements in the world through his Māyā Shakti or immanent power. It is stated in the Gitā that knowledge of Para Brahma (attributeless) leads to immortality.[3] As it is transcendental and not realizable by our senses being supersensuous, it is described in Negative terms as " Na sat tannāsat i.e. it is neither Sat (Manifest) nor is it asat (unmanifest)."[4] It is thus not identieal with the manifest or the unmanifest as wrongly understood by pantheistic philosophers but is different from both. This might however lead to atheism if it is described only in negative terms as beyond human comprehension. Therefore Lord Krishna while teaching monotheism

1. (8-3). 2. (M. U. Bh. 2-1-3). 3. (13-12). 4. (13-12).

for purposes of devotion, describes the immanent and universal aspect of Brahman in relation to the phenomenal world,[1] but to avoid any misconception of his essential nature by a false identification with the manifest nature and its states he describes him as Nirguna and without senses though possessed of all powers whereby to regulate and control this universe.[2] Thus Brahman or the Supreme Soul is one only having a double aspect viz. transcendent and immanent. The whole world, of seeming differences is comprehended and has its being within the integral unity of Brahman,[3] and there is nothing outside of or separate from him. All this universe is strung on him as rows of gems upon a thread.[4]

(4) The Doctrine of Knowledge and its usefulness.

The chief end of life from the earliest Vedic times down to the present day among the Hindus in general is emancipation or true freedom, for which various means are laid down in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. The fundamental doctrine of the Upanishads is that emancipation is obtained only by knowledge of the true spiritual self which is the immediate cause of emancipation while the other means viz. meditation, sacrifice, gift, mortification, good conduct etc. are the mediate causes of emancipation.[5] Gitā however has reconciled all these different means of emancipation and formulated a system showing that there are only two principal methods viz. the Sānkhya method of knowledge and the Yoga method of work which together form the two fold path for emancipation."[6] These two paths of knowledge and works like theory and practice are complementary.

Some kind of work as duty without desire was esential to reach the perfect stage, after reaching which, action was not obligatory.[7] The highest kind of work laid down for purification of the mind was sacrifice, which term was used in a very wide sense in the Gitā, so as to include therein worship and devotion.[8] It is further taught by Krishna that if all actions are done for sacrifice without desire and dedicated to the Supreme Lord with knowledge that one's true self which is identical with the universal self is not doing any

1. (13-13) 2. (13-14) 3. (13-16, 30); 4. (7-7, 19); 5. (S. U. 6-15; B. U. 4-4-22). 6. (3-3). 7. (3-4, 9, 17). 8. (4-24).

work but that it is only his lower nature (Prakṛiti) or the receptive mind that does work, then his work is burnt up in the knowledge of sacrifice as no work at all and it does not cause any hindrance to release.[1] According to Gitā, action without desire is useful for purification of the mind.[2] But after reaching perfection by doing good works, works are lessened and more time is devoted to contemplation and knowledge of the Supreme Being.[3] According to Gitā as well as the Upanishads it is only knowledge of the identity of the Supreme Self with the individual self that directly brings about emancipation. Action is only the indirect cause of emancipation and a means towards the end but not the end in itself, as will appear from the following verses in the Gitā : "Now I will declare this most mysterious knowledge together with intuitional experience by knowing which you shall be released."[4] "That which is to be known I will declare, knowing which one attains immortality".[5] "Knowledge of the difference between the Kshetrajna (knower of the field) and Kshetra (field) will lead to release."[6] "Through devotion does he recognise me in verity, what and who I am, then knowing me in verity, at once he enters into me."[7]

Kṛishna bestows the highest praises on spiritual knowledge and the man of knowledge. Thus he says that the man of knowledge is his very self.[8] Krishna mentions the following advantages of knowledge, viz. (1) That knowledge removes for ever all delusion[9] (2) The knower gains a vision of the oneness of all and the knowledge that he and all are one with Kṛishna.[10] (3) Knowledge destroys all sin.[11] (4) Knowledge burns up all works as a burning fire makes ashes of the fuel.[12] (5) It purifies the knower's self.[13] (6) By knowledge one obtains the highest peace.[14] (7) Knowledge dissolves all doubts.[15] (8) Works lose their binding effect on the man of knowledge.[16]

(5) The Theory of Union (Samuchhaya) of action and knowledge.

Some commentators of the Gitā have propounded the view that Gitā teaches the doctrine of union of action and knowledge as direct means to emancipation. This view is however severely criticised

1. (4–23, 33, 37, 5–10). 2. (5–11). 3. (6–3). 4. (9–1). 5. (13–12). 6. (13–34). 7. (18–55). 8. (7–18). 9. (4–35). 10. (6–29; 13–2). 11. (4–36). 12. (4–37). 13. (4–38). 14. (4–39). 15. (4–41). 16. (4–41).

by Shankarāchārya who has controverted the same by very cogent and subtle arguments. It is true that Gitā does not support the view of total inaction.[1] Gitā recognises the value of a moral life accompanied with a very rigorous discipline for purification of the mind as means to emancipation by way of preparation towards it through the stage of devotion.[2] Further Gitā follows the path of the middle course by avoiding two extremes, viz. one-sided dry knowledge as divorced from devotion and asceticism with complete abandonment of all work on the one hand and the path of blind devotion divorced from action and knowledge on the other. However Gitā does not teach the doctrine of union of action and knowledge as the direct means to emancipation as believed by certain scholars. I have already pointed out above that Gitā literally follows the cardinal doctrine of the Upanishads that emancipation results directly from the philosophical knowledge of the Supreme soul only. The theory of union and knowledge as directly leading to emancipation would therefore be inconsistent with the above cardinal doctrine of the Upanishads. Knowledge and action are opposed to each other as light and darkness, and they cannot co-exist. Actions are done by Prakṛiti or lower nature in the form of the receptive mind while the self-conscious spirit is never a doer as has been already pointed out above. Gitā further teaches the lesson that all actions are burnt by spiritual knowledge as blazing fire burns the fuel to ashes,[3] in conformity with the teaching of the Upanishads as will appear from the following quotation from the Mundaka Upanishad:—" The fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are dissolved, all his works (and their effects) perish when the Supreme Being both transcendent and immanent is seen".[4]

From the above discussion the reader will at once see that the above theory of Union of action and knowledge as the direct means to emancipation is untenable.

III. Theology.

(1) Early History of Theism.

I have already pointed out in the previous chapters that in India theology was never divorced from philosophy as in the West

1. (2-47; 3-5, 8, 24; 18-11). 2. (5-11; 6-3; 41; 12-2). 3. (4-23, 37).
4. (M. U. 2-2-8).

but was a part and parcel of philosophy. The Upanishads consist of two parts one dealing with Upāsanas or meditations of God and the other with knowledge of the Supreme Being. As a matter of fact in India religion preceded philosophy. It began at first in the Vedas with polytheism, or a belief in many gods. Then it took the shape of henotheism by which one deity was considered supreme to the forgetfulness of all others whose functions were attributed to the former. Henotheism was shortly followed by pantheism whereby the whole universe was identified with the supreme deity. The last stage of evolution of human thought in the Vedic period took the shape of monotheism or the belief of one Supreme God, who was the creator, sustainer and ruler of the universe and also the object of human worship. Even the gods of nature are subordinate to him. The trend of thought in the Upanishads on the other hand took a different turn. The Upanishads begin with idealism and pantheism and end with monotheism. The monotheism of the Upanishads however does not seem to have been developed from the ancient Vedic polytheism but independently from idealism and pantheism. The theistic conception of a Personal God in the earlier Upanishads was different from that in the Vedas and he is not called deva (god) implying manifestation of his power as in the Vedas but *Īsa or Īshvara* i. e. ruler and *Antaryāmi* i. e. controller of the universe. The idea of a Personal God as the worthy object of love and adoration was however developed subsequently in later theistic Upanishads as the Svetāsvatara and Katha Upanishads, when Īshvara or the supreme soul came to be contrasted not only with the universe but also with the individual soul. The chief functions of bringing works to maturity and apportioning their fruits to the souls were then attributed to Īshvara theistically. The theism of the Svetāsvatara Upanishad identified Shiva–Rudra with the supreme deity. It was further developed in the later Upanishads and led to the formation of the two cults of Shiva and Vishnu which constitute the popular religions of India to-day. The Bhagwad-Gitā however goes a stage further and it presents us with the first clear statement of Avatāra or descent of God as a saviour conferring divine grace upon his votaries as reward for their warm and passionate devotion (Bhakti) to him. This new element of emotion enhanced the value of the theistical religions and led to the greatest popularity and fame of the Gitā.

(2) Incarnation of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva.

The conception of Shiva and Vishnu as personal Gods failed to develop real Bhakti or devotion which was aroused for the first time by the doctrine of the incarnations of God and particularly that of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva among men as a visible object of devotion and pure love. The doctrine of Avatāra or incarnation of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva is presented to us in a very clear form in the Gitā. It is proclaimed by Shri Kṛishna in the following terms " Though unborn and immutable in essence, though Lord of all beings, yet governing nature which is mine I come into being by my delusive power. For whensoever virtue declines, Bhārata, and vice uprises, then I create myself. To guard the virtuous and destroy the wicked and to confirm the right I come into being in this age and in that. "[1] The idea of Avatāra or descent of God in human form appears for the first time in the Gitā. This followed from the identification of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva with the highest divinity. It is stated by Kṛishna that this doctrine of Avatāra is not new but that it is a very old doctrine and that there have been many births of both Arjuna as well as Kṛishna which are all known by the latter but not the former. The idea of repeated avatāras of Vishnu in the form of fish, tortoise and the Boar was already in the Brāhmanas and it seems to have been applied by Kṛishna by identifying himself with the Supreme Brahman and stating his avatāra as a descent of Brahman in this universe. It seems that the identification of Kṛishna Vāsudeva was at first with Brahman the highest divinity and not with Vishnu and his identification with the latter was only subsequent to get popular recognition from the orthodoxy of the doctrine of avatāra through a Vedic deity which was easily supplied in the form of Vishnu whose name was already associated with Avatāras in the Brāhmanas. The above inference is further borne out by the fact that the name of Vishnu occurs only three times in the Gitā and that too only as a subordinate deity or Vibhūti (glorious form) along with others as in the verse cited below,[2] and further by the fact that in the avatāra passage Kṛishna has not claimed to be Vishnu.

1. (4-6, to 8). 2. (10-21).

(a) Whether the embodied form of the incarnate Krishna is the Supreme Brahman or a part manifestation of his glories (Vibhūti).

In the Mahābhārata we find that the incarnate Krishna is mentioned as an avatāra of only one part of Vishnu and not of the whole Brahman. The well known commentatorShankarāchārya in his introduction to the Gitā also says the same thing. A different view however is expressed in the Bhāgwat Purāna which gives an account of the life and doings of Shri Krishna. According to this version Krishna in his embodied form is an avatāra or descent of the whole Brahman and not merely a part. This view is inconsistent with the statement of Krishna himself in the verse[1] cited below where he describes himself in his embodied form as Vāsudeva son of Vasudeva of the Vrishnis or the descendants of Yadu. Here Krishna is alluded to as the chief of the class called Vrishnis and not as the Supreme Being and Krishna is Vāsudeva in this sense only because the best thing of a group or class is represented to be the Vibhūti or part manifestation of the glories of the Supreme Being which are innumerable. It would be really absurd to believe that any single embodied form in this illusory world of names and forms however glorious or powerful it may be, could be identified with the all pervading supreme deity. That which is limited by the relations of time, space and causation of this empirical world can never be equated with that which is illimitable or transcendental. The above conception therefore of Krishna in an embodied human form as an incarnation of the whole transcendental supreme deity and identifying his physical body with the supreme spirit is not correct and does not stand the rational test nor is it consistent with the teachings of Lord Krishna himself in the Gitā as a whole. Obviously the above conception is an application of the doctrine of lower pantheism which is certainly not the purport of the teachings of the Upanishads nor of the Gitā. This point is made clear by Krishna himself at the end of the tenth chapter dealing with Vibhūties or the manifestations of the glorious forms of the supreme deity in the concluding verses as summarising the whole chapter. The said verses run as follows:—"Whatever thing is glorious, prosperous

1. (10-37).

or strong, know thou that this is sprung from a part of my splendour. But what avail thee, this long lesson, Arjuna ? I by one part of myself stand sustaining the whole universe."[1] These verses therefore clearly go to show that even by adding up all the manifest forms of this visible world which is pervaded by the supreme being in its immanent aspect, you cannot get an idea of his whole transendental aspect which is veiled as a mystery to ordinary persons being concealed by the projected rays of the divine illusion.

(b) The embodied form of Kṛishna is illusory (i.e. of Māyā).

Even in the verse expounding tke doctrine of Avatāras of the Supreme Being, Kṛishna makes clear that his embodied form is illusory (i.e. of Māyā). It is this delusive power of Kṛishna that makes people to identify his body which is illusory (i.e. of Māyā) with the universal and all pervading spirit which is unborn and immutable and treat the latter as born.[2] This view is supported by the teachings of Krishna in the second chapter that soul which is pure spirit is never born, while the body which is material is born and it always decays. It is further made clear in the following verses,[3] where it is taught that "all material objects of nature are born from the supreme spirit and are dependent on him but the supreme spirit is not one with them being transcendental and distinct from them. Such false identification of material objects with pure spirit is due to illusion only."

The Same idea is brought out in the following verse.[4] " By me in form unmanifest is all this universe pervaded; all beings dwell in me (i. e. are dependent on me) but I dwell not in them. (i. e. I am not co-extensive with them). " Still more explicit is the statement in the following verse[5] where Krishna says " Fools regard me the supreme being who is the substrate of the universe as a material object not knowing that my higher nature is transcendental and immutable. "

(c) Organic unity of the cosmos in the being of Kṛishna transcendent and immanent.

Kṛishna Vāsudeva of the Gitā is not "a particular pet godling to be patted for the sake of sugar-plums here or hereafter"[6] but he is the incarnate Lord of all and Brahman the Absolute. In chapter

1. (10-41, 42). 2. (4-6). 3. (7-12-to 14) 4. (9-4).
5. (7-24). 6. Brookes G. L.

ten Krishna at first describes his nature as the transcendental source of all and the immanent Lord possessed of all-pervading powers by which he remains immanent in the various objects of the world which is but part of his glory and then in chapter eleven he reveals to Arjuna his Universal and infinite form of which Arjuna had an ecstatic vision by divine sight. The above picture of Krishna-Vāsudeva presents an organic unity of the whole cosmos even in diversity and variety and shows he is not a pet godling to be worshipped in isolation by his chosen few votaries as wrongly understood by some of the bigoted sectarians. It is therefore quite natural that such a worthy object of love and adoration as Krishna Vāsudeva described in the Gitā should have obtained the greatest popularity. Krishna is not merely transcendent but he is also immanent and conditioned thus giving a most comprehensive view of the Supreme Being.

(d) Krishna as concrete manifestation of the all pervading and infinite Brahman for worship.

The greatest service done by the Bhagwad Gitā to the cause of Indian religion and philosophy is by teaching the doctrine of pure Bhakti or devotion to the supreme Being through a visible concrete object in the form of Krishna-Vāsudeva who was not a mere godling but an incarnation of the all-pervading and infinite Brahman enshrined within all creatures.[1] Krishna as the incarnation of the Supreme Being, who is transcendental as well as all-pervading, takes also a bodily form which is " something actual real and practical and not a mere abstraction of " Isness ". Worship is something actual and practical and it implies loving relations between the devotee and the object of devotion. Krishna Vāsudeva as incarnation of the personal Lord in a human form was a worthy object of love in whom his devotees had implicit faith on account of some of his noblest teachings in the Gitā and his profession of love to Arjuna and to all mankind including even the worst sinners.

(3) The doctrine of Bhakti or devotion.

(a) The path of devotion in the Gita is universal and non-sectarian.

The path of devotion laid down in the Gitā is non-sectarian and non-exclusive but is universal. It was not the monopoly of only

1. (4-6; 7-19; 9-11, 22, 29; 10-20).

the higher classes but was open to all including women as well as the lowest castes, the chandālas and the untouchables who were all assured of final release and emancipation as the fruit of devotion[1] to him as an incarnation of theLord. The religion taught byKṛishna was not confined tothe worship of petty godlings called 'Anya devatāhā' or other gods[2] which expression does not mean 'Other gods than a particular godling called Kṛishna but means gods to whom an otherness is ascribed,[3] or who were considered as self subsisting entities detached from or independent of the Universal Atman (self). The term 'Anya devtā Bhaktāhā' in the verse cited below means those devotees of other godlings who believed that the gods worshipped by them were separate from their inner self which is identical with Kṛishna.[4] These persons are really ignorant of the real nature of their inner self as Kṛishna in whom all deities are comprehended. In worshipping these other deities they are really worshipping Kṛishna though unconsciously. Their fruit is short-lived and they must be reborn again in this world as soon as their merit is exhausted.[5] But to those who worship Kṛishna in his real form transcendental and immanent consciously Kṛishna grants the power to have true knowledge and wisdom which enables them to obtain emancipation by an entry into the being of Kṛishna as the supreme deity. No contempt is shown by Kṛishna even towards the ignorant worshippers of other deities and he gives them fruit even of such worship though of short duration. The religion of devotion as taught in the Gitā shows a most tolerant and catholic spirit which is free from all sectarianism in the form of either destructive inclusiveness as in Islam and Christianity, or exclusiveness as in Judaism and certain narrow-minded sects of Hinduism.

(b) Moral effect of devotion.

The path of devotion as taught in the Gitā has also a very healthy moral effect as it leads the sinner to righteousness and ultimately after purification to emancipation by entry into Kṛishna's being as the highest fruit of devotion.[6]

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1. (9-32); 2. (7-20 and 9-23); 3. Brooke's G. L. (9-23) 4. (9-23); 5. (9-21); 6. (9-30, 31).

(c) Simple worship with love preferred to the formal one.

The doctrine of devotion in the Gitā further looks more to the heart than to the external forms of worship as appears from the following verse:—Every action whether work, eating, sacrifice, gift or austerity must be performed as an offering to Kṛishna and if it is accompanied with love and devotion it is sure to be accepted by him however poor or simple the offering may be as leaf, flower, fruit or water.[1] The Bhakti doctrine of Gitā is extremely simple and it presents a strange contrast to the present day costly and gorgeous worship in the Hindu temples accompanied by very complicated rites and forms. The later day Bhaktas (devotees) elaborated the system to such a bewildering extent that there were no less than eighty one minor forms of Bhakti leading up to the highest as stated by Shrīdhara Swāmi.

(d) Identity of Kṛishna Vāsudeva with the Supreme Being as the Royal mystery.

I shall now explain the Royal mystery of devotion as taught by Kṛishna to Arjuna. A knowledge of this mystery leads to final release and emancipation. Kṛishna often substitutes his own personality in the Gitā for the Supreme Being as an object of love and devotion. Now what is meant by the term 'me' when Kṛishna asks us to worship him in place of the Supreme Being ?[2] The answer to this is given by Kṛishna himself in the ninth chapter where he defines himself the 'Me' whom we are to worship and know. Kṛishna there does not mean a particular pet god-ling called the fondled god-son of mother Yasodā located in a particular place as a separate person whom we approach turning our backs to all other places, but he means the all-pervading supreme self (Ātman) in which the worshipper as well as all his fellow creatures live and move and have their being. We find the crux of this knotty problem in the following verses[3] where Kṛishna teaches the Royal mystery, that Kṛishna Vāsudeva the incarnate Lord in his immanent and cosmic form is identical with Brahman in transcendental form as the cause of all. It is Kṛishna the universal immanent spirit in a carnate form who pervades the whole universe

1. (9-26, 27) 2. (9-33) 3. (9-11, 12)

as its essential self and who supports all beings. The said verses run as follows :—

"The deluded fools turn their backs on me who am enshrined in the body of man in the form of humanity (mānushīm tanūm) failing to recognise my deeper underlying essence and being, the supreme ruler of all creatures."

"Vain their hopes, (of salvation for themselves as apart) vain deeds, vain their knowledge (which is false) endowed as they are with false consciousness and void of true heart consciousness They enter the delusive nature (in its exclusiveness and separateness) of monsters and devils."[1]

The substance of Krishna's teaching of the Royal Mystery of devotion therefore comes to this that those who see no further than Krishna's human form and therefore scorn him are fools. But those who understand the Royal Mystery that Krishna, the incarnate personal Lord, is one with the impersonal supreme being, worship him alone in synthetic unity and not in separateness with earnest steadfastness and single hearted devotion.[2]

(e) Organic unity of the cosmos in Krishna's lower and higher natures.

The doctrine of Bhakti is further stated in the 7th and 8th chapters of the Gitā where Krishna imparts the knowledge of himself as having two natures, viz. lower (Apara) and higher (Para). The lower nature is divided into the five elements and mind, reason and individuation.[3] The higher nature consists of that all pervading principle of life which is the support of all the existing beings.[4] All creatures are born by these two powers and Krishna is the cause of the origin and dissolution of all.[5] There is nothing higher than him. On him the universe depends as do the gems that form a necklace on the thread that binds them.[6] Krishna further explains that the three constituents of non-self viz., Purity (Satva), energy (Rajas) and Darkness (Tamas) originate from him alone and constitute his lower nature. He is not subject to these three strands of nature, like mortal beings but they are subject to him.[7] Not-self or Māyā which is controlled by Krishna with its three strands veils from the world

1. (9–11, 12). 2. (9–13, 14). 3. (7–4). 4. (7–5). 5. (7–6). 6. (7–7). 7. (7–12).

the higher unchanging essence of Kṛishna.[1] None but his votaries can pierce this Veil.[2]

(f) Devotee with knowledge object of Kṛishna's love.

Kṛishna then names four types of his votaries viz. (1) Ārta i.e. one who seeks relief from troubles (2) Jijnāsu i.e. one who is entering on the path of knowledge (3) Arthārthi i.e. one who desires material gain and (4) Jnāni i.e. the man of knowledge.[3] Of these four types of votaries Kṛishna considers the last one i.e. the man of knowledge intent on Kṛishna alone, as Kṛishna's desert votary.[4] He is deemed to be the very self of Kṛishna.[5] He alone will pierce the veil of Māyā or illusion[6] and realise that Kṛishna Vāsudeva appearing on this earth as an incarnation of Brahman in mortal guise is no other than Brahman the Absolute, which is all. It is rare to find such mighty souls.[7]

(g) Emancipation as the fruit of devotion.

In conclusion Kṛishna declares at the end of the eleventh chapter that single hearted devotion alone is the means to lead a man truly to know, to see and to become one with Kṛishna as the Supreme Lord. It is the votary alone who does his duty with Kṛishna as his goal who works without attachment and hates no living creature that comes to Kṛishna.[8] Kṛishna applies his above teaching to Arjuna at the end of the ninth chapter thus "Do thou who hast been born a man in this transient and joyless world of men, make me thine object of devotion. So shalt thou come to me."[9]

(h) Two methods of worship : devotion to the manifest Lord and contemplation of the unmanifest Absolute.

Kṛishna has already taught the Royal Mystery in the ninth chapter that he is one with the Supreme Brahman the Imperishable and has also revealed himself as transcendent and immanent Lord. Arjuna therefore asks Kṛishna which is the better method of worship whether by devotion to Kṛishna as manifest Lord or by direct contemplation of the imperishable unmanifest Brahman.[10] To which Kṛishna replies that the path of devotion is preferable to the path of contemplation of the Absolute Brahman

1. (7-13, 14). 2. (7-14). 3. (7-16). 4. (7-17). 5. (7-18). 6. (7-14).
7. (7-19). 8. (11-54, 55). 9. (9-33, 34). 10. (12-1).

as the latter is far more difficult and painful than the former though the fruit is the same and even those who contemplate the imperishable Brahman reach Kṛishna too.[1] Further, Kṛishna says that even the abandonment of the fruit of work if practised with devotion is superior to the colder intellectual modes that exclude devotion altogether.[2]

(4) Unity of Kṛishna in various aspects.

(a) Kṛishna as Purushottama or Triple Purusha.

In the fifteenth chapter Kṛishna speaks of the doctrine of three Purushas or persons viz. the perishable, the imperishable and the Supreme (Purushottama). The perishable person is all beings i. e. the not-self in every being[3] which corresponds to Aparā Prakṛiti.[4] The imperishable is called Kūtastha i. e. immovably exalted which is unmoved by contact with objects of nature. It corresponds to Parā Prakṛiti or Jīvabhutām.[5] The Supreme Purusha (Purushottama) is the highest Lord who entering the threefold world supports it.[6] He is so called because he transcends the perishable as well as the imperishable.[7] TheSupreme Purusha is cosmic Purusha who is both transcendent and immanent. Here Kṛishna the incarnation of the supreme is cosmic Purusha[8] having two natures viz. self and not-self which are combined in every being, thus shownig the organic unity of the universe. The three Purushas are not really separate or detached but they constitute one Purusha in three aspects. The word Purusha suggests personality both of the individual and the universe self and which is both cosmic and individual. It suggests personality within the impersonal. The idea of Purusha is not a new one but dates back to the Ṛig Veda and is found in the Purusha Sūkta.[9]

Here Purusha is universal and all-pervading. This universe is but one-fourth of him from an immanent point of view, while three-fourths is immortality in the heaven from a transcendental point of view. Ordinarily there seems a distinction between Purushas objectively and subjectively called *Adhidaiva* and *Adhyātma* respectively but it is not real. Thus the devas controlling the

1. (12-2 to 7). 2. (12-12). 3. (15-16). 4. (7-5). 5. (7-5).
6. (15-17). 7. (15-18). 8. (15-18). 9. R. V. (10-90).

cosmic forces of nature are called *Purusha Adhidaiva* (objective power), while the corresponding senses of the individual are called *Purusha Adhyātma* (subjective power). Both these Purushas are really one. Thus the Purusha in the Sun is purusha in the eye or Adhidaiva is identical with Adhyātma. There is a third form of Purusha, viz. The perishable Purusha which is called *Purusha Adhibhūta* relative to a particular material object. Kṛishna as Purushottama combines all the three above forms within himself viz. Adhyātma (spiritual) Adhidaiva (energetic) and Adhibhūta (material). Kṛishna is Adhidaiva as the source of cosmic energy which makes the gods work. Adhidaiva person is called the eternal person who is described most beautifully as a personal God in the Upanishads as also in the Gita,[1] devotion to whom leads to emancipation by stages. Kṛishna is Adhyātma as the essential self of the imperishable Supreme Brahman;[2] while Kṛishna as Purusha Adhibhūta (i.e. essential being) is perishable existence with reference to prakṛiti or nature.[3] Though Purusha Adhidaiva is identical with Purusha Adhyātma, both being spiritual, yet he is not identified with Purusha Adhibhūta as the latter is not-self or Kṛishna's lower nature which is perishable existence (Prakṛiti). Kṛishna preferably speaks of the lower nature as 'belonging to him' and 'under his governance'[4] rather than as himself. There is organic unity between all the three Purushas mentioned above. The man seeking emancipation must know all the three above forms of Purushas.[5] I have already stated above that Adhidaiva Purusha (objective power) is the same as Adhyātma Purusha (subjective power) both being spiritual life forces and there is no difference whatever between Purushottama and Akshara (Immutable) Purusha. As a matter of fact Kṛishna identifies himself with the essential self called Kshetrajna within all embodied souls.[6] In spite of this, certain sectarians have propounded the view that Purushottama as Adhidaiva or God of the theologians is superior to the Akshara Brahman or attributeless Absolute of the philosophers and Vice Versa. Both these views are false and evidently seem to be the outcome of sectarian fanaticism and bigotry. In the Upanishadic doctrine of non-dual monism which is throughout followed in the Gitā there is no question of

1. (8-8 to 10). 2. (8-3). 3. (8-4). 4. (4-6; 9-8, 10). 5. (7-30). 6. (13-2).

any dualism in the integrity and unity of the supreme being which is one only without a second.

(b) Kṛishna as Īshvara or Ruler.

The names Īsa and Īshvara are not applied to Brahman in the older Upanishads until we come to Svetāstavatara and Īsa Upanishads. The term Īshavara at once suggests the idea of personal deity in monotheism as an object of adoration and worship. In Gitā as in the Upanishads Īshavara is both transcendent ruler and immanent Lord. Kṛishna calls himself Īshvara, in the following verse[1] " The Lord, O Arjuna, dwells in the heart of everything and by his delusive power spins round all beings set on machine " He further calls himself as the great lord of all the worlds (Bhūta Maheshvara).[2] He is also called Parameshwara (i.e. the Lord Supreme) dwelling alike in all beings perishing not as they perish. He sees indeed who sees him as above.[3]

(c) Kṛishna as God of Justice and fruit giver.

Kṛishna advises Arjuna to do his duty without any eye to fruit, as it is Kṛishna's province only to give fruit and not man's. Although Kṛishna holds out hopes of grace to his votaries who take sole refuge under him and dedicate to him all works done by them with humble and meek submission having faith in his divine powers, he never shows any capricious partiality or vindictiveness towards any one[4] nor does he encourage total abstinence from all work or idleness in his votaries.[5] In the fourth chapter Kṛishna lays down a general rule for men as an incarnation for their guidance viz. that they must follow the path of virtue on lines laid down by Kṛishna such as helping the right, punishing the wicked,[6] doing philanthropic and altruistic works of general usefulness (Loka saṁgraha) in a self sacrificing spirit and without any selfish desire and so on.[7] He confers his gracious favour upon all who come to him exactly in the manner in which they approach him.[8] They have to satisfy him by dedicating their unselfish work to him that they deserve to merit his grace. Persons who are idle doing no useful work in a spirit of sacrifice and unselfishness, merely chanting his

1. (18-61). 2. (9-11). 3. (13-28). 4. (9-29). 5. (2-47).
6. (4-8). 7. (3-25). 8. (4-11).

names with dances of ecstacy do not participate his grace. Thus in the verse noted below,[1] Kṛishna lays down the rule of impartiality for the guidance of all his devotees " All beings I regard alike, not one is hateful to me or beloved, but those who with devotion worship me abide in me and I in them. " Shankarāchārya interprets the word ' Bhajanti ' in the above verse as ' do service with devotion ' for which we find a support in the well known grammarian Panini (600 B. C.). Shankarāchārya compares Kṛishna to fire which does not choose on whom it should spread its warmth. He who draws near it will be warmed while he who remains aloof from it will not have his cold warded off. The above verse clearly shows that Kṛishna is neither partial nor averse towards any one but he displays a sense of real justice by awarding rewards and punishments in exact proportion to the nature of the deeds done by that person. He is always impartial and just towards all. The above doctrine inspires in the hearts of the votaries feelings of love and adoration for Kṛishna, as also Faith in his powers and Hope for rewards in future according to their qualifications. By having full faith in these doctrines one is calm and contended and never grumbles against God for his misfortunes. He is convinced that Kṛishna could never be unjust to him and that he himself must be responsible for his sufferings having done some misdeeds in the past. Thus he accepts his lot cheerfully and resignedly and he is thereby freed from unnecessary worries and anxieties. Realizing his own short comings and mistakes he mends his future life by doing meritorious and virtuous deeds in the hope that Kṛishna is sure to lead him on to the spiritual path thereby.

(5) The Doctrine of Divine Grace.

Kṛishna as an incarnation of the supreme being was the most adorable object of devotion as he was the saviour by whose divine grace one could attain the eternal and immutable realm.[2] Kṛishna has taught Arjuna his devotee to cast off in thought all works done by him on Kṛishna, to make Kṛishna his goal and fix his thought ever on Kṛishna by the practice of discernment,[3] and Kṛishna assures him that "if he did work fixing his thoughts on Kṛishna he would surmount all difficulties by the grace of Kṛishna." Again the following verse[4]

1. (9-29). 2. (18-56). 3. (18-57). 4. (18-66).

contains the summary of the whole of the Gitā's doctrine of grace which will free Kṛishna's devotee from all sins. "Abandoning every duty come to me alone for refuge. I will release thee from all sins; sorrow not."

According to Rāmānuja the sole aim of the Gitā is to teach the great lesson of Prapatti or dedication of one's self wholly to the mercy of the Lord with meekness and humility as the surest means of securing release from all sins and emancipation. Kṛishna sums up to Arjuna his beloved friend the deep mystery of his teachings in the following verses[1] "all thoughts, sacrifice, worship and reverence must be directed towards Kṛishna."[2] "All work must be performed with true abandonment and Kṛishna alone must be sought as refuge and for which Kṛishna promises to deliver Arjuna from all sins and tells him not to grieve."[3]

IV. Cosmology

(1) Creation by the Lord of dual nature.

I have already pointed out above while dealing with the metaphysical and theological doctrines of the Gitā that although these are based on the Upanishads, yet the principal aim of the Gitā being to teach pure monotheism, it is naturally not free from empiric tendencies and it has set up a distinct theory of creation which is based on the law of causation. According to this theory creation is a process of evolution of the manifest from the unmanifest and the unmanifest from the manifest and so on in a ceaseless cycle from eternity.[4] The law of evolution in continuity is a part and parcel of the nature of Kṛishna who is therefore believed to be the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the universe as also its ruler and controller. Kṛishna Vāsudeva is according to Gitā both the efficient as well as the material cause of the world,[5] as also cause of its destruction.[6] He is also the sustainer of the universe wherein all beings abide and by whom the universe is pervaded.[7] The true form of Kṛishna Vāsudeva however being as an all-pervading universal spirit there could be no creation of the material world by any convertion (Parināma) of pure spirit

1. (18-64). 2. (18-65). 3. (18-66). 4. (2-28). 5. (10-8, 7-10, 12). 6. (7-6). 7. (9-4, 6, 10).

which is always immaterial as wrongly propounded by the school of pure monism started by Vallabha. To avoid such a misconception Krishna has propounded the doctrine of creation by him as a Supreme Being through his two powers called Aparā or lower nature and Parā or higher nature,[1] which are always parts and parcels of his being from eternity.[2] The lower nature is also called simply Parkriti or the power of the personal God to evolve the material world of names and forms from the unmanifest state. It is also called the potential energy or Prāna shakti of the Lord which is never independent of the supreme spirit in any of the three stages of creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe. Prakriti or nature in its primordial state consists of 3 Gunas or strands called Satva (Purity), Rajas (energy) and Tamas (darkness), which are at rest and in a state of equipoise. Before creation Prakriti is merged in the Universal Spirit. The names and forms of the material objects about to be evolved are not then in a manifest form but are merged in the potential energy of the Lord who is then inactive. An undulatory or a vibratory movement is started in the Prakriti just when the Lord begins to feel a desire to create and evolution then sets in motion. The names and forms however in the state prior to creation are not reduced to nothingness, but have an ideal existence as germs in the mind of the personal God. They are insentient and are incapable of any motion by themselves until informed by the power of the supreme spirit. They are always objects but never subjects. The two natures of the Lord mentioned above are always inseparable and constitute the solid integrity of the supreme person. The lower nature known as Prakriti is the matrix of the material world and it first evolves cosmic intelligence from which comes the principle of individuation. The five elements ether, wind, fire (heat) water and earth are next evolved as also the evolutes of the 10 senses and mind from the principle of individuation. The higher nature is called Jivabhūtam i.e. essential life or pure spirit by which this universe is upheld.[3] All beings are born of these 2 natures of the supreme soul. The lower nature being insentient cannot evolve the universe by itself without union of the higher nature or essential life of the supreme soul under whose

1. (7-5, 6). 2. (13-19). 3. (7-5).

guidance and control the lower nature which is the cause of the material world carries on the work of evolution. These two natures of the supreme soul higher (para) and lower (Apara) are also called purusha or Kshetrajna and Prakṛiti or Kshetra, in the 13th chapter and Akshara Purusha and Kshara Purusha in the 15th chapter. It is by the union of these two natures that all objects of the Universe whether steady or moving are produced.[1] Kshetra or prakṛiti is also described as Mahat Brahma or the great Brahman while the supreme soul is called the father. The supreme soul as father is said to lay the germ in Mahat Brahma (the great Brahman) which is called the womb and thence comes to birth every being.[2] All the products of this material world partake of the nature of the three constituents of of Prakṛiti viz. Satwa. (purity) Rajas (energy) or tamas (darkness). These three constituents or strands (gunas) of Prakṛiti have their origination from one ultimate source viz. the supreme soul who is independent of and not subject to these strands but they are dependent on him.[3] The whole world being deluded by these constituents of nature does not recognize that the supreme soul is higher than these[4] but they confound him with these strands of nature and believe him to be material when he is not.[5]

(2) Order of evolution.

All the products of the universe are ultimately derived from the above two natures of the supreme soul and which are themselves unborn.[6] Prakṛiti or nature when treated as the potential life energy of the supreme soul having its being in him is unborn and indestructible but it is deemed to be born with reference to the three strands (gunas) viz. Satva, Rajas and Tamas which are evolved from it in the following order. First there is the supreme soul called Kshetrajna which is the conscious principle and is identical in essence with the supreme soul.[7] Then there is Prakṛiti which by nature is insentient and from which is first evolved Avyakta made up of the three strands (gunas) Satva, Rajas and Tamas. From Avyakta proceeds consecutively in the order mentioned below, first

1. (13-26). 2. (14-3,4). 3. (7-12). 4. (7-13). 5. (7-24).
6. (13-19). 7. (13-2).

cosmic reason, then the principle of individuation, and then the five elements ether, wind, fire (heat) water and earth. From the principle of individuation comes 10 organs of perception and action and mind and lastly comes the five objects of senses thus making the total number twenty five.[1] This number tallies with the total number of principles mentioned in the atheistical school of the Sānkhyas who however mean by Purusha the embodied soul but not the supreme soul. But in the Gitā we have twenty six principles which we obtain by adding one more principle to the 25 principles of the atheistic Sānkhyas called the supreme soul or Kshetrajna or the conscious principle as distinguished from the embodied souls migrating in the world. These embodied souls (collectively called Purushas) are made up by a combination (Sanghāta) of the above principles derived from Prakṛiti with Desire, hate, pleasure, pain, association, intelligence and constancy.[2] All the above twenty-five principles including the embodied soul or Purusha, except the supreme soul or Kshetrajna which is the principle of consciousness, are called Kshetra or field which is insentient and unconscious by nature.[3] Kshetra is ever changing and unreal while Kshetrajna is ever unchanging and unmoved. It is the pure spirit of consciousness and light and is a life giver to the products of Prakṛiti.

(3) The doctrine of three gunas (strands) of Nature.

Each separate being springs from the union of spirit with Prakṛiti or nature which is also called the womb. Krishna as father deposits in the womb of Prakṛiti the seed which is essential life, thus causing the birth of every individual.[4] The first principle of the material universe is Prakṛiti or nature which consists of the three strands or constituents (gunas) called Satva (purity) Rajas (energy) and Tamas (darkness). The evolution of this universe takes place only by the development of the above three strands of of nature. These three strands are found in all beings in varying proportions. It is owing to the attachment to these three gunas or strands born of nature that the embodied soul is bound in

1. (13-5). 2. (13-6). 3. (13-6). 4. (14-3, 4).

Prakṛiti and becomes a bonded slave.[1] When the light of knowledge springs up, it may be known that Satwa (Purity) is predominent.[2] Energy (Rajas) is passion and results from attachment.[3] Darkness (tamas) is illusive and results from ignorance.[4] Character of a man depends on a true and balanced relationship of these three gunas. Presence of knowledge marks purity, keen and ceaseless activities mark the prevalence of energy while dullness lethargy and indolence mark the prevalence of darkness.[5] If purity is predominent in a man he goes to celestial realms on death. If energy is predominent he is reborn among men while if darkness prevails he is reborn after death in lower forms of life as animals, etc.[6] Emancipation is obtained by those who realize the knowledge that work is done by the strands of Prakṛiti while the supreme soul who is higher than the strands is never a doer.[7] These three gunas are not qualities but are the primary constituents of Prakṛiti and are the basis of all substances which bind fast the self which is indestructible in the body.[8] Even the happiness and knowledge derived by the migrating soul in the empiric world are modifications of Sattva and are attributes of Antahakarana (inner self) which is a product of Prakṛiti or Kshetra (not-self)[9] and these bind the embodied self by making him think 'I am happy and wise'[10] although really speaking these do not belong to the pure self. When the embodied Soul crosses beyond these three strands of Prakṛiti, he obtains emancipation and immortal bliss.[11] The man who has crossed beyond the strands is completely indifferent to and unmoved by them and he realises that all activity belongs to Prakṛiti.[12] He treats the usual pairs (dwandwas) as pain and sorrow etc. and earth and gold as alike and with indifference and perfect equanimity of mind without any perturbation whatever.[13] Whatever work he does he does without desire. Such a stage fits a person for emancipation and is reached by unflinching devotion and loving service to Kṛishna,[14] for it is Kṛishna the Incarnate Lord in whom the Supreme Brahman rests who is the source of changeless immortality, of the eternal law of virtue, and of supreme and unparalled joy.[15]

1. (14–5); 2. (14–11); 3. (14–12); 4. (14–17); 5. (14–6 to 8); 6. (14–14); 7. (14–20); 8. (14–5); 9. (13–6); 10. (14–6); 11. (14–26); 12. (14–23); 13. (14–24); 14. (14–26); 15. (14–27).

(4) The Doctrine of Non-Dual Monism or Absolute Idealism.

The theory of creation by the combination of Spirit and Prakṛiti (nature) and the working of the three strands (gunas) born from it as set out above might create a primafacie impression that the Gitā teaches the doctrine of dualism like the Sānkhya but it is not so in fact. I have already pointed out above that Prakṛiti or nature is not an independent or self-subsisting principle detached from the supreme soul. Prakṛiti is always insentient and unconscious while Purusha is a conscious principle. Prakṛiti is ever changing while Purusha is Kūtastha or immutable and unchangeable. Prakṛiti has its being only within the universal spirit and not outside of him. The three strands of Prakṛiti are evolved by the supreme soul from within its own self and not from outside. The names and forms of the manifest world just prior to creation subsist only as objects of the thought of the supreme soul and not independent of him. The acts of creation, preservation and destruction of the universe are effected by the supreme soul through Prakṛiti which is always subordinate to him by controlling it[1] and not by Prakṛiti acting independently of him.[2] Even the social order of the four castes is established by the Supreme Being by regulating the laws of action. It therefore follows that the only reality is the universal spirit which is again identified with the essential self of the individual souls.[3] Kṛishna has therefore taught to Arjuna the doctrine of non-dual monism in two small words " Vāsudevaha Sarvam " i.e. the supreme spirit is all[4] which clearly mean that the supreme spirit alone is real while every thing else as independent of him is unreal. All this manifold universe is strung on Vāsudeva Kṛishna as rows of gems upon a thread.[5]

(5) Absolute Idealism and Pantheism.

The doctrine of the organic unity of the world is further taught by Kṛishna in the following verse[6] where he says " Undivided yet in beings seeming to dwell divided, supporter of beings too is that which is to be known and is their devourer and begetter." Kṛishna has further taught that his essential self (Adhyātmam) is identical with the transcendent pure spirit called Aksharam (imperishable)

1. (9-8, 10). 2. (7-12). 3. (13-2). 4. (7-19). 5. (7-7). 6. (13-16).

Brahman which is not material.[1] Therefore the phrase "Vāsudevaha Sarvam" (i.e. the supreme spirit is all[2]) does not teach the doctrine of pantheism or identification of the supreme spirit with all including even the inanimate nature, as wrongly understood by the followers of the school of pure Monism started by Vallabha. The Gitā only teaches the doctrine of absolute idealism as established in the Upanishads according to which there is identity between the essential self of individual souls and that of the supreme soul or Brahman and not between pure spirit or self and Prakṛiti (inanimate nature) or not-self which is perishable.[3] This conclusion is further supported by the teaching in the following verse[4] where Kṛishna says "Know also, me to be Kshetrajna (pure spirit) or knower of the field in all fields (which means body evolved of Prakṛiti)". Here Kṛishna does not identify himself with Prakṛiti or nature. Gitā therefore teaches only the Upanishadic doctrine of absolute idealism and not pantheism. Accordingly spirit alone whether individual or cosmic, is real while the universe of names and forms is not separate from nor independent of the universal spirit. This interpretation of non-dual monism is further supported by the verse[5] cited below which teaches the worship of Kṛishna as the supreme spirit and none else as separated or detached from him (Ananya).

(6) The Doctrine of Māyā or Unreality of the world.

The doctrine of Māyā or unreality of the world follows as a matter of course from the doctrine of non-dual monism as set out above. This doctrine is already found in the Vedas and the Upanishads and particularly in the Svetāsvatara Upanishad as shown by me while dealing with the subject in the Upanishad period to which the reader's attention is invited. In the Upanishads the word Māyā means illusion or false knowledge ascribing reality to the separate objects of the manifold universe of names and forms as self-subsisting independent units existing by themselves in space separately from the supreme spirit though these are really unreal. This false conception of the world is due to the ignorance of embodied souls as the result of the delusive power (Māyā) of the Lord which veils from them the true knowledge of his essential

1. (8-3). 2. (7-19). 3. (13-1, 5, 6; 8-4; 15-16). 4. (13-2). 5. (9-22).

nature. In the Gītā, the word Māyā is generally used in this latter sense as meaning the delusive power of the Lord as appears from the following verses "The Lord, oh Arjuna dwells in the heart of every being and by his delusive power spins round all beings set on the machine."[1] " For this my divine delusion (Māyā) of the strands of nature is hard to pass; those who take refuge in me alone pass beyond this delusion."[2] " Though unborn, and immutable in essence, though Lord of beings yet governing nature which is mine I come into being by my delusive power. "[3] "Veiled by my power of delusion (Yoga-Māyā) I am not light to all; deluded is this world and it does not recognise me as unborn, and immutable."[4] Shankarāchārya however sometimes uses the word (Māyā) as equivalent to ignorance where the individual falsely attributes existence to the objects of experience. Though this view of the illusion or unreality of the universe gets direct support from the Upanishads as also the Gitā yet Gitā generally uses the term Māyā in the sense of delusive power of the Lord as stated above and not as identical with Prakṛiti or Avidyā. However it may be stated here that Avidyā or ignorance of the individual is the result of the delusive power of the Lord who alone is not subject to it as he is always omniscient. ' The Lord according to Gitā controls and directs Prakṛiti (nature) which functions objectively in the universe and subjectively in the individual souls[5] but He is concealed from man though he dwells in them on account of Avidyā or ignorance.

(7) Prakṛiti is the Creative medium of God.

Pure spirit whether cosmic or individual according to the doctrine of the Gitā is never a doer but a principle of pure consciousness and a knower (Kshetrajna)[6] only. Action therefore is relegated to Prakṛiti the lower nature of the supreme being. The Universal Soul as a self conscious spirit is distinguished from his lower nature called Prakṛiti as also the migrating soul. He is omniscient knowing all while the individual soul is ignorant.[7] The supreme celestial person (Parama Purusha) is thus described.[8] ' This Ancient seer the director and ordainer of all, glorious with ever lasting intelligence, beyond the darkness." He is always the Lord

1. (18-61). 2. (7-14). 3. (4-6). 4. (7-25). 5. (9-10). 6. (13-2). 7. (7-26). 8. (8-9).

and master and never a servant. Therefore Krishna delegates the act of creation to his lower nature called Prakṛiti which is the creative medium or the law of the Supreme Being and is unseen except by the effects. Prakṛiti as the creative medium of the Lord cannot therefore be identified with the supreme being as creation is only one of his innumerable glories. The supreme being is the causeless cause of this universe while Prakṛiti is the creative medium thereof through which God creates or rather manifests what was unmanifest before. The supreme being never works directly but only through Prakṛiti or life energy as its medium or agent which creates this universe under divine guidance and control.[1] Prakṛiti or nature is the womb that holds while the supreme soul is the father that gives the seed.[2] Prakṛiti is sometimes called Swabhāva or law, as in the verse[3] " Nor power of works does the mighty Lord create nor the world's works nor union of works with fruit. It is Swabhāva or law that comes forth to action." Now just as law cannot exist apart or separate from the law giver, in the same way Prakriti or nature cannot exist separately from its Lord who controls it.

(8) Prakṛiti Constitutes the Law of Causation.

The whole phenomenal world of names and forms consisting of gods, men, animals, vegetables and inanimate objects of nature is subject to the law of causation which is universal. Therefore effect is always preceded by a cause. Every effect is potential in cause which must materialise as effect. Effect is the necessary consequence of the cause. If a certain cause is set in motion, the effect will have to equal the cause. The law of causation has its full play in the world of nature and men The law is also expressed in the form that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The Karmic law of action is also another form of the same law. This law is traced to Prakṛiti which is the source of all action. All activities are traced to Prakṛiti or nature in the form of receptive mind which is subordinate to the self-conscious spirit which controls the mind. The following extracts will clearly show that according to the doctrine of the Gitā, Prakṛiti or nature is the cause of actions or works. " Every man is caused to work perforce by the strands

1. (9-10; 9-8). 2. (14-4). 3. (5-14).

born of nature."[1] "In the production of effects and causes, nature is said to be the cause."[2] "Entirely by the strands of nature are works done; he whose self is deluded by egoism, thinks 'I am the doer."[3] "He who sees that works are done altogether by nature and that Ātman or self works not, he sees indeed"[4] "When the beholder sees no worker other than strands and knows Him who is higher than the strands he enters into my being."[5] In short it may be stated that actions are done as the result of a definite law which is guided and controlled by the spirit who is not a doer but a knower only. Action is the concrete materialisation in an objective form of a concept which is only set in motion or incited by the self-conscious principle called spirit.

V. Psychology.

(1) Nature of Empiric Soul.

The individual soul is identical with the supreme soul from an ontological point of view so far as the essential spiritual self is concerned but from an empirical point of view the embodied soul which is made up of body, mind and senses is subordinate to the supreme soul.[6] This forms the subject matter of rational psychology. The various evolutes of nature giving rise to body, mind and organs give rise to the individual soul who presides the Sanghāta (combination) made up of the evolutes of nature with the addition of desire, hate, pleasure, pain, association, intelligence and constancy.[7] The embodied soul consists of three parts viz., gross body made up of the elements, subtile body made up of five senses of knowledge, five senses of action, intellect, individuation and mind and a causal body which is the substrate of actions, and certain Vāsanās or impressions which lead to his rebirths and migrations in this world. The embodied soul is (Aṅsha) part of the Lord i.e. he is under the Lord's control as the latter has no parts. He attracts the mind and the five senses which rest in nature.[8] "When the individual soul Īshvara i.e. Lord of the body, acquires a body and also when he ascends thereform he seizes these i.e. the mind and the senses and goes on his way (i.e. migrates in this world by deaths and rebirths) as

1. (3-5). 2. (13-20). 3. (3-27). 4. (13-29). 5. (14-19).
6. (15-7). 7. (13-5, 6). 8. (15-7).

the wind carries scents from their resting place."[1] The embodied soul is born in this world to enjoy the fruits of the deeds, good or bad done by him in the former life which need their requital by fresh experiences. The empiric soul goes on migrating in this world by taking repeated births until he gets emancipation by spiritual knowledge.

(2) Empiric soul as doer and enjoyer.

The empiric soul consisting of body, senses, and mind having the supreme soul as its center is enveloped in ignorance and he treats the world of appearance as reality and is devoid of all spiritual knowledge. He has no sense of discrimination between self and not-self or spirit and Prakṛiti. He therefore attributes the qualities of Prakṛiti to spirit and of spirit to Prakṛiti. Thus he identifies himself with Prakṛiti and body which is its product and attributes the agency of works to himself although it belongs to Prakṛiti and as a result he feels himself happy or miserable.[2] It is stated in the Gitā that " Prakṛiti or nature is the cause in the production of effects and causes, while Purusha or the embodied soul is the cause in the enjoyment of pleasure and pain.[3] The above two traits viz, the agency of all works and the enjoyment of worldly joys and sorrows constitute the nature of the empiric soul thus distinguishing him from the supreme soul who is neither an agent doing work nor an enjoyer of worldly joys and sorrows.

(3) Release by knowledge of the field (Kshetra) and the fieldknower (Kshetrajna).

"The supreme person in this body is called the spectator, the approver, the sustainer, the experiencer, the great Lord and also the Highest self."[4] The supreme soul is identical with the self-conscious principle within a man which constitutes his true personality. He is a spectator of all the actions done by the empiric soul and is his guide, friend and philosopher and saves him from a fall provided he listens to the inner voice by having a receptive mind and is not obsessed by the glittering glamour of the worldly drama of appearances performed by Prakṛiti or nature. The cause of migrations and rebirths in bodies high and low of the empiric souls, is their attachment to the strands (gunas) of nature. A proper knowledge therefore of Purusha

1. (15-8). 2. (13-21) 3. (13-20). 4. (13-22).

or Kshetrajna (supreme soul) and Kshetra (Pakṛiti) leads a man to release from rebirths and emancipation.[1]

(4) Free and bound Souls.

True freedom consists in having spiritual knowledge of our true being which constitutes the summum bonum of life, or emancipation. The real cause of suffering in this world is ignorance of the natureof our true being and of philosophical knowledge of the exact relations subsisting between the supreme self, nature and man. According to the Gitā there is no difference in the essential nature of the self of the individual soul and the supreme soul. It is only our ignorance that makes such a difference. The embodied soul from a philosophical standpoint is no other than the supreme soul in so far as his inner spiritual self is concerned and the knowledge of the identity of the spiritual self of the individual soul and the supreme soul and of the organic unity of the whole cosmos as having its true being in the spiritual self as the only reality, frees him from the coils of nature and marks him a free soul.[2] But the same embodied soul becomes bound if he is attached to nature and the three strands of nature and being obsessed and overpowered by nature, he wrongly indentifies himself with the lower nature and believes that he is the agent of works and feels himself happy in worldly pursuits and sensual objects.[3]

VI. Eschatology.

(1) Paths of the Fathers (Pitṛiyāna) and the Gods (Devayāna).

Gitā follows the Eschatological systems of the Upanishads regarding the state of persons after death. Thus Gitā describes the two paths of Fathers (Pitṛiyāna) and Gods (Devayāna) as shown in the Upanishads by which the souls of persons who do pious works here and of those who know the Supreme Being or who worship him by devotion travel after death to the moon and to the world of Brahman respectively. The souls of virtuous people depart from this world by the path of the Fathers from where they are reborn in this world after enjoying the fruit of their virtue for such period as their merit is not exhausted in the world of the Fathers or the Heaven. The souls of those who depart by the path

1. (13-23, 13-34). 2. (13-34, 14-26) 3. (14-5).

of Gods to the world of Brahman are never reborn here. These two paths are thus described in the Gitā:—" For these two ways the bright (the path of Gods) and the dark (the path of the Fathers) are held to be the world's eternal ways; by the one a man goes not to return here; by the other he returns again to this world."[1] The author of the Gitā accepts the theory of the Upanishads as regards the details of the different places of abode in the above two paths.

(2) Atmospheric and Nether worlds (Hell).

Gitā adds certain new theories in the eschatological system of the Upanishads which may be summarised as follows. There are some persons who depart on death neither by the path of the Fathers nor by the path of the Gods. Their souls enter the intermediate atmospheric world (Bhuvar-loka) where they remain as disembodied ghosts (Preta) on account of the neglect of their funeral obsequies (Shrāddha) and other ceremonies by their children and descendants. The deceased fathers who are deprived of the annual offerings of food and water (Pinda-udak) may also fall to lower states.[2] These disembodied ghosts haunt the people dwelling in this world. There is also another place of destination called Hell (Naraka) which falls to the lot of the sinners and the wicked.[3] These are provided with a special body of woe in the hell and there they suffer age-long torment till they are reborn. Krishna hurls these wicked men to the regions below this earth (Pātāla) etc. which are habited by devils and monsters. Devilish men are hurled down for ever into devilish wombs (Āsuri Yoni).[4] Different fruits are awarded according to the objects worshipped. Thus those who worship the devas or the gods will go to the devas and their character will be divine; those who worship the Fathers will enter the realms of Fathers; those who worship Ghosts will find a place among ghosts; while those who worship Krishna as the universal spirit or supreme divinity enter into his being and obtain emancipation.[5]

(3) The Doctrine of Transmigration.

The above doctrine which had been definitely started in the Upanishads has been followed in the Gitā. According to this

1. (8-26). 2. (1-42). 3. (1-44; 16-16). 4. (16-19). 5. (9-25).

doctrine when a man dies, his soul which is enveloped in a subtle body passes after some time into another body leaving off his gross body as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones.[1] His rebirth takes place in a body which corresponds exactly with the deeds done by him in the previous life. If he has done virtuous deeds in the former life he is born in high castes, while if he has done wicked acts he is born in low castes or in bodies of animals and even plants. This process of repeated rebirths and deaths goes on until he obtains emancipation by spiritual knowledge. This doctrine of repeated births which is known as the doctrine of transmigration of the soul is based on the law of cause and effect. It is the cardinal doctrine of the Gitā.[2] Those who have done righteous acts travel on death by the path of the Fathers to the moon where they enjoy the realm of the Fathers or heaven for a certain period varying with the deeds done by them and on the expiry of the said period they are reborn here to enjoy the fruit of the remnant of the deeds done by them in the past life as a second requital. The cause of rebirths and transmigration is attachment to the strands (gunas) of nature.[3] Those who rest in purity (Satva) go upwards and become gods. If they rest in energy (Rajas) they are born as men and if in ignorance (Tamas) they are born as animals or in lower regions.[4] According to Gitā rebirth also depends on the last thoughts of a man at the time of death.[5] If he remembers Krishna at the time of death he comes to his being.[6] If persons who have done pious deeds have a fall while on the way to Gods, after dwelling there for some time they are reborn in the house of the pure and the wealthy,[7] until they achieve final emancipation.

VII. Emancipation.

(I) Positive Conception of Emancipation.

Emancipation or release from the endless rounds of births in this mortal world of restless desires was the summum bonum of life and it meant a state of immortality (Amṛitatva).[8] The conception of emancipation or liberation in the Gītā is positive unlike that of the Buddhists whose conception was negative. The word for

1. (2–22). 2. (2–27, 4–5). 3. (13–21). 4. (14-18). 5. (8–6). 6. (8–5). 7. (6–41). 8. (2–15).

emancipation in Buddhist literature was Nirvāna which meant an entry into an indefinite abyss of Void (Shūnya). The state of Emancipation in the Gītā on the other hand is positive and it means perfect peace (paramam Shantim),[1] the calm of Brahman (brahma Nirvānam)[2] and endless and absolute pleasure in contact with the Absolute.[3] It also means a release from evil.[4] It is a place from which there is no return[5] or rebirth.[6] The embodied one is freed from birth, death, decay and pain, and attains the immortal."[7]

(2) Different forms of emancipation.

(a) Oneness with the Supreme Being

According to Upanishads the highest conception of emancipation is to become one with Brahman and we find the same idea in Gitā.[8] The state of such a soul is thus described in the Gitā "Becoming Brahman he is serene, not grieving nor desiring, regarding all beings alike. he wins to the highest devotion towards Kṛishna."[9] The state of oneness of the released soul with the supreme being is also expressed as entry into Kṛishna's being.[10]

(b) Emancipation as an Eternal and Immutable Abode.

There is also another conception of emancipation in the Gitā as an eternal and immutable abode (Akshara Dhāma), from which there is no return.[11] It is an intellectual restive place and an abode of eternal peace and joy.[12] The term abode is used in the sense of the universal goal of life and not as a place of habitation. In the Ṛig Veda the highest abode of Vishnu is the mysterious heaven which is concealed from the view of ordinary persons. It is full of nectar and honey. It is the transcendental form of the highest deity. It is called the highest place of immortality and eternal joy. No Sun or Moon nor fire can illuminate it as it is self illuminating.[13] This is also considered to be the highest place of refuge even of Kṛishna as a conditioned God.[14] Thus the conditioned form of Kṛishna has its ultimate destination in the Akshara Brahman which is transcendent and in which the former has its being while the latter has an abode in Kṛishna as

1. (6-15). 2. (2-72; 5-24, 25, 26). 3. (6-21, 28). 4. (9-1).
5. (5-17; 8-21). 6. (13-12; 14-20). 7. (14-20). 8. (5-24; 17-3).
9. (18-54). 10. (4-10; 8-5 and 14-19; 18-55). 11. (8-21; 18-56).
12. (18-54, 56, 62). 13. (15-6). 14. (15-6).

immanent Lord and incarnation of the Supreme Being as appears from the verse cited below.[1] The immanent aspect of the Supreme Being regulates and controls this manifest universe. This would go to show that the transcendent Brahman (attributeless) is the same as the immanent Brahman (with attributes) without any difference in their integral unity. There is complete identity between the impersonal (para Akshara) and the personal (para Purusha) Supreme Being and there is no question of any superiority or inferiority between these two aspects of the same Supreme Being as wrongly understood in certain schools of philosophy. Thus Purushottama or Paramātman the supreme person[2] is the same as Para Akshara or Para Avyakta (the supreme immutable and unmanifest).[3] There is impersonality within the personal and personality within the impersonal supreme being which always go together and which can never be separated. Gitā mentions both the above aspects of the Supreme Being to give a complete view of the integral unity of the Absolute which is the highest ontological object and the goal of all philosophical inquiry. Lord Kṛishna again describes emancipation as an entry into his being which is both conditioned in this manifest world and also unconditioned the latter constituting his real nature.[4]

(c) Approach to the Highest Divinity for eternal comradeship.

In the Gitā we also find passages wherein emancipation is described as an approach to the Highest Being for eternal companionship with him of ordinary persons who could not realize their oneness with the Supreme Being and were not fitted to become one with Brahman, as will appear from the following verses: " To Brahman alone the sacrificer will approach who contemplates the sacrifice as Brahman ".[5] "That man at the time of going hence, (i.e. dying) with mind unwavering, endued with devotion and by the power of control, setting the breath rightly between the eye-brows goes to the supreme celestial person (Divyam Purusham)"[6] "Having approached the celestial person who is again identified with Kṛishna great souls win not rebirth which is the abode of misery and impermanence."[7]

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1. (14-27); 2. (15-17); 3. (8-20, 21); 4. (18-55).
5. (4-24); 6. (8-10); 7. (8-15).

(3) Means to emancipation.

Different means are laid down in the Gitā for achieving emancipation, of which the most important is knowledge being the immediate cause of emancipation while others are the mediate causes. Gita lays down three paths viz., right work, devotion, and knowledge as means to emancipation. These are included in the two methods of Sānkhya (knowledge) and Yoga (action) as pointed out in the verses noted below.[1] Devotion is included in the path of right action without desire for fruit (Karma Yoga).[2] All these methods viz. action, devotion and knowledge are important and useful, in their own ways to contribute to the ultimate end of emancipation. A balanced relationship is however required to be preserved between these three methods. Thus the man of knowledge is expected to work in a spirit of control and to have staunch devotion towards Kṛishna.[3] Similarly the devotion of Kṛishna's votaries who are dear to him is not divorced from the elements of right renunciation and knowledge, otherwise, isolated devotion would be unsubstantial ecstacy.[4] So the work and knowledge of a perfect Yogi or ascetic are not separated from devotion.[5]

Knowledge (Jnāna).

Of all the means to emancipation, knowledge is the highest. Gitā throughout lays special stress on the value of knowledge as a very important means which directly leads to emancipation. " The sacrifice of knowledge is better than material sacrifices."[6] " Having gained knowledge one comes right soon to the highest peace. "[7] " Knowing me Kṛishna the great Lord of all the worlds and friend of all, one reaches peace."[8] Knowledge which is the direct cause of emancipation is not the ordinary cognitive knowledge savouring of duality but it is intuitional knowledge accompanied with direct experience. It is therefore told by Kṛishna to Arjuna: "He would declare the most mysterious knowledge (Jnāna) together with intuitional experience (Vijnāna) a knowledge of which leads to release from evil."[9] This knowledge also leads to immortality or deathlessness[10] and freedom from rebirths.[11]

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1. (3-3 and 5-4, 5); 2. (6-47; 12-2); 3. (7-17); 4. (12-13 to 20); 5. (6-46, 47); 6. (4-33); 7. (4-39); 8. (5-29); 9. (9-1); 10. (13-12); 11. (13-23).

Devotion (Bhakti).

Devotion is the next important means to emancipation. It may be either to the personal Lord or the impersonal supreme self. Both these methods of devotion lead to emancipation.[1] But Krishna recommends the method of devotion to himself as a personal Lord in preference to the worship of the unmanitest, being the easier of the two methods.[2] Krishna further teaches to Arjuna that by undivided devotion to his universal form as shown in the eleventh chapter, he could be known truly, seen, and entered into.[3] Krishna further points out that he is won by divine grace which is conferred by him upon all those who do works placing implicit faith in him.[4]

Action (Karma).

Action is the next means to emancipation. It should be however right work done without desire for fruit and be accompanied with devotion.[5] According to Gitā, the method of even mere abandonment of the fruit of work in a spirit of devotion to the Lord is better than mere meditation that rejects all loving service.[6] Benevolent and Austere works done in a spirit of sacrifice are always encouraged as preparatory means to emancipation. A life of total inaction is repugnant to the Gitā.[7] Gitā always urges on men to discharge well the duties imposed upon them in a spirit of sacrifice, and renunciation of attachment as valuable aid to achieve the true end of man's life.[8]

VIII. Ethics of the Gitā.

(1) Relation of action and knowledge.

I have already pointed out above that according to Gitā there are only two paths viz. the path of knowledge (Sānkhya) and the path of action (Yoga) which lead to emancipation. These two paths are complementary like theory and practice. Both co-operate and are useful in achieving the final end of a man's life. Action is outward while knowledge is inward. Action is however only a preparatory means which qualifies a man for spiritual knowledge. The latter alone directly leads to emancipation. Action is only a means to the end but not the end in itself. Knowledge

1. (12-4, 7); 2. (12-2); 3. (11-54, 8-22); 4. (18-56, 18-62); 5. (3-19, 6-12); 6. (12-12). 7. (2-47, 3-5, 8); 8. (3-35; 18-45, 47, 49, 56, 58).

on the other hand teaches us the true nature of our own being i.e. our real self which a constitutes emancipation. Emancipation is not something outside of our true spiritual self. Gitā teaches us that all action is done by Prakṛiti or our lower nature and not by our true self which is a knower and witness only.[1] It is only a false sense of egoism that leads one to identify his body and mind with his true self and hence his bondage. Gitā therefore teaches at the very outset the important lesson that all worldly objects are born of Prakṛiti or the lower nature and are false and unreal and one should never be deluded by them.[2] It is only knowledge of our true spiritual self and the knowledge that the self is only a knower and not a doer that will destroy the binding power of Prakṛiti. Actions done with such knowledge are sacrificed and burnt in the altar of knowledge.[3]

(2) Denouncement of total inaction.

The extreme speculations in the Upanishads led to a tendency of total abandonment and renunciation of all works. A further impetus was given to this tendency by an increasing fear of transmigrations of the soul in endless cycles of births and deaths in this mortal world full of miseries and of the horrors of metempsychosis. This led to a school of philosophers who preached the doctrine of extreme asceticism and total abandonment of all works as the only means of salvation and release from rebirths in this world. Total abandonment of all works was however physically impossible in the nature of things as certain acts were always necessary for the maintenance and upkeep of one's body and soul together. Therefore Gitā has denounced total inaction as impossible in the nature of things.[4] Kṛishna has taught that "whenever right declines and wrong uprises, he takes incarnations from time to time in bodily forms for protecting the virtuous and destroying the wicked and for establishing Virtue and law"[5] and he further adds that "if he neglected work, the world would fall in ruin."[6] Thus even Lord Kṛishna's own life and conduct was a sufficient lesson to confute the doctrine of total inaction.

(3) Denouncement of Actions with Desire.

Kṛishna further attacks certain schools of Mimānsakas who taught the doctrine of works with a desire for rewards as heaven,

1. (3-27, 13-29); 2. (2-14, 3-34); 3. (4-23, 37).
4. (2-47, 3-5, 8. 18-11); 5. (4-7, 8); 6. (3-24).

material prosperity etc., by preaching his new doctrine of Karma Yoga. Gitā speaks with contempt of those, who offer Vedic sacrifices to different Gods with the sole motive of enjoying the pleasures of paradise after death without any other aim of life.[1] It teaches the Upanishad doctrine that heavenly world does not bring permanent happiness, nor is heaven permanent. The persons who are rewarded with a celestial abode as the fruit of sacrifices and other pious deeds done by them, are reborn in this mortal world as soon as their merit is exhausted.[2]

(4) Doctrine of Karma-Yoga or action without desire.

Gitā for the first time taught the doctrine of right action without desire which practically revolutionized the current modes of thought and proved a healthy corrective to the existing views of total renunciation and abandonment of all actions. By his theory of Karma Yoga, Kṛishna taught that any work including even Vedic sacrifices and duties of castes binds a man to rebirth if it is done with a desire for reward. He has given two new definitions of Yoga or right action. The word Yoga is derived from the root ' Yuj ' to unite and it means union of the individual soul with the supreme soul. But in the Gitā the word Yoga is generally used in the technical sense of control or balance of character which leads to union with the supreme being. Kṛishna at first defines Yoga as control or balance of mind by which one views success and failure as alike.[3] Then he gives another definition of Yoga as skill in work or practice of discernment without desire.[4] By the first definition, Kṛishna teaches the method of control over all the three functions of the mind, viz. reason, will and emotion which constitute the whole personality of a man. While by the second definition he teaches the doctrine of duty without desire and for the sake of duty.

(5) Practice of self control and work with Detachment.

The Yoga method of work (Karma Yoga) as taught by Kṛishna thus included the practice of self control and moral discipline and the practice of discernment of work in a spirit of utter detachment from the result of work.

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1. (2–42 to 46). 2. (9–21); 3. (2–48); 4. (2–50).

By the practice of discipline one controls the movements of his body, mind, and senses and restrains them from wandering among sense objects. The true Karma Yogi looks upon all external objects with complete indifference. These are born of the 3 strands of lower nature and are unreal. The objects do not delude the Yogi nor they excite feelings of pain and pleasure or any passions. "His senses are entirely removed from sense objects just as the limbs of a tortoise are withdrawn within its shell."[1] The objects are brought under his complete subjugation and control together with the wandering mind by long practice. By practice of self control he views alike success and failure which are the fruit of work.[2] In short he is able to regulate all his actions by controlling his desires, thoughts, and feelings with a balanced mind. The Yoga method of work taught by Krishna also included the practice of discerning work without desire done in a spirit of complete detachment. This was a great improvement on the Vedic religion. It frees a man's mind from the state of indecision and delusion created by the various sacrificial actions and the varying fruits thereof as taught in the Vedas. The new method of work known as Yoga presents a strange contrast to the old method of work in the Vedic times by its insistence on resoluteness and fixity of purpose. There is no uncertainty or vagueness in the Yoga method. The object and purpose of works was also definite viz. the realisation of the supreme being as the highest goal of human life. The Vedas on the other hand by their promises of different rewards in the heaven which was only temporary as the fruit of different works puzzled the minds of ordinary persons doing the said works both as regards the method as also the object of work and fostered a spirit of utter selfishness. Krishna does not blame the Vedas but he only blames the wrong understanding of the persons doing Vedic works about the true significance of the latter and even uses rather strong language towards them.[3] Krishna by his new teaching of the method of Yoga gave an altogether new interpretation of works, which was a great improvement upon the older methods. Krishna urges Arjuna to rise superior to the old teaching and give up all desire for wealth and material things, and seek after a higher and all-inclusive knowledge of the supreme end of a man's life which

1. (2-58). 2. (2-38). 3. (2-42, 43, 44).

secured deliverance from this transitory world. Krishna taught Arjuna and through him to all mankind to follow the path of duty for the sake of duty as such even at the cost of one's life and without any regard to the fruits thereof.[1] He further teaches that all works should be accompanied with knowledge and devotion to Krishna and dedicated to him as sacrifice. Krishna asks Arjuna to cast off all works done by him as an agent for the Lord's sake on Krishna and fix his thoughts on the essential self as manifested in Krishna and fight without any idea of 'I' or 'mine.'[2] All men act according to the tendencies of their own nature being prompted by likes and dislikes of objects of the senses. These block one's path. Krishna therefore teaches that one should not fall under their sway.[3] To counteract the evil effects of these two enemies of men viz, likes for what is agreeable and dislikes for what is disagreeable, Krishna teaches Arjuna to follow the path of duty " Better a man's own duty (Swadharma) though ill done than another's duty well performed. Better it is to die in one's own duty; another's duty is fraught with danger."[4]

By following the method of Karma Yoga or right action as summarised above, one becomes qualified for the higher paths of devotion and knowledge. It is stated " he who dedicates works to Brahman or the supreme spirit abandoning attachment and works, is not smeared by sin as a lotus leaf by water "[5] Even ascetics do work abandoning attachment to purify their selves.[6] Work therefore without desire is useful for purification of the mind. If a man does work by the method of Yoga as taught by Krishna without attachment he gains the highest fruit.[7] It is further stated " he who is engaged in the practice of works with control, abandoning their fruit wins to final peace; while he who shuns the above practice and is attached to fruit by the promptings of desire is bound."[8] " Even a very little of this doctrine of moral virtue and discipline delivers one from the great fear of the rounds of births and deaths. "[9] After the lower self is once controlled, the Karma Yogi who follows the method of work as taught by Krishna scaling the heights of control, he will reach a state of comparative calm wherein work will be less and devote himself more

1. (2–40; 3–35). 2. (3–30). 3. (3–34). 4. (3–35). 5. (5–10). 6. (5–11). 7. (3–19). 8. (5–12). 9. (2–40).

to meditation and contemplation of the supreme being as means to final emancipation.[1]

(6) The cause of Sin.

Krishna further explains the knotty problem of the cause of sin and why a man is led to commit sin. He states that the cause of sin is to be found in nature (Prakriti) or not-self in the form of desire for what is pleasant and resentment for what is unpleasant.[2] "Both desire and wrath are caused by the strand of energy (Rajas) when it is predominated by restless activity. This twin passion obscures all knowledge like smoke that hides the fire, dirt that clouds the mirror and the water membrane that conceals the foetus. It devours like insatiable fire."[3] This twin passion has its seat in senses, mind and reason which are all products of nature (Prakriti) or not-self or its three strands (Gunas) which delude a man clouding knowledge.[4] These must be conquered at the very outset by self-control,[5] by the man aspiring after self realisation as the goal of his life. It is only when the highest spiritual self steadies and controls the lower self of man that desire and wrath the cause of sin can be conquered. It is said " Desire, wrath and greed; this is the triple gate of hell destructive of the self. Therefore these three one must abandon. "[6] Every man has two selves viz. a spiritual or higher self which is the conscious principle and a natural self or lower self in the form of subconscious mind, which is the product of Prakriti or lower nature and is the medium of all work. If the lower self is submissive and remains under the control and guidance of the higher self and listens to the inner Voice of the latter, the former is a friend of the latter, but if the lower self is rebellious and refuses to listen to the inner Voice and its advice it is its enemy.[7] This will now explain the significance of the teaching " self alone is friend of self and self alone is enemy of self. "[8] Therefore Krishna lays great stress on cultivating the practice of self control in his doctrine of Karma Yoga. It is only when the lower self is conquered that peace reigns and a man is fitted for the higher path of devotion and spiritual knowledge. This

1. (6-3). 2. (3-37). 3. (3-38, 39). 4. (3-40). 5 (3-43). 6 (16-21). 7. (6-6). 8. (6-5).

teaching is too high for Arjuna who therefore asks the Lord how can an ordinary person whose mind is prone to wander riotous, violent, stubborn and hard to check, hope to attain such tranquility and control ?[1] Lord Krishna admits the difficulty but says that by repeated practice and conquest of desire (Vairāgya) the mind can be subdued. Effort will conquer and control the thoughts provided the aspirant follows the method taught by him.[2]

(7) Sacrificial Acts.

Sacrificial acts formed part of the daily routine of the Vedic religion. They were obligatory acts which were enjoined by the holy texts. A wider meaning was however given to the word 'sacrifice' in the Gitā. In the Vedas, sacrifices meant the acts and ceremonies of offering oblations whether of animals or vegetables in the holy altar of fire. Sacrificial acts were however done with desire for reward in the heaven. Thus it is stated "This world is bound by the bonds of work, save where that work is done for sacrifice; work to this end, do thou perform, O son of Kunti, freed from attachment."[3] Here looking to the context, one finds that the word sacrifice was used in the sense of fire sacrifice as in the Vedas. But Krishna enlarges the meaning of the word sacrifice so as to include therein all philanthropic and benevolent actions done for sacrifice without attachment and desire. " If a man be free from attachment × × and act for sacrifice then his work is entirely dissolved "[4] Therefore " If any action be done for sacrifice, it is no work at all and is burnt in the fire of knowledge just as fuel is burnt to ashes in the ordinary fire."[5] Krishna further teaches that sacrifice of knowledge is better than material sacrifices without knowledge and that every work without exception comes to complete fulfilment in knowledge."[6] Therefore all acts must be dedicated to the Lord with full knowledge that the spiritual self is actionless and that the latter keeps his thoughts controlled. He is therefore freed from the notion " I am doing work." Work is done by the lower nature (Prakriti) or the subconscious mind which constitutes the lower self of man and not by the higher self which is conscious and spiritual. He who realises this truth and contemplates that his real self is not doing work

1. (6–33, 34). 2. (6–35, 36). 3. (3–9). 4. (4–23). 5. (4–37). 6. (4–33).

finds ultimate release by realising his oneness withthe supreme being and though he is engaged in sacrificial work it is no work at all being burnt up in the fire of knowledge and such work has then no binding effect. It is further stated in the Gitā that sacrificial works including benevolent and philanthropic acts should not be abandoned equally with gifts and austerities but they must be done to purify the thoughts of men.[1]

Though Krishna has enlarged the scope of sacrifices, he has at the same time not underrated the value and importance of fire sacrifices. The relation between the gods of heaven and men is based on sacrifices.[2] Sacrificial offerings presented to the gods by men brought in return the gift of food.[3] As body could 'not be sustained without food which again depended on the favour of gods, sacrificial work is of great importance.[4] The whole order of creation turns on sacrifice. From the one imperishable (Akshara) Absolute, proceeds Prakriti, lower nature or not-self whose function is activity.[5] By lower nature are done[6] all works including even sacrifices. It is only in response to sacrifice that the gods send rain by which man gets food to keep him alive. Thus the whole cycle of creation turns continuously on the work of sacrifice.[7] One therefore cannot afford to neglect sacrificial works which are most important.

(8) Duties relating to the four castes (Chāturvarna).

The caste order is of divine institution and is traced as such so far back as the Rig Veda. This principle is recognised in the Gitā in which Lord Krishna says: "The order of the four castes i.e. *Chāturvarna* was created by Him with due regard to the principle of distribution of nature and works."[8] The four castes are Brāhmins (priestly class), Kshatriyas (warrior class), Vaisyas (merchant class) and Sūdras (artisans and servant class). It is therefore wrong to suggest as is done by some modern reformers that the institution of the four castes was an innovation introduced in later times by Brāhmins for selfish purposes nor is it correct to say that according to the Gitā the caste of a man is determined not by birth but by the qualities and actions of a man in this life. Krishna distinctly says as an incarnation of the highest divinity, that it was the supreme deity who

1. (18-5). 2. (3-11). 3. (3-12). 4. (3-14). 5. (3-15, 16).
6. (3-27). 7. (3-16). 8. (4-13).

created the four castes by giving birth to each man in such family in society as accords with his deeds in previous life. Krishna is opposed to all idea of intermingling or confusion of castes (*Varnasankara*) at one's desire though he may fancy that by his superior qualifications he was more fitted to fulfil the duty of a higher caste than that in which he is placed by God as would appear from the following teaching of Krishna "Better a man's own duty though ill done than another's duty well performed; better it is to die in one's own duty. Another's duty is fraught with dread. (i.e. leads to hell)".[1] Similarly mixture of blood of different castes by inter marriages (*Varnasankara*) is denounced in the Gitā as in the law books (Dharma Shāstras) as would appear from the following verses:—" When lawlessness prevails O Krishna, the women of the family become corrupt; when women are corrupted, there appeares caste confusion (caused by intermarriages) ".[2] " To hell does this confusion lead the family and those who slay it, for when the ritual offerings of rice and water (i.e. in the Shrādha or ancestor worship ceremonies) fail, the deceased Fathers fall degraded".[3] By these sins of those who slay the family which cause the intermingling of the castes are brought to naught the everlasting law of clan and family".[4] It is therefore a great sin according to Gitā to confound the duties of castes by intermingling them. Krishna insists on the observance of caste duties (*svadharma*). Devotion to caste duties leads to perfection, provided this be performed in a spirit of true renunciation and as an offering to God.[5] Though the perfection of duty be imperfect yet the duty must be done, as a duty and in a disinterested manner. "Better is one's own duty (though destitude of merits) than the duty of another well performed. Doing the duty ordained accord-to his nature one incurs no sin. "[6] His work counts as no work. "He thus reaches perfection which leads him to final emancipation. "[7] Gitā makes a clear distinction of the duties appertaining to the four castes distributed according to the three qualities of nature, purity (satwa) energy (Rajas) and darkness (tamas).[8] Thus the quality of purity predominates in a Brāhmin, that of energy predominates in Kshatriyas, purity being subordinate. The quality of energy and darkness, energy predominating, prevails in the

1. (3-35). 2. (1-41). 3. (1-42). 4. (1-43). 5. (18-45, 46). 6. (18-47). 7. (18-45). 8. (18-41).

Vaishyas, while that of darkness and energy, darkness being predominant, prevails in the Sudras. Therefore each member of the four castes must work according to the predominant quality of the strand in his nature. Thus the duty of a Brahmin is to acquire such qualities as restraint, long suffering and uprightness; a Kshatriya must be brave, constant and generous. The Vaishya tills the soil, herds cows and trades; while the duty of Sudra is to serve.[1]

(9) Moral qualities.

Some critics have pronounced an opinion that Indian philosophy was speculative only, and it neglected the ethical side altogether. This is however far from truth, as I have already pointed out above that from the earliest times beginning with the Ṛig veda attention was paid to the side of ethics and to the development of moral virtues as truth, uprightness, liberality etc. The same remarks apply to the Upanishads and the epics in which we also find special mention made of ethical virtues and the need of their observance as part of one's duty. In the Gitā also, we find special stress laid on the development of moral virtues as preliminary means to emancipation. It has been already pointed out above that according to Gitā, the source of evil and sin is traced to the twin passion of love and hatred or likes and dislikes for agreeable and disagreeable objects which again result from the lower nature (Prakṛiti) or not self, of three strands (gunas). These three strands of nature envelope and cloud spiritual knowledge and they bind a man like the constituents of a rope. He is therefore driven by natural impulses to achieve his personal happiness and in doing so he does not even hesitate to injure other men. Men have got two natures higher and lower which are called Daivi Sampat (divine nature) and Āsuri Sampat (devilish or animal nature), and they accordingly show virtuous and vicious traits of character respectively. A strange contrast is presented in these two types of persons and their qualities in chapter sixteenth of the Gitā. The Divine nature leads to emancipation while the devilish nature strengthens the bonds of continual rebirths. Arjuna is born to the divine nature and he need not therefore fear. It is therefore quite necessary to purge one's mind of devilish tendencies and purify it from

1. (18-42 to 44).

all selfish tendencies resulting from likes and dislikes as mentioned above. Unless this is done, it is impossible to achieve the highest end of life. Gitā therefore enjoins on the purification of mind first negatively by the practice of self control and the Yoga method of right work without desire and then positively by performance of higher kinds of work as sacrifices, gifts and austerities.[1] The meaning of 'sacrifice' was enlarged in the Gitā so as to include therein gifts and austerities and all unselfish and disinterested works performed for the good of others. These higher unselfish and disinterested works were necessary and obligatory as means of purification of the Mind and for purging it of all selfish motives which were looked upon as sources of bondage. They were however only means to the end of self realisation and not ends in themselves as stated above. Ethical virtues and altruistic deeds are enumerated in the following three groups in the Gitā.

First group of virtues. (Ch. XII; 13-20)

(1) Friendliness (2) Compassion (3) Long suffering (4) Contentment (5) Self control (6) Firm faith (7) Non-attachment to worldly objects and (8) Purity of life. These traits of Virtues are found in the votaries of Krishna who are very dear to him.

Second group of virtues. (Ch. XIII; 7-10)

(1) Modesty (2) Sincerity (3) Harmlessness (4) Long suffering (5) Uprightness (6) Service to the Lord (7) Purity (8) Steadfastness (9) Self restraint (10) Desirelessness (11) Abandonment of the thought of 'I' (12) Perception of evil in birth, death, age, sickness and pain (13) Absence of attachment and excessive love of child, wife, home, and the like (14) a mind held ever in even balance, whether a pleasant or unpleasant lot befall (15) Unwavering devotion to the Lord with undivided control (16) Resort to lonely haunts (17) Distaste for the society of men (i.e. seeking the jungle, river bank or a temple etc.,) (18) Perseverance in the knowledge of the essential-self (19) Insight into the object of knowledge of the truth. These are the means of knowledge.

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1. (18-5).

Third group of virtues. (Ch. XVI; 1-3)

(1) Fearlessness (2) Purity of heart (3) Steadfastness in devotion to knowledge (4) Liberty (5) Self restraint (6) Sacrifice (7) Duty (8) Austerity (9) Uprightness (10) Harmlessness (11) Truth (12) An even temper (13) Abandonment (14) Quietude (15) An unmalicious tongue (16) Tenderness towards beings (17) Freedom from avarice (18) Gentleness (19) Modesty (20) Constancy (21) Ardour (22) Long suffering (23) Fortitude (24) Cleanliness (25) Freedom from hatred and arrogance.

The above qualities belong to those who are of divine nature.

Group of vices (XVI-4)

(1) Hypocrisy, (2) Pride, (3) Self conceipt, (4) Wrath, (5) Insolence and (6) Ignorance. These qualities belong to those who are of devilish or animal nature.

From the above lists of moral virtues it will appear that Gitā has advocated the cultivation of very high moral ideals and the practice of altruistic deeds as means to the realisation of the organic unity of the universe, having its being in the supreme soul both transcendent and immanent. Krishna's sympathies are on the side of Dharma (Righteousness) and he constantly urges Arjuna to be virtuous. Krishna takes birth as a human incarnation of Brahman to establish Dharma (law and virtue), whenever wrong prevails. Sin is adharma or defiance of one's own duty (*Svadharma*) as laid down in the Shāstras (religious books of authority laying down rules of duty) and for which the nature of each man (Svabhāva) fits him. Krishna enjoins on Arjuna to follow the dictates of Shāstras as sources of authority and guidance and not the impulses of one's lower nature. The true aim of life however is not merely to conquer sin which is only negative and not ultimate being born of Prakriti or lower nature and its three strands which bind the soul to birth by its inherent ignorance. The proper remedy shown by Krishna is to acquire spiritual knowledge of the unity of the world as having its being in the supreme deity where good and evil are both left behind as unreal effects of ignorance.

(10) Self realisation as the supreme purpose of Ethics in the Gitā.

It may be stated in short that the Ethis of the Gitā is not antitheistic in character but it is a part and parcel of the theistic religion of the Gitā. It is however only a means to the end along with devotion and knowledge and not an end in itself as in certain other religions, the supreme end in Gitā being realisation of the universal self (Atman) as the highest purpose and goal of a man's life. Thus we find that the main purpose of the Gitā is not to teach ethics as isolated from religion and philosophy but to serve as a stepping stone to reach the higher goal of life. It is primarily religious and philosophical and it leads to emancipation or perfect freedom as the summum bonum of life without detracting from the utility of ethics and moral virtues which subserve the indirect purpose qualifying a man for reaching the highest goal of life by having a true philosophical knowledge accompanied with devotion to the personal Lord.

CHAPTER VI

DHARMA SHĀSTRAS.

(1) Early History.

Shortly before the close of the Epic period, we find the revival of Hinduism by the Brāhmins to protect their ancient Vedic religion and culture from the onslaughts and attacks of two new heterodox schools of philosophy viz., Budhhism and Jainism that had been started by Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra as a revolt against the Vedic religion, in the sixth century B. C. The founders of these two schools started new religions on account of certain fundamental differances of views with the Hindus following the old Vedic religion. The Hindus following the Brāhmanical religion were therefore compelled to preserve the cardinal dogmas and doctrines of their ancient religion which was attaked by the reformers. There were once in existence thousands of Shākhās (Schools) of the Shruties having their separate text books of the Vedas which were handed down in oral form from preceptor to pupil since generations past in unbroken succession but of which only a few are extant at present. The learned Brāhmins then thought it necessary to abridge the teachings of the Vedas which were preserved by them by long standing traditions as the people had then no time to study the voluminous literature of the Vedas and the Brāhmanas. The Vedic literature was thus condensed in the form of Sūtras (short aphorisms). It was with a view to facilitate the teachings of the Vedas that the learned Pandits framed Sūtras or strings of rules chiefly in prose which formed rather a memoria technica by which the substance of the oral lessons might be recalled than regular treatises on the subject. Every department of the Vedas had its own sūtras. This whole literature of Sūtras was called collectively Smṛitis as they were written from memory or by a recollection of the teachings of the Vedas in the several schools which had ceased to exist in course of time. The word Smṛiti however in its technical sense means code of law and

virtue. Some of these Sūtras are so short that it is often difficult to gather their sense without the help of commentaries. The anxiety of the Sūtra writers to abbreviate and condense the sentences of the old religious literature was so great that the saying became proverbial that " An Author rejoiceth in the economising of half a short vowel as much as in the birth of a son ".

(2) Dharma Sūtras.

(a) Sūtra literature attached to the Vedas.

The Sūtra literature attached to the Vedas called Angas (subordinate parts) consisted of three parts viz Srauta Sūtras, Gṛihya Sūtras and Dharma Sūtras. The Srauta sūtras treated of the details of ceremonies relating to Vedic sacrifices. The Gṛihya sūtras treated of rules of domestic rites and other ceremonies relating to season festivals ete; while the Dharma Sūtras formed the last part of the Sūtras attached to the Vedic literature. They relate to the rules of practical life, virtue and law. The Shrauta Sūtras are classified by Gotama into fourteen principal forms of sacrifices of which the most important was Agnihotra which consisted of a simple oblation of milk offered morning and evening to the holy fire. The holy fire was kindled by a regular ceremony called Agniādhāna accompanied with mantras or recitations from the Vedas. The performance of Agnihotra formed an important part of the daily obligatory duties of every householder belonging to the higher castes along with Sandhyā which consisted of Vedic prayer and the worship of the god sun by chanting the Mantra of Gāyatri. The Gṛihya sūtras consisted of numerous domestic rites and ceremonies relating to birth (Garbhā dhāna), marriage (Vivāha), the initiation or sacred thread ceremony of a student (Upanayana), death and srādhha (funeral obsequies) etc. The above Vedic and domestic rites and ceremonies constituted the forty sacraments of the ancient Hindus. The object of all these sacraments was to purify a man from sins of commission and omission for higher religious purposes of life. The Ṛishis however who wrote the Dharma Shāstras laid particular stress on the observance of a high moral life which was considered more important than the mere observance of sacraments. Thus Vasistha says " the Vedas do not purify him who is deficient in good conduct though

he may have learnt them all together with the six Angas.[1] "The several texts do not save from sin the deceitful man who behaves deceitfully."[2]

(b) Classification of Dharma Sūtras.

The Dharma Sūtras related to the rules of practical life, virtue and law. The principal Dharma sūtras were composed by Gotama, Bauddhāyana, Āpastambha, Vasistha and Vishnu. Gotama seems to be the oldest of all and belongs to the sixth century B. C. The names of the principal authors of secondary Dharma sūtras were Hārita, Hiranyakeshin, Ushanas, Yama, Kashyapa and Sankha.

(c) Ethics of The Dharma Sūtras.

The Dharma sūtras laid particular stress on the the ethical side of a man's life as already pointed out above and they laid down strict rules for the observance of good conduct (sadāchāra) which constituted the primary source of law (Dharma) as laid down in the Smṛtis (codes of law) compiled later on, the earliest being that of Manu.

The authors of the Dharma sūtras pointed out that upon a strict observance of Dharma or virtue, depended all wordly prosperity and the final beatitude or emancipation which was the summum bonum of human life. Unless a man led a good and moral life, he could not reach the heaven. The birth of a man in this life whether in a good or a bad family, and the enjoyment of happiness and misery here depended on virtue (Dharma) alone. The authors of the Dharma Sūtras therefore laid down minute rules containing expositions on virtue and duty whether sacrifical, social, or moral to be observed by a man in the different spheres and relations of life. Far above the performance of different sacrifices as laid down in the Vedas, was esteemed the possession of Virtue and goodness which alone led to heaven. It was virtue which held society together and smoothed the path of progress. The rules of a progressive society commended virtue more than the breach of caste rules or the omission of rites. Gotama who was the oldest sūtra writer on Dharma (virtue) mentions the following eight good qualities :—

1. (V. S. 6-3). 2. (V. S. 6-5).

(1) Compassion (2) Forbearance (3) Freedom from anger (4) Purity (5) Gentleness (6) The performance of good actions (7) Freedom from avarice and (8) Freedom from covetousness.[1] Gotama concludes his account of the duties of a householder with the following rules :—

(1) He shall always speak the truth.

(2) He shall conduct himself as becomes Āryan.

(3) He shall instruct virtuous men.

(4) He shall follow the rules of purification.

(5) He shall take pleasure in the Veda.

(6) He shall never hurt any being.

(7) He shall be gentle yet firm and

(8) He shall ever restrain his senses and be liberal[2]

Gotam's list of sins which involved loss of caste is very instructive. It runs as follows :—(1) Murder (2) Drinking spirituous liquor (3) Violation of a Guru's bed (4) Incest (5) Theft (6) Atheism (7) Persistent repetition of sinful acts. (8) Harbouring criminals (9) Abandoning blameless friends (10) Instigating others to sinful acts (11) Associating with out castes (12) Giving false evidence and (13) Bringing false charge etc.[3] This will give the reader at once an idea as to how lofty were the ideals on ethics of the great Ṛishis who composed the codes of law and virtue. Vasistha's list of Mahāpatakas or sins is shorter but similar. It runs as follows:—

(1) The Violation of a Guru's bed (2) Drinking of spirituous liquor (3) Murder (4) Theft and (5) Spirituous or matrimonial connection with out castes.[4]

Dr. Buhler the translator of Manu Smṛiti has drawn attention to a remarkable passage from Mānava Dharma Sūtra which has been quoted by Vasistha.[5] At present we have no trace of any Dharma Sūtra of Manu though there must have been one in existence as appears from the above reference by Vasistha. At present we have Manu Smṛiti in the form of verses which is our highest authority of great veneration on Dharma (Law and virtue).

1. (G. D. S. 8–23). 2. (G. D. S. 9–68 to 73). 3. (G. D. S. 21-1 to 10).
4. (V. D. S. 1-19 to 21). 5. (V. D. S. 4-5 to 8).

(3) Dharma Shāstras.

(a) Basis of authority of the Smṛitis.

All the groups of laws, civil and religious which govern and regulate the life and conduct of the Hindus pass under one term popularly known as Dharma Shāstras which form part of the literature called Smṛitis and are of divine origin and they are based on S'rutis or Revealed Texts. We have seen above that at first Sūtras or short aphorisms were composed by the Ṛishies to make the understanding of the prescribed ceremonies whether sacrificial or domestic more easy. These sūtras were called S'rauta, Gṛihya, and Dharma Sūtras and they related to sacrificial, domestic and every day life ceremonies and observances. The Dharma sūtras contain detailed rules of conduct and the traditional practices and observances (Sāmayikāchāra) followed by the Āryans in connection with their every day life. The Dharma Sūtras were the latest in date of the three kinds of Sūtras mentioned above. These Sūtras were called by the general term Kalpa Sūtras of which the Dharma Sūtras which were in prose formed the last part.

(b) Subject-matter of Smṛitis.

Later on, the place of Dharma Sūtras was taken by Smṛitis or Dharma Shāstras (in verse) which were regular treatises dealing with the laws and rules governing and regulating the life and conduct of the people in general. Elaborate rules relating to the social order of the four castes (*Varnas*) and four stages of life (*Ashramas*) and the duties to be observed by them were laid down. In the Dharma Sūtras as also in the later Dharma Shāstras the social degradation of the Sūdras was clearly marked out. The Sūdras were excluded from the initiation ceremony called Upanayana, or sacred thread ceremony which was reserved only for the three higher castes who were called *Dwijas* or twice born persons. The Sūdras were disqualified from studying the Vedas and Upanishads which was the exclusive right of the Dwijas (twice born) only.

The Smṛitis or Dharma Shāstras consist of three sections called Āchāra, Vyavahāra and Prāyaschitta. The Āchāra section lays down regulations relating to the performance of religious rites and ceremonies and the general duties of all men and women including persons belonging to the four castes.

The Vyavahāra section lays down civil laws relating to the protection of life and property with all their rules and practices. While the Prāyaschitta section lays down rules relating to the atonement for various sins.

(c) Classification of Smṛitis.

The Dharma shāstra of the Hindus is not one single book but consists of the Samhitās or treatises composed by holy sages numbering twenty according to the list given by Yājnavalkya viz., Manu, Atri, Vishnu, Hārita, Yājnavalkya, Ushana, Angirā, Yama, Āpastambha Samvarta, Kātyayana, Bṛihaspati, Parāsara, Vyāsa, Sankha, Likhita, Daksha, Gotama, Sātātapa, and Vasistha. Other law givers mention other names of writers of Dharma Shāstras. Thus Parāsara mentions twenty names but instead of Yama, Bṛihaspati and Vyāsa he mentions the names of Kasyapa, Gargya and Pracheta. The list given above is not exhaustive. Besides the smṛitis mentioned above there are also many other Smṛitis which are extant at present.

(d) Principal Smṛitis.

Manu.

Of all the Smṛitis *Manu Smṛiti* is regarded next to the Vedas in sanctity. There are Vedic passages which direct that "All that Manu said is medicine."[1] It is the oldest of all the codes of law. Its authorship is attributed to Manu himself the son of Brahmā. He was the most ancient and the greatest of all law givers. His name is mentioned in the Ṛig Veda as the ancestor of mankind. The Manu Smṛiti in its present form seems to have been based on Mānava Dharma Sūtras which seem to have been lost and are not available at present. Manu Smṛiti belongs to the Maitrayanīya School of the black Yajurveda. It has great connection with the Mahābhārata and several verses in Manu Smṛiti are also found in the Mahābhārata. Possibly both might have made use of common materials. Dr. Buhler has translated Manu Smṛiti, in the Sacred Books of the East Series, with a most scholarly and exhaustive introduction. He assigns to Manu Smṛiti a date between 200 B. C. to 200 A. D. Manu Smṛiti was in existence much as it is now before the epic was finally redacted in its present form. Sir William Jones has fixed the date of the actual text at about

1. (Ts. 2-2-6-2; Ms. 1-1-5).

1280 B. C. Schlegal gives the date as 1000 B. C. These opinions as to the date of Manu Smṛiti not having been founded on any historical or positive proof are mere conjectures and are not conclusive. The other Smṛitis next to Manu in date and authority are Yājnavalkya (100 to 300 A. D.) Nārada (500 to 600 A. D.) Bṛihaspati and Kātyāyana (600 to 700 A. D.)

Yājnavalkya.

The arrangement in *Yājnavalkya* is better than in Manu. The book is divided into three chapters of about the same length dealing with Āchāra (rules of conduct), Vyavahāra (law) and Prāyaschitta (penance) respectively. The general outlook of Yājnavalkya is similar to that of Manu and it resembles Manu also in style. But there is less elaboration. The philosophical remarks on the fate of soul on death and transmigration are similar to those in Manu.

Nārada.

Nārada represents an older account of Manu's views than the Manu Smṛiti. It particularly deals with several topics of law. It cannot be earlier than 500 or 600 A. D.

Bṛihaspati and Kātyāyana.

Next in importance are *Bṛihaspati* and *Kātyāyana* which are extant only in fragments. They appear to be founded upon Manu with such enlargements and developments as a later form of society demanded. They are more advanced in legal views than Nārada. Their date may be assigned between 600 and 700 A. D.

Vasistha.

Of other Smritis those of Vasistha and Parāshara are important. *Vasistha* Smṛiti mentions Manu as an authority while it is quoted in the Manu Smṛiti. Kumārila Bhatta assigns it to a lost Ṛig Veda school of the Vasisthas.

Parāshara.

Parāshara Smṛiti is particularly meant for the present age of Kali. A Parāsara appears as an authority in Yājnavalkya and is cited by Medhātithi but the Parāshara Smṛiti on which Mādhava (1400 A. D.) wrote an elaborated comment adding a chapter on law to those on custom and penance in the original is doubtless later than

either of these authors. Both these authors were revered Ṛishis of good old memory whose names are mentioned in the Vedas and their works are authoritative.[1] It appears from the Mahābhārata that *Parāsara* was the grand son of Vasistha and father of Vyāsa the author of Mahābhārata. The rules laid down in Parāsara Smṛiti were not so strict as in Manu Smṛiti being meant for the Kaliyuga. The Ṛishi seems to have presaged the degradation and irreligiousness of the present times as appears from the following Verses. "Religion is conquered by irreligion, truth by falsehood, kings by thieves and men by women in the Kali Yuga; Agnihotra sacrifices cease to exist, the worship of ancestors and preceptors is extinguished and virgins give birth to children in the Kali Yuja."[2] The Omniscient Ṛishi therefore knowing the possibility of an increase in sins and with a view to the purity of life, makes an elaborate provision of Penances to atone for the sins and devotes nine chapters from the fourth to the twelvth, to Penances and rules of purity while the first three chapters deal with rules of good conduct, duties of the four castes and custom and religion which are put on a very broad and practical basis.

(e) Commentaries on Smṛitis.

There are glosses and commentaries on some of the principal Smṛitis. Thus on Manu we have the well known commentaries of Medhātithi, Govindarāja, Kulluka Bhatta and others. The most ancient commentary on Yājnavalkya is the gloss of Aparārka. Then comes the celebrated commentary of Vijnāneshvara called *Mitākshara*, which constitutes an important treatise on Hindu law. Next to Manu and Yājnavalkya come Nārada Smṛiti and Parāshara Smṛiti, the latter being particularly meant for the present age Kaliyuga. There is a commentary of Asahāya on Nārada while on Parāsara Smṛiti there is a scholarly and elaborate commentary known as Mādhaviya written by Mādhava, the well known minister of Bukkaraj the king of Vijayanagar.

(f) Compilations and Digests of Law.

The Legislators however did not agree in all respects. They often differed from one another. Hence arose the necessity of a compilation of Digest which after harmonizing the conflicting authorities might lay down the rules to be followed in practice. One

1. (T. S. 3-5-2-5; T. A. 1-1-3-37). 2. (P. S. 1-30, 31).

of the earliest of such digests is Kalpataru of Lakshmidhara (1200 A. D.). Other important Digests are Smṛiti Chandrikā of Devanna Bhatta (1200 A. D.) Chatur Varga chintāmani of Hemādri (1300 A. D.) and Madanpārijāta of Vishveshvara (1400 A. D.). In the seventeenth century we find the Nirnaya Sindhu of Kamalākara which is a religious authority in the Marātha country and the encyclopaedic Vīramitrodya of Mitra Misra. This last work also touches on the doctrine of emancipation.

Mimānsā rules of interpretation.

The authors of the Digests were alway guided by Mimānsā rules of interpretation in their opinions. I may mention here the following leading rules of interpretation for information of the reader.

(1) If there is a contradiction between a S'hruti and a Smṛiti the former is to prevail.[1]

(2) If there is no such contradiction the Smṛiti should be acted upon.[1]

(3) If two Texts differ reason must prevail in practice.[2]

(4) Smṛiti is superior to mere rule of prudence.[3]

(5) In absence of S'hruti and Smṛiti custom is authority.[4]

(6) A principle of law established in one instance should be extended to other cases also provided there is no impediment.

(7) Between rules general and special the special is to prevail.

All parts of the Dharma Shāstra have not been treated in these Digests nor are their conclusions the same. These differences have led to the formation of the different schools of law as the Benares, Mitākshara, Mithila (north Behār) Bengal (Dāyābhāga) Mahārāstra and Gujrāt schools.

(4) Manu Smṛiti.

(a) Glowing tributes of Scholars to Manu Smṛiti.

Manu Smṛiti by its memorable laws and rules as to the several institutions peculiar to India sums up the choicest wisdom of long centuries as would appear from the following observations made by the well known German philosopher Neitzsche "Such a book as that of Manu sums up the experience, sagacity and experimental morals

1. (Vyasa S. 1-4). 2. (Y. S. 2-21). 3. (N. S. 1-39). 4. (M. S. 1-110).

of long centuries, it comes to a final decision. To draw up a law book like that of Manu means to permit the nation henceforth to get the upper hand, to become perfect and to be ambitious of the highest art of living". Similarly that highly talented and experienced civilian Sir George Birdwood pays a glowing tribute to Manu Smṛiti in the following terms "The caste system of the code of Manu is the charter of the very essence of India, the breaking of which would reduce India to a deadlier anarchy than that of a thousand years brought to an end by our great victory of Plassey". The well-renowned philosopher Swāmi Vivekānand also makes similar observations about Manu Smṛiti "We must revive the old laws of the Ṛishis. We must initiate the whole people into the codes of our old Manu and Yājnavalkya with a few modifications here and there to adjust them to the changed circumstances of the time. Remember always there is not in this world one other country whose institutions are better than the institutions of this land".

(b) Short Summary of Manu Smṛiti.

Of all Smṛitis Manu Smṛiti being the oldest and the most important I shall here reproduce a short summary of its contents as given by Prof A. B. Keith in his history of Ancient Sanskrit literature.

"*Book I*—It contains an interesting semi-philosophical account of creation in the popular Paurānic type of a realistic Vedānta combined with Sānkhya terms, including the essential doctrine of the three constituents (gunas) of nature (Prakṛiti) which however is not independent but a creation, as also are the souls.

Book II—In it, the sources of law are declared (viz. S'hruti, Smṛiti, and good conduct including custom) and the duties of the student.

Book III—The householder occupies attention; his marriage, daily rites and funeral offerings (Srāddha).

Book IV—Deals with occupation and general rules of life.

Book V—Treats of lawful and forbidden food, impurity and purification, and rules as to women (and their duties).

Book VI—Deals with the two further stages of life, the hermit in the forest and the ascetic.

Book VII—We come to the duties of the king, including general political maxims.

Books VIII & IX—We have civil and criminal law, including procedure and evidence, especially ordeals. The topics are given as eighteen, a precision without any parallel in the Sūtras; recovery of debts; deposit and pledge; sale without ownership; partnership concerns; subtraction of gifts; non-payment of wages; non-performance of agreement; rescission of sale and purchase; masters and herdsmen; disputes as to boundaries; defamation; assault and hurt; theft; violence; adultery; duties of husband and wife; inheritance and partition; gambling and wagers.

Book IX—Adds an account of the duties of kings and of those of Vaishyas and Sūdras.

Book X—This deals with the mixed castes, the rules as to occupation affecting the castes and occupation in time of distress when normal rules must yield.

Book XI—We find rules for gifts, sacrifices and penances.

Book XII—Follows the sinner to his retribution in the next life by the rules of transmigration, and adds counsel regarding the means of attaining release. In this as in Chapter I we have the popular Vedānta with strong Sānkhya and Yoga influences.

(c) Important Doctrines in Manu Smṛiti.

(i) Sources of Authority.

Manu Smṛiti declares Vedas as the principal source and authority of law and virtue.[1] Those who do not believe in the authority of the Vedas are considered atheists who deserve to be outcasted by the wise men.[2] S'hruti (Revealed Texts) Smṛiti (Traditional Law) and good conduct are the sources of authority of virtue and law.[3] Immemorial custom is transcendental law, if it is based on S'hruti or Smṛiti.[4]

(ii) Theology.

In Manu Smṛiti the Vedic deities are still objects of worship. It also presents the picture of a personal God in triple aspect of creation, preservation and destruction of the cosmos.[5] God is the supreme ruler and Governor of this universe who gives births to human beings and allots to them fruits in accordance with the acts

1. (2-6, 13). 2. (2-11). 3. (2-6). 4. (1-108). 5. (1-5, 6, 7).

done by them in a former life as this is not the only creation but there are innumerable creations and dissolutions of the universe according to the Vedic conception which is followed in Manu Smṛiti.

(iii) Cosmology.

The cosmology in Manu Smṛiti is also akin to that in the Vedas. It shows more a clear development of the idea of evolution rather than creation of a new universe which did not exist before as in the Vedas. There was at first only chaos or darkness in which this universe was wholly immersed.[1] The Lord then created the universe out of this chaos by his own free will and from his own self.[2]

The above idea of creation of the universe from chaos is again akin to that in the Nasadīya hymn of the Ṛig Veda which has been already discussed by me in the second chapter. Here chaos does not mean nothing but it means the unmanifest condition of the universe just before creation, containing the latent seeds of all, which cannot be seen by the eye. Creation therefore is really a process of evolution only or making manifest what was unmanifest, the idea of creating something out of nothing being repugnant to the Vedic theory of creation. The Lord first created waters out of darkness and placed his seed in them.[3] The waters are called Nārā and the Lord occupying the same is called Nārāyana as the waters constitute his abode.[4] The seed then became a golden egg in which he himself was first born as Brahmā (masculine). The egg burst into two halves of which the upper half became heaven, while the lower half became the earth. Having divided his own body, the mighty power became half male and half female, nature active and nature passive and from that female he produced Virāj.[5] The Virāj performed austerities and produced Manu,[6] who in his turn performed very difficult religious rites and duties and produced ten holy Prajāpatis or Lords of created beings, Mārīchi, Atri and others.[7] The evolution of the universe of names and forms then proceeded in a certain order as mentioned in Manu Smṛiti of which the first was intelligence or thought which gave rise to desire out of

1. (1-5). 2. (1-7, 8). 3. (1-8). 4. (1-10). 5. (1-32). 6. (1-33). 7. (1-35).

which were evolved the 5 elements subtle and gross and 5 organs of action and mind. These evolutes are similar to those mentioned in the Sānkhya making up the total number of principles to twenty five with the addition of the Lord as the twenty sixth principle.

(iv) Philosophy.

In the matter of philosophical doctrines, Manu Smṛiti follows the Upanishads and it accepts the doctrine of monism and the principle of organic unity of the whole cosmos as having its being in the one universal self (Atman).[1] There is only one Supreme Being who is called by different names, Fire, Manu the Lord of the creatures, Indra, Prāna (life) and Eternal Brahman.[2] Emancipation or true freedom (*Swārājya*), consists in realising the oneness and unity of all as having their being within the Supreme Spirit.[3] True happiness consists in perfect freedom, self-reliance and realisation of the unity of all as having their being within the self while misery consists in dependance on another as separate from and independent of one's self.[4]

(v) The Law of Karma and Transmigration of the Soul.

Manu Smṛiti follows the Upanishads in its doctrines of Karma (actions) and transmigration of the souls according to which the souls have to take births in such bodies allotted to them by the Lord as correspond exactly to the actions done by them in the former life to enjoy rewards and suffer punishments allotted to them by the Lord as fruit of their actions done in the past life. Thus a man may be born in a low caste as Chandāla, Pukkasa or even an animal as a dog, a pig, an ass, a vulture, a snake etc. as a punishment for leading a wicked life in the former birth,[5] after suffering in the hell all the horrors there to atone for the misdeeds and sins committed by him in the former life.[6] On the other hand he may be born in higher castes and in more favourable circumstances if he has led a moral life and done good and religious works in his past life.[7] Manu sets out the theory of the soul's migrations and wanderings in this world through ten thousand millions of existences.[8] Transmigration of the soul depends on the three qualities of the

1. (12-118). 2. (12-123). 3. (12-91). 4. (4-160). 5. (12-54 to 69).
6. (6-61, 12-16). 7. (12-19). 8. (6-63).

self, satva (goodness), Rajas (activity) and tamas (darkness) with which the Lord always completely pervades all existences.[1] When one of these qualities predominates in particular then it makes the soul distinguished for that quality.[2] Those endowed with goodness become gods, those with activity become men, while those with darkness sink to conditions of low caste men, beasts or even plants.[3] The above principle is thus stated in the Manu Smṛiti "But to whatever course of action the Lord at first appointed each (kind of beings) that alone it has spontaneously adopted in each succeeding creation."[4] "Whatever he (i.e. the Lord) assigned to each first at the creation, viz. noxiousness or harmlessness, gentleness or ferocity, virtue or sin, truth or falsehood, that clung (afterwards) spontaneously to it."[5]

The theory of double requital.

The whole doctrine of transmigration of the soul as stated in the Manu Smṛiti is based on the law of Karma (actions) in accordance with the principle of the maxim "As a man soweth so shall he reap," as would appear from the following verse.[6] "But with whatever disposition of mind a man performs any act, he reaps its result in a future body endowed with the same quality."

Manu Smṛiti accepts the theory of a double requital as stated in the Upanishads. According to this theory the embodied soul takes bodily shapes in this world after enjoying rewards in heaven for the good works done by him or suffering punishments in the hell for the misdeeds done in the past life by way of a second requital of the said deeds.[7]

(vi) Ethics (Dharma).

The peculiar merit of Manu Smṛiti lies in its special teachings as to the value of Dharma (righteousness) as a divine law laid down for the guidance of man as would appear from the following verses:—"Alone man is born, alone he dies; alone he reaps the fruit of good and evil done by him. Laying down on the ground the body of the dead as if he were a clod of earth or a log of wood, the relations depart with face averted; righteousness alone follows the soul on death as a companion."[8] "Righteousness being violated destroys; righteousness being preserved preserves. Therefore

1. (12-54). 2. (12-25). 3. (12-40 to 50). 4. (1-28). 5. (1-29).
6. (12-81). 7. (19-22). 8. (4-240, 241).

righteousness must not be violated lest violated righteousness destroy us."[1] "The only friend that follows a man even after death is righteousness; for everything else is lost at the same time when the body perishes."[2] "Dharma or righteousness is defined as ten-fold which must be obeyed by the twice-born belonging to any of the four orders of castes viz. contentment, forgiveness, self-control, non-stealing, purity, restraint of the senses, wisdom, knowledge of the Supreme Self, truthfulness and abstention from anger. This is ten-fold righteousness."[3] This may be compared with the ten-fold division of Dharma (righteousness) in Yājnavalkya Smriti which comprehends the whole duty of man: viz. "Truth, honesty, mildness, modesty, purity, wisdom, firmness, self-control, restraint of the senses and learning. These make up the whole of righteousness."[4] These are however only means to the ultimate end of self-realisation which is won only by spiritual knowledge according to Yājnavalkya. "In the midst of the circle abides the self as if a motionless light; it must be known, and knowing it, no man is born again to life."[5]

Dharma or righteousness again is of two kinds viz. general Dharma or law for all the four castes and particular Dharma which is for particular castes, particular persons, or for a particular purpose. General Dharma or law consists of the following five moral virtues which are to be observed by all the four castes viz. Abstention from injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, purity and restraint of the senses".[6]

(vii) Duties of the four castes (Chāturvarna).

Particular Dharma consists of the specific acts of duty laid down for the castes separately. Thus the six acts prescribed for a *Brāhmin* (priestly caste) are teaching and studying the Vedas, sacrificing for himself and sacrificing for others, and making gifts and receiving them".[7] Out of these six acts three viz:—Sacrificing for others, teaching the Vedas and accepting gifts from pure men are the means of subsistence for a Brāhmin while the remaining three are religious duties.[8] The three acts, teaching, sacrificing for others and acceptance of gifts which are incumbent on the Brāhmins are forbidden to Kshatriyas (warrior class) and Vaishyas

1. (8-15). 2. (8-17). 3. (6-92). 4. (Y. S. 3-66). 5. (Y. S. 3-109). 6. (10-63). 7. (10-75). 8. (10-76).

(merchant class) but sacrifice for one's self, gift, and learning are the religious duties of both these latter castes.[1] Now as a means of subsistence, the profession of carrying arms and throwing them is prescribed for the *Kshatriyas* while trade, rearing cattle and agriculture are prescribed as professions for the *Vaishyas.*[2] The *Sūdras* are taught to obtain their livelihood principally by service of the Brāhmins, Kshatriyas, and the Vaishyas.[3] But if they are unable to find service with the twice-born (Dwijas), they may maintain themselves by handicrafts and other mechanical occupations and practical arts as carving, sculpture, painting etc.[4] Manu then describes the professions which a Brāhmin and a Kshatriya may follow in distressed times. Thus the Brāhmin if he is unable to obtain his livelihood from the peculiar professions allowed to him, he may follow the profession of a Kshatriya and if he is unable to obtain his livelihood from this, he may obtain livelihood from the professions allowed to Vaishyas.[5] But a Brāhmin and a Kshatriya should as far as possible avoid agriculture, as it involves the killing of insects etc.[6] Though the Shūdras are forbidden to follow the peculiar acts and professions prescribed for the three higher castes, they are praised if they follow without envy the rules of good conduct practised by the higher castes without using the vedic Mantras.[7] Not only so, but by leading a high moral life, Shūdras can obtain even the higher world.[8] This will clearly show that the angle of vision of the author of Manu Smṛiti is non-sectarian and comprehensive enough to provide for the good and welfare of the Shūdras too who are given the higher world as a reward if they lead a moral life and the charge levelled by some reformers against Manu Smṛiti that it has neglected the Shūdras altogether is quite unfounded and false. However the allotment of the various occupations to the various castes which are created by God according to the deeds done by them in a former life, is based on the principle of the division of functions. The author of Manu Smṛiti following the principles of the Bhagwad Gitā is averse to the mixture of the four castes (*Varnasankara*) and the inter change of the peculiar duties allotted to them according to their births. Thus it is laid down that "it is far better to

1. (10-77, 80). 2. (10-78). 3. (10-120 to 123). 4. (10-99, 100).
5. (10-81, 82). 6. (10-83). 7. (10-127). 8. (10-128).

discharge one's own (appointed) duty though it may be imperfect than to perform that of another caste although it may be perfect, for he who lives according to the law of another caste is instantly excluded from his own caste.[1]

(viii) Obligatory duties of the twice-born to perform the daily Prayers (Sandhyā) and the five great sacrifices (Pancha Mahāyajnas).

The daily prayers (Sandhyā).

It was a part of the daily obligatory duties of every Āryan belonging to the three higher castes Brāhmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas called twice born (Dvijas) on account of their second birth by initiation in the Sacrament of Sacred thread, (Upanayana) to offer the morning twilight and evening twilight prayers to God by doing the Sandhyā, chanting the Gāyatri Mantra in the Ṛig Veda,[1] which destroyed the sins contracted during the previous night and during the day[2] and to perform the five great Sacrifices (Pancha Mahāyajna) while he is able to perform them.[3] A Brāhmin who recites regularly during both twilights the Gāyatri verse gains the whole merit which the recitation of the Vedas confers[4]. Any omission to perform the daily Sandhyā was considered sinful and involved an exclusion from all the duties and rights of an Āryan just like a Sūdra.[5]

The five great sacrifices (Pancha Mahāyajnas).

As regards omission on the part of a person to perform the five great sacrifices it is said 'he lives not though he breathes.'[6] The five great sacrifices (Pancha Mahāyajnas) were therefore prescribed to expiate the sins of offences committed knowingly or unknowingly by having recourse to five slaughter houses as it were viz., the hearth, the grinding stone, the broom, the pestle and the water vessel.[7] The five great sacrifices consisted of (1) the sacrifice to Brahman (*Brahma Yajna*) in the form of teaching and studying the Vedas revealed to the sages (Ṛishis). (2) the sacrifice to the manes (*Pitṛa Yajna*) in the form of offerings of water and food called *Tarpana*. (3) The sacrifice offered to the Gods (*Deva*

1. (2-101). 2. (2-102). 3. (3-69). 4 (2-78). 5 (2-80, 103). 6. (3-72). 7. (3-68, 69, 71).

Yajna) in the form of burnt oblations offered in the fire (4) offering made to the Bhūta i.e. living creatures (*Bhūta Yajna*) in the form of Bali (gift of food) (5) offering to men (*Nara Yajna*) in the form of hospitable reception of guests.[1] The sages, the manes, the gods, the Bhūtas, and the guests ask the householders for offerings and gifts; hence he who knows the law must give to them what is due to each.[2] Let him worship according to the rule, the sages by the private recitation of the Veda, the gods by burnt oblations, the manes by funeral offerings (*Shrāddha*), men by gifts of food and Bhūtas (living creatures) by the Bali offerings.[3]

Obsequial offerings to the manes of the deceased ancestors (Shrāddhas) : (Pitṛi Yajna).

Manu has made elaborate rules about the performance of Shrāddha ceremonies (i. e. obsequial ceremonies) which consist in making offerings of balls of rice (Pinda) to the manes of the deceased male ancestors upto three degrees in ascent[4] and which required purity of food, as also purity on the part of the person performing Srāddha as well as the Brāhmins invited to dinner at the Shrāddha. The right to inheritance as heir to the property of a deceased person depends upon the capacity of offering Pindas, the spiritual efficacy of which determined the order of succession of Sapindas or agnates of the deceased. Manu further observes: "The rite in honour of the manes is more important than the rite in honour of the gods.[5] He who honours the manes of his deceased ancestors by Shrādhas obtains distinguished offspring by way of reward.[6]

The fire sacrifice to the Gods (Deva Yajna).

Of these 5 sacrifices the sacrifice by offering burnt oblations into the fire was the most important as such oblations reach the Sun; from the Sun comes rain, from rain food and living creatures derive their subsistence from food.[7] The same idea is repeated in the Bhagwad Gitā.[8] Thus the very subsistence of the world with all the animate and inanimate objects therein depends on the regular performance of fire sacrifices offered to the gods who supply food, riches and wealth to this earth by way of reward.

1. (3-7). 2. (3-30). 3. (3-81). 4. (9-186). 5. (3-203). 6. (3-277). 7. (3-76). 8. (B. G. 3-14).

Universaliity of love in the daily rites of making offerings to Living creatures (Bhūta Yajna) and to men (Nara Yajna).

The idea of making offerings to living creatures (Bhūta Yajna) was a very lofty and noble one and it clearly speaks of the high sense of tenderness and affection in the mind of the venerable Rishi towards all living creatures, including even the mute and dumb animals, insects, birds and so on. It is said in Manu Smṛiti "let him gentiy place on the ground some food for dogs, outcasts, Chandalas, (i.e. untouchables) those afflicted with diseases that are punishments of former sins, crows and insects."[1] That Brāhmana who thus daily honours all beings goes endowed with a resplendent body by a straight road to the highest dwelling place (i e. Brahman).[2] Having performed this Bali offering he shall first feed his guest and according to the rule give alms to an ascetic and to a student.[3] A twice born householder by giving alms receives the same reward for his meritorious act as one derives by presenting a cow to his teacher.[4]

(ix) Hospitality to the guest and social service.

Manu Smṛiti lays great stress on the duty of hospitality on the part of the householder to his guest. It is said in Manu Smṛiti: "But let him offer in accordance with the rule to a guest a seat and water as well as food garnished with seasoning according to his ability;"[5] "Grass, room (for resting); water and fourthly a kind word, these things never fail in the houses of good men."[6] "Let him not eat any dainty food which he does not offer to his guest; the hospitable reception of guests procures wealth, fame, long life and heavenly bliss."[7] "Let him offer to his guests seats, rooms, beds, attendance on departure and honour (while they stay) to the most distinguished in the best form, to the lower ones in a lower form and to equals in an equal manner."[8] "Having honoured the gods, the sages, men, the manes, and the guardian deities of the house, the householder shall eat afterwards what remains"[9]. He who prepares food for himself alone eats nothing but sin, for it is ordained that the food which remains after the performance of the sacrifices shall be the meal of Virtuous men[10]. The reader will now easily understand from the above how

1. (3-92). 2. (3-93). 3. (3-94). 4. (3-95). 5. (3-100). 6. (3-101). 7. (3-106). 8. (3-107). 9. (3-117). 10. (3-118; cf. B. G. 3-13).

lofty and noble is the Hindu ideal of life as laid down in Manu Smṛiti. The duty of hospitality on the part of a house holder enjoined him to do acts of service and usefulness to his fellow brothers in one shape or another viz., hospitality to guests, alms to the poor and the needy and other acts of benevolence and usefulness to society.

(x) Prohibition of inter-caste marriages.

There is also an interdiction of marriage outside one's own caste. If a male marries a female belonging to the lower class the marriage is called *Anuloma* and the offspring is less pure than the father.[2] But marriage of a female belonging to a higher caste with a male belonging to the lower caste is the most condemned of all mixed marriages and is called a *Pratiloma* marriage. Thus the offspring of a Brahmin woman by marriage with a person belonging to the Shūdra class is called a *Chandāla* who is outside the pale of castes being deemed most degraded and sinful.[3] These caste hybrids or offsprings of Varnasankara marriages especially Pratiloma marriages belong to no caste (Varnapetam) and are Anāryans. They are the most sinful of all creatures.[4] They destroy the whole kingdom very shortly together with all the inhabitants thereof.[5] These persons are *Unāryans* and they belong to no caste (*Avarna* or *Panchama*). They are distinguished form Āryans by harshness, cruelty and bad conduct.[6]

Their residence also is at the end of the village,[7] and they are not worthy of association on account of their unclean habits and sinful and impure conduct.[8]

(xi) Preference of a moral life to that by birth.

However in Manu Smṛiti although a man's caste is determined by birth,[9] yet a Brāhmin is censured and treated like a Shūdra if he neglects the duties of his own caste and leads a degraded life while a Shūdra is respected and praised like a Brāhmin, if he leads a high moral life.[10] This will at once satisfy the reader that Manu has shown no partiality towards Brāhmins nor any aversion or hatred towards Shūdras as wrongly charged by certain hostile critics.

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1. (10-97). 2. (10-6, 14). 3. (10-16, 35, 36, 39). 4. (10-57).
5. (10-61). 6. (10-58). 7. (10-51). 8. (10-53). 9. (10-74).
10. (10-65).

(xii) The high status of womanhood.

Now as regards the status of women too, Manu speaks of them with great reverence and respect. It is stated " Where women are respected the Gods rejoice."[1] They deserve to be respected and they are compared with Goddess Laxmi (the consort of God Vishnu).[2] " The production of religious rites as also heavenly bliss for the ancestors and one's self depend on one's wife alone ".[3] By the sacred tradition the woman is declared to be the soil (Kshetra) while the man is declared to be the seed (Beeja). The production of all corporeal beings takes place through the union of the soil with the seed.[4] Thus without the warm co-operation and active help of women the order of the world could not go on.

(xiii) Sacramental character and indissolubility of Hindu marriage.

The highest ideal of the unity of interest of husband and wife is set out in Manu Smṛiti being based on the sacramental character of Hindu marriage which is indissoluble by its very nature. A wife is called the half body of the husband (Ardhānganā).[5] Upon this principle depends the right of widows to adopt a son to their deceased husbands. It is stated in Manu Smṛiti " He is a perfect man who consists of (three persons united) his wife, himself and his offspring. Thus says the Veda and the learned Brāhmins propound this maxim likewise. 'The husband is declared to be one with the wife.' "[6] Therefore "a wife cannot by repudiation (or divorce) be released from her husband. Such we know the law to be which the Lord of creatures made of old."[7] The sacred tie of marriage in the Brahma form is indissoluble and such marriage cannot therefore be dissolved according to the sacramental theory of marriage.

(xiv) Ideal unity of Husband and Wife.

As a wife is merged ideally in the entity of her husband she is not independent of him.[8] Therefore a wife cannot do separate sacrifice from the husband.[9] This principle of wife's non-independence from her husband follows directly from the sacramental character of Hindu marriage and her ideal unity with her husband.

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1. (3-56). 2. (9-26). 3. (9-28). 4. (9-33). 5. (B. S. 25-11). 6. (9-45). 7. (9-46). 8. (5-147; 9-3). 9. (5-155).

(xv) Freedom of a woman in conformity with law (Dharma).

By co-operation with her partner for life and with his consent a Hindu wife is quite free to choose any course of action that she likes and there is no restriction whatever to her freedom provided it is not opposed to Dharma or law as laid down by wise sages like Manu. Loving co-operation and not competition between a husband and a wife is the cardinal doctrine of Manu Smṛiti which regulates all their true relations in life and which is calculated to bring about social harmony, unity and peace in the country. Identity of interest of husband and wife for a common purpose viz, realisation of the unity of the supreme self and not equality of status or rights is the Hindu ideal of life as contrasted with the ideal in the west.

(xvi) Brāhmin as the type of virtue and self sacrifice.

It may be observed here that Mauu has typified out of the four castes Brāhmin as the highest being an embodiment of purity, virtue and learning[1] not with a view to create in him a sense of superiority over the other castes or endow him with greater rights than those possessed by the latter but to show the high sensé of duty and responsibility cast upon him which entails a life of high discipline and self sacrifice on his part which it was too difficult for persons of the lower castes and the Sūdras in particular to observe.

(5) Incidents of Hindu marriage and marriage rites and ceremonies.

(1) Marriage a Religious Sacrament and obligation.

According to the Vedic theory, marriage is not a contract but a religious Sacrament and obligation which was enjoined on all whether males or females for purification, extreme asceticism being repugnant to the Hindu scriptures except in the case of a few highly qualified and enlightened persons. It is stated in the Vajasaneyi Brāhmana that man is only half and until he marries a woman, he is unable to procreate progency. Hence he is incomplete until he marries and begets children when he becomes perfect. Manu[2] also lays down that a man is incomplete without a wife and he must therefore marry

1. (1-93; 10-3). 2. (9 45).

to attain perfection by performing religious rites and duties with the help and co-operation of his wife (*sahadharmachārinī*) who was given a very high position and status in the household as a co-owner with her husband being his half body (*Ardhānganā*) equally sharing the result of his good or wicked deeds.[1] Manu enjoins that a twice born person having completed the life of a student being the first order of life (Brahamcharya Āshrama) and the course of studies laid down for him and having bathed, with the permission of his teacher and performed the rite of Samāvartana, according to the rule, he shall marry a wife of equal caste who is endowed with auspicious qualities.[2] Thus Marriage is laid down by Manu as a holy duty for one's purification and a necessity for regulating the natural impulses of a man,[3] and secondly to beget a son,[4] to discharge the debt that he owes to his parents and deceased ancestors by the son's performing Shrāddha (obsequial ceremonies) and offering funeral cakes to him after his death as also his ancestors, thus saving them from hell.[5] Similarly for women too for their purification and perfection the nuptial ceremony is enjoined as a Vedic Sacrament which corresponds to the initiation ceremony (Upanayana) in the case of boys.[6] According to Manu the person who seeks final liberation without having discharged his 3 debts viz., to the gods, Rishis of the Vedas and his deceased ancestors by begetting a son sinks downwards.[7]

(ii) Betrothal and marriage.

The choice of the bride (Varana) precedes the ceremony of joining the hands of the bride and the bridegroom (Pānigrahana) which forms part of the regular marriage.[8] The choice of bride on the part of the bridegroom is the proposal for marriage which is followed by acceptance on the part of the father of the bride who promises to give his daughter in marriage (Vāgdāna) to the bridegroom. These two together constitute betrothal for marriage which differs in several important respects from the regular marriage. Manu prohibits even the breach of an agreement for marriage. Thus he says: " Let no prudent man after giving his daughter to one give her again to another for he who gives his daughter whom he had before given incurs

1. (BS. 24-11). 2. (3-2, 4; 4-1). 3. (5-56). 4. (9-26, 33, 96). 5. (9-138). 6. (2-67). 7. (6-35). 8. (N. S. 12-2).

the guilt of speaking falsely regarding a human being."[1] Yājnavalkya however has relaxed the rigour of the above rule by making an exception allowing rescission of betrothal in certain circumstances. Thus he says. "If a person gives to another a maiden who had been once given away either by words or mind he meets with the punishment of a thief. But if a bridegroom better than the promised one is available she may be given away to the former even if promised to the latter."[2] Similarly Nārada says: " Of these parts of the marriage ceremony the choice of the bride is declared to lose its binding force when a blemish is subsequently discovered in either of the two parties The Mantra (Prayer) which is recited during the ceremony of joining the bride and the bridegroom's hands is the permanent token of matrimony"[3] which is indissoluble. But in the case of a betrothal, if the bridegroom goes abroad after betrothal, let the maiden wait till her menses have passed three times and then choose another husband.[4]

(iii) Competency of parties to marriage.

(a) Suitable qualifications of a bridegroom.

Nārada has enjoined that the man proposing to marry must undergo an examination with regard to his virility and potency. When the fact of his virility has been placed beyond doubt he shall obtain the maiden but not otherwise. He lays down several rules, for examination of a person's potency.[5] Yājnavalkya also similarly says: " A bridegroom should be endued with all the qualifications, be of the same caste and social standing, well read in the Vedas, carefully examined about his manly power, youthful, intelligent and agreeable to all the people".[6] Manu says: "A student who has studied in due order the 3 Vedas or two or even one only without breaking the rules of studentship, (Brahmacharya) shall enter the order of householders, and marry a wife of equal caste (Savarnā) who is endowed with auspicious bodily marks, having bathed with the permission of his teacher and performed the Samāvartana ceremony (the rite on returning home after completion of student's life).[7]

1. (9-71). 2. (Y. S. 1-65). 3. (N. S. 12-3). 4. (N. S. 12-24), 5. (N. S. 12-8 to 19), 6. (Y. S. 1-55). 7. (3-2, 4).

(b) Whether eunuchs and madmen are competent to marry?

Although according to Nārada a eunuch is incompetent to marry, Manu is not clear on the point. Thus he says: "If the eunuch and the rest desire to take wives, the offspring of such among them as have children is worthy of a share."[1] Different interpretations of the above verse are given by different commentators as shown by Dr. Buhler in his notes on the translation of the verse in Manu Smṛiti.[2] He remarks: "Thus Kulluka Bhatta says that by the employment of the term "somehow or other" it is indicated that a eunuch and the the rest are not worthy to marry. In the sequel he explains the word 'offspring' by Kshetraja. Rāghavānanda and Nandana follow him with respect to the latter point. Medhātithi is however of opinion that some of the persons disqualified from inheriting viz eunuchs and those born blind and deaf etc. may marry, while outcasts; madmen and the rest cannot do so. Hence the conditional clause may be taken in the sense as in the above translation (of Dr. Buhler). He however adds that the rule may also refer to cases in which the cause of the disqualification arose after marriage. Nārāyana's explanation is substantially the same. But he considers that a eunuch and an outcast cannot contract a legal marriage and that the expression 'Klībādayaha' literally 'those among whom the eunuch is the first' refers to men born blind and the rest. He admits also the rights of Kshetraja sons of eunuchs and outcasts who contracted a marriage before their disqualification arose." It seems from the above that a marriage of a eunuch or even of a lunatic if once completed would not be invalid as a Hindu marriage is not merely for sexual purposes.[3]

(c) Suitable qualifications of a bride for marriage.

A damsel who is neither a sapinda (*Asapindā*) on the mother's side (related within 5 degrees) nor belongs to the same gotra or family (*Asagotrā*) on the father's side (related within 7 degrees) is recommended to twice-born men for wedlock and conjugal union.[4] This restriction of marriage with a wife outside one's family corresponds with the rule of *exogamy* which is based on a rule of science and sociology. Let him wed a female free from bodily defects and who

1. (9-203). 2. (S. B. E. Vol. 25 P. 373). 3. (See 14 Mad 316, 320). 4. (3-5).

has an agreeable name.[1] She should be endued with auspicious marks. She must not have been known by any one or betrothed to any one before (*Ananyapūrvikām*) and she must be beautiful and younger than the bridegroom.[2] A prudent man should not marry a maiden who has no brother nor one whose father is not known.[3] For the first marriage of twice-born men wives of equal caste (*Savarnā*) are recommended.[4] A maiden should be taken from a respectable family.[5]

(d) Marriage with girls outside one's caste

(*Anuloma and Pratiloma*).

According to the Mitākshara, marriages are of 3 kinds viz., for religious purposes, for begetting a son and for desire.[6] Having prescribed the rules for marriage for religious purposes, Manu next enacts rules for marriage through desire. For such persons the following females are approved according to the direct order of castes.[7] " A sūdra wife alone can be the wife of a sūdra, she and one of his own caste the wives of a Vaishya, those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kshatriya and those three and one of his own caste the wives of a Brāhmin ".[8] A Sūdra woman is not mentioned in any ancient narration as the first wife of a Brāhmin or of a Kshatriya though they lived in the greatest distress.[9] Twice born men who in their folly wed wives of the Sūdra caste soon degrade their families and their children to the state of Sūdra.[10] Yājnavalkya and Vishnu however differ from Manu as regards the competency of persons of the three higher castes to marry with a girl of the Sūdra caste and they prohibit their marriage with such a girl.[11] Thus Yājnavalkya says : "There is the saying (as in Manu) that the twice born persons can get wives from among the Sūdras. I do not approve of it for the Ātman or soul itself is born there in the wife as the son". It has been held by the Bombay High Court that a marriage between a male of a higher caste and a female of a lower caste which is called *Anuloma marriage* is valid e.g. in the case of a male of the Vaishya caste and a female of the Sūdra caste.[12] Similarly the same High Court has held the marriage between a Brāhmin male and

1. (3-10). 2. (Y. S. 1-52). 3 (3-11). 4. (3-12). 5. (Y. S. 1-54). 6. (Y. S. 1-56). 7. (3-12). 8. (3-13). 9. (3-14; G. D. S. 15-18; A. D. S. 1-6-18-33). 10. (3-15). 11. (Y. S. 1-56; Vi. S. 25-6). 12. (46 Bom. 871).

the Sûdra female of Dhārāla caste valid and the child of such marriage as legitimate.[1] But the marriage of a female of higher caste with a male of lower caste which is called *Pratiloma marriage* is illegal and the issue of such marriage would be also illegitimate.

(iv) Eight forms of Marriage.

Eight forms of marriage are described in Manu and in less detail in Nārada and Yājnavalkya.[2] "The ceremony of Brahma, of the Devas, of the Ṛishis, of the Prajāpatya, of the Asuras, of the Gandharvas, and of the Rākshasas; the eighth and basest is that of the Paisāchas. (1) The gift of a daughter clothed only with a single robe, to a man learned in the Vedas whom her father voluntarily invites, and respectfully receives, is the nuptial rite called *Brahma.* (2) The rite which sages call *Daiva* is the gift of a daughter whom her father has decked in gay attire when the sacrifice is already begun to the officiating priest who performs that act of religion. (3) When the father gives his daughter away having received from the bridegroom one pair of kine or two pairs, for uses prescribed by law, that marriage is termed *Arsha* (4) The nuptial rite called *Prājāpatya* is when the father gives away his daughter with due honour saying distinctly 'May both of you perform together your civil and religious duties' (5) When the bridegroom having given as much wealth as he can afford, himself takes her voluntarily as his bride, that marriage is named *Āsura* (6) The reciprocal connection of a youth and a damsel with mutual desire is the marriage denominated *Gāndharva* contracted for the purpose of amorous embraces from sensual inclination. (7) The seizure of a maiden by force from her house while she weeps and calls for assistance, after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in battle or wounded and their houses broken open is the marriage styled *Rākshasa* (8) When the lover secretly embraces the damsel, either sleeping or flushed with strong liquor or disordered in her intellect, that sinful marriage called *Paishācha* is the eighth and the basest". Of these 8 forms of marriage the first four were approved while the last four were disapproved forms.[3]

These forms belong to different stages of society. The The last three point to a time when the rights of parents over

1. (32 Bom. L. R. 1348). 2. (3-20 to 42; N. S. 12-39 to 45 Y. S. 1-58 to 61; V. S. 1-28 to 36). 3. (3-39 to 42).

their daughters were unknown or disregarded and when men procured for themselves women by force, fraud or enticement. The Rākshasa and the Gāndharva forms were considered lawful for the warrior tribe.[1] The Āsura form of marriage by purchase which was condemned by Manu,[2] was the next in order of antiquity to those mentioned before. As regards Āsura form of marriage, Mr. Mayne observes. " As delicacy increased in the relation between the sexes, marriage by sale would fall into disrepute from its resemblance to prostitution." Hence Manu says. "Let no father who knows the law receive a gratuity however small for giving his daughter in marriage, since the man who through avarice takes a gratuity for that purpose is a seller of his offspring[3] The Ārsha form which is one of the approved forms of marriage, according to Mr. Mayne is simply a revival from Āsura, the substantial price paid for the girl having dwindled down to a gift of a slight or nominal value.[4] Another mode of preserving the symbol of sale was receipt of a gift as a chariot and a hundred cows which was immediately returned to the giver just like the nuzzrana given to some of the Indian princes by their subjects. The arrangement is said by Āpastambha to have been prescribed by the Vedas in order to fulfil the law.[5] The ultimate compromise as Mr. Mayne puts it appears to have been that the present given by the suitor was received by the parents for the benefit of the bride and became her dowry which is called Pallu in Gujrat. Manu says: " When money or goods are given to damsels whose kinsmen receive them not for their own use, it is no sale; it is merely a token of courtesy and affection to the bride.[6] This gift which was called the bride's fee (Shulka), passed in a peculiar course of devolution to the woman's own brothers, instead of to her own famale heirs. The shulka was considered something over which the woman's family had special rights. If they abandoned the possession they retained the reversion. Mayne ascribes this as the reason why when a girl who had been allowed to pass maturity exercised her right of choosing for herself, the bridgroom was not to give a nuptial gift to her father, since he had lost his dominion over her by detaining her at a time

1. (3–26). 2. (3–25, 41). 3. (4–51; 9–98, 100). 4. (3–29; Y. S. 1–59).
5. (A. D. S. 2–6–13–12). 6. (3–54; see in the goods of Nathibai, 2 Bom. 9).

when she might have been a parent."[1] But on the other hand as the reversion was thus lost she was not allowed to carry with her the ornaments she had received from her own father's family.[2] If the girl died before marriage, the gifts made by the bridegroom reverted to him after deducting any expenses that might have been already incurred.[3] The essential difference between the above forms of marriage and the remaining three viz., the Brahma, the Daiva and Prājāpatya, is that while on the one hand the girl is voluntarily handed over by her parents, they on the other hand receive no equivalent for the gift. The Daiva form is appropriate to an officiating priest i.e. a Brāhmin as also the Brahma form in which also the bridegroom to whom the girl was given in marriage was a man learned in the Vedas and therefore presumably a Brāhman. Of the above forms of marriage, all but 2 viz., the Brahma and the Āsura are now obsolete. It may be stated generally that the Brahma is the only legal form of marriage at present which will be presumed by law unless proved to the contrary by those asserting that the marriage was in a disapproved form. As regards Gandharva form of marriage which was in vogue in the Kshatriyas at a time when the notion of marriage involved no idea of permanence or exclusiveness, it implied nothing more than fornication without the element of a permanent union.

(v) Different sorts of sons.

The early writers on law recognized various sorts of sons on account of the great necessity for sons in those times when a man was surrounded by enemies and the very existence and security of of a family depended upon the continual multiplication of its males. The following sons were therefore recognized in the early times viz., (1) The legitimate son (*aurasa*) (2) the son of an appointed daughter (*putrikā putra*) who was considered to be the son of his mother's father by a fiction (3) the son begotten on the wife by another (*Kshetraja*) by a religious appointment or Commission known as (*Niyoga*) (4) the son born secretly (*Gūdhaja*) (5) the maiden's son (*Kānina*) begotten in her maiden state (6) the son taken with the bride (*Sahodha*) along with her to her newly

1. (9-93). 2. (9-90, 92). 3. (Y. S. 2-146).

wedded husband (7) the son of a remarried woman (*Paunarbhava*) by her second husband (8) the son by a Sūdra woman (*Nishāda*) or (9) by a concubine (*Parāsava*) (10) the adopted son (*Dattaka*) (11) the son made (*Kṛitrima*) artificially (12) the son bought (*Krīta*) for a price (13) the son cast off (*Apaviddha*) and (14) the son self-given (*Svayamdatta*)[1] Manu recognises only 12 kinds of sons in which son of an appointed daughter is not included as he is described by him separately to be equal to an actual son[2]. Of the 12 kinds of sons recognised by Manu six are heirs and kinsmen viz., (1) the legtimate son (*Aurasa*) (2) the son begotten on a wife (*Kshetraja*) (3) the son adopted (*Dattaka*) (4) the son made (*Kṛitrima*) (5) the son secretly born (*Gūdhotpanna*) and (6) the son cast off (*Apaviddha*).[3] The remaining six are not heirs but kinsmen viz, (1) the son of an unmarried maiden (*Kānina*) (2) The son received with the wife (*Sahodha*) (3) the son bought (*Krīta*) (4) the son begotten on a remarried woman (*Paunarbhava*) (5) the son self given (*Swayamdutta*) and (6) the son of sūdra female (*Shaudra*).[4] Mr. Mayne suggests that "Where a son was so indispensable, we might expect that every contrivance would be exhausted to procure one." The sage Āpastambha however stands alone among the earlier writers in refusing to recognise any of the above classes of sons except the legitimate son.[5] Āpastambha was also against mixed marriages.[6]

(vi) Rites and ceremonies of Brahma Marriage.

The marriage rite in the Brahma form which followed the betrothal consisted of the following parts viz., (1) The *Kanyā-Dāna* or the gift of a daughter in marriage with a vow (sankalpa) on the part of her father to the bridegroom wooing for her hand by pouring in his right hand water and handing over to him the bride by placing her in his right hand, invoking the blessings of Prajāpati or the Lord of Offspring.[7] From the ceremony of gift of a girl in marriage (Kanyā-Dāna) on the part of her father some persons have

1. (9-127 to 140; 158 to 164; Y. S. 2-120 to 132; G. D. S. 28-32, 33; V. D. S. 17-9 to 22 N.S. 13-17 to 20; 45 to 47 B.D.S. 17-2-10 to 24). 2. (9-134 to 136. 3. (9-159). 4. (9-160). 5. (A. D. S. 2-6-13-1 to 11). 6. (A.D.S. 2-6-13-4,5). 7. (P. G. S. 1-4-15).

come to the conclusion that according to the Hindu theory, the girl was treated as a chattel but this view is incorrect as will appear from the several Vedic Mantras uttered at the time of marriage which clearly show that the father gave her in marriage to a bridegroom after consulting her and secondly from the fact that the said ceremony was intended to show only that the father thenceforth gave up his right of protection which was transferred over by him to the bridegroom as indicated by the latter's taking hold of the bride's hand (Pāni-grahana). (2) This is followed by the ceremony of joining the hands of the bride and the bridegroom (*Pāni Grahana*) accompanied with Vedic Mantras as a token of matrimony[1]. (3) This is followed by the nuptial-fire sacrifice (*Vivāh home*) at which oblations are offered into the Nuptial fire accompanied with mantras. The bridegroom makes the girl sit down behind the fire and while she takes hold of him, he makes three oblations into the holy fire to Gods Agni, Vāyu, and Surya (Sun)[2]. The bride's father or brother then sacrifices,[3] standing facing the West, while the bride is sitting facing the East. He holds the Sruva (the ladle containing clarified butter to be offered in the fire) on the head of the bride and makes an offering of the clarified butter into the fire repeating the following formula: "Be queen and bear full sway over thy father-in-law, and rule supreme over thy husband's brothers and sister"[4]. The bridegroom then[5] standing, his face being turned to the West, seizes with his right hand the right hand of the bride with the thumb, while she is sitting with her face to the East, with the words "I seize thy hand that I may gain good fortune, that thou may'st reach old age with me thy husband. The Gods Bhaga, Aryaman, Savitṛi, and Purandhi have given thee to me to share my household for the sake of happiness.[6] He then repeats five verses from the marriage hymn of the Ṛigveda[7] and continues thus "this am I, that art thou; the heaven I, the earth thou; the Rik art thou, the Sāman I; so be thou devoted to me. Well: let us here marry. Let us beget offspring; let us acquire many sons who may reach old age"[8]. This Mantra

1. (M. S. 8-227; N. S. 12-3). 2. (Sh. G. S. 1-12-11). 3. (Sh. G. S. 1-13-1).
4. (R. V. 10-85-46). 5. (Sk. G. S. 1-13-2). 6. (R. V. 10-85-36).
7. (R. V. 10-85-37 to 41). 8. (Sh. G. S. 1-13 4).

shows that according to the Vedic theory of marriage, the relation of husband and wife was one of non-division and unity like that of the words 'sā' and 'am' in Sāma and of heaven and earth and Ṛik and Sāman which was indissoluble. The marriage tie was therefore by nature indissoluble. Now here four Brāhmanas repeat to the bride the Suryā hymn or the marriage hymn in the Ṛig veda[1] containing benedictions and blessings celebrating the marriage of Suryā the daughter of God Surya (Sun) with Soma. (4) This is followed by the ceremony known as circumambulation or leading the bride round the nuptial fire (*Agni-parinayana*) which consists of the following rites. viz. the treading of the bride on the stone (*Ashmā-rohana*) placed towards the North by the priest, leading her round the fire, and the sacrifice of fried grains (*Lājā-Homa*). The bridegroom makes the bride rise with the words 'come thou joyful one' and with his left hand makes her tread the tip of her right foot on the stone (*Ashmā-rohana*) with the words 'come, tread on the stone; like a stone be firm; tread the foes down; overcome the enemies.' The stone on which she stepped was to give her firmness. He then leads her round the fire four times so that their right sides are turned to it. The bride's father or brother then pours out of a basket fried grains of rice mixed with Sāmi-leaves into her joined hands. The spreading under, the sprinkling over and the second sprinkling over are done with Ājya-ghee (purified clarified butter). She then standing, sacrifices in the fire those fried grains (Lājā-homa) placed in her joined hands, while the husband who assists her in this, utters the words 'this woman strewing grains, prays thus 'May I bring bliss to my relations; may my husband live long; Svāhā'. All the ceremonies beginning from the treading upon the stone upto the throwing of the fried grains into the nuptial fire are repeated in the same way with the same mantras for a second time and a third time and silently (i.e. without Mantras) a fourth time[2]. (5) This is followed by the last ceremony known as the *Sapta-padī* or the stepping forward of seven steps before the Nuptial fire on the part of the bride and the bridegroom in the North-eastern direction. This ceremony consists in the bridegroom who walks with the bride

1. (R. V. 10-85). 2. (Sh. G. S. 1-13-11 to 17; 1-14-1 to 4).

in the North-eastern direction holding her hand, making her step forward seven steps (*Sapta-padī*) one after the other over seven heaps of the fried grains of husked rice put in a line in the north-eastern direction, first with her right foot and then with her left foot repeating the following words 'for sap one step, for juice with two steps, for the prospering of wealth with three steps, for comfort with four steps, for cattle with five steps, for the seasons with six steps; friend be thou (i.e. be united to me) with seven steps' The bride and the bridegroom keep standing facing the east while performing the above rite. The priest then appeases those foot-steps with water and sprinkles the heads of both the bride-groom and the bride with water out of a special water-pot kept in the north-east for the purpose, accompanied with Vedic Mantras. The couple then sits down behind the fire like before[1]. The solemn vows and pledges made by the bridegroom to the bride at the Sapta-padī ceremony before the nuptial fire indicate clearly that the relation between husband and wife was not like that between a superior and a subordinate, but like that of friends and comrades. The wife was not by virtue of her marriage subordinated to her husband according to the Vedic theory but she was elevated to the status of a queen and mistress of the house (Gṛiha-patnī) to act in co-ordination with her husband for all religious and secular purposes. The saptapadi is the most important part of the marriage ceremony as the marriage becomes complete only when the seventh step is taken before the holy fire. Thus Manu says: "The nuptial texts are a certain proof that a maiden has been made a lawful wife; but the learned should know that the ceremony of marriage is complete only with the seven steps of the bride before the sacred fire.[2] Medhātithi and Kulluka in their commentaries on the above verse say that after the seventh step, the marriage cannot be rescinded. Consumation is not necessary to make marriage complete and binding. On the completion of the seventh step before the nuptial fire on the part of the bride and the bridegroom, the marriage ceremony is complete and the marriage is indissoluble. Manu and Nārada say: "Once is a partition made; once is a maiden given in marriage and once does a man say 'I will give'; each of these acts is done once

1. (Sh. G. S. 1-14-5 to 9). 2. (8-227).

only among the virtuous."[1] This formula clearly shows that the marriage tie is indissoluble. As regards the significance of the rite of saptapadi, Dr. MacDonell observes: "The seven steps which the bride took with her husband and the sacrificial food which she shared with him were to inaugurate friendship and community."[2] The bridegroom then touches the bride's heart with the words: "Into my will, I take thy heart; thy mind shall follow my mind; into my word thou shalt rejoice with all thy heart; may Prajāpati join thee to me."[3] On the conclusion of the Vedic festivities, the bride annointed and in festal array mounts with her husband a car adorned with red flowers and drawn by two white bulls. On this she is conducted in a procession to her new home.[4] They sit silent when the sun has set until the Pole Star (Dhruva) appears. The husband shows his wife the Polar star (the star of Arundhatī and the Seven ṛishis or the seven stars in the constellation of the Great Bear) with the words 'firm be thou, thriving with me.' Then she says 'I see the Pole star, may I obtain offspring.' Through a period of three nights let them refrain from conjugal intercourse. Let them sleep on the ground.[5] On the fourth day after the wedding in the morning, the husband establishes the fire within the house and makes offerings into the holy fire of the mess of cooked food (*Sthāli Pāka*) with several formulæ addressed to different gods.[6] He then makes his wife eat the mess of cooked food with the words 'I add breath to thy breath, bones to thy bones, flesh to thy flesh, and skin to thy skin.'[7] Dr. MacDonell observes in connection with the wedding ceremony of the Hindus described above that "The main features of the nuptial ceremony of 3,000 years ago still survive in India."[8]

(vii) The Hindu Ideal of Marriage.

From the above long description of the rites and ceremonies of Vedic marriage and the several vows and pledges then uttered by the newly married couple before the sacred fire, the reader will easily understand how noble was the Hindu ideal of marriage. The

1. (9-47; N. S. 12-28). 2. (See history of Ancient Sanskrit literature by MacDonell). 3. (P. G. S. 1-8-8). 4. (Sh. G. S. 1-17-3, 4; A. G. S. 1-7-22). 5. (Sh. G. S. 1-17-2 to 6). 6. (Sh. G. S. 1-18). 7 (P. G. S. 1-11-1 to 5). 8. (See MacDonell's history of Ancient Sanskrit Literature).

bride was not treated as a subordinate creature but she was made the queen and mistress of her new home (gṛiha patni). She was asked to rule over her father-in-law, brother-in-law, and the other members of her husband's family by gaining their affection by doing useful and loving services to the family. The Hindu ideal of life was one of eternal comradeship of husband and wife, not only for this life but also for the next life for spiritual and religious purposes and not for lust. There was complete identity of interests of husband and wife who were treated as joint comrades with peculiar duties assigned to them for discharging all functions, secular, religious, social or otherwise together and in union which brought about in the result peace, harmony, unity and spiritual elevation, as would appear from the following verses in the marriage hymn of the Rig Veda which are repeated even to-day at every Hindu marriage as benedictions pronounced on the newly wedded couple. The said verses[1] run as follows:-"Here abide; be not divided; complete life's whole allotted span, playing with your sons and grandsons, rejoicing in your own abode." The last verse is spoken by the bridegroom: "May all the gods unite us two; May waters now entwine our hearts; May Mātarisvan, Dhatri and Deshtri join us together." In fact, one could not even conceive of an idea af any unhealthy competition, rivalry or opposition between husband and wife for equality of rights as seen in the West, as according to the Vedic ideal of life they are complements of each other which find their being in a united whole which was incapable of any division or dissolution having achieved a complete unity of heart and soul within the universal self in its immanent aspect whose divine spark ever keeps alive in in their hearts fresh and vivid ideals of truth, beauty, and love, enabling them to conduce to the good of society as well as their own spiritual emancipation.

(6) Rules and regulations governing marriage and marital relations.

(i) Selection and choice of husband.

We have already seen above that the Hindu marriage was a religious Sacrament accompanied with certain rites and ceremonies

1. (R. V. 10-85-42 to 47).

and it consisted of a gift of a virgin daughter of a marriageable age by her father to a husband belonging to the same caste chosen and selected by the former with the consent of his daughter, who had a hand in the selection of the husband as appears from the marriage hymn of the Rig Veda.[1] In the time of the Ṛig Veda the father did not force any match on his daughter without her consent. It was then customary for suitors to woo for the hand of maiden. Thus it is stated in the Ṛig Veda: "How many a maid is pleasing to the suitor who fain would marry for her spended riches; if the girl be both good and fair of feature she finds herself (i.e. by her own worth, independently of her dowry) a friend among the people."[2] The wooer sent special agents on his behalf to the father of the girl for wooing her hand and the choice of the husband was made finally by her father in consultation with the girl.[3] In some cases girls themselves made a selection of the husband.[4] This evidently points to the practice of *Svayamvara* (choice marriage), when a maiden of high rank used to offer herself as the prize to the conqueror in a contest of skill. This practice was however more to be seen in the kshatriyas (i.e. military class) than in other castes.

(ii) Age of Marriage.

As regards the age of marriage, no fixed rule is laid down by Manu. He only gives instances of suitable ages of marriage for a male and a female in the following verse, where he says : "A man aged 30 years shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him or a man of 24 a girl 8 years of age; if the performance of his duties would otherwise be impeded, he may marry sooner."[5] Both Medhātithi and Kulluka in their commentaries point out that this verse is not intended to lay down any hard and fast rule (*Vidhi Niyama*) fixing any particular age of marriage. As a matter of fact, several alternative ages are given for marriage. Therefore it amounts to a *Vikalpa* or alternative act and not a *niyama* or obligatory rule. It may be mentioned here that in Vedic times girls were married at puberty as appears from the marriage hymn in the Ṛig Veda wherein it is stated that the father of the bride Sūrya (sun) gave his daughter Suryā in marriage to her suitor Soma (i. e. moon)

1. (R. V. 10-85-9). 2. (R. V. 10-27-11, 12). 3. (R. V. 10-85-9, 14, 15, 23).
4. (R. V. 1-11-5). 5. (9-94).

with her consent which presupposes that she must have been of a sufficiently grown up age to give her intelligent and free consent to the choice of the husband made by her father and understand what was marital life and her responsibilities consequent thereon.[1] In the Mahābhārata, we find that there was a looseness of the marriage tie. It is said that "women were formerly unconfined and roamed about at their pleasure independent." A stop was however put to the above practice by Svetaketu and the law givers framed special rules and restricitions both as regard marriage as also the age of marriage. Thus Gotama[2] made the rule that "one shall give his daughter in marriage before puberty (Ṛitu) or before she wears clothes according to the view of some". Vasistha says: "Fearing the approach of the time of puberty (Ṛitu) the father shall marry his daughter while she still runs about young (*Nagnikā*). If she remains in her father's house after puberty, sin visits the father"[3]."As often as the menstrual course of a maiden of marriageable age who is desirous of and is solicited in marriage by a qualified bridegroom of the same caste, so often her father and mother are guilty of the crime of killing an embryo; such is the sacred law"[4]. Similarly Nārada says: "Let no maiden suffer the period of maturity (Ṛitu) to come on without giving notice of it to her relations; should they omit to give her in marriage they would be equal to the murderers of an embryo; he who does not give such a maiden in marriage commits the crime of killing an embryo as many times as the period of menstruation passes by without her having a husband. Therefore a father must give his daughter in marriage once for all as soon as the signs of maturity become apparent. By acting otherwise he would commit a heavy crime. Such is the rule settled among the virtuous."[5] Other law-givers have even recommended the marriage of a maiden at the age of 8. "A maiden 8 years old becomes a *Gauri*, one of nine years a *Rohini*, of 10 years a *Kanyā* (maiden) and after that a *Rajasvalā* i.e. a woman in menses."[6] "Therefore one should espouse a maiden before she has menstruated; the marriage of an eight years old maiden is most preferable."[7] Pārāsara

1. (R. V. 10-85-9). 2. (G. D. S. 18-21, 22, 23). 3. (V. S. 17-70).
4. (V. S. 17-71). 5. (N. S. 12-25 to 27). 6. (P. S. 7-4; Sv. S. 66).
7. (Sv. S. 68).

however mentions the age of 12 as the upper limit for the marriage of a girl. He lays down the rule that a maiden must be given in marriage before 12, otherwise her parents drink her menstruation blood every month.[1] He further says that "by seeing a maiden in menses her mother, father and elder brother—these three go to hell."[2] These statements about the marriageable age of a girl seem to be inconsistent with that of marriage of girls at maturity as seen in the Ṛig Veda. According to the well known canon of interpretation of Texts, whenever there is a conflict between S'ruti and Smṛiti S'ruti prevails. Therefore the Vedic rule regulating the marriage of mature girls ought to prevail. This interpretation is further supported by the explanation given in the *Gṛihya Saṁgraha Parisistha* attached *Gobhila Gṛihya Sūtra* as follows: "(17) So long as a girl is not menstruating she is called *Nagnikā*. When she menstruates she is called *Rutumati*, and one should give the latter in marriage; (18) A girl who has not had menstruation is called *Gauri* while one who has menstruation is called *Rohini*. So long as she has no signs of maturity she is called *Kanyā* while one whose breasts are not developed is called *Nagnikā*; (19) As soon as there are visible signs of maturity the God Soma enjoys (i. e. protects) her as the guardian deity; with development of the breasts the Gandharva as her presiding deity protects her, while on the appearance of menstruation, Agni (fire) as her presiding deity protects her; (20) Therefore a girl who is devoid of any signs of maturity, menstruation and development of the breast and who is not enjoyed (i. e. protected) by the guardian deities Soma and others is not fit to be given in marriage." " Manu[3] also lays down that " the husband receives his wife from gods; he does not wed her according to his own will. " The idea of enjoyment or protection of a girl by the three deities, Soma, Gandharva and Agni before she is fit to be married, is taken from the hymn of of the Ṛig Veda which says "Soma obtained her first of all; next the Gandharva was her lord; Agni was thy third husband. Now one born of woman (i.e. man) is thy fourth."[4] Now if we just turn to Yājnavalkya Smṛiti, we will clearly understand what is meant by the marriage of a girl with the three gods mentioned above, before she is married to a man. Yāgnavalkya states " Soma

1. (P. S. 7-5; Y. S. 22). 2. (P. S. 7-6). 3. (9-95). 4. (R. V. 10-85-40.)

has conferred upon her purity, Gandharva sweet speech, while Agni (fire) the most exalted state of holiness, washing away all her sins. Hence women are most holy.[1] The mention of Agni or fire refers to menstruation as would appear from the following statement in Vasistha: " Women are extraordinarily holy. They are never tainted. The menstruation blood of theirs every month removes their sins. Women who were first enjoyed i.e. protected by the three gods, Soma, Gandharva, and Agni (fire) are then married with men. These are never tainted according to the law. Soma conferred on them purity, Gandharva refined speech, and fire (Agni) the most exalted state of holiness. Hence women are free from sin or impurity."[2] Vasistha further says: "A woman is never contaminated by connection with her paramour. A woman should never be abandoned, even if she is enjoyed by another by force or if she has fallen into the hands of thieves, for there is no abandonment of a woman laid down in the law. One should celebrate the season of woman's flowering (i.e. the period of puberty or Ṛitu). She is purified every time by the menstrual flow."[3] The enjoyment of a girl by the three gods, Soma, Gandharva and fire, as her husbands successively before her marriage with a man as mentioned in the above verse, does not mean physical enjoyment or remarriage as wrongly interpreted by the Ārya Samājists, but it indicates and suggests her three physical states of development before marriage with a man, corresponding with the changes in her features, voice, and the menstrual appearance successively. This is supported by a verse in Samvarta smṛiti with a slight change: " The moon enjoys a maiden when hairs grow on her person, seeing the menstrual blood the Gandharvas enjoy her, and seeing her rising breasts the fire.[4] This interpretation which is based on express Vedic Texts cited above would clearly go to show that the marriage of a girl could be performed only after the appearance of menstruation, which was accompanied with heat (Agni). However, the authors of Smṛitis have positively laid down the rule of marrying a girl before Puberty (Ṛitu), as shown above. The explanation of this is two-fold. The first explanation is, that the word Ṛitu (puberty) is used in a technical sense and it is not synonymous with

1. (Y. S. 1-71). 2. (Y. S. 28-4 to 6). 3. (V. S. 18-1 to 3). 4. (Sm. S. 65).

menstruation but it means a physical state of fitness for conception indicated by the menstrual flow as explained by Kulluka in the following verse in Manu.[1] "Let the husband approach his wife in due season (Ṛitu Kāla)." The same meaning is given to the word Ṛitu in the Mitākshara on Yājnavalkya[2] who also enjoins that the persons qualified should give a maiden in marriage at any time before the time of puberty (Ṛitu) without fixing any particular age for giving her away in marriage. If they fail to do so they would be visited by the sin of destruction of fœtus at every time of her menses. In the absence of a giver, a maiden should give herself away.[3] According to Manu, conjugal union is allowed at the due season and time (Ṛitu) only when she is fit to conceive, and not before puberty, although she may have been married before the proper age; thus recognising a clear distinction between marriage and the act of union. Manu therefore only means that a girl must be married before she attains the age of puberty which varies from 12 to 16 according to climatic conditions. Taking the word Ṛitu to mean menstruation, a second explananion may be offered namely that the rule about marriage of girls before menstruation might have been laid down by the several Ṛishis to counteract the evil influences of extreme asceticism preached in the two new religions of Buddhism and Jainism which revolted against the Hindu Vedic religion and threatened to destroy it with all the rites and rituals enjoined therein. The law givers were then obliged to rearrange in a proper form all their religious literature and also Smṛitis and law books in the Buddhistic period and they framed stringent rules to preserve the Vedic religion with all its rites, dogmas and practices and they enjoined the early marriage of girls and a scrupulous observance of the rules incumbent on a householder as laid down for his order of life which was is danger of being wiped out by the new teachings of extreme asceticism and a life of celibacy, in the above 2 new religions. The performance of the Agnihotra and the five daily sacrifices (Pancha Yajna) on the part of a householder was emphasized, which necessitated the householder to marry a girl even at a comparatively earlier age. The practice of marrying young girls derived a further impetus from the advent of Mahommedan invaders to India when

2 (3-45). 3. (Y. S. 1-79). 4. (Y. S. 1-64).

life was insecure and the person, property and liberty of the people were in danger. However, the authors of the Smṛitis by their wise rules made a clear injunction against connubial union and cohabitation before the age of puberty which ranged from about 12 to 16 according to individual cases as also climatic conditions. Though Manu lays down the rule about giving a girl in marriage before puberty, yet he is averse to her being matched with an undeserving person and he seems to have paid attention to the rules of eugenics and sociology. So he has laid down the rule that a father should give his daughter to a distinguished, handsome suitor of equal caste, though she may not have attained the proper age.[1] But the maiden though marriageable should rather stop in the father's house until death than that he should ever give her to a man destitute of good qualities.[2] He further says: " Three years, let a damsel wait though she may be marriageable; but after that time, let her choose for herself a bridegroom of equal caste and rank.[3] Gotama however says that "a marriageable maiden who is not given in marriage shall allow three monthly periods to pass and afterwards unite herself of her own will to a blameless man giving up the ornaments received from her father.[4] Nārada also similarly prescribes a period of 3 months upto which a betrothed girl who has reached puberty should wait, if her betrothed husband goes abroad before marriage and does not return home and then choose another husband herself.[5] If being not given in marriage she herself seeks a husband, she incurs no guilt nor does he whom she weds. This verse will clearly show that even if a girl marries after a marriageable age in the above circumstances, she is not guilty of any sin. The question as regards the marriageable age of boys and girls has now been finally set at rest by the Child Marriage Restraint Act XI of 1929 otherwise known as the Sharda Act which forbids in express terms the marriage of a male under 18 years and a female under 14 years of age under penalty of simple imprisonment which may extend to one month or fine which may extend to Rs. 1000/- or both, for breach of the above rule.

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1. (9-88). 2. (9-89). 3. (9-90 V. S. 17-67, 68). 4. (G. S. 18-20).
5. (N. S. 12-24).

(iii) Period of marital consummation and regulations relating thereto.

Though there is no consensus of opinion among the law givers about the age of marriage of a girl, yet all of them are agreed in the view that a virgin girl must be married before the period of puberty (Ṛitu) which is accompanied with menstruation every month. Puberty is the special condition of a woman indicated by the appearance of menstrual blood when she is fit for conception as explained by Kulluka in his commentary on Manu Smṛiti[1] and by Vijnāneshvara in the Mitākshara being the well known commentary on Yājnavalkya smṛiti.[2] This was the time for marital co-habitation which was considered very sacred by the law givers as determining the most psychological moment in the life of a woman when she passes from the state of girlhood to that of womanhood and assumes the responsible position befitting her for conception and motherhood. It is observed as a sacrament (*Sanskāra*) called *Garbhādhāna* Sanskāra[3] which is accompanied with certain religious ceremonies and celebrated even now as a religious act in the Mahārāshtra and other places in India. The married parties co-habit only after the above ceremony is completed. The law-givers have prescribed rules of injunction enjoining the husband of a married girl having attained maturity (Ṛitu) to consummate the marriage by approaching her at the prescribed season with a desire to beget a male offspring, so as to redeem the sacred debt that he owes to his father and a violation of the injunction is considered a sin, for which he is liable to punishment. Thus Manu says: " The husband shall approach his wife in due season being constantly satisfied with her alone; he may also being intent on pleasing her, approach her with a desire for conjugal union on any day excepting the Parvas."[4] Sixteen days and nights in each month including four days (viz., the 8th, the 14th, the 15th and the 30th days of every lunar month called *Parvas* which are prohibited by the virtuous for co-habitation) are called the natural season of women.[5] But among these the first four, the eleventh and the thirteenth days from the commencement of menses are forbidden; the remaining nights are recommended."[6] Gotama has also made an injunction

1. (3-45). 2. (Y. S. 1-79). 3. (G. G. S. 2-5-9). 4. (3-45). 5. (3-46). 6. (3-47).

that "a householder shall approach his wife in the proper season or he may do so at any time except on the forbidden days."[1] The sage Yājnavalkya also makes a similar injunction. He says: "Sixteen days or nights commencing with the day of menses are the consummation period (Ṛitu kāla) of the womankind. Of them one should know his wife on the night of an even day. This is Brahmacharyam. On the other hand one should avoid parva days (the four days prohibited for co-habitation as specified above) and the first four days of the menses. Remembering the vow of women, being faithfully devoted to one's own wife, and being influenced by desire proportionate to hers, one can know his wife even at any other time except the menstrual period, for it is laid down in the Smṛitis that women should be protected by every means.[3] A menstruating woman becomes pure after taking bath on the fourth day and after the disappearance of her menses only she becomes fit for religious purposes connected with the gods and the manes of the deceased fathers as well as for marital and household purposes.[4] One is forbidden to touch a woman in menses or have an intercourse with her during the first four days until she has taken her bath.[5] The husband is enjoined to approach his wife on the day of her menstrual ablution and if he fails to do so, he is guilty of the dreadful sin of infanticide.[6] Pārāshara lays down a further rule for women and he says " the woman who having bathed at the close of her menstrual uncleanliness, does not share the bed of her husband that day, goes to hell after death and is doomed to suffer the pangs of widowhood in successive re-births.[7] Gobhila in his Gṛihya Sūtras gives two views about the time for co-habitation. According to one view which is that of Shānkhāyana, the time for co-habitation is after three nights succeeding the marriage have passed.[8] But according to the other view which is that of Gobhila the time for co-habitation is when the newly-wedded wife after reaching her husband's house has had her monthly sickness and the blood has ceased to flow.[9] Pāraskara in his Gṛihya Sūtras gives other opinions on the subject. Thus he says: " Through a

1. (G. S. 5-1, 2). 2. (Y. S. 1-79). 3. (Y. S. 1-81). 4. (P. S. 7-15, 17). 5. (P. S. 7-18. 19). 6. (P. S. 4-15). 7. (P. S. 4-14). 8. (Sh. G. S. 1-17-5). 9. (G. G. S. 2-5-7,8).

period of three nights succeeding the marriage, the husband and wife shall eat no saline food; they shall sleep on the ground; through one year they shall refrain from conjugal intercourse or through a period of twelve nights or of six nights or at least of three nights.[1] The great sage Sushruta a leading authority on Medicine prohibits a person from procreating any issue in his wife of very young age on the ground that if a man under twenty-five begets a child in a woman under sixteen, the child is either still-born or short-lived or is of feeble body.[2] It would seem from the above, that the proper age for consummation according to the Indian Medical opinion would be 16 for a woman and 25 for a man.

The sage Āpastamba lays down the following regulations to govern the holy act of marital consummation: "Let him have connection with his wife at the proper time according to the rules of the law. Let him have connubial intercourse in the interval also, if his wife desires it observing the restrictions imposed by the law. The duty of connubial intercourse follows from the passage of a Brāhmana 'Let us dwell together until a son is born'.[3] But during intercourse he shall be dressed in a particular dress kept for this purpose. And during intercourse only they shall lie together, but separate afterwards. Then they both shall bathe."[4] With regard to the several regulations about the approach of a husband to his wife in the due season laid down in Manu Smṛiti.[5] Kulluka Bhatta summarises the same in the form of the following rules:--

(1) The rule enjoining a husband to approach his wife in due season amounts to an injunction (*Niyama*) which is a positive rule having an obligatory force until the birth of a son and any violation of the rule on the part of the husband is sinful. (2) After the birth of a son, the said rule is not mandatory and it loses its binding force and is construed as a *Parisankhyā* which is a negative rule its object being only to teach that the husband is not bound to approach his wife but if he desires to approach her, he shall not do so at any time except in due season as mentioned in Manu. (3) To this rule however there is an exception viz when the wife expresses any

1. (6 P. G. S. 1-8-21; A. G. S. (1-8-10,11). 2. (Sushruta 10-47,48).
3. (T. S. 2-5-1-5). 4. (A. D. S. 2-1-17 to 23). 5. (3-45).

desire for having the society of her husband, in that event it is obligatory (*Niyama*) on the part of the husband to approach her, as it was a privilege extended to woman by the boon of God Indra. (4) A further rule is again laid down by the law-givers that a man may approch his wife only and no other woman. This rule is only a *Parisankhyā* which is negative. I shall speak more of these rules of interpretation when I shall deal with the subject of Mimānsa in which these rules are considered. From the above wise rules laid down by the law givers, one could easily understand that their main object in framing the said rules was to exercise a healthy controlling influence on the sexual instincts and appetites of human beings by regulating all marital relations and providing for the begetting of strong, beautiful, and healthy children, having religious tendencies free from lust, from the very birth. In fact, Manu has exercised an effective check on the reckless multiplication of issues by laying down the rule based on the scripture enjoining the married couple to beget only one son to discharge the debt that a person owes to his father and ancestors, and thereafter to have recourse to a spiritual life if the parties are religiously minded. He therefore calls the first son only as a religiously born son through whom one obtains immortality while he calls the rest as born of desire[1]. In spite of this, a new rule directly opposed to the scriptures and the Dharmashāstras based thereon, has been sought to be deduced by the school of Reformers known as the Ārya Samāja, from a certain text of the Ṛigveda,[2] as enjoining the newly married husband and wife to beget 10 sons and marry 11 wives and husbands respectively in succession on the death of their former partner. The formula of the above text runs as follows: "May you beget in this lady 10 sons making the husband the 11th" and it is repeated even at present by the Brāhmana priests at the celebration of every Vedic marriage in Brahma form, evidently with the object of conferring blessings on the newly married couple. It is therefore merely an Arthavāda passage containing words of benediction, commendation and eulogy and it would be a clear misinterpretation of the holy text to deduce from it any rule of injunction (Vidhi Niyama) enjoining the begetting of ten sons or remarriage with 11 wives and husbands respectively as advocated by the Ārya

1. (9-107). 2. (10-85-45).

Samājists. In fact the begetting of more sons than one is not a religious act enjoined in the scriptures, but it is an act of desire to satisfy one's animal instinct. Further, it would be an absurd construction of the above text on the part of the reformers to deduce therefrom a rule justifying the remarriage of a woman with 11 husbands as would appear even from a superficial examination of the text which only expresses a pious wish on the part of the priests in clear terms that the newly married wife even after begetting ten sons by her husband may not become a widow but that she may be blessed enough to see her husband then alive to be counted as the eleventh person along with her ten sons begotten by him. It would be even contrary to human nature to think of widowhood of the newly wedded bride on the very auspicious day of her marriage. As regards the practice of Niyoga sought to be supported by the above text, in the Ārya Samāja sect, it may be stated here that although the said practice was undoubtedly in vogue in the Vedic times of hoary antiquity, it fell into disrepute shortly thereafter being a beastly act as stated by Manu and was discontinued. It was definitely prohibited for the Kali Yuga as stated by the Law-givers. The above interpretation therefore of the holy Vedic text on the part of Ārya Samājists evidently to support reform will appear untenable in light of the above discussion and is directly in conflict with the texts in Manu which are based on the scriptures and the high ideals of religious life inculcated therein, with which the modern reformers want to play fast and loose.

(iv) Rights and duties of husband and wife.

Need of safeguards for the protection of women.

According to Manu, women must be under the protection of the males of their families and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments they must be kept under one's control.[1] Her father protects her in her childhood, her husband in her youth and sons in her old age. A woman should never be kept devoid of protection.[2] Reprehensible is the father who does not give his daughter in marriage at the proper time, reprehensible is the husband who

1. (9–2). 2. (9–3).

approaches not his wife in due season and reprehensible is the son who does not protect his mother, after her husband has died.[1] Women must be particularly guarded against evil inclinations however trifling they may appear, for if they are not guarded they will bring sorrow on two families.[2] Considering that to be the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands must strive to guard and protect their wives.[3] Knowing their disposition which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation (viz., fickel-mindedness, going astray etc.,) every man should strenuously exert himself to guard them.[4] He who carefully guards his wife preserves the purity of his offspring, virtuous conduct, his family, himself and his means of acquiring merit.[5]

Means for protection of women.

No man can completely guard women by force; but they can be guarded by the following expedients.[6] Let the husband employ his wife in the collection and expenditure of his wealth, in keeping everything clean, in the fulfilment of religious duties (e. g. in connection with the household-fire etc.,), preparation of his food and in looking after the household utensils.[7]

Duties of Women.

Brihaspati lays down the following duties of women. "A woman must be restrained from slight transgressions even by her relations.[8] Let not a woman reside in another man's house separated from her father, husband or sons; by giving way to malicious propensity particularly, she is sure to lose her reputation.[9] Rising before the others, paying reverence to the elders of the family, preparing food and condiments and using a low seat and bed; thus have the duties of women been declared.[10] Drinking, rambling abroad, sleeping by day and neglect of her daily duties are faults, disgracing a woman.[11] That wife is declared to be devoted to her husband who is afflicted when he is afflicted, pleased when he is happy and squalid and languid when he is absent.[12] While a husband is absent, a woman must avoid decorating herself as well as dancing, singing,

1. (9-4). 2. (9-5). 3. (9-6). 4. (9-15, 16). 5. (9-7). 6. (9-10). 7. (9-11; B. S. 24-4). 8. (B. S. 24-2). 9. (B. S. 24-5). 10. (B. S. 24-6). 11. (B. S. 24-7). 12. (B. S. 24-8).

looking on at public spectacles or festivals.[1] A wife practising religious austerities, fasting and preserving chastity, self-controlled and liberal always, goes to heaven even though she has no son.[2]

Manu declares the following as the six causes of the ruin of women viz., Drinking, associating with wicked people, separation from the husband, rambling abroad, sleeping at unreasonable hours and dwelling in other men's house.[3] He lays down the following duties of women. A woman should never be infidel towards her husband.[4] The production of children, the nurture of those born, and the daily life of men; of these matters woman is visibly the cause.[5] Offspring, the due performance of religious rites, faithful service, highest conjugal happiness and heavenly bliss for the ancestors and one self depend on one's wife alone.[6] She who controlling her thoughts, speech, and acts, violates not her duty towards her lord dwells with him after death in heaven and in this world is called by the virtuous, faithful wife (Sadhvi).[7] But for disloyalty to her husband, a wife is censured among men and in her next life she is born in the womb of a jackal and tormented by diseases as a punishment for her sin.[8] A female must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband or sons; by leaving them she would make both her own and her husband's families contemptible.[9] She must be always cheerful, clever in management of her household affairs, careful in cleansing her utensils and economical in expenditure.[10] It was the supreme duty of a faithful wife to constantly worship her husband as a God though devoid of good qualities.[11] No sacrifice, no vow, no fast, must be performed by women apart from their husbands. If a wife obeys her husband she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.[12] A Virtuous wife (*sadhvi*) is one who never slights her lord and she resides after her death with her husband in heaven.[13] A faithful wife who desires to dwell after death with her husband must therefore never do anything that might displease him who took her hand whether he be alive or dead.[14] By violating her duty towards her husband a wife is disgraced in this world, and after

1. (B. S. 24-9). 2. (B. S. 24-10). 3. (9-13). 4. (9-21). 5. (9-27). 6. (9-28). 7. (9-29). 8. (9-30). 9. (5-149). 10. (5-150). 11. (5-154). 12. (5-155). 13. (5-165, 166). 14. (5-156).

death she enters the womb of a jackal and is tormented by diseases as a punishment for her sin.[1]

Duties of women in distressed times.

We shall now consider the duties of women in times of distress. Manu has first laid down the rule that a man who has to go abroad on a journey for business should make suitable provision for maintenance of his wife, for a wife even though virtuous may be corrupted if she be distressed for want of subsistence.[2] If the husband went on a journey after providing for her, the wife shall subject herself to restraint in her daily life but if he departed without providing for her, she may subsist by blameless manual work such as spinning, sewing, embroidery etc.,[3] Manu has taken particular care to emphasize that a wife must not place herself in any situation whereby her chastity which was her highest treasure and on which the purity of the whole race depended may be in any way endangered.

Duties of husband.

Manu also imposes corresponding duties on the husband. Thus he enjoins the husband to always support his wife while she is faithful and to protect and maintain her.[4] To be mothers, were women created and to be fathers, men; religious rites therefore are ordained in the Veda to be performed by the husband together with the wife.[5] Manu further enjoins husband as well as other relations of a woman to honour them if they desire their own welfare. Where they are so honoured, there Gods are pleased; where they are not so honoured no sacred rite yields rewards.[7] Where female relations live in grief and are not duly honoured, the family soon wholly perishes.[8] Hence men who seek their own welfare and happiness should always honour women with food, clothes and ornaments,[9] for they are like goddesses of fortune in homes which are enlightened by them.[10]

Mutual co-operation the highest ideal of duty for husband and wife.

Mutual co-operation was the highest ideal of duty for husband and wife as laid down by Manu and the other law givers. Whatever

1. (5-164). 2. (9-74). 3. (9-75). 4. (9-95). 5. (9-96).
6. (3-55). 7. (3-56). 8. (3-57, 58). 9. (3-59). 10. (9-26).

be the qualities of the man with whom a woman is united according to the law, such qualities even she assumes like a river united with the ocean.[1] Akshamālā (or Arundhati) a woman of low caste by birth being united to Vasistha became worthy of honour.[2] Thus females of low births have attained eminence in this world by acquiring good qualities of their husbands.[3] A wife has community of interest with her husband. According to Manu 'the husband is declared to be one with the wife.'[4] While according to Brihaspati she is considered half the body of her husband equally sharing the result of his good or wicked deeds, whether she ascends the pile after him or chooses to survive him leading a virtuous life, she promotes the welfare of her husband.[5] Manu summarises the law of duties for husband and wife by laying down the following rules (i) " Let mutual fidelity continue until death."[6] (ii) " Let man and woman united in marriage constantly exert themselves that they may not be disunited and may not violate their mutual fidelity."[7] The above rules will at once give the reader an idea that in laying down the duties for huband and wife, Manu has not shown any partiality towards man, but has kept the scales of justice even for both men and women. In short both of them are enjoined to lead a chaste and virtuous life and act in harmony and loving co-operation for a common purpose and not in separation or opposition which is repugnant to the Hindu Shāstrās.

Duties of widows.

Of all virtues to be observed by women, Manu has mentioned chastity as the highest. A woman is enjoined to lead a chaste and virtuous life both during the lifetime of her husband as well as after his death. For widows, Manu has laid down the rule that they should lead a simple and virtuous life after the death of their husbands. Thus he says: " At her pleasure let her emaciate her body by living on pure flowers, roots and fruit; but she must never even mention the name of another man after her husband has died.[8] Until death, let her be patient of hardships, self-controlled, and chaste, and strive to fulfil that most excellent duty which is prescribed for wives who have one husband (*Ekapatni*) only.[9] Many

1. (9-22). 2. (9-23). 3. (9-24) 4. (9-45). 5. (B S. 24-11). 6. (9-101). 7. (9-102). 8. (5-157). 9. (5-158).

thousands of Brāhmans who were chaste from their youth have gone to heaven without continuing their race.[1] A virtuous wife who after the death of her husband constantly remains chaste reaches heaven though she might have no son just like those chaste men.[2] But a woman who from a desire to have offspring violates her duty towards her deceased husband brings on herself disgrace in this world and loses her place with her husband in heaven (*Patiloka*).[3]

The custom of Sati or self-immolation of widow.

It appears from certain verses in the funeral hymns of the Ṛig Veda and Atharva Veda that there was an old custom for widow to immolate herself in the fire along with her deceased husband on the funeral pyre. Dr. Macdonell in this connection makes the following observations: "The fact that in the funeral obsequies of the Ṛig Veda, the widow lies down beside the body of her deceased husband and his bow is removed from the deceased man's hand shows that both were in earlier times burnt with his body to accompany him to the next world and a verse of the Atharva Veda calls the dying of the widow with her husband an old custom (Purāna Dharma). The evidence of anthropology shows that this was a very primitive practice widely prevailing at the funerals of military chiefs and it can be proved to go back to the Indo-European age".[4] Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutta has expressed an opinion that the custom of becoming Sati on the part of a widow by immolating herself in the fire along with her deceased husband had an existence in Vedic times. Mr. Frazer however has remarked to the effect that it would be presumptuous to assert from one solitary hymn in the Atharva Veda that the custom of Sati had no existence in the Vedic times; that it was a very old custom which had survived until recent times and further it is described as an old custom in the Atharva Veda. Mr. Frazer gives a better explanation of the Vedic hymn regarding the statement about the taking back home of the widow alive from the funeral pyre, that very likely the custom of Sati might not have existed in the family of the Ṛishi who composed the said hymn. The custom of a widow's becoming Sati after her husband had been lauded as

1. (5-159). 2. (5-160). 3. (5-161). 4. (Macdonell's history of S. L.).

very meritorious by some of the law givers and it was largely prevalent in India until recently, among some of the Kshatriya princes and chiefs whose widows burnt themselves alive on the death of their husbands. Pārāsara in this connection says: "The lady who follows into the next world along with her deceased husband (i. e. becomes a Sati) remains in the heaven for a period of three crores years and a half being equal to the number of hairs on a man's body."[1] "The lady (becoming Sati after her husband) liberates him from all sins like a catcher of serpent who extricates the serpent from a hole by force of Vedic Mantras, and she enjoys celestial pleasures in the heaven in company with her Lord."[2] Manu also bestows the highest praise on a widow who leads a virtuous and chaste life after the death of her husband. However the custom of Sati has since been abolished by the law as administered in British courts and any attempt on the part of a widow to become a Sati by burning herself alive on the death of her husband is an offence under the Indian Penal Code XLV of 1860 amounting to an attempt to commit suicide and as such it is punishable under section 309 of the of I. P. Code and any one who instigates a woman to become Sati is guilty of the offence of abetment of suicide under Section 336 of the I. P. C.

(v) Maintenance of wife and widow.

(a) Duty of husband to maintain his wife.

A wife who leaves her home for purposes of adultery and persists in following a vicious course of life, forfeits her right to maintenance, even though it is secured by a decree. But from a recent decision of the Bombay High Court, it appears that if she completely renounces her immoral course, her husband is liable to furnish her with a bare or starving maintenance i.e. food and raiment just sufficient to support her life.[3] In the above case, the late Mr. Justice Chandavarkar after examining the original texts bearing on the subject observed as follows: "The general rule to be gathered from these (i.e. the texts) is that a Hindu wife cannot be absolutely abandoned by her husband. If she is living an unchaste life, he is bound to keep her in the house under restraint and

1. (4-32). 2. (4-33). 3. (Parami vs. Mahadevi, 34 Bom. 278).

provide her with food and raiment just sufficient to support life; she is not entitled to any other right. If however she repents, returns to purity and performs expiatory ceremonies, she becomes entitled to all conjugal and social rights unless her adultery was with a man of a lower caste in which case after expiation she can claim no more than bare maintenance and residence."

(b) Widow's right to maintenance.

A widow who does not succeed to the estate of her husband as his heir is entitled to maintenance out of her husband's separate property, and also out of property in which he was a co-parcener at the time of his death. A widow does not lose her right of maintenance out of the estate of her husband even though she may have lived apart from him in his life time without any justifying cause and was living separate from him at the time of his death.

(c) Forfeiture of maintenance by widow's unchastity.

The right of a widow to maintenance is conditional upon her preserving unsullied the bed of her lord and leading a life of chastity. If she becomes unchaste, the right is forfeited, even if it has been secured by a decree or by an agreement. But if she returns to a moral life, she is entitled to bare maintenance i.e. food and raiment just sufficient to support her life.[1]

A widow by remarriage forfeits her right to maintenance out of the estate of her first husband.[2] The High Court of Allahabad has held that a widow who is allowed to remarry according to the custom of her caste, does not by remarriage forfeit her right to maintenance out of the estate of her husband[3]. The High Court of Bombay on the other hand has held that she forfeits her right[4]. Sir D. F. Mulla in this connection makes the following observations in his Hindu Law : " The whole point is whether the provisions of the Hindu widow's Remarriage Act 1856 apply to the case of a remarriage where such remarriage is allowed by the custom of the caste. If they do, a widow by remarriage forfeits all interest in her husband's property whether it be by inheritance to her husband or by way of maintenance out of his property. If they do not, she does not

1. (Parami vs. Mahadevi, 34 Bom. 278). 2. (H. W. R. Act XV of 1856 S. 2). 3. (49 All. 203). 4. (Yithu vs. Govind 22 Bom. 321 Ranade J.)

forfeit either of those rights. The Allahabad High Court holds the latter view. The other High Courts hold the former view and they have accordingly decided that a widow on remarriage forfeits her interest in the estate inherited by her from her first husband even though the remarriage is allowed by the custom of the caste. No case has arisen in those Courts as to the right of such a widow to maintenance out of the property of her first husband but it is clear that if such a case did arise, the right would be negatived."

(vi) Adoption by husband and wife.

(a) Adoption by husband.

The peculiar necessity for male offspring pressed upon the Āryans on account of their religious system. This want was amply met by the early Hindu law, which provided 12 sorts of sons all of whom were competent to prevent a failure of obsequies in the absence of legitimate issue.[1] However at first an adopted son was held in low esteem as is evidenced by the low rank he held in the order of sons as stated by Yājnyavalkya and Nārada. But Manu favours the adopted son. When the number of subsidiary sons was diminished in course of time as stated above, the importance of the adopted sons naturally increased. According to the Brāhmānical theory, the primary motive of adoption was religious viz., to gratify the manes of the ancestors by annual offerings. According to Mayne however, the spiritual theory was not the sole object of adoption, even upon Brāhmānical principles and the motive was also secular viz., for celebrity of one's name after death and due perpetuation of lineage. In fact this was the sole motive of adoption in the case of the non-Āryan tribes and the classes who dissented from orthodox Hinduism such as the Jains. The whole Sanskrit law of adoption is evolved from two texts and a metaphor. The Metaphor is that of Saunaka viz., "that the boy to be adopted must be the reflection of a son" and he was to look as much like a real son as possible. The brother's son was generally preferred for adoption. The texts are of Manu and Vasistha. Thus Manu says: 'He whom his father or mother gives to another as his son, provided that the donee has no issue, if the boy be of the same class and affectionately

1. (M. S. 9-180.)

disposed is considered as a son given, the gift being confirmed by pouring water."[1] Vashistha says: " Both parents have power to give him. But let no man give or accept an only son, since he must remain to raise up a progeny for the obsequies of ancestors. "[2] All sons who were recognised in former times fell into disrepute in course of time and there remained only two kinds of sons viz., aurasa son or the natural born son and the adopted son who were considered legitimate. The adopted son became invested with all the legal rights of a natural born son and was entitled to inheritance not only to the property of the person adopting but also of all persons related to him through the latter either on the father's or on the mother's side.

(b) Adoption by wife.

As an adoption is made solely to the husband and for his benefit, he is competent to effect it without his wife's consent and notwithstanding her dissent.[3] For the same reason she can adopt to no one but her husband. An adoption made to herself except where Kṛitrima form is allowed would be wholly invalid.[4] Nor can she ever adopt to her husband during his life time except with his assent.

(c) Adoption by widow.

As regards the capacity of a widow to adopt a son to her deceased husband after his death whether with or without his assent, there are four different opinions each of which is settled to be law in the province where it prevails. The right of a widow to adopt is based on the text of Vashishta which says " Not let a woman give or accept a son unless with the assent of her lord. "[5] But the *Mithila* school apparently takes this to mean that the assent of the husband must be given at the time of the adoption and therefore a widow cannot receive a son in adoption according to the Dattaka form at all. The *Bengal school* interprets the text as requiring an express permission by the husband in his life time but capable of taking effect after his death. The doctrine of the *Benares* school is the same as that of Bengal. The *Bombay* school on the other hand explains the text away by saying: " That

1. (9-168). 2. (V. D. S. 15-1 to 4). 3. (4 M. I. A. 2). 4. (12 M. I. A. 356). 5. (V. D. S. 15-5).

it applies only to an adoption made in the husband's life time and is not to be taken to restrict the widow's power to do that which the general law prescribes as beneficial to her husband's soul.[1] A fourth view was established by the Judicial committee in a case from southern India viz. that in *southern India* the want of the the husband's assent may be supplied by that of his sapindas. In the Bombay presidency however the law was that a widow may adopt without express authority from her husband subject to certain conditions. As regards the widow whose husband was joint with other co-parceners of a joint and undivided Hindu family at the time of his death, the law until recently was to the effect that she could not adopt without the consent of her father-in-law and in his absence her husband's undivided co-parceners and there was a string of decisions of the Bombay High Court to that effect. But a revolution was made by a decision of the Privy council in Yādav vs. Nāmdeva[2] where it was observed by the Privy council that in the Marattha country of the Bombay presidency and in Gujarat, a widow whose husband had not expressly forbidden her to adopt a son to him, had power to adopt without the consent of her husband's kinsmen whether or not her husband's estate had vested in her and whether he died joint or separate in property. These observations of the Privy council were however held to be Obiter Dicta in a later case decided by a full Bench of the Bombay High Court.[3] This last case however has been overruled by another case recently decided by the Privy council in which the judgment was given by the late Sir Dinsha Mulla.[4] According to this decision therefore the ruling of the Privy council in the case of Yādav vs. Nāmdeva[5] still holds good as law in the Marattha country, and the widow of a co-parcerner who was a member of a joint and undivided Hindu family is perfectly competent to adopt without express authority of her husband or the consent of the surviving co-parceners for the reason that the act of adoption is a religious act meant to do spiritual good to the soul of the deceased and that secular considerations ought not to override religious considerations. It will be seen from

1. (12 M. I. A. 435). 2. (48 I. A. 513). 3. (Ishvar Dadu Vs. Gajabai 50 Bom. 468 F. B.). 4. (Bhimabai v. Gurunathgauda 35 Bom. L. R. 200 P. C.). 5. (48 I A. 513).

the above that at least so far as the Bombay Presidency is concerned, very wide powers are secured to widows to adopt a son to their deceased husbands for religious purposes, thus obviating the necessity of Niyoga or remarriage of widows for begetting offspring.

(vii) Niyoga or the practice of begetting a son on the wife of another by a religious appointment or commission.

Among the various sorts of sons recognized by the early writers may be mentioned the son begotten by a person on the wife of another (Kshetraja) by a religious appointment or commission called *Niyoga* which was based on an authorisation given to her for the purpose. Such a son was clearly not begotten by the husband but he came to be considered as his son by a peculiar theory of paternity which was based on the old practice of Niyoga which had prevailed since the Vedic times. In the early times the male issue was prized most on account of the necessity for protecting one self against the attacks of enemies in those unsettled days as also for one's support in old age and sickness. Not only so, but the male offspring was considered necessary for securing happiness in the next world after death which depended upon one's having a continuous line of male descendants whose duty it was to make periodical offerings (Pindas) to secure repose of the soul of his deceased ancestors. Hence according to the lawgivers the first duty of a man was to become the possessor of male offspring.[1] It was therefore quite natural that all sorts of devices were invented by the lawgivers to procure for a person a son even by a fiction. Manu while discussing the theory of paternity as regards the property in a child begotten on the wife of one by another argues on the analogy of seed sown by a stranger on the land of another or of flocks impregnated by a strange male and observes: "Thus men who have no marital property in women but sow in the fields owned by others may raise up fruit to the husbands but the procreator can have no advantage from it. Unless there be a special agreement between the owners of the land and of the seed, the fruit belongs clearly to the landowner for the receptacle is more important than the seed.[2] Manu however deprecates the

1. (6-36, 37; 9-45). 2. (9-32 to 44; 48 to 55).

practice of Niyoga. He says: "On comparing the seed and the receptacle of the seed, the seed is more important; for the offspring of all created beings is marked by the characteristics of the seed."[1] "Whatever seed is sown, a plant of that kind even comes forth."[2] Never therefore must a prudent man who knows the Vedas and desires long life co-habit with the wife of another[3] as it is laid down in an old Gāthā that seed must not be sown by any man on that which belongs to another.[4] Manu observes that in the sacred texts which refer to marriage the appointment of widows is nowhere mentioned.[5] This practice which is reprehended by the learned of the twice born castes as fit for cattle is said to have occurred among men while Vena (the immoral king) ruled.[6] That royal chief who formerly possessed the whole world caused a confusion of the castes (*Varnasankaram*) his intellect being destroyed by lust.[7] Since that time the virtuous censure that man who in his folly appoints a woman whose husband died to bear children to another man.[8] Mr. Mayne observes on the origin of Niyoga in his Hindu law as follows: "It was upon the principle viz. that a son by whomsoever begotten was the property of the husband of the mother that the kshetraja so begotten upon a wife ranked so high in the list of subsidiary sons." He cites instances from the Mahābhārata and Vishnu Purāna of kings Saudāsa and Pāndu having induced Vasistha and Vyāsa to beget for them sons upon their wives by the practice of Niyoga. And so the lawbooks expressly sanctioned the begetting of offspring by Niyoga by a person on the wife of another who was impotent, or disordered in mind or incurably diseased.[9]

The begetting of offspring upon the widow of a man who had left no issue is merely an extension of the practice described above. Mr. Mayne however points out the following distinction between the 2 cases viz., that in the latter case, the husband became the father not by any fiction of paternity but by the simple fact that he was the owner of the mother. But in the former case, the element of fiction was introduced as after his death the husband's ownership of the wife had ceased to exist except by a fiction of paternity. So an express authorisation was necessary for the beget-

1. (9-35). 2. (9-40). 3. (9-41). 4. (9-42). 5. (9-65). 6. (9-66).
7. (9-67). 8. (9-68). 9. (9-167 V. D. S. 17-14, 56; N. S. 12-97).

ting of offspring by one on the widow of another. There were also certain other restrictions on the right of a widow to beget male offspring to her deceased husband through another person viz. that she should have no male issue in existence, that the connection was not to be continued further than was necessary for the purpose of conception, that the permission to beget a son was not to be for more than one son or at most two sons; and lastly the connection by the widow was not to be with any one but only with the brother of the deceased if possible or a near sapinda relation. In the opinion of Mr. Mayne, Niyoga as practised among the Āryan Hindus was not a survival of polyandry as the issue so raised belonged to the deceased person by a fiction of paternity and not to the begetter nor for the same reason is Niyoga the same as the actual remarriage of a widow with the brother of her deceased husband as wrongly interpreted by the Ārya Samājist reformers. The above practice however died away in course of time as soon as the idea of mutual fidelity and delicacy arose as an element in the marriage union and the relations between husband and wife became more refined as in the time of the compilation of Manu Smṛiti. Not only Manu but several other lawgivers also after him like Bṛihaspati, Pārāshara and others have also condemned Niyoga.[1] This practice was particularly prohibited for the Kaliyuga as decrease of power has been ordained for the human race in this age.[2]

(viii) Widow remarriage whether sanctioned in the Dharm Shāstras and if so how far ?

The verdict of Manu is clearly against widow remarriage. He declares that a man may only marry a virgin and a widow may not marry again. Thus he says: " The nuptial texts are applied solely to virgins and nowhere among men to females who have lost their virginity for such females are excluded from religious ceremonies (*Lupta Dharmakriyā*)."[3] "In the sacred texts which refer to marriage the appointment of widows (Niyoga) is nowhere mentioned nor is the remarriage of widows prescribed in the rules concerning marriage."[4] " A woman who from a desire to have offspring violates her duty

1. (B. S. 24-12, 25-41; P. S. 4-24). 2. (B. S. 24-13). 3. (8-226). 4. (9-65).

towards her deceased husband brings on herself disgrace in this world and loses her place with her husband in heaven.[1] Offspring begotten by another man is here not considered lawful nor does offspring begotten on another man's wife belong to the begetter nor is a second husband anywhere prescribed for virtuous women (*Sādhvī*)."[2] "She who co-habits with a man of a higher caste forsaking her own husband who belongs to a lower one, will become contemptible in this world and is called a remarried woman (*Parāpūrvā*)."[3] The only exception which Manu appears to allow is in the case of a virgin who has been betrothed and whose husband has died before marriage and for whom he lays down that she may be married again to the brother of the deceased husband.[4] This is however construed by the commentators as an application of Niyoga which was accepted so far only by Manu and by Mitākshara which follows Manu in this respect.[5] It appears from the above that in former times if the betrothed husband of a girl died before actual marriage, others refused to marry such a girl and she was married with the brother of her deceased betrothed husband by Niyoga. However the above hard rule was relaxed later on and permission was given by the lawgivers to a girl on the death of her betrothed husband to marry with another person as she was still a virgin so long as the marriage Sacrament was not completed by taking seven steps before the nuptial fire. This principle is also recognised by Manu who says: "The nuptial texts are a certain proof that a wife has been made a lawful wife. But the learned should know that they and the marriage ceremony are complete with the seventh step of the bride before the sacred fire."[6] The bride's father had therefore authority over her so long as the marriage ceremony was not thus completed and he can give her in marriage as a virgin a second time to another person.[7] This interpretation also finds support in Yājnavalkya[8] who lays down that a betrothal once effected can be cancelled on the ground of certain faults discovered later on in the betrothed husband and the girl could be given in marriage to a better and a more qualified person. On the other hand two other texts in Manu appear to sanction the second marriage either of a widow or of

1. (5-161). 2. (5-162). 3. (5-163; A. D. S. 2-6-13-4). 4. (9-69, 70).
5. (Y. S. 1-69). 6. (8-227). 7. (V. D. S. 17-72, 73). 8. (Y. S. 1-65).

a wife forsaken by her husband. Thus he says: "If a woman abandoned by her husband or a widow of her own accord contracts a second marriage and bears a son, he is called the son of a remarried woman" (*Paunarbhava*).[1] "If she be still a virgin (*Akshata Yoni*) or one who returned to her first husband after leaving him, she is fit to again perform with her second or first deserted husband the nuptial ceremony.[2] Thus Manu allows remarriage of virgin widows only but not of those who became widows after they were known by their husbands. Rāghavānanda however one of the commentators of Manu Smṛiti holds a contrary view and he interprets the verse in an alternative sense (*Vikalpa*) from the use of the word Vā (or) at the end of the first half verse and not in a restricted sense limited only to the 2 cases mentioned in the verse thus allowing even non-virgin widows to re-marry. However whatever may be the construction of the verse, the remarriage of widow even in the 2 cases mentioned in Manu was always looked upon with great disfavour by the high caste Hindus being directly opposed to the sacramental theory of Hindu marriage in the Brahma form according to which the marriage tie was indissoluble even on death of the husband. The word '*Punassanskāra*' used in the said verse by Manu in connection with such second marriage means a purification or a penance for marrying second time a girl who was already given in marriage once when she was a virgin (*Kanyā*) by Vedic Mantras uttered on the occasion. According to Manu a virgin can be given in marriage once only. He says: "Once is the partition of the inheritance made, once is a maiden given in marriage and once does a man say: 'I will give;' each of these three acts is done once only."[3] He further says: "Let no prudent man after giving his daughter to one man give her again to another, for he who gives his daughter whom he had given before, incurs the guilt of speaking falsely regarding a human being."[4] In short Manu prohibits in express terms a second gift of the same girl who had been given in marriage once as a virgin. The remarriage therefore of widow even in the 2 cases mentioned in Manu Smṛiti cannot amount to a gift of virgin (*Kanyādāna*) which constitutes the very essence of the Hindu

1. (9-175; V. D. S. 17-18; B. D. S. 2-3-27; Vi. S. 15-7 to 9; Y. S. 2-130.).
2. (9-176; V. D. S. 17-74). 3. (9-47). 4. (9-71).

marriage in Brahma form. The object of the last verse according to Kulluka Bhatta is to show that a Hindu marriage is indissoluble from the statements that a girl can be given in marriage once only and that there could be no second marriage of virgin (*Kanyādāna*) in the case of a widow whether deflowered or not according to the sacramental theory of marriage. The sage Yājnavalkya on the other hand has recognised the remarriage of widows whether virgins or otherwise. Thus he says: 'A virgin or one who has not been known by a man (*Akshatā*) and a non-virgin who has been known (*Kshatā*) by a person, when purified again by performing the purificatory rites are called *Punarbhu* (i. e. remarried women).[1] The Mitākshara commenting on the above verse observes that remarried widows are of two kinds viz., a virgin widow who is not known by her husband and a widow known by her previous husband. Both these are impure, the latter by connection with her former husband while the former by the purification ceremony (*Sanskāra*) which she had to undergo at the time of her remarriage which presuposes her previous impure condition. Yājanvalkya has again described remarried woman (*Punarbhu*) along with wanton woman (*Swairinī*) who having abandoned her husband seeks another of her own choice out of lust.[2] Nārada too has similarly classed remarried women with wanton women. According to Nārada " Besides the lawful wives seven other sorts of wives are mentioned in the order who have previously been enjoyed by another man. Among these the *Punarbhu* or the twice-married women are of three kinds, while *Svairini* or wanton women are of four kinds.[3] In his opinion even a virgin widow who is not deflowered is disgraced by the act of joining the bride and bridegroom's hands on the occasion of her first marriage and she is required to have the marriage ceremony performed once more as a purification at the time of remarriage.[4] The question that arises for our consideration next is whether a widow who had already begotten children by her deceased former husband is competent to marry a second time and if so what was the place assigned to her ? There is no specific sanction for remarriage of such a woman at least so far as Manu and Yājnavalkya are concerned but she would come under one of four classes of wanton women

1. (Y. S. 1-67). 2. (Y. S. 1-67). 3. (N. S. 12-45). 4. (N. S. 12-46).

(Swairinī) as enumerated by Nārada. This question has been exhaustively dealt with by Yasodhara in his commentary known as Jayamangalā on the Kāma Sūtras of Vātsyāyana.[1] The commentator observes: " Remarried women are of 2 kinds viz., those known by a person (*Kshata yoni*) and those not so known (*Akshata yoni*). Of these two classes, the latter is included in the virgin class (*Kanyā*) only, which can be purified by the ceremony of remarriage as laid down for her, while, as regards the former, there is no ceremony of purification by second marriage prescribed for her. She could be accepted only as a wife by a second husband but not given in marriage. She is called by the people an *Avaruddhā* woman or a concubine who is in the exclusive keeping of a person as his mistress and who is governed by the peculiar rules as laid down for her in Hindu law, "her right to maintenance being conditional upon her continued chastity." The commentator then cites a passage from Vasistha as an authority in support of his above view and states that there are 6 kinds of virgins mentioned in the above text who are not deflowered (*Akshata Yoni*) and who could be married a second time (*Punarbhū*). But there is another class of women who are deflowered (*Kshata Yoni*) and who have also begotten offspring (*Prasūtā*). As regards such women, Vātsyāyana has stated one view known as the Gonardīya view which says that the widow who has lost her husband and who on account of want of control over her senses and being overcome by lust, makes a second husband endowed with all the necessary qualifications of a lover is called a remarried woman (*Punarbhū*). It appears that Manu and Yājnavalkya in recognising the ceremony of remarriage for widows as a purification in the circumstances mentioned by them as pointed out above seem to have made only a concession to the ordinary frailty of the woman as an effective check and safeguard against immorality.

It may be mentioned here that certain other Smṛitis are relied on by certain reformers as supporting remarriage of widows in the circumstances mentioned therein as opposed to Manu who disfavours widow-remarriage generally. But this construction does not seem to be correct. Thus Nārada says : " There are 5 cases in which a woman may take another husband, viz. when her former

1. (V. K. S. 4-2-39).

husband is lost, or dead, when he has become a religious ascetic, when he is impotent, and when he has been expelled from caste."[1] Now it may be stated that the above verse appears just after the verse relating to Niyoga and it allows a woman to practice Niyoga in the circumstances mentioned therein, but it does not support remarriage of widows looking to the context. Construing the above verse in light of the verses immediately succeeding it, it seems it would refer to the course of action that a woman whose husband has gone abroad on business or for other purposes after marriage but has not returned home, has to adopt on such occasions. Such a woman is enjoined by Nārada to wait for her husband for a certain number of years on the expiry of which she is asked to betake herself to another person as her master and serve under him for earning her means of livelihood.[2] Nārada says that " no offence is imputed to a woman if she goes to live with another man after the fixed period has elapsed." The word 'Pati' here does not mean second husband as construed by some but it only means one who protects and maintains the woman as interpreted by the great Mimānsaka Medhātithi in his commentary on Manu.[3] Or the verse might be construed as referring to Niyoga as stated above. But Niyoga was condemned by Manu and Bṛihaspati as a beastly act. Nor is it sanctioned by Pārāsara for the present age of Kali[4] as it is also rejected by Bṛihaspati[5] and in the Puranas.[6] The very same verse that is given in Nārada allowing a woman to have recourse to another person in the five cases mentioned by him is bodily repeated in Pārāsara.[7] But it does not there refer to Niyoga the latter being rejected by Pārāsara. From this it is argued by some that the above verse in Pārāsara applies to remarrriage of women in the 5 cases mentioned therein including that of a widow but this does not seem to be a correct mode of interpretation being opposed to the Vedic theory of marriage which consists of a gift of Virgin girls (Kanyādāna) only accompanied by Vedic Mantras as explained by Manu who has forbidden the second gift of a woman in marriage after she was once married in her virgin state according to the Vedic formulae before the holy fire.[8] Nandapandita in his commentary on Pārāsara known as *Vidvan Manoharā* has interpreted the above verse in Pārāsara to mean that it applies to cases of Virgin girls

1. (N. S. 12-97). 2. (N. S. 12-98 to 101). 3. (9-76). 4. (P. S. 4-24). 5. (B. S. 24-12 to 14; 25-35, 41). 6. (V. P; A. P.). 7. (P. S. 4-30). 8. (9-71).

only who are only promised in marriage but whose marriage is not actually completed by Vedic Mantras and it provides for the remarriage of such girls with another person in the five cases mentioned above viz., when the betrothed husband is lost, dead, has become an ascetic, has been found to be impotent, or has fallen to the state of a sinner but it does not provide for the remarriage of a widow whose marriage was completed once according to the Vedic rites in her virgin state. The interpretation of Mādhava in his commentary on the above verse to the effect that Pārāsara has sanctioned widow remarriage in the 5 cases mentioned by him for other times than the age of Kali is clearly wrong as Pārāsara Smṛiti is specially meant for the Kali age and all the rules therein laid down would therefore apply to the Kali age. It would thus be seen from the above discussion that widow remarriage did not find much favour with the law givers. Even Manu who has allowed remarriage of widows in the 2 cases mentioned by him has expressed his positive disapproval of it by censuring the husband of a remarried woman (*Parapūrvā Pati*) as unfit to be invited to dinner as a Brāhmana at the Srāddha ceremony.[1] Manu has also censured the son begotten on a remarried woman as inferior to a lawful son and not entitled to right of inheritance to the property left by his father which descends to the lawful son,[2] though he puts the son begotten on a woman by Niyoga in a higher category and treats him in a rank with lawful sons born of the first marriage of virgin girls and adopted sons and as such entitled to inheritance to the property of his deceased father. The above question however was set at rest finally by the Hindu widow Remarriage Act XV of 1856 and remarriages of Hindu widows whether virgins or otherwise were since legalised subject however to the restriction that the remarried widow forfeits all rights of inheritance to the property of her deceased husband. Though widow remarriages are allowed in certain castes on the ground of long established custom, they are still looked upon with much disfavour and very few persons belonging to the high caste Hindus even to-day seem inclined to favour widow remarriage notwithstanding the special facility for the same afforded by the Legislative enactment referred to above.

1. (3-166). 2. (9-160).

(viii) Divorce Repugnant to the Sacramental theory of Marriage.

I have already shown above that according to the Vedic theory, marriage not being a contract but a religious Sacrament which creates a permanent tie between the married parties, it is indissoluble by its very nature. Even if through ignorance a man marries a girl belonging to his own family (Sagotra) against the express injunction of law he cannot dissolve the marriage but he is enjoined by the law-givers to maintain her for life and look upon her as a mother. Mr. Jolly in this connection observes in his translation of the Nārada Smṛiti that "a betrothal being dissoluble on the discovery of a blemish in either party (both according to Yāgnavalkya and Nārada), it follows that the act of joining the bride and bridegroom's hands i.e. the ceremony of marriage must be indissoluble." Nārada does not place betrothal on a par with the ceremony of marriage which is indissoluble for life as remarked by Mr. Jolly.[1]

Manu has laid down the rule that "neither by sale nor by repudiation is a wife released from her husband; such we know the law to be which the Lord of creatures (Prajāpati) made of old"[2]. This would clearly show that according to Manu the marriage tie being Sacramental is indissoluble. But Manu recognises separate staying of husband and wife in certain circumstances, which however does not mean divorce as the husband is enjoined to maintain his wife even on such separation. Thus Manu says: "Though a man may have accepted a damsel in due form, he may not stay with her if she is blemished, diseased or deflowered and if she has been given with fraud[3]. For one year let a husband bear with a wife who hates him, but after that period let him deprive her of her property and cease to cohabit with her.[4] The commentators however add that she must be maintained. Manu further says that a woman who shows disrespect to her husband, who is addicted to some vice, (e.g. gambling.,) or is a drunkard etc. shall be deserted for 3 months and be deprived of her ornaments and furniture.[5]

1. (See Jolly S. B. E. Vol. 33, P. 165). 2. (9-46). 3. (9-72). 4. (9-77). 5. (9-78).

Manu similarly gives the wife the right to stay separate from her husband in certain circumstances but this also does not mean divorce as she is not thereby deprived of her other rights to property. Thus it is stated ' She who shows aversion towards a mad or outcaste husband, a eunuch, one destitute of manly strength or one afflicted with certain incurable diseases shall neither be cast off nor be deprived of her property[1].

(ix) Polygamy inconsistent with the Vedic ideal of Marriage.

It seems that in the time of the Ṛig Veda it was the usual practice to marry one wife only and the custom of marrying many wives does not seem to have been favoured in those times but rather disapproved as would appear from the following verse in the Ṛig Veda: " The ribs that compass me give pain and trouble me like rival wives " (spoken by a man fallen in a well).[2] Mr. Ragozin in "Vedic India" has remarked that it is self-evident that polygamy could not have been common in a society which possessed the high ideal of marriage as set out in the marriage hymn of the Ṛig Veda. This opinion is further supported by repeated allusions to monogamy in several other hymns.[3] The Vedic theory of marriage which creates a permanent and indissoluble tie between the husband and the wife not only for this life but even for the next life would not support the second marriage of a husband with another wife during the lifetime of his first wife. Such polygamous marriages are repugnant to the high ideal of marriage as set out in the Ṛig Veda. However the custom of polygamy seems to have been more definitely established since the time of the Brāhmanas and there has been a considerable change in the Hindu law since then and second marriage with another wife while one wife is alive has been held to be valid on the ground of usage in several cases as observed by Abbe Dubois thus: "Polygamy was tolerated among persons of high rank though even among them it was looked upon as an infraction of law and custom and in fact an abuse. " One Text of Manu seems to indicate that there was a time when second marriage was only allowed to a man

1. (9-79). 2. (R. V. 10-33-2; 1-105-8). 3. (R. V. 1-105-2; 1-124-7; 4-3-2; 10-11-5).

after the death of his former wife, to enable him to again kindle the sacred fires (*Agni Ādhāna*).[1] Another set of texts lays down special grounds which justify a husband in taking a second wife (e.g. if she is immoral, disobedient, barren, etc.). Except for such causes it appears she could not be superseded without her consent.[2] Other passages provide for a plurality of wives[3] even of different castes without any restriction. Mr. Mayne in this connection in his Hindu law observes: "A peculiar sanctity however seems to have been attributed to the first marriage as being that which was contracted from a sense of duty and not merely for personal gratification. The first married wife has precedence over the others and her first born son over his half brothers ". "That son alone on whom he throws his debt and through whom he obtains immortality, is begotten for the fulfilment of the law; all the rest they consider the offspring of desire."[4] Mr. Mayne further remarks: " It is probable that originally the secondary wives were considered as merely a superior class of concubines like the handmaids of the Jewish patriarchs." It is however now quite settled in the Courts of British India that a Hindu is absolutely without restriction as to the number of his wives and he may marry again without his wife's consent or without any justification except his own wish. But in spite of this, the strict ideal as laid down in the Ṛig Veda has been maintained even now in the Vadnagrā Nāgar caste and the usage of the said caste forbids a husband from contracting a second marriage during the lifetime of his first wife.[5] The incident in Rāmāyana of the banishment of Rāma to the forest and his wanderings there with his wife Sitā brought about as the result of intrigues in the harem of Rāma's father King Dasharatha who had married several wives is sufficient to point out the evils of polygamy.

(x) Polyandry uncommon among the Āryan Hindus.

Polyandry in its lowest form as authorising the union of women with a plurality of husbands of different families could not have been common among the Āryan Hindus as the system of kinship through females such as exists among certain tribes of the

1. (5-168). 2. (9-80, 81). 3. (3-12; 9-85 to 87). 4. (3-12, 14; 9-86, 107, 122 to 125). 5. (2 Bor. 524, 572).

West coast of India and Assam where inheritance goes through the female was alien to the Āryan society. In the Āryan Hindus, kinship is traced through males strictly in accordance with custom which is based on their religious system, the first principle of which was the practice of worshipping deceased male ancestors to the remotest degree.[1] According to Mr. Mayne therefore at the earliest times of which we have any evidence, polyandry had become very rare and had fallen into complete discredit even where it existed. There is however one example in Mahābhārata of Draupadi who was won at an archery match by Arjuna one of the five Pāndava princes and then became the wife of all. This is the only definite instance in which an Āryan woman is recorded to have become the legal permanent wife of several men. However, the very description of the transaction represents it as one which was opposed to public opinion and which was rather justified by remote tradition than by existing practice. The account given in the Mahābhārata runs as follows: "The father of Draupadi is represented as shocked at the proposal of the princes to marry his daughter. He says: "You who know the law must not commit an unlawful act which is contrary to usage and the Vedas." Yudhisthira one of the five Pāndava princes replies: "The Law, O king is subtle. We do not know its way. We follow the path which has been trodden by our ancestors in succession." It is also to be remembered as Mr. Mayne puts it that the Pāndava princes were Kshatriyas to whom greater license was allowed in their dealings with the sex and for whom the loosest forms of marriage were sanctioned.[2] From a passage in the Rāmāyana cited by Wheeler[3] it appears that even the giant Rāvana on seeing the two brothers Rāma and Lakshmana in the forest of Dandakā with one woman Sītā and believing them to be her husbands, became enraged, as he seems to have looked upon polyandry with the same abhorrence as Draupadi's father." Polyandry however was in existence among certain aboriginal hill tribes as the Todas of Nilgiris, the Tiyars of Malabar and Travankore and the low-caste Malyalis of Cochin. According to custom as prevailing in those tribes, the wife is the property of all the brothers

1. (3–81 to 83, 91; 122 to 125, 189, 193 to 231; 282 to 284).
2. (3–26) 3. (wheeler' His. of India 2–241).

and lives in their home. "Polyandry exists as an institution among certain classes in Malābar and we see every day the four or five chosen husbands among these classes celebrating their polyandrous marriage openly according to their caste rules."[1] This custom was however never prevalent among the Āryan Hindus and according to the lawgivers a woman could never have more than one husband at a time.

(xi) Sale of a girl denounced by the lawgivers.

Manu has interdicted the sale of girls. Hence he says: "Let no father, who knows the law receive a gratuity (*Shulka*) however small for giving his daughter in marriage since the man who through avarice takes a gratuity for that purpose is a seller of his offspring."[2] "Even a Sūdra should not receive a gratuity (shulka) for giving his daughter in marriage since the man who takes a gratuity is a seller of his daughter secretly."[3] He further says that "no instances of secret sale of daughters have been known to have taken place even in former ages.[4] But when money or goods are given to damsels whose kinsmen receive them not for their own use it is no sale. It is merely a token of Courtesy and affection to the brides."[5]

(7) The Sacred laws and traditions of the Āryans.

(i) Twofold nature of the Āryan religion as taught in the Dharmashāstras.

According to the Vedic theory the main purpose of a man's life was fourfold viz. Dharma or righteous conduct, Artha or worldly prosperity, Kāma or sensual desire, and Moksha or spiritual emancipation. Of the above four objects Dharma or righteous conduct is the first and it is the most important aim of life. The word Dharma is generally used in a loose sense and it means conduct, duty, righteousness, spiritual merit, law, or religion. But, in the Dharmashāstras it is used in the sense of righteous conduct or duty as regulated by law or custom. The word Dharma is derived from the root Dhru, i.e. to hold and it means that by which a man is held and saved from a fall i.e. virtue or righteousness. In short Dharma means good conduct laid down as one's duty in the sacred law

1. (Malabar marriage Report-by O. C. Menon P. 103). 2. (3–51).
3. (9–98). 4. (9–100). 5. (3–54).

or by custom. Success in achieving the three other objects of life, Artha, Kāma, and Moksha depended entirely on a scrupulous observance of Dharma or moral and religious duty. The acquisition of wealth and material prosperity, fulfilment of sensual desire and spiritual emancipation or perfect freedom demanded an imperative observance of the commandments of duty laid down for a man as the sacred law in the Dharmashāstras or by custom. Thus Manu says: " The whole Veda is the first source of the sacred law. "[1] " Whatever law has been ordained for any person by Manu that has been fully declared in the Veda; for that sage was omniscient."[2] The word Dharma in a wide sense means religion and it includes all the above four objects of life, viz. righteous conduct, prosperity, sensual desire, and emancipation of which the first three constitute the religion of duty or *Pravṛitti Dharma*, while the last constitutes the religion of renunciation (Vairāgya) and knowledge (Jnāna) or *Nivṛitti Dharma*. The religion as taught in the Dharmashāstras is thus two-fold viz., religion of duty (Dharma) or conduct and religion of renunciation and knowledge, that maintains order in the Universe. Thus Manu says: "Some declare that the supreme good consists in the acquisition of religious merit (Dharma) and wealth, others place it in gratification of desire and the acquisition of wealth, others in the acquisition of spiritual merit alone, while others say that the acquisition of wealth alone is the chief good here; but the correct decision is that it consists of the aggregate of these three."[3] Manu at first defines the sacred law and religion as that which is followed by men learned in the Veda and assented to in their hearts by the virtuous, who are ever exempt from hatred and inordinate affection.[4] Jaimini the author of the Pūrva Mimānsā defines the sacred law as an object which is distinguished by a command or an injunction.[5] This religion has been practised by the Āryans of all castes and religious orders (Varnāshrama) since the time of the Vedas of hoary antiquity down to the present times. The religion of duty and conduct leads to worldly prosperity as also to happiness in the higher world which is acquired as the fruit of an unseen religious merit, (*Apūrva*) while the religion of renunciation and knowledge leads to liberation and freedom from the rounds of rebirths in this world. Manu has

1. (2-6). 2. (2-7). 3. (2-224). 4. (2-1). 5. (J. S. 1-1-2).

dealt with the religion of duty and conduct in Chapters 2 to 11 of his law code while he has dealt with the religion of knowledge in Chapters 1 and 12. Though the religion of duty and conduct which is enjoined on the several castes and religious orders primarily conduces to worldly prosperity and a station in the heavenly region of the Devas (gods) after death, yet it also subserves the purpose of securing the surpreme bliss of emancipation indirectly through knowledge generated by means of good conduct and purity of mind (Sattvashuddhi). The religion of renunciation and knowledge relates more to theory and problems of abstruse metaphysics and philosophy rather than to practice and practical problems of life and human conduct which are dealt with principally in the Dharmashāstras.

(ii) Traditional mode (Parampara) of handing down sacred Precepts and customs about good conduct (sadāchāra).

The Dharmashāstras which are based on the Vedas, mainly treat of rules of injunction and prohibition regulating human conduct in relation to the social, moral, and religious spheres of a man's life. Leading a high moral life (*Sadāchāra*) and observance of rules relating to the four castes and orders of life (*Varnāshrama Dharma*) and those relating to purity regulating ablutions, touch, food, drink, marriage, penances, expiations against defilement and so forth marked out and distinguished the Āryans from the Un-Āryans who were known for their unclean and filthy habits, sinful acts and an impulsive and animal life seeking after sensual gratification even at the cost of their fellow brothren, members of the same society who were treated by them with cruelty[1]. The Un-Āryans were the uncultured and illiterate aborigines of the land and they formed a separate class by themselves. The Āryans were distinguishedfrom the Un-Āryans by their scrupulous observance of the rules and regulations relating to the four castes (*chāturvarna*) and to conduct as laid down for them in the Dharma Shāstras. Man has by nature a beastly nature being governed more by impulses and animal instincts than by reason seeking after sensual pleasures at the cost of others which required to be controlled by proper and well regulated religious restraints. The law givers therefore knowing

1. (10-58).

this inherent weakness in human nature framed minute rules and regulations governing man's conduct in almost all the spheres of daily life enjoining him to follow the same scrupulously as his most pious and sacred duty, with religious penalties for an infraction of the said rules. They were evidently actuated with a desire to raise man to the level of god by leading a pure and well-disciplined life. If you take away from Hindu religion, the rules and regulations relating to conduct, purity, and discipline laid down by the wise lawgivers as suggested by certain present-day social reformers you would destroy the most vital ingredient in the Hindu religion which distinguishes the Āryans from the Un-Āryans. Manu has laid down that the rule of conduct (*Achāra*) constitutes transcendental law and religion whether it be taught in the revealed texts or in the sacred tradition which a man shall accept and follow as his standard of life.[1] By good conduct (*Sadāchāra*) he means the conduct of virtuous men and of the four castes as observed by custom which is handed down by tradition in regular succession (*Parampara*) since time immemorial.[2] Traditions were handed down by oral communications either from teacher to pupil, father to son, ancestors to descendants or from virtuous men to their followers from generation to generation in unbroken succession. Manu says: "Through virtuous conduct (*Achāra*), one obtains long life, desirable offspring and imperishable wealth. Let him untired follow the conduct of virtuous men (*sadāchāra*) connected with his occupations, which has been fully declared in the revealed texts and in the sacred tradition (*Smriti*) and is the root of the sacred Law".[3] A man of bad conduct (*Durāchāra*) is blamed among people; he constantly suffers misfortunes, is afflicted with diseases and is short lived.[4] A man who follows the conduct of the virtuous (*sadāchāra*), has faith and is free from envy, lives a hundred years though he is entirely destitute of auspicious marks.[5] Let him carefully avoid all undertakings the success of which depends on others, but let him eagerly pursue that the accomplishment of which depends on himself.[6] Manu exhorts all Āryans to make self-determination as their principle of life and follow preferably the high ideals of culture and civilisation as laid down in the ancient Āryan traditions and practices of their virtuous predecessors and illustrious

1. (1-108). 2. (2-18). 3. (4-156, 155). 4. (4-157). 5. (4-158). 6. (4-159).

sages and saints of hoary antiquity rather than imitate blindly the ideals of persons belonging to other races and religions which are least suited to the peculiar conditions as prevailing in India. Manu has rightly said: " Every thing that depends on others gives pain, while every thing that depends on oneself gives pleasure; know that this is the short definition of pleasure and pain.[1]

(iii) Sources of the sacred laws of the Āryans.

As regards the sources of law, Manu says: "The whole Veda (*S'ruti*) is the first source of the sacred law, next the *Smṛiti* (tradition) and the virtuous conduct (*Sadāchāra*) of those who know the Veda as also the customs, (*Achāra*) of holy men and finally, self-satisfaction (*Ātmatusti*)."[2] As explained by the commentator Medhātithi, the self-satisfaction i.e. of the virtuous is the rule for cases not to be settled by any of the other authorities or for cases where an option is permitted. " But a learned man after fully scrutinising all this, with the eye of knowledge should in accordance with the authority of the revealed texts be intent on the performance of his duties (*Swadharma*).[3] "Every twice born man who relying on the institutes of dialectics treats with contempt these two sources of the law must be cast out by the virtuous as an atheist and a scorner of the Vedas."[4] " The Veda, the sacred tradition, the customs of virtuous men and self satisfaction, they declare to be visibly the four-fold means of defining the sacred law."[5] " The knowledge of the sacred law is prescribed for those who are not given to the acquisition of wealth and to the gratification of their desire; to those who seek the knowledge of the sacred law, the supreme authority is the revelation (S'ruti).[6] Gotama similarly lays down that " the administration of justice shall be regulated by the Veda, the institutes of the sacred law, the Angas and the Purāna[7]. Thus the two great categories of primeval authority are the S'ruti (Revelation) and the Smṛiti (Tradition).

The S'ruti (Revelation)

The S'ruti is that which was perceived in a revelation and includes the four Vedas consisting of the Samhitās, Brāhmanas and

1. (4-160). 2. (2-6). 3. (2-8). 4. (2-11). 5. (2-12). 6. (2-13).
7. (G. D. S. 11-19).

the Upanishads. It was considered to be of supreme authority with all its Angas or Appendages.[1]

Smṛiti (Tradition)

The Smṛiti is a recollection handed down traditionally by the sages of antiquity. "For that man who obeys the law prescribed in the revealed texts and in the sacred tradition, gains fame in this world and after death unsurpassable bliss." "By S'ruti (revelation) is meant the Veda and by Smṛiti (tradition) the institutes of the sacred law: these two must not be called into question in any matter, since from them the sacred law shone forth."[2] The S'ruti is of divine origin while the Smṛiti is of human origin. The S'ruti contains very little of secular law though its statements of facts are occasionally referred to as conclusive evidence of a legal usage. "Rules of conduct as distinct from instances of conduct" as Mr. Mayne puts it are for the most part embodied in the Smṛiti." The Purānas are reckoned as supplement to the scriptures and as such they constitute the fifth Veda.[3] They are considered as valid authorities like the Veda, Sacred Law and the Angas.[4]

Rules of interpretation of the Sacred Texts.

(1) When the S'ruti and Smṛiti conflict the Smṛiti must give way to the S'ruti.[5] (2) When two sacred texts (S'ruti) are conflicting both are held to be valid, for both are pronounced by the wise to be valid law.[6] (3) Similarly where two Smṛitis conflict an option (Vikalpa) is permitted and either may be followed, at pleasure.[7] Jaimini in the Pūrva Mimānsā lays down the following rules on the subject: (4) Smṛitis are authorities because they have the support of the Veda behind them.[8] If we do not find the express Vedic text to support the Smṛiti we must presume that there was a Vedic text in its support which is lost. But what are we to do when the Smṛiti text is in contradiction with the express Vedic text? To which Jaimini replies: (5) That when the Smṛiti conflicts with an express Vedic text, the Smṛiti is to be rejected, because the presumption for its validity arises when there is no such contradiction.[9]

1. (2-13; G. D. S. 1-1, 8-5). 2. (2-9,10). 3. (Ch. Up. 7-1-2; G. D. S. 8-6). 4. (G. D. S. 8-6, 11-19). 5. (2-13). 6. (2-14). 7. (G. D. S. 1-4). 8. (J. S. 1-3-2). 9. (J. S. 1-3-3).

Practices of good men and customs. (Āchāra)

Manu next mentions good conduct (Sadāchāra) as a source of law. He says: "the custom handed down traditionally in regular succession (Paramparayā) since time immemorial among the four chief castes (Varna) and the mixed races (Antarāla) of that country is called the conduct of virtuous men (Sadāchāra). "[1] This would exclude new customs of recent growth from having a binding legal authority.

Reason (Tarka)

The last source of authority for the sacred law recognised by Manu is self-satisfaction (Ātma-tushti) or what is agreeable to the reason of the virtuous. Medhātithi explains it to be the self-satisfaction of the virtuous which is to be applied when an option is permitted, while Nārāyana interprets it to mean that the rule applies to cases which are not to be settled by any of the other authorities. What Manu seems to mean by self-satisfaction as an authority in cases not covered by the other authorities is that it is in consonance with the reason of the virtuous, thus recognising reason as an important element in determining what is right course of action to be followed by a man in cases of doubt. This construction is further supported by another passage in Manu Smṛiti which says: " Let him adopt that course of action which is deemed right by pure reason (i.e. which is free from any bias or prejudice)."[2] He further says: " He alone and no other man knows the sacred law who explores the utterances of the sages and the body of the laws by modes of reasoning not repugnant to the Veda lore"[3] by which he means the rules of reasoning laid down by Jaimini in Pūrva-Mimānsā. Manu of course like a true Vaidic refuses to recognise mere dry dialectical reasoning of persons who refused to believe in the supreme authority of the Scriptures and the word of God and who are therefore called by him as atheists and who must be cast out according to him.[4]

(iv) Good conduct (Āchāra) and ancient usages as transcendent law.

Manu has stated that " The sages who saw that the sacred law is grounded on the rule of conduct have taken good conduct

1. (2-18). 2. (6-46). 3. (12-106). 4. (2-11).

(Āchāra) to be the most excellent root of all authority."[1] The rule of conduct (Āchāra) is transcendent law, whether it be taught in the revealed texts (S'ruti) or in the sacred tradition (Smṛiti); hence a twice-born man who possesses regard for himself should be always careful to follow it."[2] " A Brāhmana who departs from the rule of conduct does not reap the fruit of the Veda but he who duly follows it, wlll obtain the full reward."[3] The rule of good conduct mentioned in the preceding verses comprises the numerous usages prescribed partly in the Veda and partly in the Dharma Shāstras. Manu further says: " A king who knows the revealed law, must inquire into the particular laws of castes (Jāti), of districts, of guilds and of families (Kulāchāra) and thus settle the particular law of each."[4] " What may have been practised by the virtuous and by such twice-born men as are devoted to the law, that the king shall establish as law if it be not opposed to the customs of countries (Desha), families (Kula) and castes (Jāti).[5] Medhātithi interprets the above verse to mean that " What has been practised by the virtuous and by the twice-born, that the king shall establish as law if it is not opposed to texts of S'ruti and Smṛiti." The Māhābhārata also says that the sacred law is derived from rules of conduct (Achāra Prabhavo Dharmaha).[6]

Hindu Law mostly consisting of immemorial customs.

Mr. Mayne in his Hindu law has expressed the opinion that "Hindu Law is based upon immemorial customs which existed prior to and independent of Brāhmanism. That when the Āryans penetrated into India, they found there a number of usages either the same as or not wholly unlike their own. That they accepted these with or without modifications, rejecting only those which were incapable of being assimilated such as polyandry, incestuous marriages and the like. That the latter lived on a merely local life, while the former became incorporated among the customs of the ruling race." In the opinion of Mr. Mayne the most distinctive features of the Hindu Law viz. the undivided family system, the order of succession and the practice of adoption existed independently of Brāhmanism which had nothing whatever to do with the early history of these

1. (1-110). 2. (1-108). 3. (1-109). 4. (8-41). 5. (8-46).
6. (M. B. Anu. 104-157).

branches of the law and the religious element was introduced only subsequently.

Neutrality of the Āryans towards the conquered races and non-interference with their usages.

Mr. Mayne pays a glowing tribute to the Āryans for their noble spirit of tolerance and neutrality and their non-coercive attitude towards the aboriginal native inhabitants of India such as the Dravidians of Southern India who were allowed to observe their ancient usages without any hindrance or obstruction whatever. Thus he observes: "We know the tenacity with which Eastern races cling to their customs unaffected by the example of those who live near them. We have no reason to suppose that the Āryans in India ever attempted to force their usages upon the conquered races. × × The Brāhmin treatises themselves negative any such idea. There is not an atom of dogmatism or controversy among the old Sūtra writers. They appear to be simply recording the usages they observe and occasionally stop to remark that the practice of some districts or the opinions of other persons are different."[1]

Manu averse to disturb the existing customs of the different classes of people.

Mr. Mayne further observes: "The greater part of Manu is exclusively addressed to Brāhmins; but he takes pains to point out that the laws and customs of districts, classes, and even of families ought to be observed.[2] Example and influence coupled with the general progress of society have largely modified ancient usages but a wholesale substitution of one set of usages for another appears to be equally opposed to philosophy and to facts." The above remarks of an eminent Jurist and Lawyer ought to be an eye-opener to the modern reformers of India who want to force their views of social and religious reform into Hindu religion through the medium of legislation in purely religious matters upon a large bulk of the reticent orthodox Hindus who honestly follow old practices and customs in matters affecting their sacred religion as a matter of conscience and faith and who are opposed tooth and nail to certain proposed reforms which are sought to be forced upon them through the medium of legislation.

1. (A. D. S. 2-6-14-6 to 9; G. D. S. 28-26, 40). 2. (M. S. 8-41, 46).

Paramount Duty of the Sovereign to preserve usages of the subject people.

As regards the preservation of social and religious usages of the subject people on the part of the Sovereign authority, Yājnyavalkya says: " Of a newly subjugated territory the monarch shall preserve the social and religious usages and also the judicial system and the state of classes as they already obtained.[1]

Legal forcement of custom.

The fullest effect is given to custom both by our courts and by legislation. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has observed in the Rāmnād Case: " Under the Hindu system of law, clear proof of usage will outweigh the written texts of law."[2] Mr. Mayne has also observed in this connection: " And all the recent Acts which provide for the administration of the law dictate a similar reference to usage, unless it is contrary to justice, equity and good conscience or has been actually declared to be void."[3]

Evidence of Custom.

Next as regards the evidence of custom, the Privy Council has observed as follows: " Their Lordships are fully sensible of the importance and justice of giving effect to long established usages existing in particular districts and families in India but it is of the essence of special usages modifying the ordinary law of succession that they should be ancient and invariable and it is further essential that they should be established to be so by clear and unambiguous evidence."[4] The custom must also be definite, so that its application in any given instance may be clear, certain and reasonable. It may also be remarked here that a custom cannot be created by agreement as observed by their Lordships of the Privy Council: " A mere agreement among certain persons to adopt a particular rule cannot create a new custom binding on others, whatever its effect may be upon themselves."[5] Lastly customs which are immoral (e.g. prostitution) or contrary to public policy will neither be enforced nor

1. (Y. S. 1-343). 2. (Collector of Madura vs. Mootoo Ramalinga 12 M. I. A. 436). 3. (Bombay Reg. IV of 1827 s. 26; Act. II of 1864 s. 15). 4. (Ramalakshmi vs. Shiva Natha, known as the Oorcad case 14 M. I. A. 570, 585). 5. (Myna Boye vs. Ootaram 8 M. I. A. 420).

sanctioned.[1] Thus it has been held by the Bombay High Court that caste customs authorising a woman to abandon her husband and marry again without his consent was void for immorality.[2]

(v) Assembly of Learned Brāhmans (Parishad) competent to decide doubtful points of Sacred Law.

"If it be asked how it should be with respect to points of sacred law which have not been specifically decided, the answer is that which Brāhmans who are shistas (learned) propound shall doubtless have legal force."[3] "Those Brāhmans must be considered as (Shistas) learned who in accordance with the sacred law have studied the Veda together with its appendages (i.e., the Angas, the Purānas (ancient narratives and mythologies) Itihāsas (histories) and so forth) and are able to adduce proofs perceptible by the senses from the revealed texts."[4] "Whatever an assembly consisting either of at least ten or of at least three persons who follow their prescribed occupations declare to be the law, the legal force of that one must not dispute."[5] "Three persons who each know one of the three principal Vedas, a logician, a Mimānsaka, one who knows the Nirukta (i.e. Vedic etymology), one who recites the institute of the sacred law, and three men belonging to the first three orders of life (i.e. a student, a house-holder and a hermit) shall constitute a legal assembly consisting of at least ten members".[6] "One who knows the Rig Veda, one the Yajur Veda, and one the Sāma Veda shall be known to form an assembly consisting of at least three members and competent to decide doubtful points of law."[7] "Even that which one Brāhman versed in the Vedas declares to be the sacred law must be considered to have supreme legal force but not that which is proclaimed by myriads of ignorant men."[8] "Even if thousands of ignorant Brāhmans who have not fulfilled their sacred duties and who are unacquainted with the Vedas and subsist only by name of their caste, they cannot form an assembly for settling the sacred law."[9] One will see from the above that only persons well-versed in the sacred lore and the Shāstras and who were free from all sectarian bias were competent to be members of the legal Assembly (Parishad) to decide doubtful points of law and make

1. (M. S. 8-46). 2. (Uji vs. Hathi 7 B. H. C. R. (A. C. I.) 133). 3. (12-108). 4 (12-109). 5. (12-110). 6. (12--111). 7. (12-112). 8. (12-113). 9. (12-114).

laws on religious questions, which were acceptable to the Āryans. The constitution of the legal assembly of the wise to administer law as stated above presents a strange contrast to the present day Legislative Assembly and Legislative Councils consisting of persons belonging to heterogeneous races, religions, and cultures and some of whom even though outwardly professing the Hindu religion have not even the elementary knowledge of the sacred laws and customs of the Āryans. One can very well judge for himself whether such persons are competent to make laws affecting the religious questions of the Hindus.

(vi) Different sets of duties for different ages.

One set of duties is prescribed for men in Kṛita age, different ones in the Tretā and in the Dwāpara and again another set in the Kali, in proportion as those ages decrease in length.[1] In the Kṛita age the chief virtue is declared to be the performance of austerity (Tapa), in the Tretā divine knowledge (Jnāna), in the Dwāpara the performance of sacrifice (Yajna) and in the Kali liberality (Dāna).[2] Tha sage Pārāsara also lays down the same rule.[3] He further says: " The Code of Manu was the authorized Code in the Satya Yuga, the Code of Gotama in the Tretā, the Code of Sankha and Likhita in the Dwāpara and the Code of Pārāsara in the age of Kali.[4] In the Satya Yuga, one should abandon the country in order to avoid the company of a sinner, in the Tretā the village in which he lives, in the Dwāpara the family he belongs to, and the sinner himself in the Kali Yuga.[5] Sinful is the conversation with a sinner in the Satya Yuga, his very sight in the Tretā and eating his boiled rice in the Dvāpara; in the Kali age it is his act alone that degrades a man.[6] The law givers have made a gradation in the practice of expiatory penances according to the capacity of the penitent in each Yuga. But those laid down by the holy Pārāsara should be observed in the Kali Yuga.[7] Good conduct (Āchāra) is the true character of virtue among all castes of men. Without it a man needs must be hostilely disposed towards virtue (Dharma).[8]

1. (1-85). 2. (1-86). 3. (P. S. 1-21, 22). 4. (P. S. 1-23). 5. (P. S. 1-24). 6. (P. S. 1-25). 7. (P. S. 1-33). 8. (P. S. 1-36).

(vii) Catholicity of Dharma Shāstras and adaption of the law to changing conditions.

The laws laid down by the law-givers were not rigid and uniform for all ages but they were elastic so as to be adaptable to the changing conditions of the different times. Thus it is stated by Manu: "One set of duties is prescribed for men in the Kṛita age, different ones in Tretā and in the Dvāpara and another set in the Kali age in proportion as those ages decrease in length.[1] In the Kṛita age, the chief virtue is declared to be the performance of austerities (Tapa), in the Tretā divine Knowledge (Jnāna), in the Dvāpara sacrifice (Yajna) and in the Kali liberality (Dāna) alone.[2] Bṛihaspati in this connection observes "In the ages of Kṛita, Tretā, and Dvāpara, men were imbued with devotion and sacred knowledge; in the present or Kali age, a decrease of its power has been ordained for the human race."[3] The sage Pārāsara observes that "the law-givers have made a gradation in the practice of expiatory penances according to the capacity of the penitent in each age (Yuga) but those laid down by the holy Pārāsara should be observed in the Kali age."[4] Good conduct is the true character of virtue among all castes of men; without it a man needs must be hostilely disposed towards virtue (Dharma).[5] Pārāsara further observes; "Different are the rules of piety etc., in the succeeding ages of Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali, according to the exigencies of each age".[6] "In the Satya Yuga one should abandon the country, in order to avoid the company of a sinner, in the Tretā the village he lives in; in the Dvāpara the family he belongs to, and the sinner himself in the Kali age.[7] "Sinful is the conversation with a sinner in the Satya Yuga, his very sight in the Tretā, and eating his boiled rice in the Dvāpara while in the Kali age, it is his act alone that degrades a man".[8] Pārāsara further says that "the Dhārmas for the Satya Yuga are those prescribed by Manu, for the Tretā those by Gotama, for the Dvāpara those by Sankha and Likhita and for Kali those by Pārāsara".[9] The following explanation is given in the Vīrmitrodaya about the above statement in Pārāsara "What is meant is that the Smṛiti of Manu does not deal in

1. (1-85). 2. (1-86). 3. (B. S. 24-13). 4. (1-33). 5. (1-36).
6. (1-21). 7. (1-24). 8. (1-25). 9. (1-23).

detail with the duties that could be performed by men endowed with such capacity for work as we find in the Kali age and hence when Pārāsara says that the Dharmas for the Kali age are those prescribed by Pārāsara, what he means is that his work is superior to the other Smṛitis by reason of the fact that what is therein laid down is such as can be performed by men of the Kali age." Dr. Gangānātha Jha has observed in his recent book styled 'Hindu law in its sources' that "This actual adaptation of the law to changing conditions went on effectively so long as there was present in the country a temporal authority sufficiently interested and strong enough to lend to the changes its support and thereby supply the necessary driving force". This principle however it seems would apply to changes in purely secular laws needed to meet the peculiar conditions and exigencies of the times, without conflict with any express Texts of the S'hrutis (Revelation) or Smṛitis (traditions) based thereon as no secular authority is competent to make any changes in the religious laws enjoined by express Texts of the S'hruti or Smṛiti. The omniscient law-givers have no doubt left a wide scope for making changes in the practical spheres of human life according to the needs of the times as in matters of food, drink, touch, cleanliness, purification, penances and so on without detriment to the fundamental principles of the Sanātana religion of hoary antiquity based on the Vedas (Revelation). Thus the sage Pārāsara whose Smṛiti is particularly meant for the present or Kali age has made a considerable relaxation in the rigour of the rules in matters of food, drink, touch, purity and penances for distressed times and so on. Similarly the custom of Niyoga which was prevalent in the Vedic times as also the custom of animal sacrifices and flesh eating for religious purposes have fallen into disuse. It is this element of catholicity and adaptability to changing circumstances that has kept up and preserved the Hindu religion as a living religion with sufficient vitality to adapt the customs to the changed circumstances without any conflict with the fundamental and essential principles affecting the Hindu religion. There are certain texts which contain express injunctions (*Vidhi Niyama*) and prohibitions (*Nisheda*) in matters affecting positive religion while there are certain other texts which do not lay down any express injunctions or prohibitions but contain mere recommen-

dations or opinions (*Arthavāda*) only or an alternative choice of conduct (*Vikalpa*). As regards the former class of texts no secular authority is competent to make any changes so as to nullify the provisions of the express commandments and prohibitions laid down in the sacred law. But as regards the latter class of texts there is a considerable scope for making changes needed for special purposes of either the individual or the society. As a matter of fact special rules of conduct have been laid down by the different law givers for distressed times (*Āpat Kāla*) and other contingencies.

(8) Rules of conduct for the four orders of caste as constituting the Sanātan Religion (Chātur varna Dharma).

(i) What is Sanātan Religion ?

The Sanātan Religion means the religion observed by the Āryan Hindus of India since the time of the Vedas of hoary antiquity and even prior thereto upto the present times without any break in continuity. It is called the eternal religion. It is based on rules and regulations of conduct as laid down in the S'hruti (Revealed Texts), Smṛiti (Traditions) and ancient usages and practices as observed by the virtuous. The Sanātan religion mostly consists of regulations of conduct (Āchāra) and particularly those relating to the four castes (Varnas), viz. the Brāhmanas or the priestly class, the Kshatriya or the warrior class, the Vaishyas or the mercantile class and the Shūdras or the servant class, the four orders of life (Āshramas) viz., the Brahmacharya Āshrama or the order of students Gṛihastha Āshrama or the order of householders, the Vāna-prastha Āshrama or the order of anchorites and the Sanyāsa Āshrama or the order of ascetics and certain rites and ceremonies known as the religious sacraments (Sanskāras).

(ii) The religious sacraments (Sanskāras).

Manu states that " He for whom the performance of the ceremonies beginning with the rite of impregnation (Garbhādhāna) and ending with the funeral rite (Antyesti) is prescribed, while sacred formulæ are being recited, is entitled to study these institutes but no other man whatever."[1] The persons meant are the males of the three Āryan Varnas. The sacraments may be performed for

1. (2-16).

women and Shūdras too, but without the recitation of Mantras.[1] He next describes the rites and ceremonies called the religious sacraments observed by persons belonging to the three higher castes viz., the Brāhmanas, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas called the twice-born on account of their being initiated to the investiture of the sacred thread (Upanayana). " With holy rites prescribed by the Veda must the ceremony on conception and other sacraments be performed for twice-born men which sanctify the body and purify from sin in this life and after death. "[2] The rites and ceremonies connected with the household are 16 in number and they relate to *Garbhādhāna* i.e. the ceremony for securing the birth of a child. (2) *Pumsavana* i.e. the ceremony for securing the birth of a male child. (3) *Anavalobhana or Garbha-rakshana* i.e. the ceremony for preventing disturbances which would endanger the embryo. (4) *Simantonnayana* i.e. the pregnancy ceremony. (5) *Jātakarma* i.e. the ceremony for the newly born child. (6) *Nāma-dheya* i.e. the rite of naming the child. (7) *Nishkramana* i.e. the ceremony connected with the first leaving out of the house of the new child. (8) The *Annaprāshana* i.e. the first feeding of the child with food. (9) The *Chūdakarma* i.e. tonsure of a child's head. (10) *Mounji or Upanayana* i.e. initiation to the sacred thread, by which one is called Dwija or the twice-born. (11 to 14) *Veda Vrata* i.e. vow for the study of the 4 Vedas. (15) *Samāvartana* i.e. completion of the Vedic studies accompanied with a bath as a sign of Vedic graduation (Snātaka) and (16) *Vivāha or marriage.*[3] Certain rites and ceremonies are connected with death and they are known as *Antyesti* ceremonies. The above sacraments must be also performed for women and Shūdras too but without the recitation of Mantras. Thus Manu says: " This whole series of ceremonies must be performed for females also in order to sanctify the body at the proper time and in the proper order but without the recitation of the sacred texts.[4] The nuptial ceremony is said to be the Vedic sacrament for women equal to the initiation ceremony in the case of males; serving the husband is equal to the residence in the house of the teacher and the household duties are the same as the daily worship of the sacred fire.[5] As regards Shūdras too, Manu says: " Shūdras who are desirous to gain merit

1. (2-66; 10-127). 2. (2-26). 3. (2-26 to 67; 3-4). 4. (2-66). 5. (2-67).

and know their duty commit no sin but gain praise if they imitate the practice of virtuous men without reciting sacred texts.[1] Thus the Shūdras also are entitled to perform the above sacraments but without sacred Mantras.

(iii) Institution of the four castes (Chātur Varna).

The most important element in the Sanātana religion as observed by the large bulk of the Hindu community amounting in all to about 23 crores of people in number residing in India, is the institution of the four castes (Chātur Varna) consisting of Brāhmanas (priestly caste), Kshatriyas (military caste), Vaishyas (mercantile caste) and Shūdras (servant class). The caste is of divine institution which had its origin so far back as the Ṛig Veda of hoary antiquity. In the Ṛig Veda the four castes are said to have been created by the Supreme Being from the four limbs of the primeval person (Virāt Purusha) viz. the mouth, arms, thighs and feet.[2] According to the Vedic theory there was an organic synthesis and co-ordination among the four castes as members of a living organism which could not be separated from one another as totally independent units but they were complements of one another without whose mutual co-operation the social order could not thrive and prosper. Manu has based the theory of castes (Varna) on the same principles as laid down in the Ṛig Veda. According to him the institution of the four castes was founded by the Supreme Being for the good and protection of the people on the principle of division of functions and duties. Thus Manu says: "But in order to protect this universe, the Supreme Being, the most resplendent one, assigned separate duties and occupations to those who sprang from his mouth, arms, thighs, and feet."[3] The castes represented the four limbs viz. the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of the cosmic person called Virāt Purusha which were all inter-related as members of the body of the Supreme self. Of the four castes, the Brāhmana or the priestly class is the first born having been created from the mouth of the Virāt Purusha which represented learning and intelligence. The Kshatriya or the millitary caste was next created in the order of beings out of the arms of the primeval person which

1. (10-127). 2. (R. V. 10-90). 3. (1-87).

represented strength needed to give protection to the Brāhmans. The Vaishya or the mercantile caste was created out of the thighs of the primeval person which represented the conserving element which was so necessary for maintaining the different classes of the society by supplying them with resources of maintenance and wealth. The fourth class was the Shūdra who was created out of the feet of the primeval person which represented the support given to the three higher castes in the form of services by manual crafts and arts and other useful works. The Brāhman was the highest caste whose sole aim of life was to acquire knowledge and learning in preference to wealth which was subordinated to learning. The Brāhman was enjoined to lead a well-disciplined and religious life of high purity and simplicity and observe all the religious regulations laid down for his guidance, most faithfully and with an unswerving faith without having an eye to money or worldly pleasures. In short, the Brāhman was saddled with heavy responsibilities as he was entrusted with a mission to lead other castes to higher paths of rectitude and religion and that is the reason why the Brāhman is said to be the highest among the four castes and not because the other castes were inferior to him. In fact all the four castes were useful members of the body corporate as limbs of a living organism whose very existence, health and growth depended upon mutual harmony and co-operation of its several members. Each member of the body corporate had to contribute useful services to the common organism for its upkeep and growth as a whole and there could be no question of ill-will on the part of one caste towards other castes. If any member of the body was allowed to wither away or be emaciated, it at once reacted upon the whole organism which automatically suffered along with the diseased member. In short mutual goodwill, harmony, and co-operation was the very gist of the vedic theory of caste. The basic principle of synthetic unity of the four castes as laid down in the Ṛig Veda came to be forgotten in course of time and the castes began to be regarded as independent and self-subsisting bodies having no common purpose for evolution of the society as a whole nor was there any cohesive force and vitality in the caste to unite them together as a living organism. Originally there were four castes only but subsequently they multiplied and they were divided into thou-

sands of petty castes and sub-castes some of which owe their rise to intermarriages between persons of different castes and to degradation of some of them.

(iv) Āryans (savarnas) and un-Āryans (Avarnas).

According to Manu, the Āryans consisted of four castes only as named above and there is no fifth caste among the Āryans. Thus he says: "The Brāhman, the Kshatriya and the Vaishya are the twice-born ones, but the fourth, the Sūdra, has one birth only; there is no fifth caste."[1] As distinguished from the Āryans there was another class of un-Āryans which was in existence even in the Vedic times and which also exists in the same form even to-day. The Sanskrit word for caste was '*Varna*' which means colour or appearance. The Āryans were called *Savarnas* because they had a good complexion and had castes since pre-Vedic times. They were more civilized, refined, and cultured than the un-Āryans. The un-Āryans on the other hand were called *Avarnas* or *un-Āsas* (without mouth), because they had an ugly and black complexion and they belonged to no caste.[2] They were also devoid of good manners, learning and civilization, and were distinguished from the Āryans by the characteristic marks of filthiness, impurity, uncleanness, cruelty and harshness as stated by Manu.[3] The Āryans who entered into India for a fixed habitation brought with them culture and civilization of a very superior order as also the institution of caste (Varna) by which they were at once marked out and distinguished from the un-Āryans. The Āryans had the institution of four castes even in those early times with different functions assigned to them for the good and elevation of the society as a whole while the un-Āryans who were the indigenous aborigines of India and the conquered races were called in Vedic times *Dasyus, Dāsas* and *Nishādas* and susequently *Panchamas* or *Avarnas* as called at present in Southern India. The un-Āryans had no fixed institution of caste as that of the Āryans who had placed it on a social, religious and philosophical basis. Dr. Macdonell in this connection makes the following observations in his history of Sanskrit Literature: " The invaders though split into many tribes were conscious of a unity of race and religion. They styled themselves *Aryas* or "Kinsmen"

1. (10-4). 2 (10-57). 3. (10-58).

as opposed to the aborigines, to whom they gave the name of *Dasyu* or *Dāsa* ("fiends") in the later times also called *un-Āryas* or non-Āryans. The characteristic physical difference between the two races was that of colour (*varna*) the aborigines being described as black (Krishna) or 'black skins' and as the Dāsa colour in contrast with the "Āryan colour or our colour." This contrast undoubtedly framed the original basis of caste, the regular name for which in Sanskrit is colour." As Dr. Macdonell puts it even "the Dasyus appear to have been a pastoral race, for they possessed large herds which were captured by the victorious Āryans. They fortified themselves in strongholds called pur, which must have been numerous as Indra is sometimes said to have destroyed as many as a hundred of them for his allies." Would you from this circumstance be justified in saying that the Dasyus and the Dāsas who undoubtedly belonged to an althogether different race viz. the un-Āryans and several of whom even did the work of agriculture, were Vaisyas belonging to the Āryan race of culture? It will satisfy the curious reader from the above, that the distinction of Āryans and un-Āryans is not a modern innovation introduced in later times only as suggested by some but the distinction has existed as it is seen even to-day, since the times of Vedas of hoary antiquity.

Professor N. K. Dutta also gives colour or complexion (*Varna*) as the basis of the caste system in India. Thus he observes: "That the colour question was at the root of the Varna system is apparent from the meaning of the word Varna (complexion) and from the great emphasis with which the Vedic Indians distinguished themselves from the non-Āryans in respect of colour. That class which retained the utmost purity of colour by avoiding intermixture naturally gained precedence in the social scale. The Brāhmans were white, the Kshatriyas red, the Vaishayas because of large absorption of black blood were yellowish like the Mulattors of America and the Sūdras black, as is described in the Mahābhārata ..... The development of inter-caste marriage restrictions was principally due to the racial difference between the white conquerors and the black natives and the desire of the former to preserve their purity of blood."

(v) Origin of Caste in Pre-Vedic times and its subsequent growth.

We have seen above that the Āryan Community as a whole was divided into two broad classes viz., the Āryans and the un-Āryans. Even in pre-vedic times, before the Āryans came to India, the people were divided into three Varnas or castes viz., the Brāhmans (priestly class), the Kshatriyas (military class) and the Vaisyas (mercantile class). According to the researches of Dr. Haug and Prof. Kern, these distinctions existed at a time when the Āryans had not separated from their Indo-Irānian brethren the forefathers and ancestors of the Zorostrian Parsis of India who had also a similar division of three castes called *Āthrava* (Adhvaryu or priestly class), *Ratheshta* (millitary class) and *Vastriya or Shūyan* (mercantile class) corresponding to the Brāhman, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya of the Āryans. Of these three divisions of caste, the Āthrava or priestly class formed a separate class by itself which was distinguished from the other 2 castes by its superior learning and culture and it was the exclusive privilege of its members to be gifted with the knowledge of the esoteric doctrines in religious matters. The Āthravas or priests in particular formed something like caste. "They had their secrets which they were prohibited from divulging; they were the spiritual guides of their nations, and none but the son of a priest could become a priest, a rule which the the Parsis still maintain." There was then no class known as Sūdras in the fold of the Āryans, the only other class known to them being that of Dāsas or Dasyus who were the aboriginal black natives of India and were conquered by the Āryans. The two castes of priest and nobility were the first to become hereditary in course of time. The same period also saw the growth of a third class viz., the Vaisyas who then mostly tilled the land. The Vaisyas originally constituted the mass of the Āryan Community and they made an advance in agriculture and several arts and industries in course of time. The word Sūdras appears for the first time mentioned in the Purusha Sukta of the Ṛig Veda[1] by which time the said class seems to have been established as a

1. (R. V. 10-90).

separate caste having service as its occupation. In the Irānian society also of the time there existed a fourth caste called *Huiti* corresponding to the caste of Sūdra in the Āryans. The people then occupying India were also described in the Ṛig Veda as *Pancha Janāhā* or the people of the five tribes..[1] Different opinions seem to have been pronounced by different scholars as regards the interpretation of the word '*Pancha Janāhā*' (People of five tribes). Mr. Keith has expressed the view that the five tribes (Pancha Janāhā) were the tribes of Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, Turvasu, and Puru.[2] According to the school of the Aupamanyavas as stated in Yaska's Nirukta, the five tribes were the four castes of the Āryans and the fifth class Nishādas.[3] A similar opinion is also expressed by the well known scholiast Sāyana. Thus it will be seen from the above that even in the time of Ṛig Veda, there was in existence a fifth class called *Nishāda* which was so called according to to the interpretation of the etymologists (Niruktas) as the members of the said class lived a degraded (Nikṛishta) filthy mode of life and therefore were unworthy of association with the Āryans who led a purer and a more religious life. An argument has been recently advanced by some to the effect that because the two tribes Yadu and Turvasu were described as Dāsas in the Ṛig Veda[4] and included in the word *Pancha Janāhā,* therefore the class known as Dāsas belonged to the Āryan fold.[5] This argument is quite untenable in face of a number of passages in the Ṛig Veda which go to show that the class known as Dāsas was an entirely separate and distinct class from the Āryans who kept themselves entirely aloof from the said class. In the great war of the ten kings described in the Ṛig Veda, several aboriginal tribes of the Dāsa class had actually joined with some of the Āryan tribes for the time being. This would not therefore prove that the said tribes of the Dāsa class were Āryans as the latter belonged to a quite distinct race distinguished by its traditions, culture, and civilisation.

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1. (R. V. 1-189). 2. (Keith Vedic Index vol. 1, P. 467) 3. (Y. N. 3-8).

4. (R. V. 10-62-10) 5. See address of Mr. K. M. Munshi before the Sahitya Sansada 1934).

Dāsas and Sūdras.

The Sūdra class seems to have originated from the class known as Dāsas mentioned in the Ṛig Veda. The Dāsas belonged to the un-Āryan aborigines who were conquered by the Āryans and made slaves. The Āryans were distinguished from the un-Āryan Dāsas both ethnically and culturally. Thus it is stated by Prof N. K. Dutta, that 'the Āryans were white skinned, good featured, making sacrifices and worshipping gods like Agni (fire), Indra, Varuna etc., while the Dāsas or Dasyus were black skinned, noseless or flat nosed (Anās), of unintelligible speech, not sacrificing, worshipping no god and following strange customs." We find from the Ṛig Veda that there were constant feuds between the Āryans and the Dāsas and at first the Āryans were relentless towards the conquered natives of the soil who were made slaves. The word Sūdra seems to have been used later on in the Vedic period for Dāsa. Thus we find a passage in a Brāhmana which says "one like a Sūdra shall be born in thy line, the slave of another, who may be driven away or slain at will".[1] It is probable that the Sūdra might have originally represented some prominent Dāsa tribe conquered and reduced to slavery by the Āryans. By the time of the Purusha Sukta, the Dāsas had begun to be called Sūdras and the word Sūdra might have been used for Dāsas generally since then. It may be remarked here that the conquered persons remained slaves only for a limited period the only function assigned to them being to do services to their masters. They were however shortly emancipated and the lawful son of an acquired slave became a freeman. Nor was any Āryan ever subject to slavery and if any Brāhman compelled an Āryan to do work of slaves he was fined by the king[2]. It seems that the Āryans did not extirpate the conquered natives of the soil but educated them and improved their status and after several generations the Dāsas by imitating the good conduct, habits, manners and morals of the Āryans were elevated to a higher status and were employed by Āryans in their services and thenceforth the new class of Sūdras might have been recognised as worthy of association with the Āryans. They were elevated to the status of Āryans and were

1. (A. B. 7-29). 2. (M. S. 8-412).

even qualified to perform the rites and ceremonies of the Āryans but without Vedic Mantras according to Manu, as they were not initiated to the sacred thread (Upanayana) nor were they qualified to study the Vedas or perform Vedic sacrifices which were the exclusive privileges of persons belonging to the three higher castes who were called Dwijas or the twice-born. In the beginning, in some cases even marriages were contracted by the Āryans with the Sūdras and some of the gods worshipped by the latter class of persons, eg, phallus, serpent, birds and trees were admitted into the Hindu pantheon. In short the relations between the Āryans and the Sūdras were cordial and there was no antipathy between these classes of persons. It may be mentioned here that some of the sons born by the union of Brāhmans with women of the the Dāsas and Sūdras (e.g. Kakshivat, Kavasha Ailusha, and Vatsa) were very illustrious and some times were even respected as Ṛishis on account of the high qualities possessed by them due to the superiority of the seed.[1] Such cases however formed an exception only and they do not constitute the rule. The Brāhmans however soon found that by looseness of relations between the Dāsas and Sūdras, the Āryans were degrading themselves and several bad practices and customs followed by the Dāsas and the Sūdras were being introduced into the fold of the Āryans. The Brāhmans therefore with a view to preserve the purity of the Āryan race and culture, introduced in the time of the Brāhmans several restrictions in social and religious matters including marriage in the relations of the Āryans with the Sūdras which took the shape of settled laws in the time of Sutras and Smṛities or the period of the law givers. The professions of Brāhmans or the priest (e.g. Purohit) and the other castes thereafter became hereditary and Hindu religion was put on a sound and firm basis by the Brāhmans, who traced their descent from seven great Ṛishis and had distinct names for their *Gotra* (founder of family) and *Pravara* (leading Ṛishis in the line of geneology).

(vi) Distinction of caste on the Basis of varna (colour) and jāti (small Groups of caste).

We have seen above that at first in the time of the Ṛig Veda according to the traditional view, the castes were only four in

1. (Brihaddevata 4-24-25; A. B. 8-1; P. B. 14-6).

number viz, the Brāhman, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Sūdras who are said to have been created from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet of the Primeval person, Virāt Purusha. These castes formed the Āryan race. The designation given to these 4 castes was *Varna* (i.e. fair complexion) to distinguish them from the castes of *Avarnas* (devoid of fair complexion) or the un-Āryan Dasyus, and Dāsas who were produced by a series of crosses between the four Varnas or their descendants as Ambastha (Brāhman male and Vaishya female), Nishāda (Brāhman and Sūdra) Chāndāla (Sūdra and Brāhman) and so on. A list of the mixed castes which varies in the different law books as regards their origin etc., is given in the foot note below* for information of the reader. There are at present more than about 3000 castes in India varying in size and mode of origin. Besides the mode of crossing between the four Varnas and their descendants, there are also several other modes of Origin of the present day castes among the Hindus as pointed out by Professor N. K. Dutt. Thus he says: "Many castes were formed by a degradation from the original Varnas on account of non-observance of sacred rites. These are called *Vrātyas*. Thus Vrātya Brāhmans were known as 1. Bhrijjakantaka, 2. Avantya, 3. Vatadhāna, 4. Pushpadha and 5. Saikha. Vrātya or degraded

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*1. Murdhavasika (Brāhman & Kshatriya)
2. Mahishya (Kshatriya and Vaishya)
3. Karana (Vaisya and Sūdra)
4. Ambasta (Brāhman and Vaisya)
5. Nishāda or Parasava (Brāhman and Sūdra)
6. Ugra (Kshatriya and Sūdra)
7. Sūta (Kshatriya and Brāhman)
8. Māgadha (Vaisya and Kshatriya)
9. Vaideha (Vaishya and Brāhman)
10. Ayogava (Sūdra and Vaisya)
11. Khattri (Sūdra and Kshatriya)
12. Chāndāla (Sūdra and Brāhman)
13. Avrita (Brāhman and Ugra)
14. Abhira (Brāhman and Ambasta)
15. Digvana (Brāhman and Ayogava)
16. Pukkasa (Nishāda and Sūdra)
17. Kukkutaka (Sūdra and Nishāda)
18. Svapacha (Khattri and Ugra)
19. Vena (Vaideha and Ambastha)
20. Sairindhra (Dasyu and Ayogava)
21. Maitreyaka (Vaideha and Ayogava)
22. Margava Kaivarta, or Dāsa (Nishāda and Ayogava)
23. Maravara (Nishāda & Vaideha)
24. Meda (Vaideha and Nishāda)
85. Andhra (Vaideha and Kārāvara)
26. Pandusopāka (Chāndāla & Vaideha)
27. Ahindika (Nishāda & Vaideha)
28. Sopaka (Chāndala and Pukkasa)
29. Antyavasayin (Chandala & Nishāda (See N. K. Dutta's origin of caste in India Vol I)

Kshatriyas became 1. Jhalla 2. Malla 3, Lichhivi. 4. Nata 5. Karana 6. Khasa 7. Dravida 8, Paundraka 9. Odra 10. Kamboja 11. Yavana 12. Sāka 13. Parada 14. Pahlava 15. Chīna 16. Kirāta and 17. Darada. Similarly degraded Vaisyas became 1. Sudhanvan 2. Acharjya 3. Karusha 4. Vijanman 5. Maitra and 6. Satvata"[1]

(vii) Determination of caste by birth and not profession.

A theory has been propagated by some under the championship of Mr. Nesfield that the distinctions of caste as seen among the Āryans were based on distinctions of professions carried on by them for their livelihood, and that too, long after the Āryans and un-Āryans had been united into one people. It excludes all influence of race and religion from the origin and growth of the caste system. This theory does not seem to be correct as the determination of caste among the Āryans was made from the very earliest times according to birth.[2] Although distinct professions were enjoined for the different castes by the law-givers there was no such restriction in the Vedic times as appears from the Ṛig Veda. Thus it is stated in one hymn of the Ṛig Veda, that the author of the hymn was a poet by profession while his father carried on the profession of a physician and his mother that of grinding.[3] It appears from the above verse in the Ṛig Veda, as observed by Prof. Kern and Dr. Haug, that in the time of the Ṛig Veda, there were no restrictions enjoining persons of certain castes only to carry on certain professions nor were the professions then hereditary. Even in the time of the Smṛitis, the restrictions and regulations about the carrying on of certain professions by certain castes only had undergone considerable changes and it would be incorrect to base the distinctions of caste on distinctions of professions carried on by them. Thus in times of distress a Brāhman was allowed to do the profession of a Kshatriya or a Vaishya. Similarly Kshatriya and Vaishya were also allowed to carry on the profession of the castes below theirs.[4] You cannot therefore say that a Brāhman is a Kshatriya or a Vaishya merely because he carried on professions of the latter castes. In short a man's caste is determined by birth

1. (N. K. Dutt's origin of caste in India Vol. I).
2. (R. V. 10-90-12; M. S. 10-74). 3. (R.V. 9-112-3). 4. (10-81, 82).

alone and not by qualities or professions followed by him as suggested by certain modern reformers as according to the Vedic theory a man's birth in a particular caste is determined by the Supreme Being or God only who alone gives birth to him in a particular body as the offspring of certain parents belonging to a particular caste according to the deeds good or bad done by him in the past life by way of requiting them in the present life so as to induce him to lead a religious and moral life as ordained by the sacred law to secure a birth in a higher caste in the next life. The same principle is also followed in the Bhagwad Gita,[1] where our Lord Shri Krishna has said that "the fourfold caste has been created by him (i.e. by God) according to the distribution of the constituents of their nature and their actions" which could only mean the qualities and actions in the previous life as no man is observed to possess qualities or marks of any particular caste at the time of his birth, his qualities and aptitudes for a particular profession of life being developed only later on. This verse is misinterpreted by the modern Ārya Samājist reformers.

The rules and regulations relating to castes have been laid down by the law-givers in the Dharma Shāstras on the basis of express texts in the Vedas, for the guidance, purity and uplift of the four castes of the Āryans only and not for the un-Āryans who formed a separate class by themselves and who were outside the pale of the castes as laid down for the Āryans in the sacred laws. The un-Āryans lived separately from the Āryans at the end of the city or village,[2] and they were governed by the peculiar customs and usages of their own tribe as in the case of the Tiyars of Malabar and Travancore, the Nairs of Malabar, the Todas of the Nilgiris, the Teehurs of Oudh, and the aboriginal tribes residing in the other parts of India. Thus the practice of polyandry prevailed largely among the tribes known as the Tiyars of Malabar and the Todas of the Nilgiris as also among the low caste Malyalis of Cochin and one woman was the wife of several husbands. This custom however never prevailed among the Āryans, as stated by Mr. Mayne in his Hindu law.

1. (B. G. 4-13). 2. (10-51).

(viii) Offsprings of mixed Marriages (Varna Sankara) (Anuloma and Pratiloma.)

Apart from the 2 classes known as the Āryans and the un-Āryans mentioned above, there was a third class of persons who owed their origin to a confusion of castes (*Varna-Sankara*) brought about by intermarriage between men and women of different castes. Thus a marriage of a male belonging to the three higher castes with a woman of a lower caste was *Anu-loma* and the children of such marriages were inferior in status to their fathers on account of a blemish of their mother[1]. While, the marriage of a woman of the three higher castes with a man of the lower caste was called *Prati-loma* and the offspring of such marriage was considered as degraded and sinful as belonging to no caste (*Varna Apetam*)[2]. Being illegitimate, such offsprings were not entitled to inherit the property of their father. The offspring begotten by a Brāhman on a Sūdra woman was called a *Nishāda* which is a low caste[3] while that by a Sūdra male on a lady of the Brāhman caste was called a *Chandāla* who was considered the most sinful and degraded of all creatures and not worthy of association with the Āryans as stated by the law-givers in the Dharma Shāstras.[4] Similarly low-born sons born by such Prati-loma marriages were called *Shvapāka* (or the eater of dog's flesh), *Pukkasa* a (very low caste) and so forth. All these persons were untouchables, and all intercourse with them was interdicted by the law givers. The children begotten by Anuloma marriages had to perform the duties of twice-born persons,[5] but those begotten by Pratiloma marriages were treated as equal to Sūdras as regards their duties and were given very low professions such as killing fish, slaughter of animals, working in leather etc.[6] Thus Manu says "According to the power of the seed of the person by whom these persons are begotten by mixed marriages, they obtained among men more exalted or lower rank in successive births.[7] Thus the offspring of Anuloma marriage was exalted to a higher rank in the next birth, while the offspring of Prati-loma marriage was degraded to a lower rank in the next

1. (10-14). 2. (10-57). 3. (10-8). 4. (10-12, 16, 51).
5. (10-41). 6. (10-36,48,49). 7. (10-42).

birth. The law-givers have enjoined the Āryans fulfilling a religious duty not to seek intercourse or contract marriages with un-Āryans as also low caste hybrid bastards (Varna Sankara) begotten by Pratiloma marriage,[1] evidently with the object of preserving the purity and culture of the Āryan race. Though the law-givers have recognised Anuloma marriages of persons belonging to the three highest castes with women of lower castes, they had done so for times of distress only. However Manu has interdicted the marriage of a Brāhman and a Kshatriya with a Sūdra girl as his first wife even in distress as sinful,[2] and such a Brāhman will go to hell after death, if he takes a Sūdra wife to his bed; and if he begets a child by her, he will lose the rank of a Brāhman.[3] The practice of Anuloma marriages has since died away and such marriages are not favoured by the high caste Hindus who condemn them and they scrupulously observe the rule of marrying with girls belonging to their own caste as laid down by the sages Manu, Yājnalvalkya, and others. Even if a man born in a great family sprang from criminal intercourse, he will certainly possess the faults of his father, be they small or great[4]. But that kingdom in which such bastards sullying the purity of the castes are born perishes quickly together with its inhabitants[5]. Dying without the expectation of a reward, for the sake of Brāhman and of cows or in the defence of women and children secures beatitude to those excluded from the Āryan community (Bāhya)[6].

The sons whom the twice born beget on wives of equal caste but who not fulfilling their sacred duties are excluded from the *Savitri* are called *Vrātyas*[7]. The sons of the twice born begotten on wives of the next lower castes by Anuloma marriage are also called *Anantaras* (belonging to the next lower caste) on account of the blemish in their mothers.[8] The 5 sons by Anuloma marriage also beget, the one on the females of the other, a great many despicable sons even more sinful than their fathers and excluded from the Āryan community (Bāhya).[9] The sons begotten by Pratiloma marriage beget similar races on women of their own caste, and they also produce the like with females of their mother's caste (Jati) and with females of higher

1. (10-53). 2. (3-14). 3. (3-17). 4. (10-60). 5. (10-61). 6. (10-62). 7. (10-20). 8. (10-14). 9. (10-29).

ones.[1] Just as a Sūdra begets on a Brāhman female a being excluded from the Āryan community, even so a person himself excluded procreates with females of the four castes, sons more worthy of being excluded than he himself.[2] Men excluded by the Āryans, who approach females of a higher rank, beget races still more worthy to be excluded.[3] A Nishāda woman bears to a chāndāla, a son called *Antyavasāyin* employed in burial grounds and despised even by those excluded from the Āryan community[4]. These races which originate in a confusion of the castes and have been described according to their fathers and mothers may be known by their occupations, whether they conceal or openly show themselves[5]. Six sons begotten by Āryans on women of equal and the next lower castes (*Anantara*) by Anuloma marriage have the duties of twice born men; but all those born in consequence of a violation of the law (i. e. by *Pratiloma* marriage) are as regards their duties equal to Sūdras.[6] Certain Kshatriyas also in consequence of the omission of the sacred rites and of their not consulting Brāhmanas have gradually sunk in this world to the condition of Sūdras.[7] All those tribes which are excluded from the Community of persons belonging to the four castes are called *Dasyus*, whether they speak the language of barbarians (Mlechhas) or that of the Āryans.[8] Near well-known trees, burial grounds, on mountains and in groves, let these low caste tribes dwell, known by certain marks and subsisting by their peculiar professions.[9]

(ix) Duties and occupations of Chāndālas and svapachas (degraded classes of persons.)

The dwelling of *Chandālas* (born of a Brāhman female and a Sūdra male,) and *Svapachas* (the eaters of dog's flesh) shall be outside the village; they must be made Apapātras (i.e. the vessles used by them must be thrown away) and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys.[10] Their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food from broken dishes, black iron shall be their ornaments and they must always wander from place to place.[11] A man who fulfils a religious duty shall not seek intercourse with them; their transactions shall be among themselves and their

1. (10-27). 2. (10-30). 3. (10-31). 4. (10-39). 5. (10-40). 6. (10-41). 7. (10-43). 8. (10-45). 9. (10-50). 10. (10-51). 11. (10-52).

marriages with their equals.[1] Their food shall be given to them by others (than an Āryan) in a broken dish; at night they shall not walk about in villages and in towns.[2] By day, they may go about for the purpose of their work distinguished by marks (i.e. by a by a thunderbolt or by axes, adzes and so forth used for executing criminals and carried on the shoulder or by iron ornaments and the like) at the king's command, and they shall carry the corpses of persons who have no relatives; that is the settled rule.[3] By the king's order they shall always execute the criminals in accordance with the law, and they shall take for themselves the clothes, the beds, and the ornaments of such criminals.[4]

(x) Whether there could be a change of castes in this very life or in succeeding lives only ?

Next as regards the question whether a man's caste could be changed at pleasure in this life or whether such change could take place in the next life, Manu gives his decision as follows: "If a female of the caste sprung from a union of the Brāhman male and a Sūdra female bear children to one of the higher caste, the inferior tribe attains the highest caste (i. e. caste of a Brāhman) within the seventh generation.[5] Thus a Sūdra attains the rank of a Brāhman and in a similar manner a Brāhman sinks to the level of a Sūdra; but know thou that it is the same with the offspring of a Kshatriya or of a Vaishya.[6] According to the explanation given by Medhatithi and Kulluka on the above verse, if the son of a Brāhman male and a Sūdra female and his descendants marry Sudra wives, the seventh descendant will be a pure Sūdra. If a doubt should arise with whom the prominence is, whether with him whom an Āryan by chance begot on a non-Āryan female or with the son of a Brāhman woman by a non-Āryan, the decision is as follows:—"He who was begotten by an Āryan on a non-Āryan female (i. e. a Sūdra female) may become like to an Āryan by his virtues; he whom an Āryan mother bears to a non-Āryan father, is and remains unlike to an Āryan".[7] The law prescribes that neither of the two shall receive the sacraments, the first being excluded on account of the lowness

1. (10-53). 2. (10-54). 3. (10-55) 4. (10-56)
5. (10-64) 6. (10-65). 7. (10-66, 67).

of his origin, the sacond because the union of his parents was against the order of the castes.[1] The sage Yājnavalkya also states a similar opinion in the matter. Thus he says: " Pratiloma offspring begotten by a father of an inferior caste on a mother of superior caste and Anuloma offspring begotten by a father of superior caste on a mother of inferior caste are known as *Asat* (bad) and *Sat* (good) respectively[2]. The attainment of a higher caste is known to take place in the seventh or the fifth Yuga (cycle of birth) while lower caste in the seventh, sixth or the fifth birth. "[3] Taking their stand on the verse in Manu which states " A Sūdra attains the rank of Brāhman (Brahmanatā) and in a like manner a Brāhman sinks to the level of a Sūdra (Sudratā)," the Ārya Samājists deduce from it a meaning that according to Manu a Sūdra can become a Brāhman and a Brāhman can become a Sūdra in this very life. They further apply the above verse to support their theory that caste is determined not by birth but by qualities and actions of a man in this life. They argue that if a person born in the caste of Brāhman does the business of Sūdra, he ought to be considered not a Brāhman but a Sūdra and similarly if a person born in the caste of Sūdra does the business of a Brāhman (e. g. teaching, which is the peculier profession of a Brāhman) the Sūdra should be considered a Brāhman and not a Sūdra. This construction of the verse in Manu would however be entirely unsustainable on an examination of the said verse in light of the preceding and succeeding verses. The words used in the text of Manu are only 'the rank of Brāhman (Brāhmantā) and ' the rank of a Sūdra (Sudratā) ' which mean the rank of Brāhman and Sūdra only and not an actual state of Brāhman or Sūdra as construed wrongly by the Samājists. In the preceding verse, Manu states definitely that the actual conversion of an inferior caste to a higher caste takes place within several generations only and not in this life and he gives his final decision in the matter in the next verse by stating that offspring begotten by an Āryan on a Non-Āryan woman by Anuloma marriage may become like to an Āryan by his virtues; and while the offspring begotten by a non-Āryan on an Āryan woman is and remains unlike to an Āryan." The above discussion would clearly show that

1. (M. S. 10-68). 2. (1-95). 3. (1-96).

Manu does not support the theory started by the reformers that a person's caste could be converted in this very life as being opposed to the Vedic theory that a man's caste is determined by birth only. The above construction is further supported by another text in Āpastambha Dharma Sutra which distinctly says that a man's caste could be changed only in the next life and not in this life. The said text runs as follows: "In successive births, men of the lower castes are born in the next higher one if they have fulfilled their duties. Similarly in successive births men of the higher castes are born in the next lower one if they neglect their duties.[1] This text also is misinterpreted by the Ārya Samajists to support their view that a person's caste is determined by quality and not by birth but which is evidently untenable in light of the above discussion.

(xi) Whether a Sudra is entitled to study the Vedas and perform Vedic sacrifices?

The right to study the Vedas belonged to the three twice-born castes, Brāhman, Kshatriya and Vaishya only according to the Vedic theory. The sage Jaimini a great authority on Vedic rites and rituals, has discussed the matter in the Pūrva Mimānsa and given his decision in the matter as follows: He first gives a prima facie view (Pūrva Paksha) on the question whether a Sudra is entitled to perform Vedic sacrifice and says that "all the four castes are entitled to perform a Vedic sacrifice, because in the Vedas there is no distinction."[2] The author next refutes the above view by stating, "On the other hand under an injunction, the three castes are entitled to establish fire; the Sudra has no connection with the sacrifice. There is a Brāhmana text which says 'A Brāhman shall establish fire in spring, a Kshatriya shall establish fire in summer, while a Vaishya shall establish fire in autumn.' This is also the opinion of Ātreya."[3] The author next refutes other objections by stating that "the Vedic text by which the right is conferred refers only to the first three castes."[4] Next he raises another objection that "A Sudra also possesses a desire to be qualified for a sacrifice by education and so he is entitled to perform a sacrifice"[5] to which the author gives a reply "as the purification

1. (A.D.S 2-5-10, 11). 2. (J.S.6-1-25). 3. (6-1-26). 4. (6-1-33). 5. (6-1-34).

ceremoney (eg. Upanayana or the initiation ceremony) is performed for the purpose of Vedic study to which the three higher castes only are entitled and not a Sūdra, the latter is not entitled to perform the purification ceremony with Vedic Mantras and he further refers to a clear Vedic text which enjoins the initiation of the three higher castes only."[1] The author further says that "a Sūdra is not entitled to perform a Vedic sacrifice by reason of his being not entitled to the study of the Vedas and no teacher will teach to the Sūdra and no Vedic school recognises his claim to the same."[2] The author lastly relies on the authority of the Veda in support of his above view.[3] Bādarāyana the author of the Uttara Mimānsā or Vedānta also denies the right of Sūdra to study the Veda, or perform Vedic sacrifice or other Vedic sacraments.[4] Manu also relying on express Vedic texts says: "A Sūdra cannot commit an offence causing loss of caste (Pātaka) and he is not worthy to receive the Vedic sacraments (Sanskāras); he has no right to fulfil the said law of the Āryan, yet, there is no prohibition against his fulfilling certain portions of the law (eg. those relating to good and righteous conduct)."[5] Sūdras who are desirous to gain religious merit and know their duty commit no sin but gain praise if they imitate the practices of Virtuous men without reciting sacred texts."[6] Further Manu says "The more a Sūdra keeps himself free from envy, imitates the behaviour of the virtuous, the more he gains without being censured (i.e. exaltation in this world and the next)."[7] In spite of the clear position of the Vedic law as explained above the Ārya Samājists have come forward to assert that a Sūdra is entitled to the initiation ceremony (Upanayana), to the wearing of the sacred thread, to study the sacred Veda and to perform sacrifice–lessons which were far from the mind of the Vedic Ṛishis of old. The Samājists rely on a text of the Yajurveda samhitā in support of their above view which is again misinterpreted by them. Some of the reformers even go to the length of deducing from this verse a meaning that even the Untouchables (*Antyajas*) who are outside the pale of caste are entitled to receive instructions of

1. (6–1–35). 2. (6–1–37). 3. (6–1–38). 4. (V. S. 1–3–36 to 38).
5. (10–126). 6. (10–127). 7. (10–128).

Vedic Mantras. The said Vedic text has been translated by Mr. Griffith as follows: "That I to all the people may address this salutary speech, to priest and noblemen, Sūdra and Ārya (i.e. Vaishya, the agriculturist and trader, the man of the people) to one of our kin (svāya) and to the stranger (Chāranāya); dear may I be to God and guerdon giver; fulfilled be this my hope; be that my portion."[1] This verse nowhere states that one may give instructions in the Vedas to either a Sūdra or an Antyaja (Untouchable) as is sought to be made out by the reformers. The said Mantra merely expresses a pious wish on the part of the person reciting it, that he may always address a blessed speech to the four castes or to his relatives or strangers as may not offend them, and he further prays the Gods as also the person to whom the speech is addressed and who is praised thereby to favour him with alms and gifts (Dakshina) so as to procure to the patron religious merit. The word 'Chāranāya' in the above text is again wrongly translated by some reformers so as to include therein even Chāndālas, and others called *Antyajas* belonging to the class of Untouchables but Mr. Griffith has translated the word as 'Stranger' exactly like Uvata the well known Commentator of the Yajurveda samhitā who explains the word Chārana as made up of 2 words, 'Cha' and 'Arana' which mean "and others." Thus there is no Vedic authority whatever to support the view that the Sūdras are entitled to study the Veda or perform Vedic sacrifices. All the law-givers have given their unanimous verdict against the Sūdras and they have declared in clear terms relying on express Vedic Texts that the Sūdras have no such right as is sought to be made out in their favour by the reformers.

(xii) Religious duties and professions of the four castes. (Chātur varna dharma)

Manu has laid down the duties and professions which are to be followed by the four castes. As regards Brāhmans, Manu says that the Supreme Being assigned to them the duties of teaching and studying the Veda, sacrifices for their own benefit and for others, and giving and accepting alms.[2] The Kshatriya he commanded

1. (Y. V. S. 26-2). 2. (1-88).

to protect the people, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures;[1] the Vaishya to tend cattle, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Vedas, to trade, to lend money and to cultivate the land.[2] One occupation only the Lord has prescribed to the Sūdras viz to serve meekly even these other three castes.[3] I have also described above while dealing with the doctrines in Manu Smṛiti what religious duties and professions including those in distressed times were laid down by Manu for the different castes to which the reader's attention is invited. I shall here mention only in general the duties to be observed by the four castes as specially modified for the Kali age by the law-givers. Manu has laid down for a *Brāhman* six religious duties (*Shat Karma*) viz., study, teaching, celebration of and officiating as a priest at religious sacrifices and giving and taking of gifts.[4] Pārāsara adds that "a Brāhman who daily performs the above six religious duties (*Shat Karma*) and eats the residue of his Homa (sacrificial oblations) after having gratified the gods and guests never suffers any bad luck in life.[5] Pārāsara enjoins the following religious duties for a Brāhman viz., performance of Sandhyā, ablution, Japa (Muttering of the Gāyatri prayer) and Homa (sacrifice in fire), study of the Vedas, worship of the gods (e.g. Shiva, Vishnu, Ganpati, Sun and Goddess etc), performance of the Vaishva deva sacrifice (the five daily sacrifices as taught in Manu) and the act of gratifying the guests.[6] Now as regard the duties of a Brāhman in distressed times, Pārāsara says that he may take to agriculture as a means of livelihood.[7] Pārāsara however interdicts for a Brāhman, the sale of oil or any sweet vegetable juice, but he permits him to sell paddy or any kindred cereal as well as hay, wood, faggots etc.[8] Manu also says "A Brāhman must avoid selling condiments, cooked food, sesamum, stones, salt, cattle and human beings.[9] As regards the three other castes, Pārāsara lays down the following rules: *Kshatriyas* should protect their subject people, conquer the armed forces of their adversaries with mighty prowess and rule the country according to

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1. (1-39). 2. (1-90). 3. (1-91). 4. (M. S. 10-75). 5. (P. S. 1-37).
6. (P. S. 1-38). 7. (P. S. 2-2). 8. (P. S. 2-8). 9. (M. S. 10-86).

the rule of Virtue;[1] and he may also do agriculture.[2] The profession of *Vaishya* permits of dealing in gems and metals, raising cattle, merchandise and cultivation.[3] As regards the *Sūdra* caste, service to the Brāhman is the highest virtue.[4] A Sūdra is further permitted to carry on the business of salt, honey, oil, curd, whey, clarified butter and milk and he commits no sin thereby.[5] A Sūdra should not eat any prohibited article nor go to an interdicted woman, otherwise he would be punished in hell.[6] Pārāsara further lays down that a Vaishya or Sūdra may live by trade, agriculture or handicraft.[7] Mādhava has interpreted this verse to mean that in Kaliyuga all the four castes are allowed to live on trade and handi-craft as also agriculture. The observance of the duties laid down for the 4 castes since ages past by a regular succession without break in continuity is called *Sanātana religion* by Pārāsara.[8]

(xiii) General rules of religious conduct for the twice-born and their relaxation in the Kali Age and in distressed times.

Every twice-born person shall take his bath every day.[9] After that, he shall attend to his daily rites of Japa, Homa and worship of the gods, Study of the Vedas and feed one, two, three or four Snātaka Brāhmans (one who has completed his course of Vedic studies and graduated).[10] The rules of conduct for the twice-born relating to touch, food, purity and duties, professions and so on were not rigid and fixed for all times but a considerable relaxation was made in the same according to times and different rules were applied for the Kali age and for distressed times as pointed out by the law-givers.

(xiv) Excommunication from caste for infraction of caste rules.

A Hindu caste is an autonomous body governed by its own rules laid down by the sacred laws framed by the law-givers as based on Shruti, Smṛiti and traditions of hoary antiquity. Every caste is a self-contained unit having complete independence and liberty as regards the internal management of all its affairs, social,

1. (P. S 1-57). 2. (P. S. 2-15). 3. (P. S. 1-60). 4. (P. S. 1-61).
5. (P. S. 1-62). 6. (P. S. 1-63). 7. (P. S. 2-15). 8. (P. S. 2-16).
9. (P. S. 2-5). 10. (P. S. 2-6)

economic, religious or otherwise and even the British Courts under the law of the land have refused to interfere with the decision of the castes so long as they are not opposed to the rules of natural Justice. The caste has got its method of enforcing a scrupulous observance of its rules on the part of its members under penalty of excommunication for any infraction of the caste rules and restrictions in matters of interdining, inter-marriage, pollution, penances for sins and offences and so forth. Thus omission to get initiation on the part of the males of the three higher castes at a proper age, intermarriage with persons belonging to the lower castes, the outcasts and aliens, interdining and other social intercourse with outcasts, sinners and the fallen and the commission of offences involving sin entailed the penalty of excommunication of the person committing the said acts. Intercourse, eating and intermarriage should be avoided with a fallen Brāhman or person belonging to the three twice-born castes who is not initiated even after the prescribed period. He could be retaken into the castes even after generations after undergoing the necessary penance prescribed in the Shāstras.[1] The law-givers have laid down the following rules in the matter. "The murderer of a Brāhman, he who drinks spirituous liquor, the violator of a Guru's (religious preceptor's) bed, he who has connection with the female relatives of his mother and of his father within 6 degrees or with sisters and their daughters, he who steals the gold of a Brāhman, an atheist, he who constantly repeats blamable acts, he who does not cast off persons guilty of a crime causing loss of caste, and he who forsakes blameless relatives become out-casts. Likewise those who instigate others to acts causing loss of caste; and he who for a year associates with out-casts become out-casts. To be an out-cast means to be deprived of the right to follow the lawful occupations of twice-born men, and to be deprived after death of the rewards of meritorious deeds. He who forsakes his priest and teacher unjustifiably becomes an outcast."[2] Vasistha's list of great sins (*Mahāpātakas*) which involved loss of castes is shorter and it runs as follows. (1) The Violation of Guru's bed (2) Drinking of spirituous liquor (3) Murder (4) Theft and (5) Spirituous or matrimonious connection with outcasts.[3]

1. (A. D. S. 1-1-1-28 to 36). 2. (G. D. S. 21-1 to 5; V. D. S. 1-20 to 23). 3 (V. D. S. 1-19 to 21).

Among acts which make men impure (ashuchikarani) but not degraded from the caste (pataniyani) according to Āpastambha are " the co-habitation of Āryans with Sūdra women, eating the flesh of forbidden animals, eating what is left by a Sūdra, the co-habitation of Āryans with low-caste women. But some declare that these acts also cause a man to lose his caste."[1] For certain offences, the deliquent had to expiate by living as an outcast for a certain number of years and for others he had to undergo a certain penance as prescribed in the Shāstras. The rules regarding loss of caste did not apply to the Sūdras who enjoyed greater liberty in this respect. Manu says in this connection " Sūdras cannot commit an offence causing loss of caste.[2] The Sūdras were however not neglected and they were enjoined to lead a moral life. High hopes of spiritual elevation were held out to the Sūdras and persons belonging to low-castes to inspire and induce them to lead a purer and better life so as to secure good rewards in future. According to Manu by leading a high moral life a Sūdra can obtain even the higher world.[3] The above rule was based on the law of Karma (actions) and the doctrine of transmigration of the soul which was definitely established in the Upanishad period. " With whatever disposition of mind a man performs any act, he reaps its fruit in a future body endowed with the same quality."[4] Thus a Sūdra by leading a well regulated life can aspire to be born as a Brāhman in the distant future. It would be doing a great disservice to the Hindu religion as also to our motherland to preach the new lessons of equality of all irrespective of questions of caste, creed, educational and cultural qualifications, purity and so on as they are likely to create great dissensions amongst Hindus, raise a spirit of revolt against the established order and ultimately lead more to a spirit of degradation rather than an elevation or uplift of this very class of persons for whose benefit the so-called reformers are assiduously carrying on propaganda work and are even invoking the aid of certain proposed legislation. It is unfortunate that the pioneers of the new movement by seeking directly or indirectly to destroy the beneficial institution of caste of hoary antiquity and religious authority are unconsciously digging an eternal grave for the great citadel of

1. (A. D. S. 1-7-21-12 to 18). 2. (10-126). 3. (10-128). 4. (M. S. 12-81).

liberty which ought to be vindicated by all loyal children of the country having the good and welfare of their country and their fellow brethren at heart.

(xv) Conclusion

It may be mentioned in conclusion that the institution of caste was social being based on the principle of division of labour. Every person's caste was determinded by birth by the Lord in conformity with the law of heredity as recognized in modern science and biology. The rules prescribed for the various castes by the law-givers were meant for the service of the society as a whole including the backward castes of Sūdras and thereby foster feelings of a spiritual brotherhood, loving co-operation, and unity amongst mankind in general by a responsible fulfilment of the duties laid down upon them, without any unhealthy spirit of animosity towards one another.

(9) Rules of conduct laid down for the four orders of life (Āshrama Dharma).

The authors of the Dharma shāstras have laid down certain rules of conduct for four orders of life of the Āryans viz., (a) the *Brahmacharya* Āshrama or the order of the students (b) the *Grihastha Āshrama* or order of the house holders (c) the *Vānprastha* Āshrama or the order of hermits residing in the forest away from cities and villages and (d) The *Sanyāsa* Āshrama or the order of ascetics leading a wandering life for spiritual enlightenment and emancipation. These orders of life were already established so far back as in the time of the Brāhmanas and the Upanishads. Manu has taken an average of 100 years for a human life which he has divided into four equal parts of 25 years each corresponding with the orders of life mentioned above. A man is enjoined to pass through these four orders step by step by gradation for achieving perfection.

(i) Duties of a Student (Brahmachāri)

Age for the Initiation Ceremony (Upanayana)

Manu lays down that the initiation ceremony of a Brāhman shall be performed in the fifth year after conception, that of a Kshatriya in the sixth and that of a Vaishya in the eighth.[1] Yājnavalkya prescribes the 8th, the 11th, and the 12th years as the ages for the initiation of a Brāhman, a Kshatriya and a Vaishya respec-

1. (2-37).

tively.[1] The time for the Savitri (initiation) of a Brāhman does not pass, until completion of the 16th year, that of a Kshatriya until the completion of the 22nd year and that of a Vaishya until the the completion of the 24th year.[2] In fact the 16th, the 22nd and the 24th years constitute the limit of the periods within which the initiation must be performed for the said castes respectively.[3] After the lapse of the above periods the men of the three higher castes who have not been initiated become sinners (patita) and they are excluded from all religious rites and Savitri (intitation) and are outcasts (*Vrātyas*) and censured by the Āryans until they perform the *Vrātyastoma* penance as laid down in the Tāndya Brāhman.[4]

Initiation of the twice-born (Dwijas) by the teacher.

The first birth proceeds from the parents and the second from the Mounji (investiture with the sacred thread); therefore the Brāhmanas, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas are called the twice-born (*Dwijas*).[5] Manu says that according to the injunction of the revealed Texts, the first birth of an Āryan is from his natural mother, the second on the tying of the girdle of Munja grass (Maunji bandhana) and the third on the initiation to the performance of the Vedic sacrifice (Yajna Dīkshā).[6] Among those three, the birth which is symbolized by the investiture with the girdle of Munja grass is the birth for the sake of Veda; they declare that in that birth, the Savitri verse (i.e. Gāyatri) is his mother and the teacher (Āchārya) is his father.[7] Until initiation and before his birth from the Veda, a twice born person is on a level with a Sūdra.[8]

Who is an Āchārya or Teacher ?

The teacher (*Achārya*) is the Brāhman who initiates a pupil and teaches him the Veda (together with the Kalpas i.e. Sutras relating to Vedic sacrifices and the Rahasyas i.e. Secret doctrines in the Upanishads).[9] But he who for his livelihood teaches a portion only of the Veda or the Angas (appendages) of the Veda is called the sub-teacher (*Upādhāya*).[10] That Brāhman who performs in accordance with the rules of the Veda, the rites such as Garbhādhāna (i.e. conception rite) and so forth and gives food to

1. (Y. S. 1-14). 2. (2-38; A. D. S. 1-1-1-27 to 37). 3. (Y. S. 1-37). 4. (Y. S. 1-38; M. S. 2-39). 5. (Y. S. 1-39). 6. (2-169). 7.(2-170). 8.(2-172). 9.(2-140). 10.(2-141).

the child is called the *Guru* (the venerable one).[1] He who being duly chosen for the purpose, performs the Agni Adheya (i.e. the rite of setting up the holy fire) sacrifice by offering into fire oblations of cooked food called *Pākayajna*, (e.g. the sacrifices held on the new noon and full moon days etc.,) and the Vedic sacrifices (eg. Agni-stoma etc.,) for another man, is called his officating priest (*Ṛitvik*).[2] The teacher (Āchārya) is 10 times more venerable than a sub-teacher (Upādhyāya), the father a hundred times more than the teacher, (who formally initiates him) but the mother is a thousand times more than the father.[3] Of him who gives natural birth and him who gives the knowledge of the Veda, the giver of the Veda is the more venerable father, for the birth for the sake of the Veda ensures eternal rewards both in this and after life.[4] Let him consider that he received a mere animal existence when his parents begat him through mutual affection and when he was born from the womb of his mother.[5] But that birth which a teacher acquainted with the whole Veda in accordance with the law procures for him through the Savitri is real, exempt from age and death.[6] The pupil must know that that man also who benefits him by instructions in the Veda be it little or more is called in the institutes of Manu his *Guru* in consequence of that benefit conferred by instruction in the Veda.[7] The Brāhman who is the giver of the birth for the sake of the Veda and the teacher of the prescribed duties becomes by law the father of an aged man even though he himself be a child.[8]

Traditional mode (Paramparā) of handing down knowledge of the Veda from a proficient teacher to pupil.

It was the first duty of the student to begin the study of the Veda by receiving regular instructions from a qualified teacher,[9] who handed down the same to his pupils orally by the traditional method. These oral instructions in the Vedas were imparted regularly from teacher to pupil in a regular and unbroken chain of succession (*Paramparā*) without any break in continuity. The twice-born who neglected the study of the Vedas and the performance of daily rites and prayers prescribed for them will be blamed among virtuous men.[10] An offering consisting of muttered prayers is 10 times more

1. (2-142). 2. (2-143; Y. S. 1-35). 3. (2-145). 4. (2-146). 5. (2-147). 6. (2-148). 7. (2-149). 8. (2-150). 9. (2-70). 10. (2-80).

efficacious than a sacrifice; a prayer which is inaudible to others surpasses it a hundred times and the mental recitation of sacred texts a thousand times.[1]

Sacred knowledge not to be imparted to an unworthy recipient.

Manu prohibits a teacher from imparting religious instructions to an unqualified and impure student who does not observe a chaste life. Thus he says " where merit and wealth unopposed are not obtained by teaching nor at least due obedience, in such soil, sacred knowledge must not be sown, just as good seed must not be thrown on barren land."[2] Sacred learning approached a Brāhman and said to him "I am thy treasure, preserve me; deliver me not to a scorner; so preserved, I shall become supremely strong."[3] 'But deliver me, as to the keeper of thy treasure to a Brāhman whom thou shall know to be pure, of subdued senses, chaste and attentive.'[4]

Strict fulfilment of the vow of celibacy.

Manu enjoins a student to lead a life of celibacy by restraining his senses which run wild among alluring sensual objects like a charioteer his horses.[5] He is also enjoined to restrain and control the internal organ or mind which is the 11th sense.[6] Manu says: "Through the attachment of his senses to sensual pleasures a man undoubtedly will incur guilt, but if he keep them under complete control he will obtain success in all his aims.[7] Desire is never extinguished by the enjoyment of desired objects; it only grows stronger like a fire fed with clarified butter."[8] Renunciation of all sensual pleasures is far better than the attainment of them.[9] If he keeps all the ten senses as well as the mind in control, he may gain all his aims of life (spiritual merit, wealth, desire and liberation) without reducing his body by the practice of Yoga.[10] Let him always sleep alone, let him never waste his manhood, for he who voluntarily wastes his manhood, breaks his vow (*Brahmacharya Vrata*).[11] A twice born student, who has involuntarily wasted his manly strength during sleep, must bathe, worship the sun, and afterwards thrice mutter the Ṛik verse 'Again let my strength return to me'.[12]

1. (2-85). 2. (2-112). 3. (2-114). 4. (2-115). 5. (2-88). 6. (2-92). 7. (2-93). 8. (2-94). 9. (2-95). 10. (2-100). 11. (2-180). 12. (2-181).

Injunctions for daily prayers (Sandhyā) and studies in Veda (Svādhyāya).

Manu next lays down that a student must perform his morning and twilight prayers (*Sandhyā*) and worship.[1] If he neglects this, he shall be excluded like a Sūdra from all duties and rights of an Āryan.[2] Next the student is enjoined to do his daily studies in the Vedas (*Svādhyāya*).[3] Manu says that " an Āryan must study the whole Veda (i.e. the Veda with its angas or appendages or one entire Sākhā consisting of the Mantras and Brāhmanas) together with the Rahasyas (i.e. the Upanishads or the secret doctrines of the Veda) performing at the same time various kinds of austerities (e g. fasting etc.) and the vows prescribed by the rules of the Veda."[4] Let the Brāhman who desires to perform austerities constantly repeat the Veda, for the study of the Veda is declared to be in this world the highest austerity for a Brāhman.[5]

Worship of gods, manes and the sacred fire.

Manu next says that every day a student having bathed and being purified must offer libations of water (*tarpana*) to the gods, sages, and manes, and worship the images of gods and place fuel on the sacred fire.[6]

Offerings of burnt oblations to the sacred fire.

Having brought sacred fire from a distance, let him place it anywhere but on the ground, and let him make with it burnt oblations to the sacred fire, both evening and morning.[7] For neglect of this duty, he had to perform the prescribed penance.[8]

Rules for begging of the food.

Let him daily go to beg food.[9] A student being pure, shall daily bring food from the houses of men who are not deficient in the knowledge of the Veda and who are famous for following their lawful occupations.[10] Let him not beg from the relatives of his teacher, nor from his own relations, unless there are no houses belonging to strangers.[11] Or he may go to each house in the village, being pure and remaining silent.[12] He who performs the vow of

1. (2-101). 2. (2-103). 3. (2-104). 4. (2-165). 5. (2-166). 6. (2-176). 7. (2-186). 8. (2-187). 9. (2-182). 10. (2-183). 11. (2-184). 12. (2-185).

studentship shall constantly subsist on alms, but not eat the food of one person only. The subsistence of a student on begged food is equal in merit to fasting.[1] At his pleasure he may eat when invited, the food of one man at a rite in honour of the gods, or at a funeral meal in honour of the manes, behaving however like a hermit.[2] This duty is prescribed for a Brāhman only.[3]

Duty to lead a life of extreme simplicity and temperance.

The initiated student's regular daily duties after initiation until completion of his studies (samāvartan) were to offer fuel in the sacred fire, beg food, sleep on the ground and do what is beneficial to his teacher.[4] The student is enjoined not to over-eat himself as excessive eating is prejudicial to health, to fame, and to bliss in heaven; it prevents spiritual merit and is odious among men; a student ought therefore to avoid excessive eating.[5]

Rules of abstention.

Let him abstain from honey, meat, perfumes, garlands, substances used for flavouring food, women, all substances turned acid, and from doing injury to living creatures;[6] from anointing his body, applying collyrium to his eyes, from sensual desire, anger, covetousness, dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments;[7] from gambling, idle disputes, back-biting, and lying, from looking at and touching women, and from hurting others.[8]

Reverential obedience to the teacher and elders.

The student is next enjoined to be obedient to his teacher and salute him with reverence.[9] He must not sit down on the same couch or seat which is occupied by his teacher[10] (or superior in learning etc.), and he who occupies a couch or seat shall rise to meet his teacher and salute him. He who habitually salutes and constantly pays reverence to the aged by doing them service obtains an increase of life, knowledge, fame and strength.[11] He should also salute his elders.[12] Let him not pronounce the mere name of his teacher without an honorific title and let him not mimic his gait, speech and deportment.[13] Wherever people justly censure

1. (2-188). 2. (2-189). 3. (2-190). 4. (2-108). 5. (2-56, 57). 6. (2-177). 7. (2 178). 8. (2-179). 9. (2-117). 10. (2-119). 11. (2-121). 12. (2-122). 13. (2-199).

or falsely defame his teacher, there he must cover his ears or depart thence to another place.[1] By censuring his teacher though justly, he will become in his next birth an ass, by falsely defaming him, a dog; he who lives on his teacher's wealth will become a worm, and he who is envious of his merit larger insect.[2] Towards his other instructors in science (*Vidyā Guru*), towards his relatives (e.g. uncle) to whom honour is due, towards all who may restrain him from sin or may give him salutory advice, let him always behave as towards his teacher.[3] Likewise he shall behave towards the sons and relatives of his teacher.[4] An obedient pupil obtains the knowledge which lies hidden in his teacher.[5] The teacher, the father, the mother, and an elder brother, must not be treated with disrespect especially by a Brāhman, though one be grievously offended by them.[6] The teacher is the image of Brāhman, the father the image of Prajāpati, (the lord of created beings), the mother the image of earth and an elder full brother the image of one-self.[7] That trouble and pain which the parents undergo on the birth of their children cannot be compensated even in a hundred years.[8] Obedience towards these three (i.e. father, mother and teacher) is declared to be the best form of austerity (tapa) let him not perform other meritorious acts without their permission.[9] Let him always serve these three rejoicing to do what is agreeable and beneficial to them.[10] By honouring these three, all that ought to be done by man, is accomplished, that is clearly the highest duty, every other act is a subordinate duty.[11] A Brāhman who serves his teacher (*Naisthik Brahmachāri*) till the dissolution of his body reaches forthwith the eternal mansion of Brahman.[12]

Behaviour towards the teacher's wife.

The wives of the teacher, who belong to the same caste, must be treated as respectfully as the teacher; but those who belong to a different caste, must be honoured by rising and salutation.[13] Let him not perform for a wife of his teacher the offices of anointing her, assisting her in the bath, shampooing her limbs, or arranging her hair.[14] A pupil who is full twenty years old, and knows what

1. (2-200). 2. (2-201). 3. (2-206). 4. (2-207). 5. (2-218). 6. (2-225). 7. (2-226). 8. (2-227). 9. (2-229). 10. (2-235). 11. (2-237). 12. (2-244). 13. (2-210). 14. (2-211).

is becoming and unbecoming, shall not salute a young wife of his teacher by clasping her feet;[1] for it is the nature of women to seduce men. Hence the wise are never unguarded in the company of females.[2] Women are able to lead astray in this world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and to make him a slave of desire and anger.[3] One should not therefore sit in a lonely place even with his own close female relations; for the senses are powerful, and overpower even a learned man.[4]

Respect to ladies and others deserving it.

He must behave with respect towards a lady who is the wife of another man and not a blood relation, by addressing her 'lady' (Bhavati) or 'Beloved sister.'[5] Manu next lays down rules to determine who should be honoured. Thus he says that wealth, kindred, age, the due performance of rites, and fifthly sacred learning are titles to respect but each later-named cause is more weighty than the preceding ones.[6] Whatever man of the three highest castes possesses most of these five qualities, both in number and degree that man is worthy of honour among them, and so also is a Sūdra who has entered the tenth decade of his life (i.e. who is ninety years old).[7] Way must be made for a man in a carriage, for one who is above ninety years old, for one diseased, for the carrier of a burden, for a woman, for a Snātaka (i.e. one who has bathed having completed his Vedic studies), for the King and for a bridegroom.[8] The seniority of Brāhman is from sacred knowledge, that of Kshatriyas from valour, that of Vaishyas from wealth in grain and other goods, but that of Sūdras alone from age.[9] A man is not therefore considered venerable because his head is grey; him who though young has learned the Veda, the gods consider to be venerable.[10] As an elephant made of wood, as an antelope made of leather, such is an unlearned Brāhman; these three have nothing but the names of their kind.[11] As a eunuch is unproductive with women, as cow is unprolific with a cow and as a gift made to an ignorant man yields no reward even so is a Brāhman useless who does not know the Ṛichās.[12]

1. (2–212). 2. (2–213). 3. (2–214) 4. (2–215). 5. (2–129).
6. (2–136). 7. (2–137). 8. (2–138). 9. (2–155). 10. (2–156).
11. (2–157). 12. (2–158).

Lessons of good advice to be received even from a woman, child or a low caste man.

If a woman or a man of low caste observes a certain conduct leading to happiness (e.g. cleansing the hands by earth and water done by a Shudra or the mode of sipping water by the teacher's wife), let him diligently practise it as well as any other act (not prohibited by the sacred law) in which his heart finds pleasure.[1] He who possesses faith may receive pure learning (e. g. literature, logic etc.,) even from a man of a lower caste, the highest law in worldly matters (e.g. advice not to enter into a particular locality or bathe in a particular tank, or information about the rules and regulations of the people of a particular locality or a particular king) and an excellent wife of good qualities even from a base family.[2] Even from poison nectar may be taken, even from a child good advice, even from an impure substance gold.[3] Excellent wives, learning, knowledge of the law, rules of purity, good advice, and various arts, may be acquired from anybody.[4]

No gift to the teacher before Samāvartan.

He who knows the sacred law must not present any gift to his teacher before the *Samāvartan* (ceremony of returning home by the student on completion of his studies after taking a bath); but when with the permission of his teacher, he is about to take the final bath, let him procure a present for the venerable man according to his ability.[5] A Brāhman who thus passes his life as a student without breaking his vow of celibacy (Brahmacharya Vrata), reaches after death the highest abode and will not be born again in this world.[6]

The term of Studentship.

The vow of studying the three Vedas (i.e. the Ṛig-Veda, Yajur Veda and Sāma Veda) under a teacher must be kept for 36 years or 18 years or 9 years, or until the student has perfectly learnt them.[7] Manu as well as the authors of the ancient Dharma Sutras have left out Atharva Veda possibly because it was not recognised at first on account of the magical practices in it. But

1. (2-223). 2. (2-238). 3. (2-239). 4. (2-240). 5. (2-245). 6. (2-249). 7. (3-1 Y. S. 1-36; G. D. S. 2-45 to 47; A. D. S. 1-2-12 to 16; V. D. S. 8-1; B. D. S. 1-3-1 to 4).

Bauddhāyana includes the Atharva Veda and states that the term of studentship extends for 48 years 12 for each Veda. A student who has studied in due order the three Vedas, or two or even one only, without breaking the rules of studentship, shall enter the order of householders.[1] Taking an average of 20 years as the term of studentship commencing from the time of the initiation which took place at the age of 5 years according to Manu, the marriageable age of boys would be 25 which would correspond with the age of consummation as recommended by Shushruta, the well known author of Indian medicine. The age of a marriageable girl could not therefore be less than 14 or 15. However it is for the people themselves to determine the age of marriage which is a religious sacrament, and not for the State to interfere in such matters as is done at present by the Child Marriage Restraint Act XIX of 1929, otherwise known as the Sārdā Act, which has evoked a storm of opposition from the orthodox Hindus all over India.

(ii) The Duties of a householder (Gṛihastha Dharma)

At what age a student entered the order of a householder.

Having dwelt with a teacher during the fourth part of a man's life (i.e. 25 years) a Brāhman shall live during the second quarter of his life in his house after he has wedded a wife.[2]

Occupations for subsistence.

A Brāhman must seek a means of subsistence which either causes no, or at least little, pain to others and live by that except in times of distress.[3] The persons belonging to the different castes are enjoined to follow the occupations assigned to them by Manu and the other law-givers. Manu however lays down the following duties for a Brāhman who is a *Snātaka* (i.e. one who has come to his house after studying the Vedas having taken his bath and who enters the life of a householder). Thus he says: Let him never for the sake of subsistence follow the ways of the world; let him live the pure, straightforward honest life of a Brāhman.[4] Let him untired perform daily the rites prescribed for him in the Veda; for he who performs those according to his ability, attains to the highest state.[5] Let him not seek wealth through pursuits to which men

1. (3-2, Y. S. 1-52). 2. (4-1). 3. (4-2). 4. (4-11). 5. (4-14).

cleave (e.g. by music and singing etc.) nor by forbidden occupations.[1] Let him not out of desire for enjoyments, attach himself to any sensual pleasures, and let him carefully obviate an excessive attachment to them, by reflecting on their worthlessness in his heart.[2] Let him daily pore over those institutes of science (i.e. Itihāsas (history) Purānas (old chronicles) Nyāya (logic), Arthashāstra (economics), medicine and astrology) which soon give increase of wisdom, those which teach the acquisition of wealth, those which are beneficial for other worldly concerns, and likewise over Nigamas (i.e. Ángas or appendages) which explain the Veda.[3]

Duty to perform the five daily sacrifices (Panch Mahā Yajna).

Let him never, if he is able to peform them, neglect the fire sacrifices (Panch Mahā Yajna) to the sages (Brahma Yajna), to the gods (Deva Yajna), to the Bhūtas (Bhūta Yajna), to men (Nara Yajna), and to the manes (Pitṛi Yajna).[4]

Duty to perform Daily Agnihotra (oblations to the sacred fire.)

A Brāhman shall always offer the Agnihotra (oblations to the sacrificial fire) at the beginning or at the end of the day and the night and the Darsha and Paurnamāsa and sacrifices at each new moon and full moon day of the month.[5]

Duty to receive and honour the guest.

He shall next honour the guest by receiving him well at his house by offering him a seat, food, a couch, water or roots and fruits.[6] A householder must give as much food as he is able to spare to those who do not cook for themselves and to all beings; one must distribute food without detriment to one's own interest.[7] He shall always be engaged in studying the Veda and such acts as are conducive to his welfare.[8]

Duty to beget a male child.

He shall approach his wife in due season as laid down by the law until he begets a male child to discharge the debt that he owes to his deceased fathers.[9] Let him never play with dice, nor eat lying on a bed.[10]

1. (4-15). 2. (4-16). 3. (4-19). 4. (4-21). 5. (4-25).
6. (4-29). 7. (4-32). 8. (4-35). 9. (3-45). 10. (4-74).

Non-association with outcasts and untouchables.

Let him not stay together with Patitas (i.e. outcasts) nor with chāndālas (a class of untouchables) nor with Pukkasas (another class of untouchables) nor with fools nor with overbearing men, nor with Antyas (i.e. low-caste men) nor with Antyavasāyins (a class of untouchables dwelling at the end of village).[1]

Social uplift of Sudras by moral lessons.

Let him not give to the Sūdra instructions in Veda and Shāstras, nor the remnants of his meal, nor food offered to the gods; nor let him explain the sacred law to such a man nor impose upon him a penance except through a Brāhman.[2] But he may give moral and religious instructions to Sūdras by reading Purānas and Itihāsas,[3] as a Brāhman has the good of all at his heart. He is called the lover of all (Maitro Brāhmanaha).[4] He who explains the sacred law to a Sūdra (from the Scriptures or Smritis) or dictates to him a penance (directly) will sink together with that man into the hell.[5]

Whose gifts not acceptable.

A Brāhman should not a accept presents from a king who is not descended from the Kshatriya race nor from butchers, oil-manufacturers and publicans nor from those who subsist by the gain of prostitutes.[6]

Morning duties — the daily morning and evening prayers (sandhyā).

Let him wake in the Brāhmi Muhurta (i.e. about an hour or so before sun-rise) sacred to Brāhman and think of spiritual merit and wealth, of the bodily fatigue arising therefrom, and of the true meaning of the Veda.[7] When he has risen, has relieved the necessities of nature and carefully purified himself, let him stand during the morning twilight, muttering for a long time the Gāyatri and at the proper time; he must similarly perform the evening devotion.[8] By prolonging the twilight devotions, the sages obtained long life, wisdom, honour, fame and excellence in Vedic knowledge.[9]

Religious injunction to study the Vedas.

Let him recite the daily portion of the Mantras of the Veda, and study the Brāhmana and the Mantrasamhitā.[10] Let him avoid

1. (4-79). 2. (4-80). 3. (10-126, 127). 4. (2-87). 5. (4-81).
6. (4-84). 7. (4-92). 8. (4-93). 9. (4-94). 10. (4-100).

reading the Veda on certain days when the Veda study is forbidden.[1] Let him never recite the Ṛig Veda or the Yajur Veda while the Sāman melodies are heard.[2] The Ṛig Veda is declared sacred to the gods, the Yajur Veda to men, and the Sāma Veda to the manes. Hence the sound of the latter is impure as it were.[3] Medhātithi explains that Sāma Veda is not really impure, but when it is heard one must study the other Veda just as in the presence of some impure thing or person.

No disrespect to a learned Brāhman or a Kshatriya.

Let him never despise a kshatriya, a snake and a learned Brāhman as they may destroy him if treated with disrespect.[4] Let him not despise himself on account of former failures; until death, let him seek fortune, nor despair of gaining it.[5]

Saying the truth but in a pleasing manner.

Let him say what is true, and what is pleasing; let him utter no disagreeable truth, and let him utter no agreeable falsehood, that is the eternal law.[6]

Rules of good conduct, purity and discipline.

Let him eagerly follow the customs which are auspicious and the rule of good conduct, be careful of purity, and control all his senses, let him mutter prayers and untired offer daily oblations in the fire.[7] Let him daily mutter the Veda at the proper time.[8] By daily reciting the Veda, by the observance of the rules of purification, by practising austerities, and by doing no injury to created beings, one obtains the faculty of remembering former births.[9]

Worship of the gods and their images.

Early in the morning only after purification and bath let him worship the gods.[10] But on the Parva days let him go to visit the images of the gods and virtuous Brāhmans, and the ruler of the country for the sake of protection as well as his Gurus (elders).[11] Let him untired follow the conduct of virtuous men connected with his occupations.[12]

Due respect and honour to the teacher and elders.

Let him never offend the teacher who initiated him, nor him who explained the Veda, nor his father and mother, nor any other Guru, nor cows, nor Brāhmans nor any men performing austerities.[13]

1. (4-101). 2. (4-123). 3. (4-124). 4. (4-135, 6). 5. (4-137). 6. (4-138). 7.(4-145). 8.(4-147). 9.(4-148). 10.(4-152). 11.(4-153). 12.(4-155). 13.(4-162).

Denouncement of atheism.

Let him avoid atheism, cavilling at the Vedas, contempt of the gods, hatred, want of modesty, pride, anger and harshness.[1]

The law of righteousness (Dharma) and unrighteousness (Adharma).

Let him though suffering in consequence of his righteousness (Dharma) never turn his heart to unrighteousness for he will see the speedy overthrow of unrighteous wicked men.[2] Unrighteousness practised in this world, does not at once produce its fruit like a seed sown in the ground, but advancing slowly it cuts off the roots of him who committed it.[3] If the punishment falls not on the offender himself, it falls on his sons, if not on the sons, then on his grandsons; but an iniquity once committed, never fails to produce fruit to him who wrought it.[4] He prospers for a while through unrighteousness, then he gains good fortune, next he conquers his enemies, but at last he perishes root and branch.[5] Let him always delight in truthfulness, obedience to the sacred law, conduct worthy of an Āryan, and purity; let him chastise his pupils according to the sacred law; keeping his speech, arms and belly under control.[6] Let him avoid the acquisition of wealth (Artha) and the gratification of his desires (Kāma) if they are opposed to the sacred law (Dharma) and even lawful acts which may cause pain in the future (e.g. excessive charities beyond means done for fame) or are offensive to men.[7] Yājnavallkya also similarly says that one should perform religious rites carefully by deeds, mind, and words. One should not perform a religious rite (e.g. slaughter of animals in Madhu parka) which is censured by the people and which does not lead to the celestial region even if it is presented by the sacred law.[8] Let him walk in that path of holy men which his fathers and his grand fathers followed; while he walks in that, he will not suffer harm.[9]

The law for the acceptance and rejection of a gift.

Without a full knowledge of the rules, prescribed by the sacred law for the acceptance of presents, a wise men should not

1. (4-163). 2. (4-171). 3. (4-172). 4. (4-173). 5. (4-174).
6. (4-175). 7. (4-176). 8. (Y. S. 1-156). 9. (4-178).

take anything even though he may pine with hunger.[1] A Brāhman who neither performs austerities not studies the Veda, yet delights in accepting gifts, sinks with the donor into hell, just as he who attempts to cross over in a boat made of stone is submerged in the water.[2] Hence an ignorant man should be afraid of accepting any presents; for by reason of a very small gift even a fool sinks into hell as a cow into a morass.[3]

Denouncement of hypocrisy.

When one has committed a sin, let him not perform a penance under the pretence that the act is intended to gain a spiritual merit, thus hiding his sin under the pretext of a vow and deceiving women and Sūdras.[4] Such Brāhmans are reprehended after death and in this life by those who expound the Veda, and a vow performed under a false pretence, goes to the Rākshashas (devils).[5] He who without being a student (Brahmachāri) or an ascetic (Sanyāsi) gains his livelihood by wearing the dress of a student or an ascetic and keeps a big beard and curl of hairs etc. takes upon himself the guilt of all students and ascetics and is born again in the womb of an animal.[6]

Rules of moral conduct (Sadāchāra) paramount to the rules of purity of conduct (Yama and Niyama).

Let him always bathe in rivers, in ponds, dug in honour of the gods, in lakes, and in water-holes or springs.[7] A wise man should constantly discharge the paramount duties called *Yama* (e.g. non-injury, truth, non-stealing celibacy, mercy, and control of senses etc.) and not rest satisfied merely with the observance of the minor rules of observances called (*Niyamas*) (e.g. bathing, purity, celebration of sacrifices and offering and performance of gifts, austerities, and penances etc.), for he who does not discharge the former but merely obeys the latter alone becomes an outcast.[8] Yājnavalkya describes Yamas and Niyamas as follows: celibacy, mercy, forgiveness, charity, truthfulness, open-mindedness, abstention from injury, faith in sweetness of temper and restraint of the external senses are known as *Yamas* or rules of restraint[9] while bathing, silence, fasting, celebration of sacrifices, Vedic study, control of sexual desire, service

1. (4-187). 2. (4-190). 3. (4-191). 4. (4-198) 5. (4-199).
6. (4-200). 7. (4-203). 8. (4-204). 9. (Y. S. 3-313).

of the preceptor, purity, absence of anger and vigilance are called *Niyamas* or religious observances.[1]

Rules of interdiction as regards food.

Let him never eat food given by intoxicated, angry, or sick men;[2] nor that which has been touched by a menstruating woman, nor that which has been pecked at by birds or touched by a dog,[3] nor food offered by harlots,[4] nor food given by a thief, a carpenter, a usurer, and a miser;[5] nor by one accused of a mortal sin, an unchaste woman, or a hypocrite, nor anything that has turned sour, nor what has been kept a whole night, nor the food of a Sūdra nor the leavings of another man;[6] nor the food given by a physician, a hunter, a cruel man, one who eats the fragments of another's meal, nor that given by a woman whose ten days of impurity have not elapsed;[7] nor that given without due respect nor that given by a female who is without a male relative nor that of an enemy nor that given by outcasts nor that on which any body has sneezed;[8] nor the food given by one who habitually tells falsehoods, or by an actor, a tailor, or an ungrateful man;[9] by a blacksmith, a Nishāda, (untouchable caste), a stage-player, a goldsmith, or a basket-maker;[10] nor that given by a washerman or a dyer;[11] nor by those who in all matters are ruled by women, nor food given by men whose ten days of impurity on account of death of a relation have not passed, nor that which is unpalatable.[12] If he has unwittingly eaten the food of one of those persons, he must fast for 3 days; if he has eaten it intentionally, he must perform a Kṛichhra penance.[13] A Brāhman who knows the law, must not eat cooked food given by a Sūdra who performs no Shrādhhas; but on failure of other means of subsistence he may accept raw grain sufficient for one night and day.[14]

Constant Duty to offer sacrifices and gifts to acquire spiritual merit (Istā-Purtam).

Let him always offer sacrifices (*Ishtā*) and perform works of charity (*Purtam*) i.e. building wells, tanks and Dharmashālās or inns

1. (Y.S.3-314). 2. (M.S.4-207). 3. (4-208). 4. (4-209). 5. (4-210).
6. (4-211). 7. (4-212). 8. (4-213). 9. (4-214). 10. (4-215).
11. (4-216). 12. (4-217). 13. (4-222). 14. (4-223).

etc.) with faith; for offerings and charitable works made with faith and with lawfully earned money, procure endless rewards.[1] Let him always practise according to his ability, with a cheerful heart, the duty of liberality, both by sacrifices (Ishta) and by charitable works (Purta) if he finds a worthy recipient (Pātra) for his gifts.[2] If he is asked, let him always give something, be it ever so little without grudging; for a worthy recipient will perhaps be found who saves him from all guilt or sin.[3] The gift of the Veda surpasses all other gifts, water, food, cows, land, clothes, sesamum, gold, and clarified butter.[4] For whatever purpose a man bestows any gift, for that same purpose he receives in his next birth with due honour its reward.[5] Both he who carefully receives a gift and he who respectfully bestows it, go to heaven; in the contrary case, they both fall into hell.[6] Let him not be proud of his austerities; let him not utter a falsehood after he has offered a sacrifice; let him not speak ill of Brāhmans, after he has offered a sacrifice; when he has bestowed a gift, let him not boast of it.[7]

Spiritual merit (Dharma) as the only companion in the next world.

Giving no pain to any creature, let him slowly accumulate spiritual merit (Dharma) for the sake of acquiring a companion in the next world just as the white ant gradually raises its hill ?[8] Let him therefore always slowly accumulate spiritual merit (Dharma) in order that it may be his companion after death for with merit (Dharma) as his companion he will traverse a gloom difficult to traverse.[9] That companion (i.e. merit or Dharma) speedily conducts the man who is devoted to duty and effaces his sins by austerities to the next world, radiant and clothed with an ethereal body.[10]

Elevation of the race by connection with excellent men and degradation by connection with low caste men.

Let him who desires to raise his race, ever form connections with the most excellent men and shun all low men.[11] A Brāhman who always connects himself with the most excellent ones and shuns all inferior ones becomes most distinguished; by an opposite conduct

1. (4-226). 2. (4-227). 3. (4-228). 4. (4-233) 5. (4-234). 6. (4-235). 7. (4-236). 8. (4-238). 9. (4-242). 10. (4-243). 11. (4-244).

he becomes a Sūdra.[1] He who describes himself to virtuous men in a manner contrary to truth, (e.g. where one who is immoral and irreligious pretends to be virtuous and religious) is the most sinful wretch in this world; he is thief who makes away with his own self.[2] He who is dishonest with respect to his speech, is dishonest in every thing.[3]

Time for retirement from the order of householder and embracing that of a hermit.

When he has paid, according to the law, his debts due to the great sages, to the manes, and to the gods, let him make over everything to his son and dwell in his house not caring for any worldly concerns.[4] Alone let him constantly meditate in solitude on that which is salutary for his soul; for he who meditates in solitude attains supreme bliss.[5] Thus have been declared the means by which a Brāhman householder must always subsist and the summary of the ordinances for a Snātaka which cause an increase of holiness and are praiseworthy.[6] A Brāhman who being learned in the lore of the Vedas, conducts himself in this manner and daily destroys his sins, will be exalted in Brahman's world (Brahma-loka).[7]

(iii) Duties of a Hermit (Vānaprastha).

A twice born snātaka who has lived according to the law in the order of householders, may taking a firm resolution and keeping his senses in subjection, dwell in the forest (Vana), duly observing the rules laid down for a hermit as given below.[8] When a householder sees his skin wrinkled, and his hair white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest.[9] The order of householders according to Manu is completed at the age of 50, when one is enjoined to retire from the life of a householder and enter into the order of a hermit (Vānaprastha). Abandoning all food raised by cultivation, and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her.[10] Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic sacrifices, he may go forth from the village into the forest and reside there, duly controlling his senses.[11] Let him offer those five great sacrifices (Panch

1. (4-245). 2. (4-255). 3. (4-256). 4. (4-257). 5. (4-258).
6. (4-259). 7. (4-260). 8. (6-1). 9. (6-2). 10. (6-3). 11. (6-4).

Mahā Yajna) according to the rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for ascetics or with herbs, roots, and fruit.[1] Let him wear a skin or a tattered garment; let him bathe in the evening or in the morning; and let him always wear his hair in braids, the hair on his body, his beard and his nails being unclipped.[2] Let him perform the bali offering with such food as he eats, and give alms according to his ability; let him honour those who come to his hermitage with alms consisting of water, roots, and fruit.[3] Let him be always industrious in privately reciting the Veda; let him be patient of hardship, friendly towards all, of collected mind, ever liberal and never a receiver of gifts, and compassionate towards all living creatures.[4] Let him offer according to the law, the Agnihotra with three sacred fires (i.e. Gārhaspatya, Āhavaniya and Dakshina fires), never omitting the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices at the proper time.[5] With pure grains, fit for ascetics, which grow in spring and in autumn, and which he himself has collected, let him severally prepare the sacrificial cakes (Purodāsha) and the boiled messes of food (charu) as the law directs.[6] Having offered those most pure sacrificial viands, consisting of the produce of the forest, he may use the remainder for himself mixed with salt prepared by himself.[7] Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land, or in water, flower, roots and fruits, the productions of pure trees, and oils extracted from forest-fruits.[8] Let him avoid honey, flesh, and mushrooms growing on the ground.[9] Let him not eat anything grown on ploughed land, nor roots and fruit grown in a village, though he may be tormented by hunger.[10] He may either eat at night only or in the day time only, or at every fourth meal-time or at every eighth.[11] Or he may live according to the rule of the lunar practice (chāndrāyana), daily diminishing the quantity of food in the bright half of the month and increasing it in the dark half; or he may eat on the last days of each fortnight once a day only boiled barley gruel.[12] Or he may constantly subsist on flowers, roots, and fruit alone, which have been ripened by time and have fallen spontaneously, following

1. (6-5). 2. (6-6). 3. (6-7). 4. (6-8). 5. (6-9). 6. (6-11).
7. (6-12). 8. (6-13). 9. (6-14). 10. (6-16). 11. (6-19). 12. (6-20).

the rule of the institutes of Vikhanas.[1] Or let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, or let him alternately stand and sit down.[2] In summer let him expose himself to the heat of five fires (Panchāgni tāpa), during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, thus gradually increasing the rigour of his austerities.[3] When he bathes at the three Savans (i.e. Sunrise, midday, and sunset), let him offer libations of water to the manes and the gods, and practising harsher and harsher austerities, let him dry up his body frame,[4] making no effort to procure things that give pleasure, chaste, sleeping on the bare ground, not caring for any shelter, dwelling at the roots of trees.[5] From Brāhmans who live as ascetics, let him receive alms barely sufficient to support life or from other householders of the twice-born castes who reside in the forest.[6] Or the hermit who dwells in the forest may bring food from a village, receiving it either in a hollow dish of leaves, in his naked hand, or in a broken earthen dish, and may eat eight mouthfuls.[7] These and other observances must a Brāhman who dwells in the forest diligently practise, and in order to attain complete union with the supreme soul, he must study the various sacred texts contained in the Upanishads.[8] Or let him walk, fully determined and going straight on, in a north easterly direction, subsisting on water and air, until his body sinks to rest.[9] A Brāhman, having got rid of his body by one of those modes practised by the great sages, is exalted in the world of Brahman, free from sorrow and fear.[10]

(iv) Duties of an ascetic (Sanyāsi).

The fourth and the last order of life is that of ascetic who has completely renounced his house, wife, children, wealth and everything. Having passed the third part of a man's natural term of life in the forest, (in accordance with the regulations laid down for the three orders of life) he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachment to worldly objects.[11] He who after passing from order to order, after offering sacrifices and subduing his senses becomes tired with giving

1. (6–21). 2. (6–22). 3. (6–23). 4. (6–24). 5. (6-26). 6. (6-27).
7. (6–28). 8. (6–29). 9. (6–31). 10. (6-32). 11. (6–33).

alms and offerings of food, an ascetic gains bliss after death.[1] The principle deduced from the regulations laid down in the Dharma-shāstras for the different orders of life which are all based on express texts of the Brāhmanas and Upanishads, is that one has first got to remove all the sins committed by him and until he has purged off these sins by leading a disciplined and pure life, he is not qualified to enter the order of ascetic which entails on his part the highest amount of self-sacrifice and a scrupulous observance of the regulations laid down for the three preceding orders of life as a preparation for the last order. The Dharma Shāstras therefore enjoin a man to pass through the orders of life in a proper order as fixed by the sacred laws. Therefore, generally, one cannot enter into the holy order of ascetics at once, without going through the life of a student, a house-holder, and a hermit which qualify the aspirant for the last order. An exception however was made in the case of a few highly enlightened souls like the great scholiast Shankarāchārya who were permitted to become ascetics from their very young age, on account of superior knowledge and renunciation acquired from dispositions of the previous lives. It is laid down by Manu that when a person has paid the three debts (that he owes to the gods, manes and Ṛishis), let him apply his mind to the attainment of final liberation; he who seeks it without having paid his debts sinks downwards.[2] Having studied the Vedas in accordance with the rule, having begotten sons according to the sacred law, and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to the attainment of final liberation.[3] A twice-born man who seeks final liberation without having studied the Vedas, without having begotten sons, and without having offered sacrifices, sinks downwards.[4] Having performed the Ishti called Prajāpatya sacred to Prajāpati, where he gives all his property as the sacrificial fee, having reposited the sacred fires in himself, a Brāhman may depart from his house, as an ascetic.[5] It will be seen from the above verse that according to Manu only a Brāhman is qualified to embrace the holy order of ascetic. Rāmānujāchārya has interpreted the rule to mean that any person of the three twice-born castes is entitled to be an ascetic, after he has fulfilled all duties in accordance with the above regulation. But a Sūdra is not

1. (6-34). 2 (6-35). 3. (6-36). 4. (6-37). 5. (6-38).

entitled to become an ascetic. One should therefore beware of impostor ascetics seen now a days in large numbers wandering about the streets, some of whom were born as Sūdras and not qualified to enter into the holy order. Worlds, radiant in brilliancy, become the portion of him who departs from his house as an ascetic, after giving a promise of safety (Abhaya) to all created beings.[1] For that twice-born man, by whom not the smallst danger (Bhaya) is caused to created beings, there will be no danger from any quarter, after he is freed from his body.[2] Departing from his house fully provided with the means of purification (e.g. the ascetic's staff water-pot etc.), let him wander about absolutely silent, and caring nothing for enjoyments that may be offered to him.[3] Let him always wander alone, without any companion, in order to attain final liberation, fully understanding that the solitary man who neither forsakes nor is forsaken, gains his end.[4] He shall neither possess a fire nor a dwelling; he may go to a village for his food; he shall be indifferent to every thing, firm of purpose, meditating and concentrating his mind on Brahman.[5] A potsherd instead of an alms-bowl, the roots of trees for a dwelling, coarse worn-out garments, life in solitude, and indifference towards everything, are the marks of one who has attained liberation.[6] Let him not desire to die, let him not desire to live, let him wait for his appointed time as a servant waits for the payment of his wages.[7] Let him utter speech purified by truth, let him keep his heart pure.[8] Let him patiently bear hard words, let him not insult any body, and let him not become any body's enemy for the sake of this perishable body.[9] Against an angry man, let him not in return show anger, let him bless when he is cursed, and let him not utter speech, devoid of truth.[10] Delighting in what refers to the soul, sitting (in the postures (*Āsanas*) prescribed by the Yoga), independent of external help, entirely abstaining from sensual enjoyments, with himself for his only companion, he shall live in this world desiring the bliss of final liberation.[11] His hair, nails and beard being clipped, carrying alms-bowl, a staff and a water pot, let him continually

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1. (6-39). 2. (6-40). 3. (6-41). 4. (6-42). 5. (6-43). 6. (6-44).
7. (6-45). 8. (6-46). 9. (6-47). 10. (6-48). 11. (6-49).

wander about controlling himself and not hurting any creature.[1] Let him go to beg once a day, let him not be eager to obtain a large quantity of alms, for an ascetic who eagarly seeks alms, attaches himself also to sensual enjoyments.[2] When the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed, let an ascetic always go to beg.[3] Let him not be sorry when he obtains nothing, nor rejoice when he obtains something, let him accept so much only as will sustain life.[4] By eating little, and by standing and sitting in solitude, let him restrain his senses, if they are attracted by sensual objects.[5] By the restraint of his senses, by the destruction of love and hatred, and by the abstention from injuring the creatures, (*Ahinsā*), he becomes fit for immortality.[6] Let him reflect on the transmigration of men, caused by their sinful deeds, on their falling into hell, and on the torments in the world of Yama;[7] on the separation from their dear ones, on their union with hated men, on their being overpowered by age, and being tormented with diseases;[8] on the departure of the individual soul from this body and its new birth in another womb, and on its wandering through ten thousand millions of existences;[9] on the infliction of pain on embodied spirits, which is caused by demerit, and the gain of eternal bliss, which is caused by the attainment of their highest aim, gained through spiritual merit.[10] By deep meditation let him recognise the subtile nature of the supreme soul, and its presence in all organisms both the highest and the lowest.[11] To whatever order he may be attached, let him, though blemished by a want of the external marks, fulfil his duty, equal-minded (*Sama*) towards all creatures; for the external mark (Linga) of the order is not the cause of the acquisition of merit.[12] In order to preserve living creatures, let him always by day and by night, even with pain to his body, walk, carefully scanning the ground.[13] In order to expiate the death of those creatures which he unintentionally injures by day or by night, an ascetic shall bathe and perform six suppressions of the breath (*Prānāyāma*).[14] Three suppressions of the breath (Prānāyāma) even, performed according to the rule, and accompanied with the recitation of the vyāhritis and of the syllable Om, one

1. (6-52). 2. (6-55). 3. (6-56). 4. (6-57). 5. (6-59). 6. (6-60). 7. (6-61). 8. (6-62). 9. (6-63). 10. (6-64). 11. (6-65). 12. (6-66). 13. (6-68). 14. (6-69).

must know to be the highest form of austerity for every Brāhman.[1] The taints of the sense organs are destroyed through the suppression of the breath.[2] Let him destroy the taints through suppression of the breath (*Prānāyāma*), the production of sin by fixed attention (*Dhāranā*), all sensual attachments (Sansarga) by restraining his senses and organs (*Pratyāhāra*) and all qualities that are not lordly by meditation (*Dhyāna*).[3] Let him recognise by the practice of meditation (*Dhyāna Yoga*) the progress of the individual soul through beings of various kinds, a progress hard to understand for unregenerate men.[4] He who possesses the true insight into the nature of the world, is not fettered by his deeds; but he who is destitute of that insight, is drawn into the circle of births and deaths.[5] By not injuring any creatures (*Ahinsā*), by detaching the senses from objects of enjoyment, by performing the rites prescribed in the Veda, and by rigorously practising austerities, men gain that state even in this world.[6] Let him quit this dwelling (i.e. body) composed of the five elements, where the bones are the beams, which is held together by tendons (instead) of cords, where the flesh and the blood are the mortar, which is thatched with the skin, which is foul-smelling, filled with urine and ordure, infested by old age and sorrow, the seat of disease, harassed by pain, gloomy with passion, and perishable.[7] Making over the merit of his own good actions to his friends, and the guilt of his evil deeds to his enemies, he attains the eternal Brahman by the practice of meditation (Dhyāna Yoga).[8] When by the disposition of his heart, he becomes indifferent to all objects, he obtains eternal happiness both in this world and after death.[9] He who has in this manner gradually given up all attachments and is freed from all pairs of opposites, reposes in Brahman alone.[10] All that has been declared above depends on meditation (*Dhyāna*) for he who is not proficient in the knowledge of that which refers to the soul reaps not the full reward of the performance of rites.[11] Let him constantly recite those texts of the Veda which refer to the sacrifice, those referring to the deities, and those which treat of the soul and are contained in the concluding portions of the Veda known as *Vedānta*.[12] That is the refuge of the ignorant, and even the refuge

1. (6–70). 2. (6–71). 3. (6–72). 4. (6–73). 5. (6–74). 6. (6–75).
7. (6–76, 77). 8. (6–79). 9. (6–80). 10. (6–81). 11. (6–82). 12. (6–83).

of those who know the meaning of the Veda, that is the protection of those who seek bliss in heaven and of those who seek endless beatitude.[1] A twice-born man who becomes an ascetic, after the successive performance of the above mentioned acts, shakes off sin here below and reaches the highest Brahman.[2] Thus the law valid for self-restrained ascetics has been explained.[3]

(v) General observations on the four orders of life.

The student, the householder, the hermit, and the ascetic, these constitute four separate orders, which all spring from the order of householders.[4] But all or even any of these orders assumed successively in accordance with the institutes of the sacred law, lead the Brāhman who acts by the preceding rules to the highest state.[5] In accordance with the precepts of the Veda and of the Smṛiti, the householder is declared to be superior to all of them; for he supports the other three.[6] Manu then enunciates the tenfold law for the twice-born men belonging to any of these four orders and they are enjoined to carefully obey the same.[7] Contentment, forgiveness, self-control, abstention from unrighteously appropriating anything, obedience to the rules of purification, restraint of the senses, wisdom, knowledge of the supreme soul, truthfulness, and abstention from anger, these form the tenfold law.[8] Those Brāhmans who thoroughly study the tenfold law, and after studying obey it, enter the highest state.[9] A twice-born man, who with collected mind, follows the tenfold law and has paid his three debts may, after learning the Vedānta, according to the prescribed rule, become an ascetic.[10] Having given up the performance of all rites, throwing off the guilt of his sinful acts, subduing his senses and having studied the Veda, he may live at his ease under the protection of his son.[11] He who has thus given up the performance of all rites, who is solely intent on his own particular object, and free from desires, destroys his guilt by his renunciation and obtains the highest state.[12] This fourfold holy law of Brāhmanas, yields after death imperishable rewards.[13] The institution of the four orders of life (*Ashramas*) which had its origin in the Vedas and Brāhmanas and was definitely established

1. (6-84). 2. (6-85). 3. (6-86.) 4. (6-87). 5. (6-88). 6 (6-89). 7. (6-91). 8. (6-92). 9. (6-93). 10. (6-94). 11. (6-95). 12. (6-96). 13. (6-97).

in the time of the Upanishads,[1] was meant for the moral and spiritual elevation of an individual by slow degrees and gradations just as the institution of caste (*Varna*) was meant for the good and all-round elevation of society as a whole. The order of life of a student (Brahmacharya) was preparatory to that of a householder (Grihastha), the life of a householder to the life of an anchorite (Vānprastha) and the life of an anchorite was preparatory to that of an ascetic (Sanyāsi) which was the last and the highest stage. The highest end of a man's life was liberation and spiritual beatitude which could not be achieved unless he first passed through a life of discipline and self-restraint and observed the rules and restrictions relating to the institutions of caste and the four orders of life (*Varnāshrama*) as means to the highest end of self-realisation. An allround development and experience of life had to be gained by every one by going through the four stages into which human life was divided to enable him to reach perfection by leading a pure and moral life which ultimately brought about a stage of liberation and emancipation through perfect knowledge. The divisions of life into four periods was in consonance with natural development. The first period was the period of training and discipline which was necessary to mould the plastic youth to a life of duty. The teacher exacted a rigorous observance of the vow of celibacy (*Brahmacharya*) on the part of the student. The rules of studentship are found in the Atharvaveda where the importance of Brahmacharya (life of celibacy) is highly praised.[2] As the principal occupations of a Brāhman were studying and teaching, the life of a Brahmachāri (student) came to be regarded as an ideal for even ex-student householders. The second period of life viz. the life of a householder (*Grihastha*) was marked by the entrance of the student on completing his studies into the life of a householder by marriage which took place generally at the age of 25. Monastic tendencies were discouraged in the Hindu system of life unlike the two new religions of Buddhism and Jainism which laid too much stress on extreme asceticism. " In Hindu religion there is nothing unwholesome about sex life." Even the Hindu Scriptures enjoined the student on completing his studies to marry a wife and continue the lineage.[3]

1. (A. V. S. 11-5; 11-3-6, 9; Ch U. 2-23-1; B. U. 2-4-6).
2. (A. V. S. 11-5; 11-3-6; 9). 3. (T. U. 1-11-1).

Rādhākrishna in this connection observes that "Marriage was recognised as a necessary means of spiritual growth. Even the gods of the Hindus were married, each god having his own consort. Thus god Siva is Ardhanārīsvara (his consort Uma contituting half of his left body). " His image signifies the co-operative interdependent, separately incomplete but jointly complete, masculine and feminine functions of the supreme being."[1] The third stage viz. the stage of an anchorite (*Vānprastha*) arises when the responsibilities of married life are fulfilled and the householder leaves his house and children and goes to the forest either alone or with his wife if she consents to accompany him. It may be mentioned here that according to Manu the householder was not allowed to abandon his wife, children and home and go to the forest to embrace the life of an anchorite unless he was sufficiently old and his skin began to show wrinkles or his hair turned grey and he became a grand father having sons and sons' sons.[2] The main object of this stage was to escape from the bustle of life into the solitude of the forest to meditate on the higher problems of metaphysics and spiritual science. The last stage of life was that of an ascetic (*Sanyāsin*) who completely renounced all ties of home and society including family, country, nation and even the world which would not satisfy the spiritual aspirations of the soul in such a person who is not tempted by riches or honour nor is he elated by success or dejected by failure. He develops a spirit of equanimity and "bears patiently improper words and does not insult any one; he does not hate any one nor does he become any one's enemy for the sake of his perishable body."[3] The whole world is as it were a family to such a saint who has embraced the monastic order and who is above petty considerations. Even patriotism is not enough for such persons. They look upon all men and societies as partaking of the spirit of godhead irrespective of all questions of caste, creed, sect, race or even nationality. Their love is universal and does not savour of any partiality or hatred for any particular person, sect or society. Sir Rādhākrishna sums up the matter as follows: "While some forms of Christianity and Buddhism judge the life of the world to be inferior to the life of the monk

1. (Hindu View of Life by Sir Rādhākṛishna). 2. (M. S. 6-2).
3. (M. S. 6-47).

and would have loved to place the whole of mankind at one swoop in cloister, Hinduism while appreciating the life of a Sanyāsin (ascetic) refrained from condemning the state of the householder. Every state is necessary and in so far as it is necessary it is good. The blossom does not deny the leaf and the leaf does not deny the stalk and the stalk the root. The general rule is that we should pass from stage to stage gradually. The liberated soul is not indifferent to the welfare of the world. Renunciation is the surrendering of the notions of 'I' and 'mine' and not the giving up of the work enjoined by the scriptures.[1] It is related of Buddha that when he was on the threshold of *Nirvān* he turned away and took the vow never to cross it so long as a single being remained subject to sorrow and suffering. The same idea comes out in the sublime verse of the Bhāgwat Purān." There it is stated about king Rantideva that he did not pray to God for lordly power as king or for liberation but he prayed that he could participate in the miseries suffered by all creatures by staying with them and thus alleviate their suffering.[2]

(10) Rules and restrictions about food and drink.

(i) Rules based on express texts, old traditions and principles of hygiene.

The rules and restrictions laid down by the lawgivers about food and drink are based on express texts in the Scriptures, the Gitā and old traditions. Thus it is stated in the Chhāndogya Upanishad that "by the purity of his aliment one becomes purified in his nature; by the purification of his nature, his memory becomes firm and by the attainment of memory all the attachments of his body are loosened."[3] Similarly drinking of wine was also considered sinful.[4] The rules and restrictions about food and drink etc. framed by the law givers were based on rules of hygiene and science and were obviously meant to preserve the purity physical as well as instellectual as well as culture of the Āryans. It is also taught by our Lord in the Bhagwat Gitā that a man's character depends on the quality of the food taken by him which is threefold i.e. Sāttvic (pure) Rājasic (causing pain) and Tāmasic (impure).[5]

1. (Medhātithi on Manu 6-32). 2. (Bh. P. 9-21-12 cited in the Hindu View of life by Sir Rādhākrishna). 3. (Ch. U. 7-26-2).
4. (Ch. U. 5-11-5). 5. (B. G. 17-7 to 10).

(ii) Lawful and forbidden food and drink.

Manu has laid down the following rules about lawful and forbidden food. Thus he says. "Through neglect of the Veda-study, through deviation from the rule of conduct, through remissness and through faults committed by eating forbidben food, death becomes eagar to shorten the lives of Brāhmans."[1] Garlick, leeks and onions, mushrooms and all plants springing from impure substances are unfit to be eaten by the twice-born.[2] Rice boiled with sesamum, wheat mixed with butter, milk and sugar, milk rice and flour cakes which are not prepared for a sacrifice and meat which has not been sprinkled with water while sacred texts were recited and food offered to the gods (*Naivedya*) and sacrificial Viands must not be eaten before the offering has been made.[3] Remnants only of the offerings made to the gods were to be eaten. The milk of a cow or other female animal within 10 days after her calving, that of camels, of one hoofed animals, of sheep, of a cow in heat or of one that has no calf with her, and the milk of all wild animals excepting buffalo-cows, that of women and all substances turned sour must be avoided except sour milk etc.[4] A twice-born man who knowingly eats mushrooms, garlic, onions or leeks will become an outcast.[5] As regards the taking of spirituous liquor it is declared a great sin (*Mahā-pātaka*) by the ancient law-givers and put on a level with the murder of a Brāhman and as such it is totally interdicted.[6] *Surā* or *wine* is the dirty refuge (Mala) of grain, sin is also called dirt (Mala); hence a twice-born person shall not drink surā.[7] When a Brāhman even once only is deluged with spirituous liquor, his Brāhmanhood forsakes him and he becomes a Sūdra.[8] A twice-born person who has intentionally drunk through delusion of mind the spirituous liquor called surā, he shall drink that liquor boiling hot; when his body has been completely scalded by that, he is free from the guilt.[9] Or he may drink cow's urine, water, milk, clarified butter, or liquid cow-dung boiling hot until he dies.[10] If he has unintentionally drunk surā, he may eat during a year once a day at night, grains of rice or oil-cake wearing clothes of cow-hair and his own hair in braids and carrying a wine cup as a flag.[11]

1. (M. S. 5-4). 2. (5-5). 3. (5-7). 4. (5-8, 9, 10). 5. (5-19). 6. (G. D. S. 21-1; V. D. S. 1-19, 20). 7. (11-94). 8. (11-98). 9. (11-91). 10. (11-92). 11. (11-93).

If a person partakes of any interdicted food or drink he shall perform a penance.[1] Once a year a Brāhman must perform a Kṛichhra penance in order to atone for unintentionally eating forbidden food, but for intentionally eating forbidden food, he must perform the penances specially prescribed therefor.[2] The following further restrictions were laid down in the Dharma Shāstras as regards the discrimination of food articles in conformity with the rules of modern science and ideas of cleanliness. "Food touched by a Brāhman or other high caste person who is impure, become impure but not unfit for eating. But what has been brought by an impure Sūdra must not be eaten; nor that food in which there is a hair or any other unclean substance nor must that food be eaten which has been touched with an unclean substance e.g. garlic; nor that in which an insect living on impure substances is found; nor that in which excrements or limbs of a mouse are found; nor that which has been touched by the foot; nor what has been touched with or brought in the hem of a garment, nor what has been looked at (or touched by) a dog or an Apapātra (i.e. a chāndāla and a fallen person); nor what has been brought at night by a female slave (Dāsi)."[3] "If during his meal a Sūdra touches him, then he shall leave off eating. Nor shall he eat sitting in the same row with unworthy people nor shall he eat sitting in the same row with persons amongst whom one while they eat, rises and gives his leavings to his pupils or sips water. He shall not eat food which has been bought or obtained ready-prepared in the market; nor shall he eat flavoured food bought in the market excepting raw meat, honey and salt. Oil and clarified butter bought in the market, he may use after having sprinkled them with water. Prepared food which has stood for a night must neither be eaten nor drunk, nor should prepared food that has turned sour. All intoxicating drinks are forbidden. Likewise the milk of cows, buffaloes, or she-goats during the first ten days after their giving birth to young ones. Likewise food mixed with herbs which serve for preparing intoxicating liquors, and garlics, onions, and leeks. Mushrooms ought not to be eaten; that has been declared in a Brāhmana; nor the meat of one-hoofed animals, of camels, of the Gayal, of village pigs, of Sarabhas

1 (5-20). 2. (5-21). 3. (A. D. S. 1-5-16-21 to 32).

and of cattle. × × Among birds that scratch with their feet for food, the tame cock must not be eaten; carnivorous birds are forbidden. Among fishes, the cheta ought not to be eaten, nor the snake-headed fish, nor the alligator, nor those which live on flesh only nor those which are misshaped like mermen."[1] "Eating the flesh of forbidden creatures as of a dog, village cocks, or pigs, (who are known for their filthy feeding) makes men impure. Likewise eating what is left by Sūdra; some declare that these acts also cause a man to lose his caste."[2]

(iii) Rules for and against flesh eating.

Manu has given permission to eat flesh of animals on certain occasions only and not at all times. Thus he says: "One may eat flesh when it has been sprinkled with water *(Prokshita)* while Mantras are recited, when Brāhmans desire one doing it, when one is engaged in the performance of a rite according to the law and when one's life is in danger.[3] Manu allows permission to eat flesh for the purpose of honouring gods and manes at sacrifices and *Shṛāddhas* respectively and he who eats meat on those occasions commits no sin. But to persist in using it on other occasions is said to be a proceeding worthy of Rākshasas (Devils)".[4] A twice-born man who knows the law must not eat meat except in conformity with the law, for if he has eaten it unlawfully, he will, being unable to save himself, be eaten after death by Victims.[5] A Brāhman must never eat the flesh of animals unhallowed by Mantras; but obedient to the primeval law he may eat it consecrated with Vedic texts.[6] If he has a strong desire for meat he may make an animal of clarified butter, or one of flour and eat that; but let him never seek to destroy an animal without a lawful reason.[7] Manu defends flesh-eating for the sake of sacrifices. Thus he says: " The self-existent (*Swayambhū*) himself created animals for the sake of sacrifices; sacrifices have been instituted for the good of this whole world; hence slaughtering of beasts for sacrifices is not slaughtering in the ordinary sense of the word.[8] Herbs, trees cattle, birds, and other animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices receive (being reborn)

1. (A.D.S. 1-5-17-1 to 39); V.D.S. 14 (1 to 48). 2. (A.D.S. 1-7-21, 14 to 18). 3. (5-27). 4. (5-31, 32). 5. (5-33). 6. (5-36). 7. (5-37). 8. (5-39).

higher existences.[1] A twice-born man who, knowing the true meaning of the Veda slays an animal for the sacred purposes of religion causes both himself and the animal to enter a most blessed state.[2] But a twice-born man of virtuous disposition must never even in times of distress cause an injury to any creature which is not sanctioned by the Veda.[3] He who injures innoxious beings from a wish to give himself pleasure never finds happiness, neither living nor dead.[4] Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to the attainment of heavenly bliss. Let him therefore shun the use of meat.[5] There is no greater sinner than that man who though not worshipping the gods or the manes seeks to increase the bulk of his own flesh by the flesh of other beings.[6] He who during a hundred years annually offers a horse sacrifice, and he who entirely abstains from meat, obtains the same reward for their meritorious conduct.[7] " Me he (*Māmsah*) will devour in the next world, whose flesh I eat in this life; the wise declare this to be the real meaning of the word flesh (*Māmsah*).[8]

(iv) Lawful and forbidden flesh.

Manu first lays down a general rule that, 'a man shall not eat the flesh of five-toed (Panch nakhā) animals,[9] e.g. monkeys, jackals etc. except the porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise and the hare whose flesh is declared to be eatable as also that of those domestic animals that have teeth in one jaw only excepting camels.[10] Manu prohibits the eating of flesh of the following birds and animals viz., all carnivorous birds and one-hoofed animals which are not specially permitted to be eaten as also that of sparrow, village-cock, crane, wood-pecker, parrot, village pigs, and all kinds of fishes".[11] He further interdicts the eating of flesh from a slaughter house and dried meat.[12] Āpastambha interdicts the eating of the flesh of a dog, village cocks or pigs and carnivorous animals.[13]

(v) Origin of the practice of flesh-eating and subsequent restrictions.

Prof. N. K. Dutt makes the following observations about the origin of the practice of flesh eating in early times and the subse-

1. (5-40). 2. (5-42). 3. (5-43). 4. (5-45). 5. (5-48). 6. (5-52). 7. (5-53). 8. (5-55). 9. (5-17). 10. (5-18.) 11. (5-11, 12. 14). 12. (5-13). 13. (A. D. S. 1-7-21-14, 15).

quent restrictions relating thereto. Thus he says: " The Ṛig Vedic people including Brāhmans, were fond of meat-eating and practically all the important ceremonies and sacrifices were attended with slaughter of animals. The principle of *Ahimsā* or non-injury to animals was then unknown to the Ṛishis. Offerings of flesh were frequently made to the gods and the worshippers including the priests ate the offerings. Thus Agni is described as " fed on ox ".[1] "Indra will eat thy Bulls".[2] Horse sacrifice is also described in the Ṛig Veda.[3] The custom of entertaining a distinguished guest with the meat of a bull as we find in the time of the Brāhmanas[4] must have been in existence in the time of the Ṛig Veda. Thus at wedding ceremonies " Oxen were slain " evidently for the feeding of the invited guests.[5] From the Brāhmanas, we learn that the sage Agastya slaughtered one hundred bulls at a sacrifice.[6] Yājnavalkya, the greatest sage and philosopher of his time, was fond of eating the flesh of bullocks if it was tender.[7] The custom about flesh-eating has been followed more freely in Bengal till to-day than in other parts of India and particularly in Gujrat where the people were influenced more by the lessons of *Ahinsā* as preached by the Jainas and the Vaishnavas who had made their stronghold in Gujarāt. Animal sacrifices died away in course of time and the people in general were advocates of vegetarian diet since the time of the Sūtra writers, down to the present time.

(vi) General public feeling against cow-slaughter from the earliest times.

The cow was the most important domesticated animal for a long time. It not only provided them with milk, curds, butter, ghee etc. but the ox drew their carriages and was very useful in ploughing fields of pasture. There was a luxurious growth of cows in early times and the cow was the standard of wealth in those days. He who possessed the largest number of cows was considered rich. The Āryans in the Ṛig Vedic times were conscious of the usefulness of the cow not only as a giver of milk and its valuable products but also as a medium of exchange and they were therefore

1. (R. V. 8-43-11). 2. (R. V. 10-86-13). 3. (R. V. 1-162). 4. (S. B. 3-4-1-2; A. B. 1-3-4). 5. (R. V. 10-85-13). 6. (T. B. 2-7-11-1; P. B. 21-14-5). 7. (S. B. 3-1-2-21).

reluctant to make an indiscriminate destruction of this useful animal. Prof. N. K. Dutta makes the following observations in this connection: "The name *aghnya* (i.e. not to be slain) was sometimes given to the cow in the Ṛig Veda and some sanctity was was then attached to her". The reverence for cows which had its origin so far back as in the time of the Ṛig Veda, further increased since the spread of the 2 new religions, Buddhism and Jainism. Thus Gautama Buddha preached: "Like unto a mother, a father, a brother and other relatives, the cows are our best friends, in which medicines are produced. They give food and they give strength; they likewise give a good complexion and happiness; knowing the real state of this, the good Brāhmans of old did not kill cows." At present there is a strong religious sentiment among the Hindu community in general including the Ārya Samājists and the Mahāsabhites and particularly among the Jains against cow-slaughter which has not only the support of the Hindu scriptures and shāstras but which derives further support from the difficulty of obtaining fresh and pure milk, butter and ghee in the absence of increase in the of miltch-cows due to economic stress and the large prevalence of the practice of cow-slaughter at present. The following passage from the Ṛig Veda will give the reader an idea as to what high veneration was paid to the cow in those times. Thus it is stated: " The mother of the Rudras, daughter of the Vasus, centre of nectar, sister of the Ādityas, to folk who understand. I will proclaim it injure not *Aditi* (not to be killed), the cow, the sinless."[1] In fact, the beginning of such tender feeling for the cow can be traced to Indo-Irānian times as observed by Prof. Macdonell in his History of Sankskrit Literature, as follows: " The cow is the animal which figures most largely in the Ṛig Veda. This is undoubtedly due to the important position resulting from its pre-eminent utility, occupied by this animal even in the remotest period of Indian life. × × × That this animal already possessed a sacred character is shown by the fact that one Ṛishi addresses a cow as *Aditi* and a goddess impressing upon his hearers that she should not be slain. *Aghnya* (not to be killed), a frequent designation of the cow in the Ṛig Veda, points in the same direction. Indeed the evidence of the *Avesta* proves that the sanctity of this animal goes back even to the Indo-Irānian period.

1. (R. V. 8-90-15).

In the Atharvaveda the worship of the cow is fully recognised, while the Satapatha Brāhmana emphasises the evil consequences of eating beef. The sanctity of cow has not only survived in India down to the present day, but has even gathered strength with the lapse of time. The part played by the greased catridges in the Indian Mutiny is sufficient to prove this statement. To no other animal has mankind owed so much and the debt has been richly repaid in India with a veneration unknown in other lands. So important a factor has the cow proved in Indian life and thought, that an exhaustive account of her influence from the earliest times would form a noteworthy chapter in the history of civilisation."

(vii) Determination of the legal position as regards flesh eating.

Manu has given permission to eat flesh in the following cases only viz., "(1) when it has been sprinkled with water, consecrated with Mantras for sacrifical purposes (2) when Brāhmans desire one's doing it (3) when one is invited at religious rites (whether in honour of the gods or manes) and (4) when one's life is in danger."[1] Manu has allowed slaughter of animals at the ceremony of Madhuparka or the honey mixture given to a guest at Vedic sacrifices and at the rites in honour of the manes (Shrāddha).[2] In fact this was an old practice which was widely prevalent in Vedic times when animal sacrifices into the sacred fire were in vogue. But in course of time, after the rise of Buddhism and Jainism the above practice died away and animal sacrifices were replaced by sacrifices of burnt offerings of vegetables (Pāka Yajna) clarified butter, milk and so on. In fact, the Sūtra writers had relaxed the rule. In particular Āshvalāyan in his Gṛihya Sūtras has laid down by reference to Mantras quoted from the Ṛig Veda that "knowledge of the Veda and worship of the gods is equivalent to a real sacrifice and even by learning only, satisfaction is produced in the gods; 'that adoration verily is sacrifice'; thus runs a Brāhmana.[3] The practice however of offering flesh to a guest at the Madhuparka ceremony was discontinued. Thus Shānkhāyana says "Should any of the six persons mentioned in the Srautasūtra viz., the teacher, officiating priest, the father-in-law, a king, Snātaka (the student

1. (5-27). 2. (5-41). 3. (A. G. S. 1-1-4).

who has completed his Vedic studies and bathed) and a friend, to whom the Arghya reception is due, visit him, let him offer flesh or what sort of food he thinks most like thereto."[1] Further on he says "At the Madhuparka (Reception ceremony of a guest) and at the soma sacrifice, at the sacred rites for deceased fathers (manes) and gods only animals should be sacrificed not elsewhere; thus Manu has said.[2] It will be thus seen from the above that offering of flesh at the Madhuparka was optional (*Vikalpa*) and not obligatory as laid down by the Sūtra writers. Therefore the rule is not mandatory (*Niyam Vithi*) but is optional and a *Parisankhyā* (a negative rule) and one is under no obligation to offer flesh on the said occasion. The same rule would apply to the desire of Brāhmans for flesh. But as regards the use of flesh at sacrifices and Shrāddhas, in honour of gods and manes respectively, the rule is not uniform. There are 2 different opinions given by the Mīmānsakas and commentators. The Mīmānsakas relying on the Sūtras of Jaimini which enjoined the slaughter of animals and the offer of their separate limbs into the fire at the Vedic sacrifices such as Agni-Soma sacrifice and so on,[3] pronounced the opinion that killing of animals at sacrifices amounted to an injunction (*Niyama Vidhi*). Similarly Medhātithi, Kulluka, Govindrāja, and some other commentators of Manu also have interpreted the rule about killing of animals at sacrifices as an injunction (*Niyama Vidhi*), and not as an optional or negative rule (*Parisankhyā*). On the other hand some other commentators on Manu and philosophers as the Sānkhyas and so on have interpreted the above rule as *Parisankhyā*, so that the rule laid down in Manu is intended to teach only that one should not eat flesh on any other occasion than when it is sprinkled for sacrificial purposes and it was not obligatory for one to eat flesh even on those occasions as flesh eating is accompanied with some faults, and he need not therefore eat flesh. This view is further supported by other Smṛitis as also the Upanishads which all preach the doctrine of non-slaughter (*Ahinsā*) of animals. Manu further says, "There is no sin in eating flesh (in sacrifice), in drinking spirituous liquor (at Sautramani sacrifice) and in conjugal intercourse with one's wife (at the time of Ṛitu or season regulated

1. (S. G. S. 2-15-1; A. G. S. 1-24-1 to 7, 33). 2. (S. G. S. 2-16-1).
3. (J. S. 2-2-17; 10-7-2, 3).

by law), for that is the natural way of created beings; but abstention of these things brings great rewards as fruit."[1] This verse is construed by the commentators to mean that though no sin attached to eating flesh of five-toed animals which are not interdicted by the lawgivers, drink of wine on the part of Kshatriyas, and conjugal intercourse with a wife even in the period which is not the proper season as regulated by the lawgivers, yet a man derives a great religious merit by way of reward by abstaining from these things. By laying down the above regulations and restrictions on flesh eating and sexual relations, Manu has exercised a healthy control and check on the natural impulses of man. For the Kali age however, flesh-eating at Madhuparka was interdicted along with other practices such as inter-caste marriage, Niyoga, and so on as stated in Bṛihannāradiya and Āditya Puranas and in Kṛitsusmṛiti.

Summary.

The legal position on the subject of flesh eating may be summarised as follows (1) The rule about eating of flesh amounts to an injunction (*Niyama Vidhi*) only in 3 cases viz, at sacrifices, Shrāddhas and when one's life is in danger for want of food. (2) But the permission to eat flesh on the occasion of reception of guests (Madhuparka) and at the desire of Brāhmans is not an injunction (*Niyama-Vidhi*), but it amounts to a *Parisankhyā* i.e. a negative rule of permission only. (3) In general, abstention from flesh eating conduces to a high religious merit. (4) By a long continued usage extending over several generations past, flesh-eating has been totally discontinued by the high-caste Hindus, excepting a few castes, and it is even censured by them as a blameworthy act. Therefore, a new rule prohibiting flesh-eating is now definitely established which is binding on all as stated by the sage Yājnavalkya[2] to which Mitākshara adds a gloss that no one should slaughter animals at Madhu-parka as the practice has totally fallen into disrepute.

(viii) Relaxation of the rules and restrictions as to diet in the Kali Age.

Pārāsara first lays down a general rule that a Brāhman may at the rites in honour of gods and manes always eat with immunity in the house of Kastriyas and Vaishyas clean in their body and

1. (5-56). 2. (1-156).

spirit and devoted to the performance of religious rites.[1] But he interdicts the taking of cooked food on the part of a Brāhman in the house of a Sūdra and prescribes a penance for a transgression of the rule in distressed time.[2] He further says " Rice, oil, milk, or any other kind of raw edible substance come from the house of a Sūdra and cooked in the house of a Brāhman becomes fit to be eaten by a Brāhman in accordance with the injunction of Manu.[3] Both Manu and Yājnavalkya prohibit a twice-born from eating the cooked food of Sūdras except in distressed times.[4]

(ix) Relaxation of restrictions as to diet in distressed times.

To meet the exigencies of distressed times, when a Brāhman is unable to procure food in the house of the twice born, Pārāsara permits him to accept from a Sūdra, clarified butter, oil, milk, treacle and articles of confectionery cooked in oil which the Brāhman is allowed to eat at the bank of a river.[5] Pārāsara further allows a Brāhman, permission to eat cooked food of the following persons among the Sūdras viz., his servant, barber, cow-herd, family friend, and his labourer in tillage."[6] This would however apply only to distressed times as would appear from the preceding verse wherein Pārāsara says: " Repentance purifies a Brāhman that takes boiled rice in the house of a Sūdra during the time of distress or a hundred repetition of the Gāyatri Mantra is the expiation for his sin under the circumstance."[7] Manu also makes a similar exception in the case of certain Sūdras whose cooked food a Brāhman is allowed to eat with impunity in distressed times. Thus he says: " A Brāhman who knows the law must not eat cooked food given by Sūdra who performs no Srāddha, but on failure of other means of subsistence, he may accept raw grain, sufficient for one night and day."[8] Further on, he says that "a Brāhman may eat the food of the following persons among the Sūdras viz., his labourer in tillage, his family friend, his cow-herd, his family servant and his barber."[9] A similar rule is also to be found in Yājnavalkya.[10] But this rule only applied to distressed times and it no longer holds good now. The rule did not apply to normal times when a man could get food from a twice-born person as is made clear by Āpastambha who lays down the

1. (P.S.11-12). 2. (P.S.11-19). 3. (P.S.11-18). 4. (M.S. 4-223, Y.S. 1-160). 5.(P S.11-13). 6. (P.S.11-20). 7. (P.S.11-19). 8.(4-223). 9.(4-253). 10.(Y.S.1-168).

following rules in the matter. Thus he says: " According to some (e.g. Gotama),[1] food offered by people of any caste who follow the laws prescribed for them except that of Sūdras may be eaten. In times of distress even the food of a Sūdra, who lives under one's protection for the sake of spiritual merit may be eaten. He may eat it after having touched it once with gold or with fire. He shall leave it when he obtains a lawful livelihood. "[2] Gotama also similarly observes " If the means for sustaining life cannot be procured otherwise, food may be accepted from a Sūdra. "[3] When the life of a man is in danger for want of food he may eat any food and from any person to save his life. An express rule to this effect is laid down in the Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyana.[4] It appears from the Mahābhārata that the sage Visvāmitra took dog's flesh from the house of a chāndāla (the lowest caste of untouchables) to save his life in a fierce famine when no food could be had anywhere. The reader will see from the above that the rules in the Hindu Dharma Shāstras were not rigid but were elastic enough to a adapt the law to changed circumstances in case of a real need (*Āpat-kāla*). But this concession was strictly limited to the demands of actual necessity only and not extended beyond as would appear from an interesting episode in the Chhāndogya Upanishad[5]. which is reproduced here for information of the reader. The said episode runs as follows: " When the Kurus had been destroyed by hail-stones, Ushastichākrāyana (a Brāhman) lived as a beggar with his virgin wife at the Ibhyagrāma village which was inhabited by an elephant-driver, (not belonging to the three twice-born castes); seeing the latter eating beans, Ushasti begged of him for food. The elephant-driver said 'I have no more except those beans which are put away as remnants of my eating here.' Ushasti said: 'Give me of the same to eat.' He gave him the beans and said "There is something to drink also." Then ushasti said: 'If I were to drink of it, I would be drinking the remnant of another's drink '. The elephant-driver alluding to the beans retorted, 'Were not those beans only left over and therefore unclean ?' 'No' he replied; 'For I should not have lived

1 (G. D. S. 17-1). 2. (A. D. S. 1-6-18-13 to 15). 3. (G. D. S. 17-5).
4. (V. S 3-4-28). 5. (Ch. U. 1-10-1 to 4).

if I had not eaten them, but the drinking of water I can command at pleasure by getting water anywhere'."

(II) Rules and regulations regarding purity and defilement by touch etc.

(i) Regulations regarding purity of conduct (Shauchāchāra) an integral part of the Hindu religion.

Shaucha or purity has been defined by Atri as consisting of renunciation of forbidden food, association with those who are not badly spoken of and abiding by good conduct.[1] Regulations relating to purity of conduct, defilement by touch of interdicted things and persons and impurity were parts and parcels of the Hindu religion which derived their sanction from the Brāhmanas attached to the different Vedas. Thus the householder who was initiated to the fire sacrifice (Agnihotra) and other Shrauta (Vedic) sacrifices mentioned in the Brāhmanas, was enjoined to observe rules of purity laid down therein most faithfully and scrupulously and any infraction of the said rules required the performance of penances on the part of the person guilty of such infraction. The person performing Vedic sacrifices was enjoined to take a bath, avoid touch of certain interdicted articles and persons and intercourse with the latter, to sip water and observe certain other regulations regarding purity of conduct as laid down in the sacred lore. The Dharma Shāstras abound in detailed rules and regulations regarding purity and defilement by touch, impurity etc., which are mostly based on the Brāhmanas. Regulations regarding purity of conduct (*Shauchāchāra*) engaged the attention of the law-givers equally as those relating to righteous conduct (*Sadāchāra*) and the social order of the 4 castes and the four orders of life known as (*Varnāshrama Dharma*). These regulations constituted the *Sanātana Dharma* or the traditional religion of the Āryans and they are still followed in almost the same form by the large bulk of the orthodox Hindu populace of India descended from the illustrious Āryan race of hoary antiquity. With these facts, to deny on the part of any one that there are any rules and regulations in the Hindu religion regarding untouchability as practised in India today betrays a colossal ignorance of even the rudimentary elements

1. (At. S. 35).

of Hindu religion on the part of the person making such denial. These rules were mostly based on principles of hygiene and evidently framed to preserve the racial purity and high culture and civilisation of the Āryans and they subserved the important purpose of giving a preliminary training to the people so as to enable them to acquire good and pure habits, and lead a well disciplined life of self restraint as a means to secure spiritual elevation and emancipation or perfect freedom which was the supreme end of human life and which demanded the highest self-sacrifice and self-restraint on the part of the aspirant after final liberation. As a matter of fact, the Āryans were distinguished from the Un-Āryans by marks of pure and good conduct and high culture and civilisation. Atri describes the following qualities of which purity is the first as the characteristics of a Brāhman viz. Purity, desire for doing good unto others, absence of strained and unnatural exertion, absence of jealousy, absence of avarice, self-restraint, charity and mercy.[1] The sage Daksha lays down the following rules and regulations as to what thing is pure and what thing is impure and about purity of conduct. What is pure should be done and what is impure should be avoided by intelligent men.[2] Care should always be bestowed on the purificatory rites described in the Smritis. All the rites of a twice-born person who is divorced from purity of conduct become futile.[3] Purity spoken of is two-fold, external and internal. External purity is effected by water, earth etc.. Purity of thought is internal purity.[4] External purity is superior to impurity and internal purity is superior to external one. He who is pure in both is said to be in a state of purity and no one else.[5] Earth should be applied to the impure parts once after urination and thrice after evacuation, ten times on the left palm, seven times on both the palms and thrice on the feet.[6] There is one kind of purification for the day time and another one is laid down for the night. similarly there is one kind of purification laid down for an easy time and another one for distressed time.[7] A half of the purification which is necessary in the day time is laid down for the night; half of it for a diseased person, and half for him who is in a hurry to go in the middle of a road. There is no impurity for a person who is visited

1. (At. S. 33) 2. (5-1). 3. (5-2). 4. (5-3). 5. (5-4). 6. (5-5). 7. (5-11).

with a calamity.[1] More or less should not be done in the matter of purification by him who wishes for purity. There is no penance for the transgression of the established practice.[2] Manu lays down certain rules about internal purification. Thus he says: The learned are purified by a forgiving disposition, those who have committed forbidden acts by liberality, secret sinners by muttering sacred texts and those who best know the Veda by austerities.[3] By earth and water is purified what ought to be made pure, a river by its current and a woman whose thoughts have been impure is purified by the menstrual secretion.[4] The sage Vasistha has laid down the dictum that even the Vedas do not purify him who is devoid of good conduct.[5] Similarly Pārāsara says that good conduct is the true defender of virtue among all castes of men. Without it a man needs must be hostilely disposed towards virtue.[6]

(ii) Regulations about compulsory bath and sipping of water (ācham an) for purification.

The sage Yājnavalkya mentions bathing and purity as parts of the obligatory and self imposed religious duties to be observed by all (*Niyama*).[7] Manu enjoins a student belonging to the first order of life to take bath every day for purification as also a Snātaka to bathe early in the morning after voiding the faeces.[8] Similarly it is laid down by Pārāsara that a man should never take dinner without taking his bath.[9] One is further enjoined to take bath after having dreamt a bad dream, or after having vomitted or shaved himself or after having intercourse with a woman (in time of her season due to possibility of conception), or after an exposure to the smoke of a cremation ground. If one has vomitted after he has eaten, let him sip water.[10] A menstruating woman becomes pure by bathing after the menstrual secretion has ceased to flow.[11] Commendable is a bath during the day, in waters purified by the rays of the sun. A night bath other than one made under the auspices of a lunar eclipse is always prohibited.[12] A bath under the auspices of a lunar eclipse is enjoined as obligatory in the scriptures.[13] Daksha lays down the following rules for bath and rinsing the mouth with water. When the dawn arrives, one should after duly performing the

1. (5–12; 6–19). 2 (5–13). 3. (5–107). 4. (5–108). 5. (6–3). 6. (1–36). 7. (Y. S. 3–314). 8. (2–176, 4–152). 9. (1–39, 12–43). 10. (12–1; M. S. 5–144). 11. (M. S. 5–66). 12. (P. S. 12–20). 13. (12–21).

purificatory works (i.e. passing urine and excreta) and cleansing teeth, bathe in the morning.[1] Bathing in the morning is the purifier of the highly dirty body having nine apertures and passing urine and excreta day and night.[2] The organs of a sleeping person become moistened and pass discharges. The superior organs thereby come to the level of the inferior ones.[3] Besmeared with sweat and perspiration one gets up from the bed. Therefore without bathing one must not perform any religious rites such as the recitation of the Mantras, the celebration of Homa (sacrifice) etc.[4] If a Brāhman getting up from the bed at dawn takes his daily bath early in the morning for three years, he has the sins of his entire birth dissipated.[5] The Ṛishis highly speak of early bathing in the morning, for it yields fruits seen and unseen. One who bathes in the morning with his soul purified is entitled to perform all rites such as the recitation of the Mantras etc.[6] It is said that one should rinse the mouth after bathing. By performing the *Āchaman* (rinsing) according to the following regulation one attains to purification.[7] Having washed both hands and feet, one should drink water thrice after seeing it carefully. Then one should rub the mouth twice with the thumb curved a little.[8] Manu lays down that one must sip water in the following circumstances. Though one may be already pure, let him sip water after sleeping, sneezing, eating, spitting, telling untruths, and drinking water, likewise when he is going to study the Veda.[9] The Sage Yājnavalkya in this connection lays down that every twice-born person before and after taking meals should sip water accompanied by a formula called Āposhana.[10] After bathing, drinking water, yawning, sleeping, walking, putting on clothes (as also after weeping, reading etc.,), one should rinse his mouth again even if he has done it once before.[11] Gotama similarly says " After sleeping, dining and sneezing, he shall again sip water though he may have done so before. "[12] Likewise, after changing clothes passing semen, urine and excreta and after conversing with degraded castes.[13] The sage Āpastambha also says: " On touching during sleep or in sternutation of the effluvia of the nose or of the eyes, on touching blood, hair, fire, kine, a Brāhman or a woman,

1. (2-6). 2. (2-7). 3. (2-8). 4. (2-9). 5. (2-10). 6. (2-12). 7. (2-13). 8. (2-14). 9. (M. S. 5-145). 10. (Y. S. 1-106). 11. (Y. S. 1-196), 12. (G. D. S. 1-37). 13. (U. S. 2-1 to 3).

and after having walked on the high road, and after having touched an impure thing or man, and after having put on his lower garment, he shall either bathe or sip water or merely touch water until he considers himself clean."[1]

(iii) Regulations regarding purification from defilement by touch.

Defilement by touch of a chāndāla or a degraded person (Patita).

Pārāsara has laid down that a Brāhman having touched a tree growing on a cremation ground, a chāndāla (untouchable) or a seller of soma should bathe with all his clothes on.[2] One should remain at a distance of aYuga (i.e. four hands) from a chāndāla the most degraded caste, two Yugas from a parturient woman and four Yugas from a degraded person (Patita).[3] The practice of remaining at a certain distance from certain classes of degraded persons leading a filthy and dirty life and not touching them corresponds with the modern system of a quarantine whereby persons suffering from infectious or contagious diseases are segregated in a secluded place far away from the city so as to prevent their coming into contact with healthy persons.

Defilement by touch of certain animals.

Pārāsara further lays down certain regulations regarding defilement by touch of certain animals such as dog etc. Thus he says that a Brāhman having been bitten by a dog, jackal, wolf, donkey, pig etc., should bathe and repeat the sacred Gāyatri the mother of the Vedas.[4] A person of other castes bitten by a dog would be pure again by bathing in water in which cow-horns have been dipped, at the estuary of a great river and by seeing the sea.[5] A Brāhman having been bitten by a dog, at the close of his Vedic studies or at the completion of a vow, should resume his cleanness by bathing in washings of gold and by taking clarified butter as well.[6] A Brāhman having been bitten by a dog during the observance of a vow should fast for three nights and then complete his vow after having taken clarified butter mixed with washings of Kusa grass.[7] A part of the human body smelled, licked, or scratched by a dog should be purified by washing it with water and cauterising it with fire.[8]

1. (A. D. S. 1-5-16-14). 2. (12-25). 3. (12-47). 4. (5-1). 5. (5-2). 6. (5-3). 7. (5-4). 8. (5-6).

Defilement by touch of corpse.

Those who have touched a corpse are purified after ten days. This rule however applied to Sapinda relations only of the deceased. As regards the Samanodaks who give libations of water to his deceased relative they were purified after 3 days. But all others who carry a dead body to the cemetery or touch it, are purified after one day and night added to three periods of three nights.[1]

When touch of a Sūdra or even touch of a Brāhman in violation of the prescribed regulations causes defilement.

Pārāshara has laid down that a Brāhman touching the person of a Sūdra, after he has washed his mouth after eating, should take a bath for purification, while having touched one with unwashed mouth after eating, he should practise a Prājāpatya penance.[2] In case a Brāhman who has not washed his mouth after eating (Ucchhista) touches another Brāhman who has not similarly washed his mouth after eating, both these persons or in case a Brāhman touches a dog, or a Sūdra before washing his mouth after eating, then he should fast for a day and take the compound known as *panchagavya* (containing cow's urine, dung, milk, curd and clarified butter) in order to recover his purity.[3] The rule prohibiting touch of even of a Brāhman at the time of dinner is based on the principle that different persons may have different aura which may be even impure and it is not therefore advisable to touch them, as they spread around them an electrical aura of impressions which may be contaminating. Therefore on being likewise touched by castes that are untouchable one is enjoined to bathe. He who takes the residue of their food should perform a Kṛichhra penance for 6 months.[4] Āpastambha in his Dharma Sūtras lays down the following regulations about defilement by touch of Sūdras. Thus he says: (1) If a Sūdra touches him while he is taking meal, he shall leave off eating. Hardatta commenting on this Sūtra observes that according to some, the touch of a Sūdra does not defile at any other time than at dinner, while according to others a Sūdra's touch defiles always. (2) Nor shall he eat sitting in the same row, with unworthy people i.e. who are neither of good family nor possess learning and virtue. (3) Nor shall he eat sitting in the same row with persons

1. (M. S. 5-64). 2. (7-21). 3. (7-22; A. S. 9-32). 4. (At S. 74).

amongst whom one rises while they eat and gives his leavings to his pupils or sips water. According to the commentator Hardatta, a person who misbehaves thus is called a 'dinner thorn.' This point of etiquette is strictly observed in our days also as stated by Dr. Buhler in his comments to the translation on the Sutras. (4) Nor shall he eat where they give him food reviling him.[1]

(iv) Regulations interdicting touch during impurity due to birth and death.

Pārāsara lays down certain regulations interdicting touch of a person during the period of his impurity due to birth and death of any member of his family.[2] As regards impurity due to death, no Sapinda relations of the deceased could be touched during the period of impurity while as regards impurity due to birth only, the parents of the child, could not be touched. The father regained purity immediately after bathing that very day while the mother of the newly born child remained impure for 10 days.[3] The period of impurity due to death in one's family in respect of a Brāhman is three days.[4] According to Manu the *Sapinda relationship* (agnacy) ceases with the seventh person (in the ascending or descending line) and thereafter the relationship is one of *Samānodaka.* The period of impurity to be observed by a Sapinda on account of the death of his relation (of full age) according to Manu is 10 days, while that for a Samānodaka is three days.[5] The rule of 3 days' impurity laid down by Pārāsara would therefore apply to Samānodaka relations only of the deceased and not his Sapindas. According to Pārāsara, the person of a Brāhman becomes purer through divine worship and his body may be touched at that time only but not at any other time during the term of impurity due to a birth in his family.[6] The period of impurity due to a birth in his family is ten days in the case of a Brāhman, 12 days in the case of a Kshatriya, 15 days in the case of a Vaishya and 30 days in the case of a Sūdra[7]

(v) Impurity due to suicide and rules of purification.

In case of suicide of a person by a fall from an elevated place, or by burning in fire, the agnate relations of such a person

1. (A. D. S. 1-5-17-1 to 4). 2. (3-1). 3. (3-30, 31). 4. (3-2).
5. (5-59; 60). 6. (3-3). 7. (3-4).

become pure by bath only and they have not to observe any period of impurity.[1] In the Pārāsara Madhavīya an opinion of Pārāsara is stated to the effect that if a Brāhman doing Agnihotra (fire sacrifice) commits suicide by a fall from an elevated place etc., his dead body should be cremated without Mantras and a penance performed thereafter as determined by Brāhmanas, while it is stated in Hemādri that the dead body of such a person should be got cremated at the hands of Sūdras without any rite of cremation as in the case of sinners (Patits). Pārāsara next describes the fate of the person who violently terminates his own life by hanging either out of inordinate pride, incurable love, or excessive fright or anger.[2] For a period of sixty thousand years the spirit of a person committing such suicide is consigned to the darkness of the hell called *Andhatāmisra* which is full of blood and fetid pus.[3] No period of impurity should be observed in respect of such violent death of his deceased relation by suicide. The rite of cremation is denied to the corpse of a person committing suicide; no tears should be shed for him nor should any libation of water be offered unto the spirit of such a person.[4] Carriers and cremators of the corpse of a person who has committed suicide by hanging should regain their personal purity by practising the penance of Tapta Krichhra. This is what has been enjoined by Prajāpati.[5]

(vi) Interdiction of the touch of a woman in menses or in confinement.

As regards a woman in menstruation, Pārāsara lays down the rule interdicting her touch during the first three days of her monthly flow and he says that such a woman regains her personal cleanness on the fourth day of her flow after bathing but she is not privileged to undertake any rite whether pertaining to the gods or one's departed manes till the complete cessation of the discharge for the month.[6] A woman becomes as impure as a *Chāndāli* (the most degraded caste) on the first day of her menstrual flow, as a murderess of a Brāhman (*Brahmaghātini*) on the 2nd day and as a washerwoman (*Rajaki*) on the third day. She regains her cleanness on the fourth day.[7] By this verse Pārāsara only

1. (3-12). 2. (4-1). 3. (4-2). 4. (4-3). 5. (4-4).
6. (7-17; M. S. 5-66). 7. (7-19).

means to say that a man having an intercourse with a menstruating woman on the 1st, 2nd, or the 3rd day of her menstrual flow before she takes bath on the fourth day, incurs the sin of an intercourse with a chāndāli and the other degraded women and that is the reason why the menstruating woman is called a chāndāli and so on. The period of uncleanness to be observed by a woman in confinement due to child-birth, in case there is abortion of the foetus or miscarriage of the child is for the number of days corresponding to the months of her pregnancy.[1] She cannot be touched during such period of uncleanness. Abortion takes place within the fourth month and miscarriage upto the 6th month of gestation. A delivery of the child after that time is called parturition and the period of uncleanness for the same is 10 days.[2] At the close of parturition, if the mother is delivered of a living child, its agnates become unclean for purposes of touch for 10 days. In the case of a still-born child, its mother only is regarded unclean for 10 days.[3] The period of uncleanness should be counted as running from the day preceding in cases where menstruation, death or delivery would take place in the night.[4] A Brāhman householder not in any way coming in touch with his wife after parturition becomes clean by bathing while his parturient wife remains unclean for 10 days.[5] Even a Brāhman who is well versed in the Vedas with all their six subdivisions is affected by birth uncleanness on the parturition of his wife, if he happens to come in contact with her.[6] A Brāhman is defiled only by an unclean contact there being no other defilement in respect of a Brāhman. Hence by all means a Brāhman should renounce defiling contacts.[7]

(vii) Rules regarding pure and impure things and modes of purification from defilement.

Vessels of bell metal, smelled by kine, or defiled by the touch of dogs, crows, etc., or out of which Sūdras have taken their food should be purified by rubbing them with 10 kinds of ashes.[8] A vessel of bell metal, defiled by the touch of wine should be purified by heating it on fire.[9] Earthen vessels are purified by heating them in fire; while paddy should be purified by attrition.[10] Large measures of

1. (3-17; M. S. 5-66). 2. (3-18). 3. (3-19). 4. (3-20). 5. (3-31).
6. (3-32). 7. (3-33). 8. (7-24). 9. (7-23). 10. (7-28).

paddy or large numbers of clothes, anywise defiled are purified by sprinkling them over with water, while they are purified by simple washing when their measure or number is small.[1] Fabrics made of bamboo skin, wool, jute, cotton or silk are purified by simply dipping them in water.[2] Bedsteads, woollen pillows as well as yellow or red fabrics should be purified by exposing them to the sun.[3] Cats, flies, worms, insects, vermin and frogs touch things both pure and impure; hence nothing is defiled by their contact. Thus is the dictum of Manu.[4] A stream of water which comes flowing over the ground is not considered defiled by a used remainder.[5] Betels, sugar-cane, oil seeds, oil, *Madhu parka* (i.e. compound of honey, milk, curd, ghee and sugar offered to an honourable guest and so forth), unguents and Soma juice, if previously used or partaken of by another, do not suffer any defilement thereby. This is the dictum of Manu.[6] Mires of road water, boats, hays, and burned bricks are purified by exposing them to the sun and the air.[7] Yājnavalkya observes: Mud and water lying on a roadside and buildings made of burnt bricks when touched by chāndālas or other degraded castes and by dogs and crows are purified by air.[8] Pārāsara says: Dust blown about by the wind as well as broad streams of water suffer no defilement; women, infants, and old men are always pure.[9] One should always touch one's right ear after having sneezed, coughed, spitted or bitten any part of one's body as well as after having told a lie or talked with a degraded person.[10] The fire-god, the Vedas, the sun, and the moon reside in the right ear of a Brāhman.[11] The holy pools and streams as the Prabhāsa, the Ganges etc. always reside in the right ear of a Brāhman. This is the dictum of manu.[12] The sage Yājnavalkya mentions the following methods of purifying different things. Thus he says that the purification of gold and silver vessels, of pearl oysters, sacrificial vessels, vegetables, cords, roots, fruits, clothes etc., is obtained by mere water.[13] While the sprinkling of water purifies beddings and a collection of raiments.[14] Woollen and silken raiments are purified by the ashes of plantain

1. (7-29). 2. (7-30). 3. (7-31). 4. (7-33). 5. (7-34). 6. (7-35). 7. (7-36). 8. (Y. S. 1-197). 9. (7-37). 10. (7-38). 11. (7-39). 12. (7-40). 13. (1-182). 14. (1-184).

leaves, earth, cow's urine and water.[1] Silken raiments are purified with cow's urine and water and earthen vessels, if not particularly impure, are purified by being burnt again. He next mentions the following things and articles as always pure viz., the hand of an artisan, articles for sale, articles obtained by begging, and the face of a woman at the time of conjugal intercourse.[2] Earth is purified by rubbing, burning, or in course of time till the sign of the impure object is entirely destroyed or by the sprinkling of cow-dung and water, or by rain or by digging, or by rubbing with cow-dung. A house is purified by rubbing and pasting with cow-dung.[3] If any edible is made impure by the smell of a cow, by hairs, insects and flies, then water, ashes or earth should be thrown into it for purification.[4] Tin, lead, copper and brass are purified by water mixed with ashes or acid or simple water.[5] Impure gold and silver is purified by earth and water or by removal of the bad smell. Whatever article is pronounced to be pure by Brāhmans is pure.[6] Water in its natural state and on earth (even if it is (impure) is always pure.[7] The rays of the sun, fire, dust, shade, cow, horse, earth, air, frost and fly even when touched by a chāndāla are always pure and so is a young one while sucking milk.[8] The face of a goat and horse is pure but that of a cow and the impurities of a person's body are not so. The tail of a cow is however pure and its touch was considered meritorious. The roads are purified by the rays of the sun, moon, and the wind.[9] Drops of water begotten in the mouth, drops of water left on any part of the body after rinsing and hairs of mustache entering the mouth are pure; similarly any food stuff etc., sticking on the teeth and not dropped out is also pure.[10] As regards voiding the excreta, Yājnavalkya lays down the rule that the twice-born having placed thread on the ear (right ear which is holy), with his face directed towards the north should pass urine and excreta during the day and period of conjunction (morning and evening) and with his face towards the south in the night.[11] Manu lays down the following rules in the matter: Let him not void urine on a road, on ashes or in a cow pen,[12] nor on ploughed land, in water, on an altar of bricks, on a mountain, on the ruins of a temple nor ever on an ant-hill;[13] nor in holes inhabited by

1. (1-186). 2. (1-187; M. S. 5-130). 3. (1-188). 4. (1-189). 5. (1-190). 6. (1-191). 7. (1-192). 8. (1-193). 9. (1-194). 10. (1-195). 11. (1-16). 12. (4-45). 13. (5-46).

living creatures nor while he walks or stands, nor on reaching the bank of a river nor on the top of a mountain.[1] Let him never void fæces or urine, facing the wind, or fire, or looking towards a Brāhman, the sun, water or cows;[2] otherwise his intellect perishes.[3] He may ease himself having covered the ground with sticks, clods, leaves, grass, and the like, restraining his speech, keeping himself pure, wrapping up his body and covering his head.[4] Earth and water must be used to cleanse the impure parts after he has voided urine and fæces as also for removing the twelve impurities of the human body viz., oily exudations, semen, blood, the fatty substance of the brain, urine, fæces, the mucus of the nose, ear-wax, phlegm, tears, the rheum of the eyes and sweat.[5] He who desires to be pure must clean his impure parts by application of earth several times.[6] Then let him after sipping water, sprinkle the cavities (i.e. of the head and also the navel and the heart) likewise, when he is going to recite the Veda and always before he takes food.[7] Let him who desires bodily purity first sip water 3 times and then twice wipe his mouth; but a woman and a Sūdra shall perform each act once only.[8] Drops of water from the mouth which do not fall on a limb do not make a man impure nor the hair of mustache entering the mouth nor what adheres to the teeth.[9]

Defilement of food by touch and even sight of the impure.

Āpastambha in his Dharma Sutras lays down the following rules about defilement of food by touch and sight of impure persons, things or animals. Thus he says: (1) Food touched by a Brāhman or other high caste person who is impure becomes impure but not unfit for eating. The commentator Haradatta observes on the above Sūtra that food which is simply impure may be purified by putting it on the fire, sprinking it with water, touching it with ashes or earth and praising it. (2) But what has been brought (whether it is touched or not) by an impure Sūdra must not be eaten. The commentator Hardatta remarks that according to some the food becomes unfit for eating only, if in bringing it, the Sūdra has touched it. (3) Nor that food in which there is a hair. But this rule holds good only if the hair had been cooked with

1. (4-47). 2. (4-48). 3. (4-52). 4. (4-49). 5. (5-134, 135).
6. (5-136). 7. (5-138). 8. (5-139). 9. (5-141).

the food. If a hair falls into it at dinner then it is to be purified by an addition of clarified butter and may be eaten. (4) Or any other unclean substance e.g. worms, beetles, nail-parings, excrements of rats etc., (5) Nor must that food be eaten which has been touched with an unclean substance (e.g. garlic). (6) Nor that in which excrements or limbs of a mouse are found (7) Nor that which has been touched by the foot even of a pure person (8) Nor what has been touched with the hem of a garment (9) Nor that which has been looked at by a dog or an *Apapātra* i.e. a person whom one must not allow to eat from one's dishes e.g. Chāndāla, Patita (degraded person), a woman in her courses, or during the ten days of impurity after confinement (10) Nor that which has been brought in the hem of a garment even though it may be clean (11) Nor what has been brought at night by a female slave (*Dāsi*). The commentator Haradatta thinks that as the Sūdra has the feminine gender, it does not matter if a male slave brings the food. But others forbid also this.[1]

Rules of purity to be observed by persons concerned in the preparation of food for the twice-born.

Āpastambha lays down the following rules of purity to be observed by persons concerned in the preparation of food of a householder for his meals: (1) Pure men of the first three castes shall prepare the food of a householder which is used at the Vaisvadeva ceremony i.e. for his meals (2) The cook shall not speak, nor cough nor sneeze while his face is turned towards the food. (3) He shall purify himself by touching water, if he has touched his hair, his limbs, or his garment. (4) or Sūdras may help in the preparation of food under the superintendence of men of the first three castes. This Sūtra does not mean the actual preparation of food by Sūdras as interpreted by some but it means other services only in connection with the preparation of food such as mending vegetables, cleansing cooking utensils etc., as there is a distinct dictum of Manu[2] to the effect that one should not eat the cooked food of Sūdras, and the word used in the Sūtra being *Sanskartā*, purifer and not Pāchaka i.e. a cook. (5) For them is prescribed the same rule of sipping water as for their masters (6) Besides the

1. (A. D. S. 1-5-16-22 to 32). 2. (4-223).

Sūdras shall daily cause to be cut the hair of their heads, their beards, the hair of their bodies and their nails. (7) And they shall bathe keeping their clothes on (8) or they may trim their hair and nails on the 8th day of each half-month or on the days of the full and new moon. (9) He (the householder himself) shall place on the fire that food which has been prepared without supervision and shall sprinkle it with water. Such food also they state to be fit for the gods.[1]

(viii) Relaxation of the rules about purity etc. in times of distress.

Pārāsara next states the rules to be observed in times of distress. Thus he says: During the prevalence of a famine, in disease, or in a foreign country or on the outbreak of a civic disturbance in one's mother-land, one's primary thought should be the protection of one's body. Piety should be a secondary consideration under the aforesaid circumstances.[2] By any measure, whether mild or violent, one should try to recoup one's bodily health when diseased, and practise piety when physically capable.[3] One need not think of rules of purity of conduct when in distress. Let him first get rid of the trouble and then purify himself by necessary penance and practise virtues.[4] The question of impurity should not be thought of when a city is besieged, when there is a tumult in the country, when the country is besieged by an army, when a house is set on fire, when a sacrifice is begun, or in great festivities.[5] There is no defilement or sin from touch in religious processions of idols of gods in the public, in pilgrimages, in marriage, sacrifice or festivities.[6] It is similarly laid down by Yājnavalkya that there is no purification laid down in gifts, sacrifice, war, devastation of the country, calamity and distress.[7]

(12) Special rules of interdiction regarding touch and intercourse with chāndālas, degraded persons (patitas), and low castes (Antyajas).

(i) Defilement by touch or intercourse with chāndālas and degraded castes (Patitas).

The Dharma Shāstras abound in special rules of interdiction and prohibition as regards the relations of the Āryans with

1. (A. D. S. 2-2-3-1 to 9). 2. (7-41). 3. (7-42). 4. (7-43).
5. (At. S. 228; D. S. 6-18). 5. (At. S. 245). 6. (3-29).

Chāndālas and degraded castes (Patitas) in matters of touch food, drink, marriage, social intercourse and so on. According to Manu these classes of persons were outside the pale of the 4 castes of the Āryans, there being no fifth class.[1] They were also outside the pale of all religious rites.[2] They were unworthy of all social intercourse with the Āryans on account of their unclean habits and manners, immoral and cruel practices (*Asat Āchāra*) and abject ignorance and they were born of *pratiloma* marriages (between a male of an inferior caste and a female of a higher caste).[3] Manu says: "Let him not stay together with out-casts (*Patitas*) nor with *Chāndālas* nor with *Pulkasas* nor with low-caste men (*Antyas or Antyajas*) nor with *Antyavasāyins* staying at the end of a city or village,".[4] They were segregated in houses for removed from those in the city or village inhabited by the Āryans.[5] The Āryans had no intercourse of any kind whatever with these classes of persons as regards touch, food, drink, marriage and so forth as their contact was degrading. Thus Manu says: "A man who fulfils a religious duty shall not seek intercourse with them; their transactions shall be among themselves and their marriages with their equals.[6] The kingdom in which such bastards sullying the purity of the castes are born, perishes quickly together with its inhabitants.[7] Their food should be given to them by others than an Āryan giver. The food was given to them in broken vessels (*Apapātra*).[8] They took their meals in altogether separate dishes which were broken.[9] They were prohibited from visiting the cities and village occupied by the Āryans at night time and they were ordered under the king's laws to visit the cities and villages of the Āryans for necessary purposes in the day time only (*Divāchareyuhu*) bearing peculiar marks distinguishing them from the Āryans.[10] Their dress consisted of the garments of the dead and black iron constituted their ornaments.[11] They were to follow the professions of executing criminals, corpse-bearers removing the corpses of persons having no relatives, and of doing services in burial grounds.[12] and they were allowed to take for themselves the clothes, the beds,

1. (10-4). 2. (Y. S. 1-93) 3. (10-58, Y. S. 1-95). 4. (4-79). 5. (10-51). 6. (10-53). 7. (10-61). 8. (10-51, 54). 9. (10-52). 10. (10-54, 55). 11. (10-52). 12. (10-55, 56, 39).

and the ornaments of the criminals executed by them.[1] The chāndālas were base born bastards of impure origin, being the off-spring of hybrid marriages (*Pratiloma*) between Brāhman women and Sūdra men and they belonged to the lowest class of men.[2] Strictest rules were framed by the law-givers interdicting all intercourse on the part of Āryans with Chāndālas and persons belonging to the degraded castes who were outside the pale of caste.

(ii) Special rules of purification from defilement and polution by touch of chāndāla etc.

Manu lays down the rule that: "When a person has touched a Chāndāla (called Divākirti or one who moves about during the day only), a menstruating woman, an out-cast (Patita), a woman in childbed, a corpse, or one who has touched a corpse, he becomes pure by bathing.[3] Similarly Yājnavalkya lays down that purification of a person touched by a woman in her menses or by one who is impure (e.g. a Chāndāla or a person of the degraded caste) is effected by bathing. But as regards the touch of a person who has been defiled by touch with a Chāndāla, or a woman in menses, Yājnavalkya lays down that, a person touched by such a person is purified by rinsing the mouth and by reciting once mentally the Vedic Mantras relating to water (viz., the hymn of the Ṛig Veda beginning with Āpohisthā etc.[4]), and the famous Gāyatri Mantra of the Sandhyā (daily prayer) repeated by the Brāhmans.[5] Āpastambha lays down that a Brāhman having unknowingly touched a Chāndāla or a Svapacha (i.e. eater of dog's flesh) before washing his face after a meal, should regain his purity by practising an expiatory rite.[6] Similarly Atri says that when one is touched by a Chāndāla while he has still the leavings of food in his mouth, he should get purified by fasting for three nights.[7] Pārāsara also says that a Brāhman having touched a Chāndāla should bathe with all his clothings on.[8] Similar rules are laid down by Atri, Yama, Samvarta and several other law-givers.[9]

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1. (10-56). 2. (10-16). 3. (5-85). 4. (R. V. 10-9). 5. (Y. S. 3-30). 6. (A. S. 4-3. 9-38, 39). 7. (At. S. 235). 8. (P. S. 12-25). 9. (At. S. 235; Ym. S. 63, Sm. S. 178).

Defilement by sexual intercourse with a Chāndāla woman.

Having gone unto a Chāndāla or Svapacha woman, a Brāhman should fast for 3 nights with the permission of three Brāhmans. He should shave his head together with the tuft of hair (Shikhā) on the crown of his head, and practise three Prājāpatyas and other penances and drink Panchagavya the next morning.[1] By co-habiting unknowingly with a woman belonging to the castes of Chāndālas, Mlechchas, Svapachas, or other low castes, one is purified by a Parāka penance.[2] But if one has sexual intercourse with her willingly and procreates children, he is degraded to the same caste; there is no doubt in it, for that man is born as her son.[3] If one touches a low caste woman, he should get himself purified by fasting for 3 nights. This is the eternal regulation.[4] If one co-habits with a low caste woman, he is obliged to perform the prescribed penance; he should take his bath before that.[5]

Defilement of an Āryan woman by Sexual intercourse with a Chāndāla.

If an Āryan woman has sexual intercourse with a Chāndāla, she should confess her guilt to 10 eminent Brāhmans.[6] Immersed upto her chin in a well containing clay and liquid cow-dung, she should stay there for one night abjuring all food to regain purity.[7] After that, she would be lifted out of the well and having entirely shaved her head, she should take a barley diet. Then she should fast for 3 nights passing the last night of her penance in water.[8] Then she should take Panchagavya with a decoction of certain roots, leaves, and flowers,[9]

Defilement by sight and touch.

The sage Pārāsara lays down that a Brāhman having seen a Chāndāla should cast a look at the sun, but having touched him, he should bathe with all his wearing apparels on.[10]

Defilement by conversation.

Pārāsara further lays down that a Brāhman having conversed with a Chāndāla should expiate his sin by first holding a conversation with a Brāhman and by reciting the Gāyatri thereafter.[11]

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1. (P.S. 10-5, 6). 2. (At. S. 183). 3. (At. S. 184). 4. (At. S. 269). 5. (At.S. 270). 6. (P. S 10-18). 7. (P. S. 10-19). 8. (P. S. 10-20). 9. (P. S. 10-21). 10. (P. S. 6-22). 11. (6-20).

Defilement by sharing the bed with a Chāndāla.

Having shared the same bed with a Chāndāla, a Brāhman should fast for three nights and having walked the same road with a Chāndāla, he should regain his purity by reciting the Gāyatri Mantra.[1]

Defilement by drinking water in touch with a Chāndāla.

A Brāhman drinking water in touch with a Chāndāla should regain his purity by fasting for a day and night and by bathing thrice during the fast.[2] Having drunk the water of a well which has been defiled by the touch of a Chāndāla's water-pot, a Brāhman should live on barley and cow's urine for 3 days whereby he would regain his purity.[3]

Defilement by drinking water from a Chāndāla's tank or from his vessel.

Having unknowingly drunk the water of a tank which a Chāndāla has caused to be excavated, a Brāhman should fast for a night and the whole day following.[4] The expiation for the sin of unknowingly drinking out of a Chāndāla's vessel is the performance of a Chāndrāyana penance on the part of a Brāhman, provided that the water is belched out immediately after taking. But if the water is retained and digested in the stomach, then the expiation is by performing a Krichhra penance.[5]

Defilement by stay of a Chāndāla in a Brāhman's house or his entry therein.

If a Chāndāla conceals himself or lives incognito in the house of a Brāhman, he should be driven out of the house as soon as it is known that he is a Chāndāla. His brethren Brāhmans learned in the Vedas should favour the defiled Brāhman as follows for absolving his sin.[6] For three days in the company of these Brāhmans, the delinquent Brāhman should take cooked sesamum with milk, curd, clarified butter and cow's urine and bathe twice each day.[7] For the first three days, he should take cooked sesamum soaked in cow's urine with milk, with milk curd for the second three days and with clarified butter, for the last three days of the penance.[8]

1. (6-21). 2.:(A. S. 9-40). 3. (P. S. 6-24). 4. (6-23). 5. (6-25, 26). 6. (6-32). 7. (6-34). 8, (6-35).

Articles of copper or bell metal should be purified with ashes, and clothes by washing; while the earthen vessels kept in the room should be thrown away.[1] After that, a vessel containing safflower, treacle, cotton seed, salt, oil and clarified butter, should be kept at the door of the room and the room should be set to fire.[2] Having been thus absolved of sin, he should feed the Brāhmans and make gift of thirty kine with a bullock to them.[3] The ground should be again plastered and purified by performing rites of Homa and Japa upon it. The ground on which a Brāhman stands can never suffer any defilement or contamination.[4] In case where a woman of the cobbler, hunter or pulkasa classes resides incognito in the house of a person belonging to any of the four Āryan castes, only half of what has been stated above should be practised by way of purification with the exception of burning down the room.[5] If a Chāndāla enters once into the house of any one, he should be driven out and all the earthen pots kept therein should be thrown away.[6] Defiled earthen vessels containing oil, clarified butter etc., should not be discarded; they should be purified by sprinkling water over them.[7]

Defilement by shadow of a chāndāla.

The Brāhman who goes under the shadow of a Svapacha (eater of dog's flesh) should bathe and get himself purified by drinking clarified butter.[8] If a person unknowingly salutes a low caste man, he should immediately bathe and get himself purified by taking clarified butter.[9]

(iii) Whether the rule of untouchablity was a modern innovation or whether it had the sanction of the vedas ?

A vigorous campaign has been started recently against the rule of untouchability by a certain section of reformers among the Hindus who have propounded the view that the rule of untouchability as observed and practised by the Hindus at present was a later innovation grafted on the Hindu religion from outside and it had no sanction in the Vedas. It is therefore necessary to consider here first whether the above view is correct by an examination of the holy texts of the Vedas and the Hindu Shāstras. It may be stated here at the outset that there is no doubt that the classes

1. (6–37). 2. (6–38). 3. (6–39). 4 (6–40). 5. (6–42). 6. (6–43). 7. (6–44). 8. (At. S. 284). 9. (At S. 308).

known as *Nishādas*, *Chāndālas* and so on existed so far back as in times of the Ṛig Veda, the white Yajurveda, the Brāhmanas and the Upanishads as appears from the revealed texts. The institution of the 4 castes (*Chāturvarna*) which is of divine origin was definitly established in the time of the Ṛig Veda as appears not only from the Purusha Sukta,[1] but also from several other hymns.[2] I have shown above that in the time of the Ṛig Veda, there existed 2 fundamental divisions among the people viz., the Āryans and the Un-Āryans called *Dasyus*, or *Dāsas* between whom and the Āryans there was an eternal feud from the earliest times. The Un-Āryans were the aborigines of India, who were described by the Āryan conquerors not only as *Dasyus* and *Dāsas* but as *Avarnas* (i.e. having a black complexion) and *Unāsas* (i e. devoid of learning, good speech and culture) in contrast with the Āryans who were called *Savarnas* (having a white complexion) and had reached a high state of civilisation and culture in the time of the Ṛig Veda. The un-Āryans were also described sometimes as *Nishādas*. Thus the people of India then consisted of 4 Varnas or castes viz. The Brāhmans, (priestly class), the Kshatriyas (military class), the Vaisyas (mercantile class), and the Sūdras (servant class) and the fifth class called *Dasyus*, *Dāsas* or *Nishādas*. There are several passages in the Ṛig Veda and the other Vedas which described the people as *Pancha Janāhā* (i.e. people of the five tribes) consisting of 4 Āryans castes and the 5th class called the Un-Āryan *Dasyus*, *Dāsas* or *Nishādas*.[3] Now Yāska the author of Nirukta (Vedic etymology) on the authority of the Aupamanyava school explains the word *Nishāda* as one who lives on animals i.e. a hunter and on the authority of Niruktas or etymologists he derives the word Nishāda from the affix '*ni*' and the root '*shad*' as meaning one who lives a degraded life and earns his livelihood therefrom. The term *Nishāda* according to the last derivation means one in whom sin is embodied and it applied to the degraded castes and the *Chāndālas* who were known for leading a degraded, sinful, and impure life. The well known scholiast Sāyana has also interpreted the word Nishāda in the same way. The modern term used in

1. (R. V. 10-90). 2. (R. V. 1-113-6; 8-35-16 to 18).
3. (R. V. 1-89-10; 9-65-23; 10-53-4; V. S. 25-23; A. V. 7-6-1).

Southern India for the degraded castes is *Panchama* corresponding with the word *Panch Janāhā* used in the Ṛig Veda which included the *Nishādas* and *Dāsyus* as shown above. It is however not clear from passages in the Ṛig Veda whether the Āryans treated these classes of persons as untouchables as at present. This much however appears that the Āryans treated the aborigines as of an entirely different stock and race and treated them as unworthy of association and free intercourse on account of their impure and immoral practices and habits. There is a passage in the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā of the white Yajur Veda which enjoins on a purification of sacrificial vessels from defilement by touch of low-born persons by sprinkling water (Prokshana), before they were used at the sacrifice. The original text runs as follows: " whatever of yours (i.e. the vessels of the sacrifice to whom the words are addressed) the impure (*Ashudhāhā*) have here by their touch polluted, I cleanse (*Shundhāmi*) for you from all defilement. "[1] The word used in the above text for impure persons whose touch was considered sufficient to cause defilement is *Ashudhāhā* which has been translated by the commentator Mahidhara as low born persons (*Neecha Jātayaha*). This interpretation is further supported by an explanation of the same Mantra in the Satapatha Brāhmana which runs as follows: " It is for the divine work, the sacrifice to the gods, that he consecrates the sacrificial vessels by sprinkling over them water accompanied with the above Mantra. For whatever belonging to them, some impure person has on this occasion desecrated by touching, that he thereby renders sacrificially pure for them by means of the water. "[2] It would be seen from the above Vedic Mantra that even sacrificial vessels were defiled by the touch of impure persons like *Chāndālas* and other low caste men and they were required to be purified by sprinkling water over them, for being made fit for use at the sacrifice. Now if vessels are defiled by the touch of low class and impure persons, how these persons could be allowed to touch high caste persons on occasions of religious rites and ceremonies or to enter into Hindu temples, as the latter alone were initiated and qualified to perform the sacred rites and ceremonies or to enter into the temples. There are also other passages in the same Veda

1. (V. S. 1-13). 2. (S. B. 1-1-3-12).

which go to show that the low castes whose touch was considered to cause a defilement for religious purposes, were firmly established in those times. Thus the following castes are mentioned in the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā viz. *Nishād* (Hunter), fisher man, *Vrātya* (band of nomad non-conformists of Āryan extraction but absolutely independent and not following Āryan way of life), washer-man, iron smelter, *Bheel* (a blackman who carries bows and archs in his hands), *Kirāta* (a savage who lives by hunting), *Pulkasa* (a man of very low birth being born of a Nishāda and a Kshatriya), a cow-killer and a *Chāndāla* (a man of an impure and degraded tribe and an outcast.)[1] It will be interesting to note in this connection that even *Swāmi Dayānand*, the founder of the new sect of reform known as *Arya Samāj* has observed in his commentary on the white Yajurveda in chapter 30, that the rule of untouchability had been clearly established in the time of the white Yajurveda and that persons belonging to low castes and castes known as untouchables had their houses separate at a distance from the city or village in which the caste Hindus resided. It is therefore quite apparent that the present day Ārya Samājists who ardently support the move for anti-untouchability reform are not loyal to the illustrious founder of their own sect. The next passage which goes to prove the existence of the rule of untouchability in the time of the Upanishads is found in the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad which runs as follows: "This deity called Prāna i.e. the soul of life, then after having destroyed the sin of the deities (presiding over the sense organs of speech, eye etc.,) technically called death, made him depart where the end is of the quarters. There it fixed the abode of sins of the said deities of sense organs. Hence let no one repair to the outerpeople called *Antya Janāhā*. Let him not follow sin.[2] Now the great and well-known philosopher Sri Shankarāchārya commenting on the above passage has interpreted the word " *Antya Janāhā* " or outerpeople as persons who do not deserve to be associated with either by conversation or by sight and who are enjoined to reside at the end of the city or village at a great distance from the caste Hindus. Manu seems to have relied on the above Vedic passage in enjoining on a segregation of the low caste men and *Chāndālas* at the end of the city away

1. (V. S. 30-6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18). 2. (B. U. 1-3-10).

from the Āryans.[1] The reader can easily see from the above that there are clear Texts in support of the rule of untouchability and interdiction of touch with the untouchables not only in the Dharma Shāstras but also in the Vedas or the Revealed Scriptures of the Hindus and the contrary opinion expressed by several present-day so-called reformers shows an uncritical judgment and their collosal ignorance of the Hindu Shāstras. That the class of *Chāndālas* and out-casts was a separate class by itself and treated as such separately from the Hindus on account of their dirty and impure habits, appears clearly stated in another scriptural passage which says: " Those who have done wicked and sinful acts are born in the wombs of the sinners as dogs, pigs, or *Chāndālas*."[2] It would therefore be clearly wrong on the part of the so-called present-day reformers preaching an abolition of untouchability from the Hindu religion altogether, in face of the above evidence, to attribute the custom of keeping these classes of degraded persons and sinners at an arm's length as a modern innovation created by the later day Brāhmans out of pride or contempt for these classes of poor persons. The rule of untouchability in Hindu Dharma Shāstras which is based on principles of hygiene and science evidently seems to have been framed with the object of preserving the racial purity and high culture of the Āryans, by preventing impure and filthy habits and customs of the low caste persons from creeping into the Hindu community and contaminating pure Āryan blood by indiscriminate and reckless unions with them. The question of purity was of such vital importance to the Āryans that the law-givers viewed with great dread and horror on the procreation of bastard offspring (*Varna Sankara*) by union of Āryan women with persons belonging to these low and degraded castes. In this, they echoed the noble thoughts and sentiments expressed by our Lord Shri Krishna in the Bhagvad Gitā,[3] wherein it is further stated that a hybrid son born of a union with the degraded castes (*Varna Sankara*), leads one as well as his whole family to hell.[4] A novel argument has been recently advanced by some to the effect that though there is a mention in the Shāstras of Chāndālas who formed the lowest class of untouchables, they were of one particular description only as narrated in the Rāmāyana about

1. (10-51). 2. (Ch. U. 5-10). 3. (3-24), 4. (1-41).

Trishanku viz., that they had red eyes, protruding tongue and luxuriant growth of hair all over their body like a bear, and that unless it was shown that persons of the above description are found existing at present, it cannot be stated that the persons who are stamped as untouchables at present are really Chāndālas.[1] The above argument is fallacious as it proceeds on an assumption, that the Chāndālas are of one description only as given in the Rāmāyana but the correctness of this assumption is not yet established. In fact Chāndālas are not of one description only but there are several descriptions of Chāndālas as given in the Vedas, the Brāhmanas, the Dharma Shāstras, the epics and the Purānas.[2] Further, according to the orthodox view, a person's caste having been determined by birth and certain persons having been stamped as Chāndālas from birth and treated as untouchables by an unbroken tradition and custom extending over several generations and observed till to-day as is evidenced by voluminus documentary evidence, the burden of proving that the present-day untouchables are not Chāndālas is upon those who make the said assertion dogmatically and not upon those who have already made out a primafacie case in support of the rule of untouchability which has not yet been refuted by the pioneers of the movement for the proposed reform. Not only so but an express opinion has been already pronounced definitely by Āchārya Pandit Indirā Raman Shāstri, a follower of the School of reformers headed by Gandhiji doing propaganda work for removal of untouchability, after a careful examination of the texts, to the effect that 'the present day untouchables are no other than the class of *Nishādas* and so on as mentioned in the Vedas' which is sufficient to refute the contrary view as propounded by Principal A. B. Dhruva. The curious reader is invited to refer to the article in the book described in the foot note below.* The authorities cited above from Sruties and Smṛities are sufficient to give a

1. (See the recent statement published by Mr. A. B. Dhruva Principal, Benares Hindu University).

2. (R. 1-58-10; Mh. A. P. Ch. 27-28; B. P. 4-14-43 to 46; Vy. S. 1-9).

* See the article of Āchārya Indirā Raman Shāstri entitled 'The Untouchables right to study the Vedas,' appended to the book called 'Temple entry and removal of untouchability' written by Mahātmā Gandhy in Hindi and published at Benāres.

lie direct to the novel lesson taught by the different schools of modern reformers that the rule of untouchability had not the sanction of the Vedas. The scathing criticism against the practice and custom of untouchability " as a blot on the Hindu religion " made by the apostle and leader of the new movement and the dissemination of new ideas directly opposed to Sanātan religion seem to be not only without any foundation or justification but they are directly calculated to degrade the purity and high level of Sanātan religion of hoary antiquity and drag it from the heights of the Himālaya to an abysmal ditch of pitchy darkness and rank impurity. They are further likely to cause an utter disintegration of the Hindu community and to let loose in society wild forces of irreligion, impurity and insubordination leading to chaos and confusion in the Hindu community. It is high time when the religiously-minded Hindus should be on their strict guard to protect their sacred religion which has stood the test of ages hithertofore against ruthless attacks made by the reformers without abatement from time to time.

(iv) Whether the Hindus Shāstras or the law of the land warrant the untouchables alleged right to temple entry. The legal position under the existing law.

The pioneers of the so called reform movement have of late set up an alleged right of the untouchables to entry into the Hindu temples and carried on considerable propaganda work for removing the disabilities of these persons from entry into the Hindu Temples, even by medium of legislation. It is therefore necessary to consider here whether there is any sanction in the Shāstras for allowing the untouchable's right for entry into Hindu Temples for purposes of worship. It may be pointed out at the outset that Hindu Temples were constructed by the orthodox Hindus mostly after the rise of the 2 new religions, Buddhism and Jainism in about the 6th century before Christ. In several cases the settlers who erected the Hindu Temples have founded religious endowments and trusts at an outlay of large sums of money for the exclusive benefit of the caste Hindus only. In cases where there are express trust deeds with clear intention on the part of the founder of the religious endowments and temples as regards the persons who are entitled to the benefit of the said institutions and temples, and their right to

worship in the said temples, there is no difficulty in determining who is entitled to enter into the said temple for worship. Thus in the famous temples of Mambādevi, Bābulnāth and the Mādhavbāg situate in Bombay, there are express trust deeds providing that only the caste Hindus shall be entitled to visit the temples for worshipping the deities installed therein. But in cases where there are no written Trust deeds regulating the user of Hindu Temples the question arises for consideration in view of an assertion on the part of the reformers that the untouchables have a right to entry into such temples for purposes of worship, whether the above assertion is correct. It may be stated here at once that apart from the Shāstraic authorities and precepts in the matter, by an unbroken custom extending over several generations past and beyond memory, no untouchable had ever entered into these temples for worship nor even asserted any such claim until the reformers took up the question and started the present move for the untouchables' right to temple entry. The result therefore would be that a definite right is established in favour of the caste Hindus only to entry into the Hindu Temples for purposes of worship on the ground of immemorial custom and the presumed intention of the settler in favour of the caste Hindus only to the exclusion of the untouchables who have hitherto failed to establish any such fictitious right in their favour. It is submitted that this constitutes the common law of India which the British Courts are bound to recognise and administer in British Courts in matters of dispute between the caste Hindus (*Savarnas*) and the untouchables (*Avarnas*). Moreover it is further expressly laid down by section 112 of the Government of India Act 1919 which is a statute passed by the British Parliament that " the High Courts at Calcutta, Madrās and Bombay in the exercise of their original Jurisdiction shall in matters of dealing between party and party when both parties are subject to the same personal law or custom having the force of law, (e.g. Hindus) decide according to that personal law or custom. " Further it is expressly provided in section 84 of the Government of India Act 1919 that " a law made by any authority in British India and repugnant to any provision of this or any other Act of Parliament shall to the extent of that repugnancy but not otherwise be void." One could thus easily see from the above that it would be incompetent to the

Indian Legislature, either Central or Provincial, to pass any laws inconsistent with the provisions of section 112 of the Government of India Act 1919 enjoining the High Courts of Calcutta, Madrās and Bombay to administer only the personal law and custom to which the parties are subject in matters of dealing between party and party and any legislation that may be passed by the Indian Legislature contrary to the existing law between the caste Hindus and the untouchables would be null and void being opposed to the express terms of the Parliamentary statute viz. the Government of India Act. 1919.

The position according to Shāstras.

Apart from the above legal position against the alleged right of the untouchables to enter into Hindu Temples for worship enjoining the trustees to allow the caste Hindus only a right to temple entry and on which basis several schemes have been already framed by the different Courts in British India which the trustees are bound to carry out according to the law of the land, the matter is covered by clear Shāstric authorities which emphatically deny any such alleged right in favour of the untouchables to entry into the Hindu Temples. It may be stated here at the outset that as it is doubtful whether there were any temples in India in the earliest Vedic times, one cannot find any express authorities in the Vedas on the point in question. However the matters relating to temples, their mode of construction, worship therein and so on have been exhaustively dealt with in the Āgamas and other Smṛitis and Shāstras which deny the alleged right of the untouchables to temple entry. Thus it is stated in Brighu Saṁhita that "If a Temple consecrated by the installation therein of a deity is entered into by Chāndālas, the Antyajas (Untouchables), and others born of pratiloma marriages between persons of prohibited castes, the Mlechhas, low-born and degraded persons, guilty of calumny towards the religious head and preceptor and of other faults and particularly by their touch and worship of the deity, the temple becomes polluted.[1] Similarly it is stated that "If the class of persons known as Magadhas and others, those born of Pratiloma marriages or others censured of sinful acts, enter into the Court-Yard of a building erected for a temple or into the holy place attached to a temple and set apart

1. (Brighu Saṁhita).

for making offerings to the deity, the said place becomes defiled and requires to be purified by performing a sacrifice therein by way of penance, to invoke blessings from the deity and for peace and the idol which is worshipped should be also purified by a water bath a thousand times for appeasing it."[1] "Or if the idol is defiled by the touch of a Chāndāla, wine, fire, sinful persons, remnants of blood and other impure things, it should be reinstalled with fresh rites and ceremonies."[2] It is further laid down that " The only mode of worship allowed to untouchables, persons belonging to degraded castes, and those born of pratiloma marriages, was by a sight of the crest of temples only.[3] It is proposed by the reformers to decide by medium of legislation, the question of the untouchables right to temple entry by a referendum to certain classes of persons residing within certain geographical limits of the particular temple, whose names are entered as voters in the Municipal or Local Board register of the city or village in which the said temple is situate and by the opinion of a majority of votes of such persons. It may be stated here that Hindu Temples are not public places like museums or libraries in which every member of the public of any class, creed, or religion is entitled to enter, but the right of entry therein for worship could be decided only according to religious precepts as enjoined by the Hindu Shāstras, traditions and old customs, as the matter relates to a purely religious question and the same could not be decided by the opinions of certain persons who are entitled to vote at the election of members to a Municipality or Local Board of the place in which the Temple is situate. The whole idea of deciding the above purely religious question by the method of referendum seems to have been misconceived and based on a complete ignorance of the fundamental principles of Hindu religion and law. It would really be an irony of fate, if ever such a proposed legislation is passed, as it would be a great menace to the freedom of conscience and liberty of faith of the orthodox Hindus who constitute the bulk of the Indian populace and their right to worship the deity in any manner they think best. In view of the several inroads recently made by reformers against the Hindu religion from time to time and in view of the fact that incessant agitation is carried on by them to force

1. (Pāncharātra). 2. (Hayashirsha Pāncharātra). 3. (Shaivāgama).

reforms in religious and social-religious matters on the bulk of the orthodox Hindus even against their wishes by medium of legislation, it is submitted it would be highly necessary and proper that a special clause of religious safeguards should be inserted in the new constitution Act to be passed by the British Parliament for British India in the near future and an express declaration made therein to the effect that there will be no interference either legislative or otherwise in religious matters, either as regards the mode or method of religious worship or the exercise of any of the religious rites and customs enjoyed by the peoples of India hitherto so as to cement happy and warm relations between the Government and the people.

(v) Untouchables in the Buddhist Literature.

Prof. N. K. Dutta gives the following account of the existence of the rule of untouchability in the Buddhist Literature which must have been established by about the fifth century before Christ when there was a definite growth of professional castes (jātis) in India. Thus he says: "The Chāndālas were the most despised caste of the society. They were not allowed to live within the walls of a town. Even touching or seeing a Chāndāla caused impurity. In the Mātanga Jātaka, it is related how sixteen thousand Brāhmans lost their caste, because they unknowingly took food which had been polluted by contact with the leavings of a Chāndāla's meal. In the Satadhamma Jātaka, a Brāhman commits suicide because he had eaten the leavings from a Chāndāla's dish. In several Jātakas, we find Brāhmans running away to escape pollution by contact with Chāndālas. This fear of pollution was not confined to Brāhmans alone. A merchant's daughter washes her eyes with scented water and goes away from the place on seeing two Chāndālas. Another Setti (or chetti) girl does the same thing on seeing a Chāndāla at Benares. The Chāndālas were not only despised and kept isolated from society but were distinguished from the rest of the population by their dress as in the Mātanga Jātaka, and also by their speech as in the Chitta Sambhuta Jātaka. So despised were the Chāndālas that "contemptuous as a Chāndāla" was a proverbial expression. Equally low as the *Chāndālas* were the castes of *Pukkasas* and *Nishādas.*" It may be mentioned here as observed by Prof. Dutta that "the Varna division of society was mainly Āryan in character though

accentuated by the peculiar conditions of the early Āryan conquerors in India and that the formation of Jāti castes (i.e. small groups of professional castes) many of which were tribal in origin, together with some of the practices like untouchability, infant marriage etc., was due largely to aboriginal influences." The custom of untouchabilty also existed definitely in India in the time of the great Chinese traveller Fa-Hien who had travelled to India in about 400 A. D. Thus he remarks: "Those who clear away filth, have to strike sticks while going about in token of their approach."

(vi) Bewildering Extent of Prevalence of untouchability in Southern India due more to Pre-Dravidian influence.

As regards the wide extent of the prevalence of untouchability in Southern India, Mr. S. V. Vishwanatha of Mysore University makes the following observations: " Ideas of pollution by touching have gained greater currency in the South than anywhere else in India, for South India has preserved Brāhmanical traditions and practices more close than the other parts of the country. Castes in Malabar strike the observer as a bewildering phenomenon. There are in that District various grades of castes and sub-castes from the proud or orthodox Brāhman on the one hand to the lowest Nāyādi on the other. The degree of pollution depends on the distance. There are some castes which are looked on by the Nambudri as causing pollution only by touching e.g. the foreign Brāhman settlers; some cause pollution if they come within five or six feet e.g. the artisan class; distance of about a hundred feet is necessary in the case of the Izhava, the professional toddy-tapper; his purity is unimpaired only if twice the distance is kept with the cow-killing Pariah, while the Nāyādi, perhaps the last according to the social stratification in Malabar, will have to stand furlongs off and should cry out from the distance as the Asuras of olden times were supposed to do. Pollution by approach finds ample illustration in Malabar. It is in evidence in other parts of India too, and should not be looked upon as of quite recent growth."[1] Tracing the causes which led to the custom and practice of untouchability, the learned author observes: " Pollution and untouchability resulted primarily out of hygienic,

1. (Racial synthesis in Hindu culture by S. V. Vishvanatha).

physiological, sentimental, and ethical objections. Those castes were declared to be polluting as were accustomed to certain interdicted practices such as the eating of meat and the drinking of liquor. Such of the lower castes as shunned these practices were of course considered to cause less pollution." It may be mentioned here that even before the coming of the Indo-Āryans into India, there had been great cultural differences among the natives of India including the civilised Drāvidians and the savage pre-Drāvidians living in forest and caves who had not advanced beyond the hunting and fishing stage of culture. Prof. Dutta in this connection observes that "the suggestion of Przyluski (a research scholar) about the origin of the *Doms* of Modern India confirms the belief that the Pre-Drāvidians are to be found in the *Nishādas* and *Chāndālas* etc., of the Vedic literature." The rule of untouchability is observed by the untouchables themselves to such an enormous extent that persons belonging to certain sub castes do not touch persons belonging to other sub-castes among them although both are untouchables. Thus a *Dhed* or a *Mahār* (i.e. a scavenger or sweeper of public streets) would not touch a *Bhangi* (i.e. one who removes the night soil and filth). Nor would a person belonging to one sub-caste marry with a person belonging to another sub-caste among the untouchables themselves. It seems that the rule of untouchability as practised at present in its extreme form in certain parts of India is due more to Pre-Drāvidian influence than Āryan as stated above and the same requires to be brought into conformity with the more rational rule as observed by the Vedic Āryans. From this one cannot assert dogmatically that untouchability as such had no existence in any form in Vedic times as I have already pointed out above that the Āryans had a scrupulous regard for rules of purity, bath, and so on in the observance of their religious sacrifices and domestic rites and rituals and they avoided touch of every thing that was impure even in Vedic times. However, it is true that the ramification of untouchability multiplied to an enormous extent among the Pre-Drāvidian aborigines of India as is seen in some parts of the South even at prsent. So far as the Āryans were concerned, their rules about untouchability were more rational, being based on religious and hygienic considerations and they were more actuated

by considerations of preserving their racial and cultural purity rather than any apathy towards the poor classes known as untouchables who formed a separate class of casteless castes by themselves and for whose amelioration there is a great scope for social work.

(vii) The anti-untouchability movement.

Though there is ample scope for social work for mitigating the sufferings of these poor classes of persons known as untouchables, yet at the same time it would be dangerous even to think of abolishing the rule of untouchability altogether and in every possible form so as to cover therein even matters of religious faith and conscience and ancient usages and customs as observed by the orthodox Hindus at present. The recent campaign against untouchability started by a certain section of reformers amongst the Hindus, some of whom have not even the rudimentary knowledge of the Hindu Scriptures and Dharma Shāstras, has taken such a serious turn as to cause a serious apprehension in the minds of many as to the disintegration of the Hindu community and internal dissensions amongst its various classes and groups. The reformers not being content with carrying on anti-untouchability propaganda, have of late gone to the length of attempting to force the said reform through the rank and file of the orthodox Sanatanists although the latter are opposed to the said movement, by medium of forced legislation, thus depriving them of their elementary right of freedom of conscience and liberty of faith in religious matters. Such methods instead of doing any good to the country are directly calculated to embitter feelings of hatred between various classes of the people and do considerable harm to the very cause for which the reformers have been striving so much hitherfore. What the untouchables really want is not so much a right to entry into the Hindu temples or a removal of untouchability in every possible form as their economic and educational uplift, as pronounced by their several eminent leaders, and for which the orthodox Hindus are quite willing to co-operate with them by peaceful and constitutional methods without detriment to their sacred religious and traditional laws. The Hindu scriptures and shāstras are elastic enough and they have a catholicity of spirit of so adjusting their laws and customs to changed circumstances as to allow the backward classes to rise to higher ranks of social life in

course of time fitting them to associate more freely with the caste Hindus by leading a purer, a better and a more religiously-minded form of life without offending against the principles laid down in the Hindu Shāstras.

(viii) Fundamental differences between backward classes and untouchables,

A great confusion has been caused by many in the discrimination of persons belonging to the backward classes and untouchables and even so great a personage as Gandhiji had only recently published a statement in the press to the effect that the total number of untouchables was 4 crores thus correcting the previous belief about their total number as 6 crores. But even this understanding does not seem to be correct due to a confusion of untouchables with backward classes. The terms 'Untouchables' and 'Backward classes' are not synonymous nor are they convertible with each other. Although the untouchables are backward classes, yet it is not true that the backward classes are all untouchables. The term 'Backward classes' is a generic term of which the untouchables form a species or a variety. Turning to the statistical figures as appearing in the last census return of 1931, one will find that while the total number of Hindus following the Brāhmānical religion which included the backward classes is 22,03,08,164 crores, the remaining Hindus not following the Brāhmānical religion which inter alia included the untouchables is 1,78,88,275 crores only. The latter class also contains certain aboriginal and other tribes which do not follow the Hindu religion. Therefore the total number of persons who are classed as untouchables amongst the Hindus would hardly amount to even a crore in number. The class known as untouchables comprises therein the castes of *Chāndālas*, *Svapachas* and *Pukkasas* as described in the Vedas and Dharmshāstras and the present day *Dheds, Mahārs, Doms, Bhangis* and so on. As contrasted with the class of untouchables which formed a small class by itself and which was beyond the pale of the Aryan castes, the backward classes which formed a sub-division of the *Sūdras* were undoubtedly within the four-fold varna division of the Hindus. While persons belonging to the former class were untouchables by birth, those belonging to the latter class were not necessarily so in all respects, so as to require an immediate bath for purification

but some of them were untouchable by degradation to low professions and their impure and unclean habits.

Low and backward castes (Antyajas)

Seven castes along with some others are known in the Smṛities as low and backward castes, viz, a washerman, a cobbler, an actor, a basket-maker (Baruda), a fisherman (Kaivarta) a flesh-seller (Meda) and a hunter.[1] By knowing their women, taking their food, and accepting gifts from them willingly, one should perform a Prajāpatya Penance for a year; and if, unknowingly, two Chāndrayana penances.[2] Carpenters, barbers, milkmen, cobblers, potters, traders, userers, kāyasthas, flowermen, basket-makers, hunters, Chāndālas, Dāsas, eaters of dog's flesh, kolis and beef-eaters, and those born by Pratiloma marriages belong to the low castes of men (*Antyajas*). A conversation with some of these persons should be expiated by an ablution, while their sight by a sight of the sun.[3] Although these were backward and low castes all of them were not necessarily untouchables. Thus neither a carpenter nor a kāyastha was an untouchable. Having partaken of boiled rice from low-caste persons, twice-born persons should perform a penance.[4] A twice-born person who takes food from a washerman or from an actor or one who lives on bamboo work should perform a Chāndrāyana penance.[5] By knowing women of low castes, taking their meals and lying with them on the same bed, one should get himself purified with parāka penance.[6] It may be mentioned here that some of the backward castes mentioned above were considered low-castes and were called Asat-Sūdras on account of their low professions and impure habits as compared with other Sūdras, called Sat-Sūdras who led a purer and better mode of life. Their touch however was not so polluting as that of a Chāndāla. While the touch of Chāndāla with a twice-born person always demanded an immediate bath on the part of the latter for purification from defilement, the touch of some of the backward castes mentioned above e.g. a carpenter, kāyastha and so on was not considered so defiling as to require a bath for purification. Thus it is stated in Atri that "If a twice-born person has touched out of stupefaction a cobbler, a washerman, a bamboo-maker, a fisher-

1. (Ym. S. 54; At. S. 195; Ag. S. 1-3). 2. (At. S. 196). 3. (Vy. S. 1-10 to 12). 4. (Ag. S. 1-2). 5. (At. S. 168). 6. (At. S. 169).

man, or an actor, he should being self-restrained rinse his mouth.[1] By being touched by these, a twice-born person should drink water one night; by being touched by them having the leavings of food in their mouth, he should fast for three nights and get himself purified by drinking clarified butter.[2] The same law-giver makes a distinction in the case of an untouchable and says that the Brāhman who goes under the shadow of an untouchable (*Swapacha* i.e. an eater of dog's flesh) should bathe and get himself purified by drinking clarified butter.[3] Similarly, Yama says "Being touched by a woman in her menses or a persom of the degraded castes (patitas) in the night, a Brāhman should bathe before the fire, with the water brought during daytime.[4] The word '*Antyaja*' is used by the sage Samvarta in the sense of an untouchable (*Asprisya*) belonging to the class of *Chāndālas* or *Antyavasayins* living at the end of the city or village as would appear from the following verse wherein the said law-giver enjoins bath as a purification for touching an Antyaja. Thus he says: "By touching a Chāndāla, an out-cast, a dead body, a person of degraded caste (*Antyaja*), a woman in her menses and a woman in a state of impurity consequent on child birth, one should bathe with clothes on."[5] This construction drives further support from the fact that according to the well known rule of interpretation, the word Antyaja having been used at the end of the first line of the verse last referred to above after enumeration of general words Chāndāla, out-cast and so on, it is used in the sense of *ejusdem generis* i.e. of a similar nature to the words previously enumerated and not in a new sense so as to include therein the seven classes of backward castes mentioned above, all of which are not necessarily untouchables in the same sense as a Chāndāla and so on.[6] However the sage Angiras seems to have used the word *Antyaja* in a different sense so as to include therein the seven classes of backward or low castes only beginning with a washerman as described above,[7] and he prescribes a penance for having partaken of boiled rice from such low-caste persons, but not a bath as a purification for having touched them.[8] Nor even the

1. (At. S. 282). 2. (At. S. 283). 3. (At. S. 284). 4. (Ym. S. 63). 5. (Sm. S. 178). 6. (See Maxwell on interpretation of statutes Emp. vs. Ratansi Hirji 13 Bom. L. R. 581). 7. (Ag. S. 1-3). 8. (Ag. S. 1-2).

sages Atri and Vyāsa have laid down the need of a bath in such a case.[1]

Low castes (Antyajas) limited only to seven in number.

It may be mentioned here that the low castes described as *Antyajas* in the Dharma Shāstras were only 7 in number beginning with washerman all of whom were not necessarily untouchables like *Chāndālas*. Further several other castes as carpenters, gardeners and so on enumerated along with these 7 low castes were not low castes (*Antyajas*). Not only so, but several other castes mentioned in the long list of backward castes (*Antyajas*) in Vyāsa Smṛiti as *kāyasthas, traders* and so on were high caste Āryans like Vaisyas, having all the rights and privileges of Āryans, viz. right of initiation to the sacred thread, right to learn the Vedas, to perform sacrifices and so on.

Bogey of untouchability as a political instrument.

It will be seen from the passages from law-books cited above that the statements made by reformers from the platform as well as the press from time to time to the effect, "That about 6 crores of Hindus (which number is now reduced to 4 crores as admitted by Gandhiji) are untouchables and that unless the rule of untouchability is abolished from Hinduism, all these persons would be permanently detached from Hinduism and embrace other faiths and religions and thereby the Hindu Community would be seriously crippled of its numerical strength" are not only unfounded but they are also misleading and mischievous and evidently they seem to have been made to serve purely political and selfish ends of these reformers. The backward classes barring a few castes leading an impure life and having bad habits are not really untouchables as is sought to be made out by the reformers and the bogey of untouchability in respect of these classes of persons raised by the reformers is a purely political instrument and expedient to serve their own ends, and the recent propaganda carried on by certain leaders to have a statutory recognition of special rights reserved for these backward classes seem to have been made to foster feelings of hatred between classes and classes and support a spirit of communalism pure and simple which is really most detrimental to the truly national interests of our country

1. (At. S. 282; Vy. S. 1–12).

at this critical juncture when the future constitution of India is about to be shaped into a proper form by His Majesty's British Parliament. In fact several persons belonging to some of these castes have improved in status and are in affluent circumstances and they are not in need of any special protection.

(ix) Uplift of backward classes and Sūdras.

The idea of the uplift of backward classes and Sūdras was not a new idea of modern times only, but it was an old idea started by the conquering Āryans in Vedic times of hoary antiquity and which was worked up by them into actual practice for the benefit of these classes of persons. The Āryans had never entertained any idea of extirpating the conquered races of *Dasyus* and *Dāsas* but they imparted to them their high ideas of purity, learning and culture and ultimately, in course of time, they succeeded in elevating the social status of these persons who thenceforward were called *Sūdras* after some generations after they adopted and followed the purer and better modes and habits of the Āryans. Prof. N. K. Dutta in this connection makes the following observations: " During the Ṛig-Vedic period the Sūdras were mostly war-captives and hence slaves pure and simple. But in the Gangetic plains, it was not captured individuals only but often whole tribes reduced to subjection who became Sūdras. So the word came to mean the non-Āryans in general. In the later Vedic literature, the Sūdra is often contrasted with the Ārya, instead of the Dāsa or Dasyu of the Ṛig Veda as appears from the following texts: 'Oh, Indra, object of our praises, let the godless whether he be an Āryan or a Dasyu who wages war against us, be vanquished by us.' 'Oh, Indra come, recognising and marking the distinction of the Dasyu and the Ārya.' Thus the Ṛishi in the Atharva veda says: 'Make me dear to the gods, dear to the princes, dear to every one who beholds me, both to Sūdras and to Ārya.'[1] Again it is further stated 'By it I see every thing, whether the Sūdra or the Ārya.'[2] Moreover the greater association of Sūdras in those professions which had been the monopoly of Vaisyas in the Ṛig Vedic period and the greater intermixture of blood which took place in the rank and file of the population, naturally tended to lessen the distinction between the Vaisyas and the Sūdras. Again we know that where there has been admiration, familiarity breeds contempt, but that

1. (A. V. 19-62-1). 2. (A. V. 4-20-4).

where there has been contempt, familiarity turns down contempt. The hated Dāsas with their ugliness, different creeds and languages, manners and customs, began to be more familiarly treated when they became domestic slaves and somewhat initiated into the habits and usages of their Āryan masters. Thus from the 3rd book of the Taittiriya Brāhmana, we know that the Sūdra was already entrusted with some function viz., to watch the property in one of the most important and sacred rites of the Āryans, the Ashvamedha or the horse sacrifice. A passage from the Taittirya Samhitā still more clearly shows that the Sūdra had gained a recognised position in society, being worthy of being prayed for in respect of his welfare by a Brāhman sage and was almost bracketted together with the Vaisya, 'Bestow splendour on our Brāhmans; bestow splendour on our nobles, bestow splendour on our Vaisyas and Sūdras; bestow splendour over splendour on me.'[1] Yet there was a limit beyond which the Sūdra would not be allowed to stretch. The right of initiation belonged to the Brāhman, Rājanya and Vaisya but never to the Sūdra.'[2] He is definitely declared as 'unfit for sacrifice.' (*Ayajniya*) in the Brāhmanas.[3] Some sort of ceremonial impurity was ascribed to the touch of a Sūdra on certain sacred and solemn occasions. 'Let not a Sūdra milk it out. For this Sūdra has sprung from non-existence. They say that what a Sūdra milks out is no oblation. Let not a Sūdra milk out the Agnihotra. For they do not purify that."[4] As regards the fifth class of *Nishādas*, *Chāndālas* and *Paulkasas*, the earliest mention of whom is to be found in the Yajurveda, according to Prof. Dutta, the latter observes: "They originally denoted only unclean savage tribes living in hills and forests outside settled habitations. So little amenable to culture were they and such abhorrence did they generate in the minds of Āryans and also probably of the more cultured sections of the non-Āryans, that a wall of separation was raised between the men of society and these wild people and they came to form the so-called castless castes whose occupations were those which could not be followed by the higher classes. The humanitarian idea of elevating by slow and laborious work, the cultural level and the standard

1. (T. S. 5-7-6-4). 2. (S. B. 3-1-2-10). 3. (S. B. 3-1-1-10; P. B. 6-1-11). 4. (T. B. 3-2-3).

of life of these unfortunate peoples, was either under the circumstances impracticable or did not occur to the missionaries of the time. The great contempt with which these people were treated becomes somewhat explicable if we remember that besides being of extremely dirty habits and low-culture, they belonged to a Pre-Drāvidian Stock probably Munda-Monkhmer race who had remained unabsorbed by the Drāvidians, and had been treated as Parialis even by the latter. This spirit of contempt existed among the Āryanised Drāvidians and was taken up from them by the Āryans. This feature of the caste system was evidently not a part of the original Indo-Āryan institution but was a thing borrowed from the Drāvidians among whom in the south even in modern times untouchability plays such a prominent part."*

(x) Elevation of Sūdras and degraded persons to Āryanhood by Vratyastoma Ceremony and the Suddhi (purification) movement.

I have already pointed out above that the Dāsas were never directly transformed to the state of Āryanhood but they were first made Sūdras after they had adopted by imitation, the purer and better ways and modes of habits and manners and customs followed by the Āryans in course of several generations. The Āryans had a special ceremony known as the *Vrātyastoma* which is described at great length in the Panch Vimsa Brāhmana attached to the Sāma Veda,[1] and by which those persons among the Āryans who had fallen to a degraded mode of life were admitted back into the fold of Āryans. There were several kinds of Vrātyastoma ceremonies for purifying persons from different modes of degraded life viz., (1) Those who had fallen to a degraded life from Āryanhood and become Vrātyas or fallen by omitting to perform the daily Sandhyā or morning and evening twilight prayers enjoined for every twice-born Āryan and other religious rites and duties (2) those who had been unable to perform the sacred rites incumbent upon them, either on account of young age or old age and (3) those who had been converted from Hindu religion to other religions and faiths and who desired to re-enter into the fold of Āryan religion on performing the necessary cere-

*Origin of Caste in India by N. K Dutta. 1. (See Caland's Translation of the Panchavimsa Brāhmana Ch. XVII Pp. 454, 458).

mony of purification prescribed therefor. Thus several Brāhmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sūdras who embraced other religions and faiths as well as several tribes and groups were reconverted and brought to their original status of Āryanhood after performing the necessary penance. It may be stated here that according to the orthodox view, the caste of a person having been determined by birth, no man who was born in other groups of societies alien to that of Āryans and following other religion or faith and who was neither converted to that religion from Hinduism nor who descended from persons who were thus converted, could be made a Brāhman, Kshatriya, or a Vaisya either by performing Vrātyastoma or other kind of ceremony. At the most the said ceremony could only purify such persons following other faiths and religions so as to make them like *Sat-Sūdras* by following their pure habits and manners but they could not be introduced into the fold of the three higher castes which were twice-born nor could they be initiated to the sacred thread (Upanayana) or qualified to study the Vedas or perform the Vedic sacrifices like the Sūdras who were denied these privileges. The Suddhi movement which is taken up at present by certain modern reformers as the Ārya Samājists, Mahāsabhaites and others to convert to the three higher castes, persons born as Mahomedans, Christians and so on without any connection with Hinduism either in this life or by descent from Āryan ancestors, by giving them names used for the high castes and initiating them to Vedic learning and Vedic sacrifices does not seem to be in conformity with the principles laid down in the Vedas and the Hindu Dharma Shāstras but is an innovation pure and simple which is not acceptable to the orthodox Hindus. However the Ārya Samājists and the Mahāsabhites although they have made a serious departure from the Sanātan Vedic religion in several important respects, yet they have done valuable services to the cause of the Āryan religion by converting persons who admittedly belonged to the fold of Āryans once but were subsequently converted to other religions, by bringing them back to the fold of Āryan religion after undergoing necessary purification ceremonies, as also by reviving the study of the Vedas, and spreading the high culture and civilisation of the Vedic times by introducing several good practices prevailing in Vedic times, e. g. sacrifices, observance of the Vow of celibacy

(Brahmacharya) on the part of the student and so on, elevating the status, dignity, and position of women in general and giving them a liberal education, including religious learning and implanting in the minds of the people ideas of true nationalism in a constitutional manner.

(xi) Chāndālas (untouchables), antyajas (low castes) and Sūdras (servant class) and their inter-relations.

We have already seen above that there were fundamental differences between *Chāndālas* (untouchables) and *Antyajas* (low castes) and the 2 terms were not convertible with each other. While the *Chāndālas* (untouchables) formed a separate class by themselves, the *Antyajas* or low castes formed a part of the *Sūdra* class and belonged to the Āryan race. Further some groups belonging to the fold of *Antyajas* or low castes followed the religious practices, traditions, and customs observed by the Āryans and were distinguished from the other members of their own community by leading a purer mode of life and following better customs and practices. They were not therefore deemed unworthy of social intercourse with the Āryans. Some of the castes enumerated in the long list of low-castes (*Antyajas*) in Vyāsa Smṛiti e.g. carpenters, gardeners, and so on who were *Sat-Sūdras* were not untouchables[1] but they enjoyed the rights and privileges of Āryans, formed an integral part of the Hindu community and did useful services of various kinds to society. The *Chāndālas* being the fifth class formed a distinct and separate class by itself which was outside the pale of the Āryan castes (Varna).

(xii) Two classes of Sūdras, Sat-Sūdras and Asat-Sūdras.

I have already shown above that there were two classes of of Sūdras viz., *Sat-Sūdras* and *Asat-Sūdras.*[2] The former class of Sūdras viz., *Sat-Sūdras* observed the rules of purity and good conduct as laid down in the Hindu Shāstras and performed several domestic rites and ceremonies as practised by the Āryans but without Vedic Mantras. This class also included persons who were begotten by Āryan males on Sūdra or slave girls (Dāsis) by anuloma marriages. The latter class of Sūdras on the other hand viz., *Asat-Sūdras* were of impure habits and they led an impure and bad life nor did they perform any rites as observed by the

1. (V. S. 1-11, 12). 2. (Y. S. 1-95).

Āryans. This class included out-casts from the caste Hindus and sinners and persons of impure origin who were begotten by pratiloma marriages between Āryan females and Sūdra males. Of the several kinds of low-born children born by hybrid or pratiloma marriages, the *Chāndāla* was the basest, being the offspring of marriage between a Brāhman female and a Sūdra male which was considered very sinful and prohibited. While the *Chāndālas* formed the casteless castes and were unworthy of all social intercourse including touch and so on, the other kinds of *Asat-Sūdras* of impure origin constituted the various low-castes called *Antyajas* on account of the low professions carried on by them. The Āryans were naturally averse to have any kind of intercourse and dealings with these classes of persons of impure habits and practices on account of their impure origin and impure and sinful practices and they formed a separate class by themselves. So far as the *Chāndālas* were concerned, they could not be elevated to the status of Āryans in their present life by any amount of austerities performed by them and they had to take repeated births in low-castes for several generations to atone for their sins and misdeeds to enable them to be born in the fold of Āryans as explained in the Mahābhārata in the dialogue between *Indra* and *Mātanga* who was born a Chāndāla by the union of a barber with a Brāhman female.[1] As contrasted with the Chāndālas, several groups of Sūdras and persons belonging to the class of *Antyajas* were elevated in course of time after some births to the higher rank and status of *Sat-Sūdras,* by coming into closer contact with Āryans of superior culture, learning and purity and following their manners, customs and practices. Those among the Āryans who were outcasts on account of their neglect to perform religious rites and ceremonies and duties incumbent on them, were readmitted into their former castes in the fold of Āryanhood after performing the necessary penances prescribed therefor. As regards the regulations laid down in the Dharma Shāstras prohibiting all social intercourse and relations on the part of Āryans with certain classes of persons, they related either to *Chāndālas* who were the most despicable among the untouchables or *Asat-Sūdras* who were of impure and bad habits. Thus it was laid down by Gotama: "He shall not converse with

1. (M. B. A. P. Chs. 27-29).

barbarians (*Mlechhas*), or impure or wicked men, "[1] to which the commentator Haradatta adds a gloss that only a conversation properly so called is forbidden but not a talk asking barbarians about the road and similar matters. On the other hand, the Āryans never showed any aversion towards the *Sat-Sūdras* but they praised them for imitating the practices of virtuous men and studying religious books open to them e.g. Purānas and so on but without reciting sacred texts.[2] Manu further says about them: "The more a Sūdra keeping himself free from envy imitates the behaviour of the virtuous, the more he gains without being censured, exaltation in this world. "[3] It is further said by sage Atri that " by following his own religion even a Sūdra enjoys the celestial region. Another's religion should be abandoned like the most beautiful wife of another person."[4] The above description of Sūdras clearly applied to those who led a purer and holier kind of life, and were called *Sat-Sūdras.* They were also allowed in addition to doing service to the twice-born, to carry on mechanical occupations, arts, industries, handicrafts and other professions such as trade and agriculture as means of livelihood in distressed times, although some of these professions were specially reserved for Vaisyas (trading class), thus elevating the *Sat-Sūdras* to the social rank of Vaisyas.[5]

Exploitation of Sūdras and low-caste men by the reformers.

The high caste Hindus have never interfered with the peculiar professions open to the Sūdras and low-caste men and it is really unfortunate that of late some reformers have begun to exploit these persons belonging to low-castes by depriving them of their professions e.g. laundries, tanneries, hair cutting saloons and so on which are captured by some of these reformers to the great detriment of these poor persons.

(xiii) Elevation of status of Sat-Sūdras and persons of low-castes of pure habits and special rights accorded to some of them by way of exception.

The relations between the Āryans and the Sūdras were very cordial from the very commencement and there was no love lost between them. It may be further mentioned here that although

1. (G. D. S. 9-16). 2. (M. S. 10-127). 3. (10-128). 4. (At. S. 18).
5. (M. S. 10-99, 100; At. S. 15; P. S. 2-15).

the Sūdras were not generally entitled to study the Vedas or perform Vedic sacrifices and other rites accompanied with Vedic Mantras, exceptions were made even in Vedic times in the case of some of them known as *Sat-Sūdras* who were allowed certain special rights and privileges. Thus a *Rathakāra* or a chariot-maker was entitled to keep holy fire (Agni Ādhāna) for a sacrifice for the rainy season, although he was not twice-born, but a Sūdra.[1] Similarly a *Nishāda sthapati* or a chief belonging to the tribe of Nishāda (a low and wild tribe of Bheel) was considered entitled to perform Raudra Yāga sacrifice although he was not a twice-born person.[2] Likewise we find in the Rāmāyana, that the divine incarnation Shri Rāma, when he had started on his way to the forest being banished there by his father king Dasharatha, he was given a very warm reception and a close embrace by *Guha*, the King of Nishādas, (an aboriginal race of low caste e.g. Bheel but not a Chāndāla).[3] We also find in the Vedas that in exceptional cases certain Sūdras (*Sat-Sūdras*) by virtue of their leading a religious and moral life, were actually elevated to the status and position of Ṛishis which was generally reserved to Brāhmans. Thus *Kakshivān* who was begotten by the sage Dirghantamas on a maid servant of king Swanaya was respected as a Ṛishi and a seer of certain hymns of the Ṛig Veda although he was a Sūdra.[4] Similarly *Kavasha Ailusha* who was the son of a Brāhman by a slave-girl (Dāsi), was also revered as a Ṛishi and a seer of certain other hymns in the same Veda.[5] Further *Vidur* who was the author of a treatise on morals is praised very highly in the Mahābhārata although he was begotten by the sage Veda Vyāsa on a maid servant (Dāsi). Lastly we have the further instance of *Dharma Vyādha* who although he was a flesh vendor and belonged to a very low class was highly respected on account of his piety and highly religious and moral life. This shows that the Āryans were not slow in recognising merit wherever it existed even in Sūdras and persons of low-castes but who led a pure and pious life. The cases cited above were however exceptional and not normal. These pious souls were respected on account of their superior learning and pure habits acquired by them by the religious tendencies inherited by them from their past lives. It may

1. (J. S. 6-1-44 to 50). 2. (J. S. 6-1-51, 52). 3. (Rāmāyana 2-50-35, 40).
4. (R. V. 1-116 to 120). 5. (R. V. 10-30 to 34; A. B. 8-1).

be stated here that although Vedic learning was not imparted to the Sūdras and low castes, yet religious instructions were imparted to them from the Purānas and the two Epics, Rāmāyana and Māhābhārata which were always open to them. Besides the path of devotion as taught by our Lord Shri Krishna in the Gitā was specially thrown open to Sūdras and women and even to the worst sinners. Thus it is stated in the Gitā: "Finding refuge in me, they also who may be of sinful birth, women, Vaisyas as well as Sūdras-even they attain to the Supreme Goal."[1] Further Lord Shri Krishna has stated in the Gitā: "The same I am to all beings; to me there is none hateful or dear; but who worship me with devotion they are in me and I am also in them."[2] This principle is in consonance with the Upanishadic doctrine of Advaita or non-dual monism according to which there is unity in variety and the supreme spirit of God-head extends universally in all, including even the worst sinner, though veiled in cloudy ignorance of the latter which requires to be enlightened by following the precepts laid down in the Shāstras. It will thus appear from the above that according to the Gitā and the Hindu Shāstras, there is no question of any hatred or apathy towards any castes whether Sūdras or backward classes who are all integral parts of the body corporate of the Hindu community. The Sūdras are enjoined to do useful services to the society as a whole in a spirit of loving co-operation and devotion to the Lord in conformity with the religious precepts as laid down in the Shāstras so as to foster feelings of a real brotherhood and unity in the Hindu society.

(xiv) Growing spirit of communalism harmful to the growth of true nationalism and unity

The Hindus have lived with these classes of poor persons viz., Sūdras and persons belonging to low castes since generations past most peacefully and in harmony without any conflict with them until recently when seeds of rank communalism were implanted in their minds by certain persons out of political and similar considerations. Such spirit of communalism unless checked in time is bound to develop and result into internal dissentions and discords between classes and classes of the Hindu community,

1. (B. G. 9-32). 2. (B. G. 9-29).

thus crippling the solidarity and unity of the Hindu community as a nation. It may be pointed out here that some low castes as those carrying on the business of laundries, tanneries and so on, have risen to affluent circumstances and they cannot be treated as backward classes any more being no longer in need of any special protection.

(13) Punishments and penalties for religious offences and sins.

(i) Sin due to a transgression of the divine laws.

We have seen above that every part of a Hindu's life was governed by minute rules and regulations relating to piety and good conduct which were laid down in the Dharma Shāstras to preserve the racial purity of the Āryans and any infraction of the said rules and regulations entailed the performance of certain penances as laid down in the Dharma Shāstras by way of atonement for the sins resulting from the commission of religious offences. The religious offences were committed by a violation of the divine laws laid down for the guidance of the Āryans. The idea of sin as resulting from violation of the divine laws appears definitely stated in the hymns addressed to God Varuna-the supreme presiding deity of the moral law in the Ṛig Veda. God Varuna is described in the Ṛig Veda as a self-dependent monarch (Swarāj); as well as a universal ruler.[1] The epithest 'māyin' (i.e. one possessed of occult power) is also applied to him. His personality is more fully developed as the moral God as well as the great Lord of the laws of nature. His ordinances which governed gods, man and things alike cannot be transgressed.[2] It is by his law that the heaven and earth are held apart.[3] He is also called 'Ṛitasya Gopta' or guardian of 'law and order' and 'Ṛitavat' or 'the observer of order'. God Varuna is the only God who is so frequently prayed to in the Ṛig Veda to forgive and destroy the sins that man may have committed through thoughtlessness or ignorance. This sentiment is beautifully expressed in the following hymns of the Ṛig Veda: "Somehow through weakness of my will, I went astray; shining one, be gracious, mighty Lord and spare."[4] "Whatever wrong we men commit against the race of heavenly ones, O Varuna, whatever law of thine, we here

1. (R. V. 8-42-1). 2. (R. V. 8-41-7). 3. (R. V. 6-70-1). 4. (R. V. 7-89-3).

have broken through thoughtlessness, for that transgression, do not punish us O God."[1] Merciful to penitents, he is angry with those who transgress his laws.[2] His punishment of the sinful is as severe as his bounties are plentiful.[3] He binds with fetters and inflicts disease and death on evil-doers, while he frees those who humbly pray to him for forgiveness for their sins as also for the sins committed by their fathers and ancestors. The committing of sin also leads to disease and death.[4] Sin is committed by killing or cursing,[5] deceiving[6] and by inordinate indulgence in drink, anger, or dice, and his forgiveness is obtained by confession,[7] prayer for remission of penalty,[8] by oblations and sacrifices[9] and by hymns of praise."[10] "The Ordinances of Varuna are unchangeable and even the gods must follow them.[11] Hence he is called 'Dhritavrat' (i,e. one whose ordinances are fixed."[12] This would clearly show to the reader how high was the veneration paid by the Āryans to the divine laws which must be obeyed by them as their paramount duty and any transgression of the same incurred the highest displeasure and wrath of the supreme lord who inflicted a heavy punishment on the sinners for the sins committed by them unless they were atoned for by a candid and full confession of the same and a performance of the special penances prescribed therefor. The Supreme God of Justice as conceived by the Vedic Āryans was not an autocrat who dispensed his divine fiats from his Royal throne in the highest heaven in an arbitrary manner according to his whims and caprices, punishing the offenders in a vindictive manner and giving special rewards to the chosen few belonging to a particular sect or creed who followed the dogmas as laid down in their respective sects or creeds. But He was a just and merciful God who was above petty considerations of caste, creed or sect. The justice dispensed by the Supreme Lord was in exact accordance with definite laws whether moral or natural and it was also tempered with mercy according to the penitence and genuine remorse displayed by the delinquent.

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1. (R. V. 7-89-5). 2. (R. V. 7-86-2, 3, 7; 1-25-2). 3. (R. V. 7-88-1). 4. (R V. 7-86-4). 5. (R. V. 1-41-8). 6. (R. V. 2-27-16). 7. (R. V. 7-86-6). 8. (R. V. 7-86-5). 9. (R. V. 1-24-14). 10. (See Religion in Vedic literature by Dr. P. S. Deshmukha). 11. (R. V. 8-41-7). 12. (R. V. 1-25-8, 10).

(ii) Theories of punishment.

Law and punishment as instruments to preserve Peace and Order.

Law and punishment were instruments to preserve peace and order. " Punishment alone governs all created beings, punishment alone protects them, punishment watches over them while they sleep; the wise declare punishment to be identical with law".[1] "If the king did not without tiring inflict punishment on those worthy to be punished, the stronger would roast the weaker like fish on a spit."[2] 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 enjoyment which it owes.[3] Even the gods perform the respective functions assigned to them for the good and protection of the universe by fear of punishment.[4] It is thus laid down in the Upanishads " Through fear the fire warms, through fear the sun shines, through fear move Indra, the wind, and death as the fifth ".[5] " Let the king act with justice in his own domain, with rigour chastise his enemies and behave without duplicity towards his friends ".[6] The fame of a king who behaves thus spreads in the world like a drop of oil on water.[7] But the fame of a king who acts in a contrary manner diminishes in extent like a drop of clarified butter in water.[8] The king has been created to be the protector of the castes and orders (*Varnāshrama*) who all according to their rank discharge their several duties.[9] A king who properly inflicts punishment prospers but he who is voluptuous, partial and deceitful will be destroyed even through the unjust punishment which he inflicts,[10] e.g. Vena, Nahusha and others.[11]

Retributive Theory.

The retributive theory of punishment traces the origin of Justice to the instinct of vengeance as appears stated in the maxim " a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye, and a life for a life ".[12] Punishment is an end in itself according to this theory and the wrong done by one must be paid in his own coin in order that

1. (M. S. 7-18). 2. (7-20). 3. (7-22). 4. (7-23). 5. (K. U. 6-3; T. U. 2-8). 6. (M. S. 7-32). 7. (7-33). 8. (7-34). 9. (7-35). 10. (7-27). 11. (7-41). 12. (Mayne's criminal law of India).

justice may be vindicated. Though the retributive theory of punishment savours of an element of savagery and barbarism, yet its value has been emphasised by such a great personage as Kant who is recognised as one of the greatest philosophers of the modern time. Kant makes the following observations on the point: "Juridical punishment can never be administered merely as a means for promoting another good, either with regard to the criminal himself or to civil society but must in all cases be imposed only because the individual on whom it is inflicted has committed a crime. The penal law is a categorial imperative and woe to him who creeps through the serpent windings of utilitarianism to discover some advantage that may discharge him from the Justice of punishment or even from the due measure of it."[1] The retributive theory proceeds on the principle of the intrinsic value of punishment as a vindication of justice and cannot be lightly brushed aside in all cases but it holds good even today in cases of murder when the culprit who is found guilty and convicted of the offence, is sentenced to a punishment of death.

The deterrent or preventive theory.

The deterrent or preventive theory of punishment proceeds on the view that punishment is never an end in itself but it is merely a means whereby some good may be reached. According to this theory, punishment is made to frighten others from doing wrong. The robber is sent to the jail not because the offence deserves punishment but because others may be prevented from committing such offences. This theory is utilitarian in principle.

The reformative or educative theory.

The last theory is known as the reformative or educative theory. It proceeds on the view that the object of punishment is not so much to punish the offender as to educate him and improve his character in future. This theory like the last one is also utilitarian or teleological having some purpose in view to realise which punishment is meted out to the offender. Whatever may be the merits and demerits of the above theories, it is quite clear that the amount of punishment is never fixed on any retributive standard but it is

1. (Kant's philosophy of law' tr. by Hastie P. 195).

always fixed on utilitarian considerations. In giving punishment to an offender an account is always taken of the motive and intention with which the offence was committed. As against the reformative theory, it may be stated that if punishment is meted out with a view to improvement only, then punishment loses its force altogether. Punishment is no punishment at all unless it is vindicative of the dignity of law. The end of punishment however was prevention of crime, and so punishment should never be severe or out of vindictiveness. "In meting out punishment to the offender, three things are taken into consideration viz., to vindicate the dignity of law, to purify the guilty, and to strike terror into the heart of others. It is only when a particular crime becomes rampant that rougher punishments come into play." If punishments are unduly severe and vindictive, they lose all chance of improving the character and conduct of the delinquent and make him more callous and blunt than before. In meting out punishments to offenders all the above theories are therefore taken into consideration.

(iii) Primitive Punishments.

In olden times punishments were private and revengeful but a great step forward was taken when the sphere of private revenge was supplanted by the authority of State. We find that the system of wergild (*Vairdeya*) was in vogue in Vedic times,[1] according to which the offender had to pay fines of varying amount for murder, culpable homicide and other crimes against person by paying which the offender was free from all further punishment. The payment of fine for killing a man varied very much; it often took the form of handing over a number of cows to the relatives of the person injured.[2] Among other forms of punishment then prevalent, there was the ordeal of red-hot-axe which had to be held by the offender in his hands and he was held innocent if he escaped burning but he was held guilty of the offence if his hands felt marks of burning.[3] In some cases the punishment was binding the offender to posts[4] or death. There is a reference (in the Vedas) to a prison,[5] to fetters of iron,[6] to ordeals of fire, water and a

1. (R. V. 5-61-8). 2. (A. D. S. 1-9-24-1 to 4). 3. (Ch. U. 6-16).
4. (A. V. 19-47-9). 5. (R. V. 4-12-5). 6. (A. V. 6-63-2).

combat.[1] Thieves were to be severely beaten.[2] The Atharvaveda calls for a very horrible punishment on a man for injuring a Brāhman's cow viz. crushing his bones and dislocating all his limbs.[3] "A. first offender should be let off with a warning; an offender who is guilty twice should be let off with a strong censure, one who has committed the offence for a 3rd time should be punished with a fine; while death, corporal punishment or mutilation of a limb was the penalty for one who had committed the same crime for the fourth time.[4] It may be mentioned here that the criminal law as laid down in the Scriptures and the Dharma Shāstras has been supplanted by the Indian Penal code being Act 45 of 1860.

(iv) Punishment of fines

Fining was the most conspicuous mode of punishment in former times. "Fining was inflicted as a punishment for giving false evidence,[5] for non-payment of debt,[6] and for misappropriation of property.[7] Punishment in those days varied according to the castes of the offenders. Thus the fine for the life of a Kshatriya was 1000 cows; for a Vaisya 100 cows and 10 for a Sūdra. But the crime of killing a Brāhman was too heinous to be punished with a fine merely. A Brāhman using abusive language to a Kshatriya was liable to a fine of 50 Panas, in the case of a Vaisya the fine shall be 25 Panas, in the case of a Sūdra 12 Panas. But a Kshatriya, a Vaisya and a Sūdra guilty of the same offence against a Brāhman were liable to a fine of 100 Panas, a fine of 150 to 200 Panas and a corporal punishment respectively.[8] Although the above mode of discriminative and varying punishments according to the castes of the offenders does not appear to be just and satisfactory from the standpoint of modern system of administration of justice, yet as Mr. Buch puts it in his Hindu Ethics "it should never be forgotten that the Hindu law-makers at the same time lay down that in proportion to the greater knowledge of the delinquent, guilt is greater. Thus we read in Shāntiparva that if great men transgress (the law), their chastisement should be proportionate to their greatness."[9] Manu also says in this connection:

1. (R. V. 1-158-4, 5). 2. (A. V. 4-3-5). 3. (A. V. 12-5-65 to 71). 4. (M. S. 8-129, 130; Y. S. 1-366, 367). 5. (8-120, 121). 6. (8-139). 7. (8-264). 8. (M. S. 8-267, 268). 9. (M. B. S. P. Ch. 273; Hindu Ethics by Mr. Buch).

"For having committed a theft, a Sūdra cognisant of the law shall be punished with a fine eight times the usual one in value; a Vaisya with a fine sixteen times; a Kshatriya with a fine thirty-two times; and a Brāhman with a fine 64, 100, or 128 times the usual one in value."[1] Mr. R. C. Dutta also observes in this connection: "Manners × × × × change with times and many portions of the institutes of Manu have ceased to be operative in their present day in their entirety. The draconic severity of the law towards Sūdras was probably never reduced to practice even in the days of Brāhman supremacy, and all distinctions in punishment based on caste, certainly ceased to have operation after the Mahomedan conquest of India."[2]

(v) Corporal punishments.

"Corporal punishments were prescribed for assault,[3] and for cases of theft.[4] Mutilation of limbs and even capital punishment were the lot of thieves of valuable property.[5] A robber deserves a worse punishment.[6] A man incurs the penalty of having his fingers cut off if he is guilty of rape.[7] An adulterous woman is liable to be devoured by dogs in a place frequented by many.[8] Very cruel punishments involving mutilation of limbs were inflicted on adulterers."[9]

(vi) Penances for sins and religious offences by way of purification.

A man who omits a prescribed act, or performs a blameable act or cleaves to sensual enjoyments must perform a penance otherwise he goes to hell. For purification therefore penance should be performed by him in this world. The inner self of such a man as well as the world become pleased.[10] All sages have prescribed a penance for a sin committed unintentionally, while some declare on the evidence of revealed texts that it may be performed even for an intentional offence. A sin unintentionally committed is expiated by the recitation of Vedic texts but that which men in their folly commit intentionally is expiated by various special penances. According to sage Yājnavalkya a sin committed knowingly is not

1. (M. S. 8-337-8). 2. (R. C. Dutta's history of civilisation in Ancient India Vol. III P. 199). 3. (M. S. 8-280 to 283). 4. (8-322, 325). 5. (8-334, 322, 323). 6. (8-345). 7. (8-367). 8. (8-371). 9. (8-370 to 383; Hindu Ethics by M. A. Buch). 10. (M. S. 11-44; V. D. S. 20-1 to 3 and 22; Y. S. 3-219, 220).

expiated by a penance but by virtue of a text he can associate with his community.[1] A man is polluted by a vile action, e.g. sacrificing for men unworthy to offer a sacrifice, eating forbidden food, speaking what ought not to be spoken, neglecting what is prescribed and practising what is forbidden.[2] The guilt (*Adharma*) contracted by the deed is not effaced before it has produced its result in the shape of punishment in hell and in other births.[3] The most excellent opinion is that he shall perform a penance.[4] For it is declared in the Veda that he who has offered a Punastoma may again come to partake of the libations of Soma.[5] Likewise he who has offered a Vrātyastoma which was a special rite for expiating the sins resulting from leading a degraded life and omitting to perform obligatory and other religious rites enjoined for the twice born.[6] The Veda says further that he who has offered a horse sacrifice conquers all sins, he destroys the guilt of the murder of a Brāhman.[7] Forseeing that in Kali Yuga, men will be more irreligious and impious, the omniscient sage Pārāsara has dealt with the subject of Penances and purifications at great length in his law book which is specially meant for the present Kali age and he concludes by stating that "all sins are extinguished through the practice of *Chāndrāyana* or *Tulāpurusha* which is an 8 days penance in which the delinquent had to live on one kind of food only for 5 days e.g. washed rice water, whey, barley meal and so on and to fast for 3 days as well as by living on barley diet, or by following the cows to pasturage.[8] By carefully taking into account time and place, age and ability and the nature of the crime one should lay down the penitential rite.[9] If a person refused to perform any penance, his own kinsmen should make the female servant of such an outcast, carry his water vessel filled with water to the outskirts of the village and ostracise him from all social and religious works.[10]

Austerities (Tapa), Gifts (Dāna) and sacrifices (Yajna), the great purifiers from sin.

It is laid down by our Lord Sri Krishna in the Gitā that sacrifice (*Yajna*), gift (*Dāna*), and austerities (*Tapa*) are the three

1. (M. S. 11-45, 46; Y. S. 3-226). 2. (G. D. S. 19-2). 3. (G. D. S. 19-5). 4. (G. D. S. 19-6). 5. (19-7). 6. (19-8). 7. (19-9). 8. (P. S. 12-72; Y. S. 3-322). 9. (Y. S. 3-293). 10. (Y. S. 3-294).

great purifiers from sins.[1] Reciting the Veda, austerities (*Tapa*) a sacrifice (*Yajna*), fasting, and making gifts (*Dāna*) are the means for expiating a blameable act.[2] The purificatory texts are the Upanishads, the Vedānta, the Saṁhitā text of all the Vedas, the Anuvākas called Madhu, the hymn of Aghamarshana, the Atharvashrias, the Anuvākas called the Rudras, the Purusha hymn, the Sāmans etc., the Pāvamānis and the Sāvitri.[3] To live on milk alone, to eat vegetables only, to eat fruits only, to live on barley gruel prepared of a handful of grain, to eat gold, to eat clarified butter, and to drink Soma are modes of living which purify men from sin.[4] All mountains, all rivers, holy lakes, places of pilgrimage, the dwellings of Ṛishis, cowpens and temples of the gods are places which destroy sin.[5] Continence, speaking the truth, bathing morning, noon, and evening, standing in wet clothes, sleeping on the ground and fasting are the various kinds of austerities (*Tapa*).[6] Gold, a cow, a dress, a horse, land, sesamum, clarified butter, and food are the gifts (*Dāna*) which destroy sin.[7] The periods of penances vary from 1 year to 6 months, 4 months, 3 months, 2 months, 1 month, 24 days, 12 days, 6 days, 3 days, a day and a night.[8] These acts may be optionally performed when no particular penance has been prescribed.[9] For great sins (*Mahāpātakas*) difficult penances are prescribed and for trivial faults easy ones are prescribed.[10] The *Kṛichchra*, the *Ati-Kṛichchra*, and *Chāndrāyana* are severe penances prescribed for all offences.[11] In consequence of a remnant of the guilt of former crimes, persons are born idiots, dumb, blind, deaf, and deformed, who are all despised by the virtuous.[12] Penances therefore must always be performed for the sake of purification because those whose sins have not been expiated, are born again with disgraceful marks.[13]

Repentance after confession and a determination not to commit sin in future essential elements of all penances and purifications.

Mere performance of penances and purifications as prescribed in the Shāstras is of no effect unless it is coupled with a confession

1. (B. G 18-5). 2. (G. D. S. 19-11). 3. (ibid 19-12). 4. (19-13).
5. (19-14). 6. (19-15). 7. (19-16). 8. (19-17). 9. (19-18).
10. (19-19). 11. (19-20). 12. (M. S. 11-53). 13. (11-54).

and a genuine remorse from the heart and a determination not to commit the sin in future. By confession, by repentance, by austerity, and by reciting the Veda, a sinner is freed from guilt, and in case no other course is possible by liberality.[1] In proportion as a man who has done wrong himself confesses it, even so far he is freed from guilt, as a snake from its slough.[2] Hence one should confess the sin committed by him before the synod of learned Brāhmans (*Vidvat Parishad*) and perform the penance laid down by them.[3] In proportion as his heart loathes his evil deed, so far is his body freed from that guilt.[4] He who has committed a sin and has repented is freed from sin, but he is purified only by a determined resolution of ceasing to commit sin and thinking 'I will do no more.'[5] Having thus considered in his mind what will arise from his deeds after death, let him always be good in thoughts, speech and actions.[6] He who having unintentionally or intentionally committed a reprehensible deed, desires to be freed from the guilt of it, must not commit it a second time.[7] If his mind be uneasy with respect to any act, let him repeat the austerities prescribed as a penance for it until they full satisfy his conscience.[8]

Value of austerities.

All the bliss of gods and men is declared by the sages to whom the Veda was revealed, to have austerity for its root, austerity for its middle and austerity for its end.[9] The pursuit of sacred knowledge is the austerity of a Brāhman, protecting the people is the austerity of a Kshatriya, the pursuit of his daily business is the austerity of a Vaisya and service is the austerity of a Sūdra.[10] Sages who control themselves and subsist on fruit, roots, and air, survey the 3 worlds through their austerities alone.[11] Medicines, good health, learning, and the various divine stations are attained by austerities alone; for austerity is the means of gaining them.[12] Both those who have committed mortal sins (*Mahāpātaka*) and all other offenders are severally freed from their guilt by means of well-performed austerities.[13] Whatever sin men commit by thoughts, words or deeds, that they speedily burn away by penance, if they

1. (M. S 11-228; P. S. 9-62). 2. (11-229). 3. (P. S. 9-62). 4. (M. S. 11-230). 5. (11-231). 6. (11-232). 7. (11-233). 8. (11-234). 9. (11-235). 10. (11-236). 11. (11-237). 12. (11-238) 13. (11-240).

keep penance as their only riches.[1] The gods accept the offerings of that Brāhman only who has purified himself by austerities, and grant to him all he desires.[2]

(vii) Classes of difficult penances.

Kṛichchra, Ati-Kṛichchra and Chāndrāyana penances for expiating sins.

For the expiation of offences for which no atonement has been prescribed, let him fix a penance after considering the offender's strength and the nature of offence.[3] The difficult penances prescribed in the Dharma Shāstras for expiating different sins committed by a person are *Kṛichchra, Tapta Kṛichchra, Ati-Kṛichchra* and *Chāndrāyana* which rise in severity according to the gravity of the sins and offences.

Prājapatya Kṛichchra penance.

As regards the *Prājapatya Kṛichchra* penance revealed by Prajāpati, the twice-born who performs it for expiating a sin committed by him, shall during the first three days eat in the morning only food fit for offerings and fast in the evening. Next he shall eat food fit for offerings during another period of three days in the evening only. Next during another period of 3 days, he shall not ask anybody for food. Next he shall fast during another period of three days.[4]

Sāntapana Kṛichchra.

Subsisting on *Panchagavya* consisting of the urine of cows, cow-dung, milk, sour-milk, and clarified butter, and a decoction of kusha grass, and fasting during one day and night, that is called a *Sāntapana Kṛichchra.*[5]

Tapta Kṛichchra penance.

A Brāhman who performs a *Tapta Kṛichchra* penance, must drink hot water, hot milk, hot clarified butter and inhale hot air, each during three days, and bathe once with a concentrated mind.[6]

A Parāka Kṛichchra.

A fast for 12 days by a man who controls himself and commits no mistakes is called a *Parāka Kṛichchra* which removes all guilt.[7]

1. (11-242). 2. (11-243). 3. (M. S. 11-210, 211). 4. (M. S. 11-212; G. D. S. 26-2 to 5; A. D. S. 1-27-7; V. D. S. 21-20; Y. S. 3-319). 5. (11-213; Y. S. 3-314). 6. (11-215; Y. S. 3-317). 7. (11-216; Y. S. 3-320).

Ati-Kṛichchra.

A twice-born person who performs the *Ati-Kṛichchra* penance must take his food during three periods of three days in the manner described above but one mouthful only at each meal and fast during the last three days.[1] He who desires to be purified quickly shall stand during the day and sit during the night. He shall speak the truth. He shall not converse with any body but Āryans. He shall daily sing the two Sāmans. He shall bathe in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, reciting the 3 prescribed verses and he shall dry himself reciting the prescribed purificatory verses (Pāvamāni). Next he shall offer libatious of water. The worship of the sun must be performed with the prescribed texts. Offerings of clarified butter must be made with the help of the same texts. At the end of the period of 12 days, he shall eat boiled rice and make offerings to the deities Agni (fire), Soma, Agni and Soma, Indra and Agni, to Indra, to all the gods, to Brahman, to Prajāpati, and to Agni svista Kṛit. Afterwards he must feed Brāhmans. By the above rules, the Ati-Kṛichchra penance has been explained. When he performs that, he shall eat only as much as he can take at one mouthful.[2]

Kṛichchra Ati-Kṛichchra.

The Third Kṛichchra is that where water is the only food and it is called *Kṛichchra Ati-Kṛichchra* (or the most difficult penance). According to Gotama the period of this penance is 12 days only but according to Yājnavalkya, it is 21 days. He who has performed the first of these three, becomes pure, sanctified, and worthy to follow the occupations of his caste. He who has performed the second is freed from all sins which he commits excepting great or mortal sins (*Mahāpātakas*). He who performs the third removes all guilt. Now he who performs these three Kṛichchras becomes perfect in all the Vedas and known to all the gods. Likewise he who knows this.[3]

Chāndrāyana penance.

The *Chāndrāyana* or the lunar penance is the most difficult penance which is prescribed for expiating the most heinous offences.

1. (11-214; Y. S. 3-319). 2 (G. D. S. 26-6 to 19). 3. (G. D. S. 26-20 to 25 Y. S. 3-320).

If one diminishes one's food daily by one mouthful during the dark half of the month and increases it in the same manner during the bright half and bathes daily at the time of three libations (morning, noon and evening), that is called the lunar penance or *Chāndrāyana.*[1] The general rules prescribed for a Kṛichchra penance are applicable to the Chāndrāyana. The hair must be shaved in case it is performed as a penance. He shall fast on the day preceding the full moon. And he shall offer libations of water, oblations of clarified butter, consecrate the sacrificial Viands and worship the moon reciting the prescribed Mantras of the Ṛig Veda.[2] He shall offer clarified butter reciting the 4 prescribed Mantras. And at the end of the offering of clarified butter, he shall offer pieces of sacred fuel reciting certain holy texts. Each mouthful of food must be consecrated by the mental recitations of one of following words 'Om Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svah, austerity, truth, fame, prosperity, vigour, refreshment, strength lustre, soul, law, Siva.' Or he may consecrate all of them at once saying Adoration Svāhā. The size of the mouthful shall be such as not to cause a distortion of the mouth in swallowing it. The sacrificial Viands are boiled rice, food obtained by begging, ground barley-gruel, vegetables, milk, sour milk, clarified butter, roots, fruits and water; among these each succeeding one is perferable to those enumerated earlier. He shall eat on the day of full moon 15 mouthfuls and during the dark half of the month daily diminish his portion by one mouthful. He shall fast on the day of the new moon, and during the bright half of the month daily increase his portion by one mouthful. According to some the order shall be inverted, i.e. the performer may begin with the fast on the day of the new moon. That is called a month occupied by the *Chāndrāyana* penance. He who has completed that, becomes free from sin and free from crime and destroys all guilt He who has completed a second month living according to the above rule sanctifies himself, his ten ancestors and ten descendants as well as any company to which he may be invited. And he who has lived for a year according to that rule dwells after death in the world of the moon.[3] He who performs the lunar penance of ascetics, shall eat during a

1. (M. S. 11-217; Y. S. 3 323). 2 (R. V. 1-91-17; 1-91-18; 10-85-19).
3. (G D. S. 27-1 to 18).

month daily at mid-day, eight mouthfuls, controlling himself and consuming sacrificial food only.[1] If a Brāhman with concentrated mind, eats during a month daily 4 mouthfuls in a morning and 4 after sun set, that is the lunar penance of children.[2] He who concentrating his mind eats during a month in any way thrice eighty mouthfuls of sacrificial food, dwells after death in the world of the moon.[3] The Rudras, likewise the Adityas, the Vasus, and the Maruts, together with the great sages, practised this rite in order to remove all evil.[4] Burnt oblations must daily be made by the penitent himself, and he must abstain from injury to sentient creatures, speak the truth, and keep himself free from anger and from dishonesty.[5] Let him bathe three times each day and thrice each night, dressed in his clothes; let him on no account while performing the penance talk to women, Sūdras, and outcasts.[6]

(viii) Classification of sins, as Mahāpātakas (great sins) Upapātakas and other minor sins.

Mahāpātakas or great sins.

The following sins are called *Mahāpātakas* or the great mortal sins viz., killing a Brāhman, drinking the liquor called Surā or wine, stealing the gold of a Brāhman, adultery with a Guru's (teacher's) wife, and association with men who have committed these offences.[7] These sins involved a loss of caste. For the above first four great sins, if they do not perform the prescribed penance, let him inflict corporal punishment and fines in accordance with the law.[8] For violating a Guru's bed, a mark shall be impressed on the forehead with a hot iron; for drinking the spirituous liquor called Surā, (wine) the sign of a tavern (i.e. a wine-cup), for stealing the gold of a Brāhman a dog's foot, and for murdering a Brāhman a headless corpse.[9] Excluded from all fellowship at meals, excluded from instruction and from matrimonial alliances, abject and excluded from all religious duties, let them wander over this earth.[10] Such persons who have been branded with indeliable marks must be cast off by their relations and receive neither compassion nor a salutation; that is the teaching of Manu.[11] But men of all castes who perform the

1. (M. S. 11-219). 2. (11-220). 3. (11-221). 4. (11-222) 5. (11-223).
6. (11-224). 7. (M. S. 9-235; 11-55; V. D. S. 1-19 to 21; G. D. S. 21-1 to 10).
8. (M. S. 9-236). 9. (9-237). 10. (9-238). 11. (9-239).

prescribed penances must not be branded on the forehead by the king, but must be made to pay the highest amercement or fine.[1] For such offences, if committed by a Brāhman, the middlemost amercement shall be inflicted or he may be banished from the realm keeping his money and chattels.[2] If men of castes other than that of Brāhman, have unintentionally committed such crimes, they ought to be deprived of their whole property. If they committed the crimes, intentionally, they shall be banished.[3] The most terrible punishment was prescribed for drinking wine viz., the drinker was made to drink hot boiling liquor until he was completely scalded.[4] Falsely giving information to the king regarding a crime, and falsely accusing one's teacher are offences equal to slaying a Brāhman.[5] Reviling the Veda, giving false evidence, slaying a friend, and eating forbidden food, are offences equal to drinking wine.[6] Stealing a deposit, or men, horse, silver, land, diamonds and other gems is declared to be equal to stealing the gold of a Brāhman.[7] Carnal intercourse with sisters by the same mother, with unmarried maidens, with females of the lowest castes, with the wives of a friend or of a son, they declare to be equal to the violation of a Guru's bed.[8]

Upapātakas or less grave sins and offences causing loss of caste (Jātibramsa).

Among Upapātakas or less grave sins, we find slaying kine, sacrificing for those who are unworthy to sacrifice, adultery, selling oneself, casting off one's teacher, mother, father or son, giving up the daily study of the Veda, and neglecting the sacred domestic fire;[9] defiling a damsel, usury, breaking a vow, and selling one's wife or child;[10] living as a Vrātya (i.e. one who has fallen by neglecting all obligatory and other rites and duties enjoined for the twice-born), casting off a relative, teaching the Veda for wages, learning the Veda from a paid teacher, and selling goods which one ought not to sell;[11] superintending mines or factories of any kind, executing great mechanical works, e.g. making machines for killing great animals and so on, injuring living plants, subsisting on the earnings of one's wife, sorcery by means of sacrifices, and working magic by means of roots and so forth;[12] neglecting to kindle the sacred fire, theft, non-payment of the three debts (viz., to the

1. (9-240). 2. (9-241). 3. (9-242). 4. (11-91). 5. (11-56). 6. (11-57). 7. (11-58). 8. (11-59). 9. (11-60). 10. (11-62). 11. (11-63). 12. (11-64).

sages, the fathers and the gods), studying bad books, and practising the arts of dancing and singing,[1] stealing grain and cattle, intercourse with women who drink spirituous liquor, slaying women, Sūdras Vaisyas or Kshatriyas, and atheism–all these are *Upapātakas* or offences which cause a loss of caste.[2] Giving pain to a Brāhman (e.g. by a blow), smelling at things which ought not to be smelt at e.g. garlics, onions etc. or at spirituous liquor, cheating and an unnatural offence with a man, are declared to cause the loss of caste (*Jāti bramsha*).[3]

Other minor sins and offences.

Killing a donkey, a horse, a camel, a deer, an elephant, a goat, a sheep, a fish, a snake, or a buffalo, these offences degrade the offender to a mixed caste (*Saṁkarīkarana*) and he is purified by reinitiation after undergoing necessary penance.[4] Accepting presents from blamed men, trading, serving Sūdras and speaking a falsehood make the offender unworthy to receive gifts (*Apātra*).[5] Killing insects small or large, or birds, eating anything kept close to spirituous liquor, stealing fruit, firewood, or flowers are offences which make men impure (*Malāvaha*).[6] Special penances are prescribed in the Dharma Shāstras for an expiation of sins resulting from different offences.[7]

Secret sins and penances for their expiation.

The penances for sins made public are mentioned above, while different penances are prescribed for secret sins. Sixteen suppressions of the breath (*Prānāyama*), accompanied by the recitation of the Vyāhṛities and of the syllable 'OM' purify a man after a month for the secret sins committed by him including even the murder of a learned Brāhman, provided the said penances are repeated daily.[8] Even a drinker of wine, the person who has stolen gold and the violator of a Guru's bed in secret, become pure by muttering the prescribed Mantras.[9] He who desires to expiate sins, great or small, must mutter during a year the Rik verse 'May we remove thy anger, O Varuna etc.', or 'whatever offence here O Varuna etc.'[10] That man who having accepted presents which ought not to

1. (11–66). 2 (11–67). 3. (11–68). 4. (11–69). 5. (11–70). 6. (11–71). 7. (11–72 to 179). 8. (11–219). 9. (11–250 to 252). 10. (11–253; Ṛ. V. 1–24–14; 7–89–5).

be accepted or having eaten forbidden food, becomes pure after three days by muttering the prescribed verse.[1] But he who has committed many sins becomes pure if he recites during a month the four verses addressed to Soma and Rudra and also other prescribed verses, while he bathes in a river.[2] He who is stained by mortal sin, becomes pure if with a concentrated mind he attends cows for a year, reciting the Pāvamāni verses contained in the 9th Mandala of the Ṛig Veda and subsisting on alms.[3] Or if pure in mind and in body, he thrice repeats the Saṁhitā of the Veda, in a forest, sanctified by three Parāka penances, he is freed from all crimes causing loss of caste (Pātaka).[4] But if a man fasts during three days, bathing thrice a day and muttering in the water the hymn of *Aghamarshana Mantra*, he is likewise freed from all sins causing loss of caste, as a horse sacrifice removes all sins.[5] A Brāhman who retains in his memory the Ṛig Veda, is not stained by guilt though he may have destroyed the three worlds and though he may eat the food of any body.[6] He who with a concentrated mind thrice recites the 3 Vedas viz., Ṛig-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Sāma-Veda, together with the texts of the Upanishads teaching the secret doctrines, is completely freed from all sins.[7] As a clod of earth falling into a great lake is quickly dissolved, even so every sinful act is engulfed in the threefold Veda.[8]

(x) Excommunication of persons having intercourse with outcasts.

He who associates with an outcast himself becomes an outcast after an year, by using the same carriage or seat with him or by eating with him but he becomes an outcast forthwith by sacrificing for him, teaching him, or forming a matrimonial alliance with him and he has to perform a penance for expiation. Even a Sūdra who is not qualified to study the Veda and offer oblations to the sacred fire becomes purified by performing the prescribed penance.[9] The sage Pārāsara lays down the rule that by the use of the same bed, seat, or cushion with an outcast or by conversation with him or

1. (11-254; R. V. 9-58-1 to 4). 2. (11-255; R. V. 6-74-1 to 4; 4-2-4 to 6). 3. (11-258). 4. (11-259). 5. (11-260, 261). 6. (11-262). 7. (11-263). 8. (11-264). 9. (M. S. 11-181; G. D. S. 21-3; V. D. S. 1-22; B. D. S. 2-2-35; Y. S. 3-261; Vi. S. 35-3 to 5).

by eating with him, sin becomes suffused in the body of the person associating with the outcast, just as oil drops poured on water soon spread over its surface.[1] He who associates with any one of those outcasts must perform the prescribed penance in order to atone for such intercourse.[2] The Sapindas and Samanodakas i.e. agnate relations of an outcast must offer a libation of water as if he were dead, outside the village, on an inauspicious day, in the evening and in the presence of the relatives, officiating priests and teachers.[3] A female slave shall upset with her foot a pot filled with water as if it were for a dead person; his agnate relations shall be impure for a day and a night.[4] But thenceforward it shall be forbidden to converse with him, to sit with him, to give him a share of the inheritance, and to hold with him such intercourse as is usual among men.[5]

Re-admission of the Excommunicated person to caste after performing penance.

The person who is excommunicated from his caste for associating with outcasts is readmitted to his former caste, after performing the prescribed penance. When he has thus performed the penance, they shall bathe with him in a holy pool and throw down a new pot filled with water. Thenceforth they accuse him no longer and associate with him in all social and religious works.[6] But he shall then throw that pot into water, enter his house and perform as before all the duties incumbent on a relative.[7] Let him follow the same rule in the case of female outcastes; but clothes, food and drink shall be given to them and they shall live close to the family house.[8] Let him not transact any business with unpurified sinners; but let him in no way reproach those who have made atonement.[9]

(xi) Expiatory penances and rites dictated by the synod of learned Brāhmans (Vidvat Parishad).

A penitent is purified of his sin through the dictates of the synod of learned Brāhmans (*Vidvat Parishad*).[10] Like water that is dried up by the sun and air, the sin of the penitent is extinguished by the order of the Parishad; it does not attach itself either to the penitent or to the synod.[11] The Synod that lays down the

1. (P. S. 12-71). 2. (M. S. 11-182). 3. (11-183) 4. (11-184). 5. (11-185). 6. (11-187; G. D. S. 20-10 to 14; V. D. S. 15-17 to 21; Y. S. 3-296). 7. (11-188). 8. (11-189). 9. (11-190). 10. (P. S. 8-17). 11. (8-18).

form of an expiatory rite for a penitent without having any knowledge of the Scriptures, acquires the demerit of the act for which expiation is sought.[1] What three or four Brāhmans well-versed in the Vedas lay down as expiation for any particular delinquency, should be regarded as the only true form of expiation that can be advised. What thousands of ignorant Brāhmans may advise in the case is not of the right kind.[2] Sin stands in awe of them, who interpret the meanings of scriptures in conformity with the principles of sound reasoning.[3] An assembly consisting of 3 or 4 Brāhmans well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāngas (i.e. appendages of the Vedas), even without consecrating the sacred fire, is called a *Parishad* (synod).[4] Even a single Brāhman who is a Muni with a knowledge of self and devoted to prayers, performance of Vedic sacrifices and ceremonial oblations, may constitute a Parishad in his individual capacity.[5] In the absence of of five Brāhmans of the aforesaid type, an assembly consisting of Brāhmans who are content with their own profession should be regarded as a Parishad.[6] A council consisting of thousands of persons, who are Brāhmans only in name should not be honoured with the dignity of a Parishad.[7] A wooden elephant, an antelope made of stuffed hide, and a Brāhman who has not studied the Vedas are the three things that merely bear the epithet of their living prototypes.[8] A Brāhman without the Gāyatri Mantra is more degraded than a Sūdra. Brāhmans who know the Supreme Brahman and are devoted to the Gāyatri are the foremost in honour and sanctity.[9]

(14) The special purpose of the Dharma Shāstras.

(i) Ethics the main purpose of the Dharma Shāstras.

The Dharma Shāstras which constitute the Smṛitis of the Hindus are based on the Vedas and they mainly treat of rules of commandment (Vidhi) and prohibition (Nishedha) regulating conduct in relation to the social, moral and religious spheres of a man's life. The main purpose of Dharma Shāstras was ethical. A high moral life (*Sadāchāra*) and the observance of rules relating

1. (8–14). 2. (8–15). 3. (8–16). 4. (8–19). 5. (8–20). 6. (8–21). 7. (8–22). 8. (8–23). 9. (8–31).

to the four orders and stages of life (*Varnāshrama Dharma*) and those relating to ablutions, purity, touch, food, drink, marriage, penance and purification against defilement, marked out and distinguished the Āryans from the Un-Āryans who were known for their unclean and filthy habits, immoral acts, and an impulsive and animalistic life seeking after self-gratification even at the cost of their fellow brethren members of the same society, who were treated by them with cruelty.[1] The Un-Āryans who formed a class by themselves had their dwelling places at the end of the city or village in which the Āryans observing the rules relating to to the four castes (Chāturvarna) and other matters as prescribed in the shāstras resided.[2] The rules framed by the law-givers in the Dharma Shāstras were meant for the racial purity and elevation of morals and the culture and civilisation of the Āryans.

(ii) Rules of the Dharma Shāstras were means only to the supreme end of self-realisation and not ends in themselves.

It may be pointed out that the ethical and other rules laid down in the Dharma Shāstras were means only to the supreme end of self-realisation or perfect freedom which was the highest end or summum bonum of a man's life and not ends in themselves and their object was purification of a man's body and mind. The supreme end of life as taught in the Vedānta philosophy was knowledge of transcendental idealism which demanded the highest self-sacrifice and a life of high discipline and self-abnegation on the part of the aspirant after supreme truth and enlightenment. In short, ethics was not the goal of human life but it was only a means to the end of spiritual enlightenment and it had therefore to be transcended in the ultimate end. It was however not an easy task for all to have spiritual enlightenment and vision of the supreme divinity all at once without necessary inititation and due qualifications therefor. Hence the law-givers have insisted on the Āryans to observe the rules and regulations as laid down for their guidance in the Dharma Shāstras according to their castes, orders of life and so forth which they were enjoined to follow scrupulously by leading an orderly and a graded life, according to their qualifications.

1. (M. S. 10-58). 2. (M. S. 10-51).

The well known scholar and philologist of the West, Prof. Maxmuller even has defended the rule in the Hindu Scriptures that only those who were initiated to the learning of the sacred lore were qualified to study the esoteric doctrines of the Vedānta philosophy. The learned author makes the following observations in the matter:—"The caste of the Sūdras was not admitted to the education provided for the higher, or the twice-born castes. To admit them to a study of Veda, would have been like admitting naked savages to the lecture room of the Royal Institution × × ×. But while the Sūdras were excluded the right to be taught the Vedānta, all the higher castes were admitted to the study of the Upanishads and the Vedānta philosophy, provided always that they had qualified themselves for these higher qualifications. This insistence on certain qualifications is surely not exclusion, and no doctrine, can be called esoteric, which is open to all who are able and willing to enter."*

(iii) Whether the ethics of the Bhagvadgitā is opposed to that of the Dharma Shāstras ?

An opinion has been expressed on the part of certain social reformers to the effect that the ethics of the Bhagvadgitā is opposed to that of the Dharma Shāstras; that the Gitā by its doctrine of equality of all has obliterated all distinctions between the four castes as also all rules of interdiction and restriction laid down in the Dharma Shāstras in matters of touch, food, drink, marriage etc. Even a superficial examination of the contents of the Gitā will dispel the above notion and show that the ethics of the Gitā is not at all opposed to that of the Dharma Shāstras. Our Lord Shri Kṛishna exhorts Arjuna in the Gitā and through him all persons "to treat the scripture law which says 'Thou shalt act so and so; thou shalt not act so and so' as the supreme authority in deciding what ought to be done and what ought not to be done."[1] Further as regards the institution of caste as laid down in the Vedic religion our Lord Shri Kṛishna himself took incarnation on this earth in bodily form for the preservation of spiritual life i.e. Brāhmanhood including the Vedas, the Brāhmanas and sacrifices on which depended all distinctions of caste and religious orders (*Varnāshrama*). Shri Kṛishna has further pointed out in the Gitā that the four castes

*See three Lectures on the Vedanta philosophy by Maxmuller. 1. (B. G 16-24).

(Chāturvarna) were created by him on the principle of the distribution of qualities and actions,[1] distinct duties having been assigned to the respective castes according to the qualities born of nature from the very birth.[2] The same principle is laid down in Manu Smṛiti,[3] according to which separate duties and occupations were assigned to the four castes, from the very birth. As regards the distinctions as to marriage too, the Gitā scrupulously follows the doctrine of the Dharma Shāstras and condemns in strong terms the caste-hybrid offspring (*Varnasankara*) begotten by the inter-marriages of persons belonging to different castes and consigns them to hell.[4] Manu too in his famous law code,[5] has laid down the law enjoining on marriage in one's own caste and prohibiting marriages with persons belonging to other castes and he stigmatises the off-spring born of Pratiloma marriages as the worst sinner. He says: "That kingdom in which such bastards sullying the purity of castes are born, perishes quickly together with its inhabitants.[6] The reader will thus see from the above discussion that the ethics of Bhagvad gitā is in no way opposed to that of the Dharma Shāstras but accepts the rules in the latter as of supreme authority for the preservation of Āryan culture and purity of race.

(iv) Obedience to Law and Authority paramount duty of all as laid down in the Scriptures and Dharma Shāstras.

The Āryans looked upon law and order with the greatest veneration from the very earliest times. Thus it is stated in the Ṛig Veda " From devotional austerities of Brahmā-the creator, eternal law and truth were born."[7] In the Upanishads, law and truth were equated with the highest divinity,[8] which was the object of devotional worship and exacted from all a dutiful obedience to the moral and natural laws. On the whole, we find a growing sense of justice and a higher conception of law displayed in the Upanishads.[9] "Law is power of the Kshatriya; therefore there is nothing higher than the law. Thenceforth, even a weak man rules a stronger with the help of the law as with the help of a king". The ordinances of Varuna as the great Lord of the Laws of nature as also moral

1. (B. G. 4-13). 2. (B. G. 18-41). 3. (M. S. 1-87). 4. (B. G. 1-42). 5. (M. S. 3-4). 6. (10-61). 7. (R. V. 10-190-1). 8. (N. Pt. U. 1-6). 9. (B. U. 1-4-14).

laws, govern gods, men and nature and being unchangeable except by His will, they must be dutifully obeyed by all including even gods.[1] The sacred law along with the Vedas and the eternal truths revealed therein constitute the word of God (Brahmā), who created the universe. Brahmā imparted knowledge of the secred law to Manu and Manu imparted it to Marichi, Brighu and other sages,[2] and the sage Brighu taught it to others.[3] As regards the majesty of law and its binding character, Manu says: "The sacred law of justice and righteousness (Dharma) being violated destroys and being preserved it preserves. Therefore sacred law of justice must not be violated, lest justice violated destroy us."[4] "The only friend that follows a man even after death is justice and righteousness, for every thing else is lost at the same time when the body perishes."[5]

(v) Theistic basis of the ethics and sacred laws laid down in the Dharma Shastras.

It may be mentioned here at the outset that in India ethics was never divorced from theology as in the West but it formed a part and parcel of the Āryan religion from the very earliest times, as appears from several hymns of the Rig Veda cited above addressed to Varuna who was not only the Lord of natural laws but also a moral God. We have already seen above that according to the Vedic theory, God is the Supreme ruler and governor of the universe who governs nature animate as well as inanimate by moral, just, and natural laws, which are all controlled by Him in a wise and just manner. Neither natural nor moral laws would have their play and operation by themselves without sustenance of the omniscient Lord who also dispenses justice to man and all sentient beings by giving them fruits in exact accordance with the acts done by them whether in this life or in a former life. Why a particular act whether good or bad gives rise to corresponding fruits which operate after some time cannot be explained rationally by atheists. Likewise no rational explanation can be given by them even of the working of the law of causation, the law of uniformity of nature, and other natural laws without postulating a sentient Being as overlord to control the said laws which being inert and lifeless could not operate in a definite and regular manner of their own accord

1. (R. V. 4-42-1, 2). 2. (M. S. 1-58, 59). 3. (1-60). 4. (8-15). 5. (8-17).

without divine guidance and control. All the canonical works of the Hindus including the Vedas, the Brāhmanas, the Upanishads, the 2 Epics of Rāmāyana and Māhābhārata, and the Purānas not opposed to the Sr'uti and Smriti are theistic and they presuppose the existence of God as Creator, Ruler and Governor of the universe, without whose wise control the universe could not subsist or carry on its functions in a regular and orderly manner. According to Vedic theory, there is a unity of plan and design seen throughout the whole universe which would soon go to extinction, if it was not controlled by the Omniscient, Omnipotent, and all-pervading God. The Dharmashāstras therefore have throughout presupposed the existence of God as the author and dispenser of the Sacred laws contained therein, all ideas of atheism being entirely repugnant to them.

(vi) Criticism of the modern theory of equality of all.

A new theory has been propounded of late by certain schools of modern thought preaching the doctrine of equality of all men and women and equality of rights without any distinction based on sex, caste, creed, colour, race, blood, rank, wealth, learning, and so forth. It is therefore necessary to examine critically the above theory and consider whether there is any truth therein. Even a superficial examination of the phenomenal world of nature and man and its working would satisfy any one that the truth is just otherwise and he will find that nowhere in the whole universe is it possible to find exact equality between any two objects or even between man and woman. Not only is there no equality but there is great inequality and an infinite variety seen all around in the universe in the form of plains, landscapes, gardens, mountains, valleys, forests, trees, lakes, rivers, seas, oceans, sky, stars, planets, fishes, birds, animals, men, and so on which all differ from one another in numerous ways and manners. Not only do the different objects of nature differ from one another, but even each object singly bristles with an infinite and rich variety therein. Thus taking the single instance of a tree, one will find a great variety therein viz., roots, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, buds, blossoms, fruits, seeds and so on which all differ from one another although they are parts of the same tree. So also as regards men belonging to different races and countries, they differ from one another radically and fundamentally in matters relating

to race, nationality, linguistics, ethnology, culture, sociology, economics, politics and so on. Similarly the structure or constitution of man differs from that of woman who alone is fitted by nature to be the mother of children and as such she has peculiar rights and duties assigned to her as distinguished from those assigned to man. With these facts before us, it would be presumptuous on the part of any one to maintain the theory of equality of all which again is repugnant to the fundamental principles and doctrines of the Hindu scriptures and Dharma shāstras such as those affecting caste and orders of life (*Varnāshrama*) and rules of conduct for man and woman and so on. In fact, the Upanishads preach the doctrine of unity in variety. Rich and infinite variety is the very gist of the phenomenal world which would never go on or work smoothly and regularly without a happy and harmonious blending of heterogeneous elements which are however not antagonistic or opposed to one another but are kept united to achieve a central purpose as designed by the Lord. However some reformers who preach the doctrine of absolute equality of all, rely on the following well known and oft quoted verse in the Bhagwad Gitā in support of the above novel doctrine preached by them. The said verse runs as follows: " In a Brāhman endued with wisdom and humility, in a cow, in an elephant, as also in a dog and a dog-eater (i.e. a chāndāla or an outcast), the wise see equality (*Sama*). "[1] The great philosopher and Scholiast Shri Shankarāchārya commenting on the above verse makes the following observations: "Of the creatures mentioned above, the highest is the Brāhman who is spiritually regenerated and highly Sāttvic (i.e. in whom the quality of *Sattva* or purity predominates). Next comes the cow, not spiritually regenerated and which is Rājasic (i.e. in which the quality of *Rajas* or energy predominates). Lastly come the elephant etc., (i.e. dog, and chāndāla) which are purely Tāmasic (in which the quality of *Tamas* i.e. darkness or ignorance predominates). In all the beings mentioned above the sages see the same, the one who is immutable in Himself and quite untouched by Sattva and other qualities (i. e. strands born of nature (*Prakṛiti*)) or by the tendencies born of these, whether Sāttvic, Rājasic or Tāmasic". The reader will see from the

1. (B. G. 5–18).

above that the verse of the Gitā quoted above does not teach the lesson of equality of all as wrongly interpreted by the reformers but the word *Sama* or equality in the verse is used in the technical sense of the Supreme Divinity and not in the sense of physical equality of the different objects. This construction is further supported by an explanation of the word *Sama* or equality in the next verse as meaning Brahman or the highest God. The said verse runs as follows: "Even here birth (by transmigration) is overcome by those persons whose mind rests on equality (*Sāmya*); spotless indeed and equal (*Samam*) is Brahman; wherefore in Brahman they rest."[1] A very humorous criticism of the above novel interpretation of the word *Samam* in the above verse is made by the late great scholar of Maharastra Lokamānya Bāl Gangādhar Tilak, in his well known commentary on the Gitā. The learned writer remarks in this connection that if the well versed Brāhman, cow, elephant, dog and eater of dog's flesh were all equal, then a human being like an animal would partake of grass offered to him as his meal but as a matter of fact no human being does so, it being opposed to the very nature of things. It would therefore be absurd to argue that all beings are equal or that they have equal rights, irrespective of all considerations of sex, caste, creed, community, race, rank, social status, learning, wealth, and so on. Thus the rights and duties of males are fundamentally different from those of women. Similarly even the rights and duties of men and women separately for themselves differ in several respects. Though all men are made of the same stuff physically, and though they have certain rights and duties in common as human beings and members of the same society, yet they are not exactly alike in all respects. In short, they cannot be treated of the same quality as mere clay, as by doing so man would be reduced to the low level of material objects and animals and it would efface all human valuation and the value of the high ideals entertained by different individuals, societies and institutions which vary according to the level of culture and civilisation reached by them. The theory of equality of all is not only false and unfounded in fact but is also dangerous and mischievous in its consequences as leading to rebellion against all established authority whether secular, religious, legal,

1. (B. G. 5-19).

social, or of other kind and it would introduce into society principles of communism, Bolshevism and even anarchism which would be most disastrous to the stability, peace and happiness of society as also to a peaceful and good Government.

(vii) Restraining influence of the Dharma Shāstras in combating the present day disruptive forces leading to communism and Bolshevism.

The fallacies underlying the modern theory of communism.

We shall now examine the fallacies underlying the modern theory of communism which is spreading far and wide almost all over the world, and also in our country and how the Dharma Shāstras by their wise laws and regulations have safeguarded against the dangers of communism penetrating into society. The exponents and admirers of the theory of communism are to be found in countries having forms of Government based on theories of socialism, communism and so on. These persons ostensibly preach the doctrine of complete equality of all men and women and equality of rights for all without any distinction based on caste, creed, colour, race, religion, blood, wealth, learning and so on, but which is contradicted in practice as pointed out above. The communistic movement is an anti-God campaign which is being propagated to-day in Soviet Russia and which has captivated the minds of several eminent persons who claim to lead the country by its apparent adherence to Justice and the principle of equality of all but which is entirely misconceived and even perverted in practice. Religion and communism are incompatible both in theory and practice. The famous Bolshevist leader Zinovied said " We will grapple with God. We will conquer him in the highest heaven; and wherever He seeks refuge, we will subdue Him for ever ". Active legislation is used to make religion disappear. It is said: " Communism aims by every means even the most ruthless at two objects; relentless class war and the total abolition of private property. "

Some phases of communism.

Marriage is treated as a mockery and there are no restrictions of any kind relating to marriage e.g. restraining one from marrying a wife within one's own family. The marriage tie is very loose neither

having the Sacramental sanctity of religion nor even the ordinary tie of family life. The parties can obtain dissolution of marriage even the very next moment after marriage. In short, while the Hindu Shāstras seek to preserve the purity of blood and race by wise laws of marriage, the Communists seek to destroy the purity of race by promoting indiscrete and reckless marriages without any restriction whatever. Nor is there anything like a normal family life in societies based on the principle of communism. "The most serious consequence of the industrial movement is the passing away of the homes. We see it in America and in Russia, where every member aspires for economic independence; family ties are weakened, men and women work outside their home, and the children when they are not asleep at home, work in school or college and amuse themselves in the football or the cinema hall."[1] With regard to Russia, Trotsky in his problems of life writes: "Gigantic events have descended on the family in its old shape...we need more socialistic economic reforms. Only under such conditions can we free the family from the functions and cares that now oppress and disintegrate it. Washing must de done by a public laundry, catering by a public restaurant, sewing by a public workshop, children must be educated by good public teachers who have a real vocation for the work. Then the bond between husband and wife would be freed from every thing external and accidental and the one would cease to absorb the life of the other." "In short neither a woman's place nor a man's is the home," as observed by Sir Radhākrishna. "In the communistic philosophy no account is taken of even the possibility of a spiritual survival after the death of the body nor of spiritual or religious freedom. Every thing is to be centered on temporal beliefs and animal gratification * * * and men must live as animals." The above picture will give the reader some idea of the principles of communism and to what length of absurdity they have gone.

The Principles of communism opposed to Democracy and liberty and their disastrous consequences.

Democracy which is the rule of a country by its own people does not exist as such in Soviet Russia which has a communistic

1. See Kalki by Sir Radhakrishna.

form of Government nominally of the Proletariat but really of the Dictators whose rule is supreme and anti-democratic and it leaves no scope to individual freedom in any sphere of life. There is no liberty of action and thought or freedom of conscience whether in religious or other matters except as dictated by the State through its Dictator. The teachings of communism have resulted in letting loose in society forces of a disruptive nature in the form of constant feuds between capital and labour, landlord and tenant, clergy and laity, teacher and pupil, father and son, husband and wife and lastly between the ruler and the ruled. Private property is denounced, religion is given the go-bye, traditions are broken, clergymen are banished, Churches are converted into hospitals and schools, and all forms of Government whether monarchical, oligarchical, constitutional or otherwise are condemned except that of dictatorship of a few leaders of the communist party. The communist dictators seek to enforce their views on the people by encroaching on the liberty of the latter in all spheres of life whether social, economic, educational, political or religious. Waves of communism have of late spread into India and its principles are being propagated widely in the pious name of liberty, fraternity and equality. Liberty is taken by some to mean unbridled license so as to give them a passport to do anything they like. The leaders understand liberty in one sense while the masses in another. This confused state of thought is responsible for bringing into existence various forms of dictatorship which seek to enforce the will of a few dictators on many people in general even against their will by investing the dictators with extraordinary and unlimited powers.

Restraining influence of the Dharma Shāstras.

The principles of Communism are not yet understood by the people and unless checked in time they are likely to degenerate into waves of Bolshevism and even lawlessness. The principles of communism are repugnant to the teachings of the Dharma Shāstras and the ethical Theism inculcated therein and they are not acceptable to the revered authors and sages of the religious law-codes of the Hindus like Manu, Yāgnavalkya, and others. The Dharma Shāstras have proclaimed in loud terms, that the good and welfare of society consists not in equality of rights but in observance of

duties (*Dharma*) laid down for its various groups and members. The authors of the Dharmashāstras have denounced the spirit of unhealthy competition between the different groups and members of society based on a false interpretation of the doctrine of equality of all. The so-called principle of equality of all as commonly understood is opposed to nature and is contradicted by all experience as no two human beings are exactly alike in all respects nor could the same rights and duties be exercised or enjoyed together by all in all matters. Rights and duties are correlative and they always vary with different individuals and their conduct towards one another also depends on their mutual relations and it cannot possibly be the same. Thus although a mother, a sister, a daughter and a wife are all women, yet they cannot be treated all alike by any man whose behaviour with them varies according to the relations they bear to him nor can the same rights be exercised by them or with them. Unity in variety and not mere monotonous uniformity is the cardinal doctrine of the Hindu Shāstras which is based on the Upanishadic doctrine of non-dual monism. The duties of women are different from those of men. The duties of the four castes (Chāturvarna), the Brāhmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sūdras are different and the duties prescribed for the four orders of life (*Āshrama Dharma*) viz., those of student, house-holder, anchorite, and ascetic are also different. By interchange of duties as laid down in the Dharma Shāstras and chalking out new modes of life contrary thereto according to one's own whims and impulses which are animalistic, there would result caste confusion (*Varan Sankaratā*) and misery to the whole society. People want to assert rights and claim equality with others without possessing the necessary qualifications therefor but they shirk duties and responsibilities imposed upon them. The authors of the various law-codes have therefore prescribed beneficent rules and regulations, to counteract the evil influences resulting from the above perverted and false notions for the good and peace of society as a whole, by laying down high ideals for the improvement of the conduct, morals, purity and general level of its component groups and members as also for regulating their inter relations. If the different groups and members of society fulfilled their duties in conformity with the

sacred law laid down in the Dharma Shāstras for their conduct, they would soon discover that they are already enjoying the rights of freedom aspired for by them and all strifes and discords that are found prevailing at present in society would disappear for ever and complete peace, unity, and happiness would be restored everywhere. According to the Vedic theory of caste (Varna) which is a divine institution and is accepted as such in the Dharmashāstras, the several castes and sub-castes are not detached from, or independent of, one another as rival bodies competing for supremacy but they constitute one whole community or brotherhood under the kingdom of one God of which they are component parts and units and they have to perform only the respective duties and functions assigned to them. By scrupulously following the rules laid down for them, they would ultimately realise that true happiness consists in union and harmony with other fellow members of the same society who are all inter-related as members of a living organism pulsating with the same effulgent ray of divine life which ever keeps them together to achieve supreme bliss, supreme happiness, and supreme freedom as the summum bonum of life gradually and by slow degrees without any disintegration or rupture of the society at any time. In short, responsive co-operation and co-ordination and not competition is the basic principle of the structure of Hindu society as laid down in the Dharma Shāstras in conformity with the Vedāntic doctrine of monism. The Hindu ideal of life consists in spiritual evolution and uplift of the society as a whole through gradual elevation and improvement of its component parts by regulating their conduct individually as well as in relation to other members of society. The Hindu Dharma Shāstras have therefore taught the supreme lesson that an individual must curb all selfish and egoistic tendencies of securing individual good at the cost of others by leading a well-disciplined, religious, and moral life so as to do positive good to his fellow brethren as members of a living organism. The above ideal of Hindu life may be contrasted with the modern ideal of the west which seeks more to achieve good of the individual rather than good of the society as a whole with the result that we constantly find clashes of interests between individuals and society, and between individuals and groups of individuals among themselves, which it was the sole aim of the Dharma Shāstras to eradicate from society by enacting wise laws and regulations for its evolution.

CONCLUSION.

It may be stated here at the end, that Indian Philosophy in general as distinguished from Dars'ans proper as ordinarily understood is comprehensive enough in its nature and scope so as to include therein subjects affecting the daily life of every person in almost all the sphers of human activity, spiritual, religious, intellectual, social, legal, moral and so on, as will appear from the above pages. As observed by Sir Rādhākrishna "It is the intimate relation between the truth of philosophy and the daily life of people that makes religion always alive and real." Hence I have in this book dealt with rather at great length, the rules of conduct and discipline as affecting the daily life of people and laid down by the Hindu law-givers for the guidance of individuals as well as society as preliminary means to acquiring the necessary qualifications for understanding the abstruse and difficult problems of Indian philosophy. The great saint and teacher Pushpadanta has rightly observed in his memorable work '*Mahiman Stotra*' which is daily sung as a devotional song by the religiously minded Hindus from one end of the country to the other that "Though there is a great diversity in the tastes of people in selecting the paths for approach to the highest divinity, whether straight, circuitous, or of other kind, yet O Lord, thou art one only, the supreme destination of all, like an ocean to the rivers." Similarly, although the end of Indian philosophy which is the summum bonum of human life is one only viz., self-realisation as determined most accurately by the Indian philosophers and sages and certified by their individual experiences separately, yet the means prescribed by them for achieving the said end were different to suit the varying capacities of people as pointed out by the great religious thinkers, saints, and savants of India from time to time in their several monumental works. In fact, the cardinal principle of Indian philosophy is Unity in variety which is followed by all subsequent religious writers. I have therefore made an humble attempt in these pages to elucidate the leading principles of Indian philosophy which includes religion as well as ethics, from various standpoints to suit the varying capacities of different individuals and enable them to appreciate the valuable services done to the cause of Philosophy and religion by the great thinkers of India, who were once the torch bearers of light and learning. If these pages succeed in creating in the minds of the reader a taste for higher study in the realms of Indian Philosophy and religion and is found useful to him, I shall consider that my attempt has not been in vain.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SELECTIONS FROM THE TEXTS

CONTENTS

(1) Prayer to Varuṇa... 407

(2) Unanimity in Assembly 408

(3) Prayer for blessings to the kingdom 408

(4) Glorification of the Prime Cause... 408

(5) Know thy-self 409

(6) The everlasting nay 410

(7) Gārgī and Yājnavalkya — the omnipotence of the attributeless Imperishable (Akshara) 411

(8) Maitreyī and Yājnavalkya—love of the all-embracing (pantheistic) self (Ātman) 412

(9) Bliss of the Infinite (Bhūman) and Perfect Freedom ...414

(10) *Gloria in Excelsis* 415

(11) Devotion to Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva 417

(12) Bhagwad-Gitā on sacrifice 417

(13) Divine and devilish natures 418

(14) Nahūsha and Yudhishṭhira-Definition of a true Brāhmaṇa420

(15) Self is its own witness 420

(16) Dharma-the only inseparable friend 421

APPENDIX A.

(1) Prayer to Varuṇa.

Unchangeable in their greatness are the origins of that Varuṇa who bare up the vast heaven and earth, who appointed unto their two-fold task the glorious sun and the beautiful constellations, who spread out the earth.

When may I in my person converse with that deity? When may I enter into the heart of Varuṇa? How shall He without displeasure accept my oblation? When may I, joyful of heart, behold that giver of happiness?

In my desire to behold Thee, Varuṇa, I ask what is mine offence: I have gone to make inquiry of the wise: verily the sages have said the same to me — Varuṇa is wroth with thee.

What hath that great wickedness been, Varuṇa, that thou shouldst seek to destroy the worshipper, Thy friend? Supreme, resplendent Varuṇa, declare it unto me that, freed from sin, I may quickly approach thee in veneration.

Loosen the bonds imposed by the ill deeds of our fore-fathers and those laid upon us by the sins which we have ourselves committed: liberate (me) Vasishtha, O kingly Varuṇa, like a calf from its tether .....

It is not our own choice, Varuṇa, but destiny: from such come drunkenness, wrath, gambling, ignorance: the strong standeth beside the weak: even a dream may provoke to sin.

Freed from sin, I may perform like a slave diligent service to the divine Benefactor, the sustainer of the world: may He the divine Lord, give wisdom to us who are void of understanding: may He who is most wise guide the worshipper to wealth. May this laudation, O Varuṇa the provider of food, be taken into Thy heart: may success be ours in keeping what we have and in gaining more and do ye, the Gods, ever cherish and bless us.

(*Ṛig Veda 7-86*)

(2) Unanimity in Assembly.

Thou mighty Agni, gatherest up all that is precious for thy friend. Bring us all treasures as thou art enkindled in libation's place.

Assemble, speak together, let your mind be of one accord, as ancient Gods unanimous sit down to their appointed share.

The place is common, common the assembly, common the mind, so be their thought united. A common purpose do I lay before you, and worship with your general oblation.

One and the same be your resolve, and be your minds of one accord. United be the thoughts of all that all may happily agree.

(*Rig Veda 10-191*)

(3) Prayer for blessings to the kingdom.

Oh, Brahman, let there be born in the kingdom the Brāhman illustrious for religious knowledge, let there be born the Rājanya, heroic, skilled archer, piercing with shafts, mighty warrior; the cow giving abundant milk; the ox good at carrying, the swift courser; the industrious woman. May Parjanya send rain according to our desire; may our fruit-bearing plants ripen; may acquisition and preservation of property be secured to us.

(*White Yajurveda 22-22*)

(4) Glorification of the Prime Cause.

Vena (i. e. the loving, rising sun) beholds that Highest (the Supreme First Cause) which lies hidden, wherein this all resumes one form and fashion. Thence Pris'ni (the speckled cow as creative power of nature) milked all life that had existence; the hosts (created beings) that knew the light with songs extolled her.

Knowing eternity, may the Gandharva (i. e. Vena, the rising sun) declare to us that highest secret station. Three steps thereof lie hidden in the darkness: he who knows these shall be the father's father (i. e. wiser than his elders).

He (the Almighty Creator) is our Kinsman, father and begetter : He knows all beings and all ordinances. He only gave the Gods their appellations: all creatures go to Him to ask direction.

I have gone forth around the earth and heaven, I have approached the first born son (Prajāpati the creator developing as Agni) of order (i.e. the eternal law of the universe).

He putting Voice as it were within the speaker, stands in the world; He verily is Agni (fire).

I round the circumjacent worlds have travelled to see the far-extended thread of order, wherein the Gods, obtaining life eternal, have risen upward to one common birthplace.

(*Atharvaveda 2-1*)

(5) Know thy self.

The world then was not unfolded. It became unfolded in Name and Shape, so that one might say, " He of this or that name is of this or that shape. " So even now it becomes unfolded in Name and Shape, so that one may say, " He of this or that name is of this or that shape. " He passed into it up to the nail-tips as a razor might be laid in a razor-case or the All-Supporter (i.e. fire-god) in the All-Supporter's nest. They see Him not, for He is divided. As breathing, He is called Breath; as speaking, Speech; as seeing, Sight; as hearing, Hearing; as thinking, Mind; these are the names for his workings. A man who worships one or another thereof understands not, for He is but in division as one or another thereof. So He should be worshipped as the Self; for therein do all these become one.

This Self is the track of the Universe, for by it is the universe known, yea, as a thing may be followed up by its track. Fame and praise a man finds who has such knowledge.

This Self is dearer than a son, dearer than substance, dearer than all beside, more inward. If of a man who calls another than the Self dear it should be said that he will lose his darling, it may well come to pass. He should worship the Self only as darling; for him who worships the Self as darling his darling perishes not.

They say: " Seeing that men deem that by knowledge of Brahma they shall become the universe, what did Brahma know that He became the universe ?

The world forsooth was in the beginning Brahma. It knew itself, "I am Brahma"; therefore it became the universe. And whosoever of the gods understood this also became the same; likewise of sages and of men. Seeing this, the sage Vāmadeva set it forth, saying "I have become Manu and Sun." So now likewise he who knows "I am Brahma" becomes the universe. The very Gods have no power that he should not be so; for he becomes the Self of them.

Now he who worships another godhead, saying " This is not the same as I," understands not; he is as it were a beast belonging to the Gods. Even as many beasts profit a man, so each man profits the Gods. It is unpleasing when one beast is taken away; how much more when many are taken ! Therefore it is not pleasing to them (i. e. to gods) that men should know this.

(*Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 1-4-7 to 10*)

(6) The everlasting nay.

Verily this great unborn Self it is that is compact of understanding amid the life-breaths, that lies in the ether within the heart, master of all, lord of all, ruler of all; He becomes not greater by a good deed nor less by an ill deed; He is king of all, ruler of born beings, guardian of born beings, the dyke holding asunder these worlds that they fall not one into another. Brāhmaṇs seek to know Him by reading the Veda, by sacrifice, by charity, by mortification. Knowing Him, a man becomes a saint; wandering friars wander forth seeking Him for their world. Understanding this, the ancients desired not offspring: " What is offspring to us who have this Self for this world ? " So having departed from desire of sons, from desire of substance and desire of the world, they went about begging. For desire of sons is desire of substance, desire of substance is desire of the world; these are both desires.

This Self is Nay, Nay: not to be grasped, for He is not grasped; not to be broken, for He is not broken; unclinging, for He clings not; He is not bound, He trembles not, He takes no hurt.

One (who knows this) is overcome neither by having done evil for His sake nor by having done good for His sake; he overcomes both; work done and work not done grieve him not.

This is said by a verse:

The Brāhman's constant majesty by works,
Nor waxes more, nor wanes. This shall he trace;
This known, ill deeds defile him nevermore.

(*Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 4-4-22, 23*)

(7) Gārgi and Yājnavalkya—the omnipotence of the attributeless Imperishable (Akshara).

" Yājnavalkya " said Gārgi, " as a warrior from the land of Kāsi or Videha might string his unstrung bow and come forward holding in his hand two arrows to pierce through his foe, even so I have come forward against thee with two questions; answer me them."

"Ask, Gārgi."

" Yājnavalkya," said she, "that which is above the heavens, which is beneath the earth, which is midway between the heavens and the earth, which they call the past and the present and the future.....in what is it woven and woofed ?"

"Gārgi," said he, "that which is above the heavens, which is below the earth, which is midway between the heavens and the earth, which they call the past and the present and the future is woven and woofed in the earth."

" Homage to thee, Yājnavalkya, " said she, " for thou hast answered me this; make ready for the other. "

"Ask, Gārgi."

"Yājnavalkya," said she, "that which is above the heavens, which is below the earth, which is midway between the heavens and the earth, which they call the past and the present and the future ...in what is it woven and woofed ? "

" Gārgi," said he, "that which is above the heavens, which is below the earth, which they call the past and the present and the future is woven and woofed in the ether."

"And in what is the ether woven and woofed ? "

"Gārgi," said he, "that is what Brāhmaṇs call the Imperishable (Akshara); It is not gross, not fine, not short, not glowing (like fire) not fluid, not shadow, not darkness, not ether, not clinging, without taste, without smell, without eye, without ear, without speech, without mind, without vital force, without breath, without mouth, without measure, without aught inward, without aught outward; it consumes nothing, none consumes it.

At the command of the Imperishable, Gārgi, sun and moon are held asunder; at the command of the Imperishable, Gārgi, heaven and earth are held asunder; at the command of the Imperishable, Gārgi, minutes, hours, days and nights, fortnights, months, seasons, and years are held asunder; at the command of the Imperishable, Gārgi, flow the rivers, some eastward from the white mountains, some westward, each in its own way. At the command of the Imperishable, Gārgi, men praise givers, the Gods hang upon the sacrifice-giver, the Fathers upon the manes-sacrifice. Indeed, Gārgi, if one performs sacrifices and worship and undergoes austerities in this world for many thousands of years but without knowing the Imperishable, limited indeed is that work of his. Indeed, Gārgi, he who departs from this world without knowing the Imperishable is pitiable. But he who departs from this world knowing the Imperishable, Gārgi, is a Brāhman. Indeed, Gārgi, the Imperishable unseen sees, unheard hears, unthought thinks, uncomprehended comprehends. There is naught else than this which sees, naught else that hears, naught else that thinks, naught else that comprehends. In the Imperishable, forsooth, Gārgi, is the ether woven and woofed.

(*Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 3-8-2 to 11*)

(8) Maitreyi and Yājnavalkya—love of the all embracing (pantheistic) self (Ātman).

'Maitreyi!' said Yājnavalkya, lo, verily, I am about to go forth from this stage (of life). Behold! let me make a final settlement for you and that Kātyāyini.

Then said Maitreyi: 'If now, sir, this whole earth filled with wealth were mine, would I be immortal thereby?'

'No,' said Yājnavalkya. 'As the life of the rich, even so would your life be. Of immortality, however, there is no hope through wealth.'

Then said Maitreyi: 'What should I do with that through which I may not be immortal? What you know, sir—that, indeed, tell me!'

Then said Yājnavalkya: 'Ah! Lo, dear as you are to us, dear is what you say! Come, sit down. I will explain to you. But while I am expounding, do you seek to ponder thereon.'

Then said he: 'Lo, verily, not for love of the husband is a husband dear, but for the love of Soul (Ātman) a husband is dear.

Lo, verily, not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for the love of Soul a wife is dear.

Lo, verily, not for love of the wealth is wealth dear, but for the love of Soul wealth is dear.

Lo verily, not for love of Brāhmanhood (Brahma) is Brāmanhood dear, but for love of the Soul Brāhmanhood is dear. × × ×

Lo, verily, not for love of all is all dear, but for the love of Soul all is dear.

Lo, verily, it is the Soul (Ātman) that should be seen, that should be hearkened to, that should be thought on, that should be pondered on. O Maitreyi, Lo, verily, with the seeing of, with the hearkening to, with the thinking of, and with the understanding of the Soul, this world-all is known.

Brāhmaṇhood has deserted him who knows Brāhmaṇhood in aught else than the Soul. × × ×

This Brāhmaṇhood, this Kshatrihood, these worlds, these gods, these beings, everything here is what this Soul is. × × ×

It is—as, when a lute is being played, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the lute or the player of the lute the sound is grasped.

It is—as, from a fire laid with damp fuel, clouds of smoke separately issue forth, so, lo, verily, from this great Being (*Bhūta*) has been breathed forth that which is Ṛig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma

Veda, Hymns of the Ātharvans and Angirasas (*i.e. Atharvaveda*), Legend (*Itihāsa*), Ancient Lore (*Purana*), Science (*Vidyā*), Mystic Doctrines (*Upanishad*), Verses (*Sloka*), Aphorisms (*Sūtra*), Explanations, Commentaries. From it, indeed, are all these breathed forth.×××

It is—as a lump of salt cast in water would dissolve right into the water; there would not be (any) of it to seize forth, as it were (Iva), but whereever one may take, it is salty indeed...so, lo, verily, this great Being (*Bhūta*), infinite, limitless, is just a mass of knowledge (*Vijnāna-ghana*).

Arising out of these elements, into them also one vanishes away. After death there is no consciousness. Thus, lo, say I." Thus spake Yājnavalkya.

Then spake Maitreyi: " Herein, indeed, you have bewildered me, sir—in saying: " After death there is no consciousness ! "

Then spake Yājnavalkya: "Lo, verily, I speak not bewilderment. Sufficient, lo, verily, is this for understanding.

For where there is a duality (*Dvaita*), as it were (*Iva*), there one sees another; there one smells another; there one hears another there one speaks to another; there one thinks of another; there one understands another. Where, verily, everything has become just one's own self, then whereby and whom would one smell ? then whereby and whom would one see ? then whereby and whom would one hear ? then whereby and to whom would one speak ? then whereby and on whom would one think ? Then whereby and whom would one understand ? Whereby would one understand him by whom one understands this All ? Lo, whereby would one understand the understander ? "

(*Brihadāranyaka Upanishad 2-4*)

(9) Bliss of the Infinite (Bhūman).

The Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in anything finite. Infinite only is bliss. This Infinite, however, we must desire to understand.

Where one seeth nothing else, heareth nothing else, understandeth nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one seeth

(heareth, understandeth) something else, that is the Finite. The Infinite is immortal, the Finite is mortal.

And in what doth the Infinite rest ? In its own greatness nay, not even in its greatness. The Infinite indeed is below, above, behind, before, to right, and to left — it is indeed all. This followeth the explanation of the Infinite as the I; I am below, I am above, I am behind, before, to right and to left—I am all this.

Followeth the explanation of the Infinite as the Self (or Soul). Self is below, above, behind, before, to right and to left.—Self is all This.

He who seeth, perceiveth and understandeth this loveth the Self, rejoiceth in the Self-he becometh the Ruler of Self; he is Lord and Master in all the worlds.

But those who think differently from this live in perishable worlds and have other beings for their rulers.

(*Chhāndogya Upanishad 7-23*)

(10) Gloria in Excelsis

I know that great Spirit, sun-hued, beyond the darkness. Knowing Him, man escapeth Death; there is no other way to walk.

Than this naught else is higher, nor subtler, nor mightier. As a tree firm-set in the heavens stands the One; with this Spirit the universe is filled.

Formless, sorrowless is the Highest; they become deathless who know it; but others come to very grief.

With face, head, neck everywhere, dwelling in covert in every creature, pervading all, the Lord is He; thus everywhere is the presence of the Gracious.

A great Lord is the Spirit, mover of the understanding, ruler of this pure approach, Light, unfading.

The Spirit dwells ever as inward soul, an inch in stature, within men's hearts, conceived by the heart, the imagination, the thought; deathless they become who know this ... ...

Showing himself in the qualities of all senses, void of all senses He is Lord, ruler of all, refuge of all.

Bodied in the nine-gated city, the Swan hovers without, master of all the motionless and moving world.

Handless and footless, He speeds and seizes; eyeless, He sees; earless, He hears. He knows what may be known, but there is none to know Him. Men call Him the Primal, the Great Spirit.

Subtler than the subtle is He, greater than the great, the Soul lodged in covert in living beings. Freed from grief, man sees by the Almighty's grace Him the desireless. Him the power sovereign.

I know Him, the ageless, ancient, All-Soul, dwelling everywhere in universal presence, to whom Brahma-teachers deny birth whom they call the Eternal.

The one hue that by blending of powers lends manifold hues in diverse wise from gathered substance, the Beginning and End wherein the All dissolves—He is God; may He unite us with blessed understanding !

That same is the Fire, that is the Sun, that the Wind, that the Moon; that same is the Bright, that Brahma, that the Waters, that the Creator.

Thou art woman, Thou art man, Thou art boy and maiden; Thou art the old man tottering on the staff; Thou art born with face looking all ways.

Thou art the black bird, the green with red eyes, the lightening-bearing (cloud), the seasons, the seas; Thou art that which is beginningless; Thou livest in universal presence, whence are born all beings... ...

In vision of the Lord, the bounteous worshipful God, who stands sole warder over every womb, in whom this All falls together and dissolves asunder, man comes to this everlasting peace.

May He who is the fount and origin of the Gods, the lord of all, Rudra, the great sage who beheld the Germ of Gold (Hiranyagarbha coming into being, unite us with blessed understanding... ...

Where there is not darkness, nor day and night, nor being or not-being, but the Gracious One alone, that is the Unfading, that is the lovely (light) of Savitā (the sun); thence has streamed forth the ancient Intelligence.

He may not be grasped above, nor athwart, nor in the midst. There is no likeness of Him whose name is Great Glory.

His form is not to be beheld; none sees Him with the eye. Deathless they become who in heart and mind know Him as heart-dwelling. × × ×

Seeking for freedom, I go for refuge to that God who is the light of his own thoughts; He who created the creator and delivered the Vedas unto Him.

(*S'vetās'vatara Upanishad 3-8 to 4-20, and 6-18*)

(11) Devotion to Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva.

Whosoever with devotion offereth Me leaf, flower, fruit or water, that, given with devotion, I accept from him whose self is pure and enjoy. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever sacrifice thou makest, whatever thou givest, whatever penance thou performest, do that as offered to Me. Thus wilt thou be set free from the bonds of action, the fruits of which are tasteful or distasteful. And, thyself, being filled with this devotion, and controlled by renunciation, thou wilt be set free and come unto Me. I am alike unto all beings; to Me none is hateful, none is beloved; but those who worship Me with devotion abide in Me, and I also in them.

(*Bhagwad Gitā 9-26 to 29.*)

(12) Bhagwad-Gitā on Sacrifice.

The act of offering is Brahman; the offered gift is Brahman, offered by Brahman in fire that is Brahman. To Brahman must he come who contemplates (*Samādhi*) a work that is Brahman.

To the Lords of Heaven do some Ascetics observe the sacrifice; and others by sacrifice only offer sacrifice in the fire that is Brahman.

Some offer the senses, hearing and the rest, in the fires of restraint; others offer the objects of sense, sound and the rest, in the fires of the senses.

Others offer all the works of sense and works of breath in the knowledge-kindled fire of control, which is restraint of self.

Others make sacrifice with substance (e.g. costly articles, practising liberality in general and so on), sacrifice with austerity, (i.e. mortification of the body *tapas*), sacrifice likewise with ascetic practice (*Yoga*-methods of control), or with scripture-reading and learning, men of restraint, men of strict vows (*Vratāh*).

Others offer the outward breath in the inward, and the inward in the outward; checking the flow of both inward and outward, they make constraint of breath (*Prāṇāyāma*) their aim.

Others, moderate in food, offer breaths in breaths (*Prāṇāyāma*). Each one of these is a knower of sacrifice (i.e. one who performs sacrifice with the knowledge (spiritual) which alone gives it its value), and by sacrifice, their stain is done away.

Eating the remains of the sacrifice, ambrosial food, they go to Brahman, which is from everlasting; this world is not for him who sacrifices not; how then another, best of Kurus ?

Thus manifold are the sacrifices outspread at the gate of Brahman, know that all these are born of work; if thou dost know this, thou shalt find release.

The sacrifice of knowledge O Paramtapa, is better than material sacrifice; every work without exception, son of Pṛithā, comes to complete fulfilment in knowledge.

Learn this by reverence, by questioning, by service. Men of knowledge, who behold the truth, will teach thee knowledge.

(*Bhagwad Gitā 4-24 to 34*)

(13) Divine and devilish natures. (Daivāsura Sampat).

The Blessed Lord said:

Fearlessness (*Abhayam*), purity of heart (*Satva S'amsudhih*), steadfastness in devotion to knowledge, liberality (*Dānam*), Self-restraint (*Dama*), sacrifice, sacred study (*Svādhāya*), austerity (*Tapas*), uprightness (*Arjavam*).

Harmlessness (*Ahinsā*), truth (*Satyam*), an even temper (*Akrodhah*), abandonment, quietude (*Shāntih*), an unmalicious tongue, tenderness towards beings (*Dayā*), a soul unruffled by desire, gentleness, modesty, constancy.

Ardour, long suffering (*Kshamā*), fortitude (*Dhṛiti*), cleanness (*Shaucham*), freedom from hatred and arrogance-these are his who is born to Divine nature, O Bhārata.

Hypocrisy, pride, and self-conceit, wrath, insolence, and ignorance (*Ajnāna*)—these are his, O son of Pṛithā, who is born to Devilish nature.

The Divine nature is deemed to lead to emancipation, the Devilish to bondage. Grieve not, O son of Pāndu, thou art born to the Divine nature.

Two creations of beings exist in this world, the divine and the devilish: the former has been described at length. Hear (the account of) the other from me. These devilish men are equally ignorant of action (*Pravṛitti*), and cessation from action (*Nivṛitti*); they are distinguished neither by purity (*Saucha*) nor by right conduct (*Āchāra*) nor by truth (*Satya*).

" Without truth (i.e. not putting on reliance on the truth of the Vedas, Shāstras, etc.-refers to chārvākas or materialists), without basis (i.e. with no moral government) is the Universe, they say 'and without God; born of mutual union, caused by lust (*Kāma*-this is the view of Lokāyatikas or materialists, that sexual passion is the sole cause of all living creatures) naught else ! ' Yielding to insatiable desire, full of hypocrisy, arrogance, and conceit, impure in their practices, and governed by delusion (*Moha*) they snatch at wrongful gains.

Entertaining boundless anticipations extending to the end of all things, esteeming enjoyment (*Kāmopabhoga*) the main thing, and the only thing, bound in a hundred chains of hope, the slaves of lust and anger, for the sake of gratifying their passions, they strive to amass wealth by unjust means. ' This has been gained by me today; the object of desire I shall obtain; I have this property, and that further wealth I shall acquire. That enemy has been slain by me, and I shall slay the others also. I am lord; I enjoy pleasure, I am complete, powerful, happy; I am opulent, of noble birth; who else is like me ? I will sacrifice and bestow alms, I will make merry. Thus speaking, deluded by ignorance, carried away by many imaginations, enveloped in the net of illusion (*Mohajāla*), and abandoned to gratifications, they fall into an impure hell (*Naraka*)."

(*Bhagwad Gitā 16-1 to 16*).

(14) Nahusha and Yudhisthira–Definition of true Brāhman.

"Answer my question correctly" said Nahusha, the serpent "or else I will finish off thy brothers." "Ask Oh great serpent," said Yudhisthira, "I will answer to the best of my abilities." "Who is a Brāhman?" asked Nahusha: Yudhisthira replied "One who is endowed with truthfulness, liberality, forgiveness, good conduct, equality of feeling towards all, austere life, and compassion." "But the four castes do exist: "rejoined Nahusha" what then if truthfulness, liberality, forgiveness &c. are found in a S'udra?" Yudhisthira answered: "If this mark exists in S'udra and does not exist in a Brāhmaṇa, that S'udra is not a S'udra and that Brāhmaṇa is not a Brāhmaṇa, O great serpent: Where this mark exists, the person is a Brāhmaṇa, where it does not, the person is a S'udra." If O, King: "said Nahusha" You think that a man's demeanour makes him a Brāhmaṇa, then the fact of belonging to a particular caste is of no avail unless a man's actions entitle him to that caste." "The caste, Oh great serpent," said Yudhishthira, "in the presence of the general species of mankind is at present indistinguishable in consequence of the great intermixture of races. Men of all castes beget children on women belonging to all castes indiscriminately. Men are common only in speech, sexual intercourse, birth and death. I will quote a further Vedic argument viz., the verse 'Ye yajamāhe.' Therefore, those who have an insight into the essence of things believe that conduct is the chief thing. Castes are useless if suitable conduct does not exist; for the intermixture of races has been very great indeed."

(*Mahābhārata Vana-Parva, 182–21 et. seq.*)

(15) Self is its own witness.

The self (or soul) is its own witness; and the self is its own refuge. Disregard not thy soul which is the best witness of men.

Sinners think 'no one sees us' but the gods behold them and their own inner man.

Though good man, thou thinkest of thyself 'I am alone!' know that this sage (muni) residing in thy heart is a beholder of virtuous and sinful acts.

'If thou are not at variance with that divine Yama the son of Vivasvat, who dwells in thy heart, thou needest neither visit the Ganges nor the land of the Kurus (Kurukshetra)'

(*Manu Smṛiti 8–84, 85, 91, 92*).

(16) Dharma the only inseparable friend.

The only firm friend who follows men even after death is virtue, all others are extinct with the body. For in his passage to the next world, neither his father nor his mother nor his wife nor his son nor his kinsmen will remain in his company—his virtue alone will adhere to him. Single is each man born; single he dies; single he receives the reward of his good or single the punishment of his evil deeds. When he leaves his body, like clay on the ground, his kindred retire with averted faces; but his virtue accompanies his soul continually. Therefore by degrees let him collect virtue for the sake of securing an inseparable companion; since with virtue for his guide, he will traverse a gloom how hard to be traversed:"

(*Manu Smṛiti 8–17; 4–239 to 242*).

APPENDIX B

OFFSPRINGS OF MIXED CASTES
(VARNA SANKARAS)

APPENDIX B.

Offsprings of mixed Castes.

I. Union of Castes–Anuloma.

Man	Woman	Manu	Vasishṭha	Bauddhāyana	Gotama	Vishṇu	Others
Br.	Br.	Br.	Br.	Br.	Br.	Br.	Brāhmaṇa
Br.	Ksh.	...	Ambashṭha	Brāhmaṇa	Ambashṭha	Kshatriya	Mūrdhāvasik.
Br.	Vais.	Ambashṭha	...	Ambashṭha	Daushyanta	Vaishya	Bhrijjukaṇṭak.
Br.	Sud.	Nishāda, Pāra.	Pāras'ava	Nishāda, Pāra.	Nishāda	S'udra	Pāras'ava
Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.	Ksh.
Ksh.	Vai.	...	Ugra	Kshatriya	Ugra	Vaishya	Māhishya
Ksh.	Sud.	Ugra.	...	Ugra.	Pāras'ava	Sudra	Yavana
Vai.	Vai.	Vai.	Vai.	Vaishya	Vaishya	Vaishya	Vaishya
Vai.	Sud.	...	Nishāda	Ratlhakāra	...	Sudra	Karaṇa
Sud.	Sud.	Sud.	Sudra	Sudra	Sudra	Sudra	Sudra.

II. Union of Castes–Pratiloma.

Sud.	Br.	Chāṇḍāla	Chāṇḍāla	Chāṇḍāla	Chāṇḍāla	Chāṇḍāla	Chāṇḍāla
Sud.	Ksh.	Kshatta	Vaiṇa	Kshatta	Kshatta	Māgadha	Pulkasa
Sud.	Vai.	Āyogava	Antyāvasāyin	Māgadha	Āyogava	Ayogava	Vaidehaka
Vai.	Br.	Vaideha	Rāmaka	Vaideha	Vaideha	Vaideha	Māgadha
Vai.	Ksh.	Māgadha	Pulkasa	Āyogava	Māgadha.	Pulkasa	Dhīvara.
Ksh.	Br.	Suta	Suta	Suta	Suta	Suta	Suta

III. Mixed-Caste Unions with the Main Castes.

Man.	*Woman.*	*Caste of the offspring.*
Brāhmaṇa	Ugra	Āvṛita (Manu)
Do.	Ambasṭha.	Ābhira (Manu)
Do.	Āyogava	Dhigvaṇa (Manu)
Nishāda	Sudra	Pukkasa (Manu)
Do.	Vais'ya	Do. (Baudhāyana)
Sudra	Nishāda	Kukkuṭaka (Manu)
Vaisya	Nishāda	Do. (Baudhāyana)
Pukkasa	Do.	... ...
Ambashṭha	Brāhmaṇa	S'vapāka (Baudhāyana)
Ugra	Kshatriya	Vaina (Baudhāyana)

IV. Union of Mixed-Castes.

Man.	*Woman.*	*Caste of the offspring.*
Vaidehaka	Āyogava	Maitreyaka (Manu)
Nishāda	Vaidehaka	Kārāvara (Manu)
		Āhiṇḍika
Chāndāla	Do.	Pāndusopāka (Manu)
Kshatta	Ugra	S'vapāka (Manu)
Nishāda	Āyogava	Mārgava, Dāsa, or Kaivarta (Manu)
Chāṇḍāla	Pukkasa	Sopāka (Manu)
Do.	Nishāda	Antyāvasāyin (Manu)
Vaidehaka	Ambashṭha	Veṇa (Manu)
		Vaiṇa (Baudhāyana)
Ugra	Kshatta	S'vapāka (Baudhāyana)

Note:—Tables I to IV above are taken from 'Racial synthesis in Hindu culture by S. V. Vishwanath.'

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

Page.	*Line.*	*Present reading.*	*Correct reading.*
11	30	Reconsciliation	Reconciliation
13	3	called	are called
15	19	pristime	pristine
15	35	Do	Do
16 (20)	8	ideas	ideals
16 (24)	5	reformer	reformers.
19	32	Homer	Homer."
19	33	Macdonald	Macdonell.
20	7	Do	Do
26	25	bottle	battle.
27	11	develoved	developed
29	last line	oblation	oblations
36	24	The	This
36	27	Vadic	Vedic
37	20	Macdonalad	Macdonell
37	28	Do	Do
40	last but one line	Dissinct	distinct
58	8	Principal	2. Principal
67	13	Shetaketu	S'vetaketu
70	foot note 1	K. U.	Ka. U.
72	foot note 3	K. U.	Ka. U.
76	8	Verbatim	verbatim.
86	28	and asserted	and of whom Vallabh has asserted
100	32	out-castes	out-casts
118	13	800 B. C.	600 B. C.
124	15	4 Ethics	IV Ethics.
152	3	Comes	Come

Page.	*Line.*	*Present reading.*	*Correct reading.*
152	4	Do	Do
156	13	where	whereby
157	27	men	man
167	2	a constitutes	constitutes
177	3	liberty	liberality
181	10	Sutras	Shastras
195	4	Caste[1]	Caste
209	13	Vivah Home	Vivāha Homa
209	Foot-note 5	Sk. G. S.	Sh. G. S.
212	Foot-note 2	Ancient Sanskrit	Sanskrit
212	Do 8	Do	Do
216	Do 1	Y. S. 22.	V. D. S. 17-70.
217	Do 2	Y. S.	V. D. S.
217	Do 3	V. S. 18-1 to 3	V. D. S. 28-1 to 3.
218	Foot-note nos. 2, 3 & 4	2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3.
229	25	an existence	no existence
244	1	(viii)	(ix)
245	8	(ix)	(x)
246	30	(x)	(xi)
248	8	(xi)	(xii)
257	8	forcement	enforcement.
280	Foot-note 1	A. D. S. 2-5-10, 11.	A. D. S. 2-5-11-10,11
297	19	and sacrifices	sacrifices
311	last but one line	Ashramas	Ās'ramas.
320	18	in the	in the number
339	Foot note nos. 5, 5, 6	Nos. 5, 5, 6	Nos. 5, 6, 7.
340	14	for	far.
360	21	drives	derives
387	23	(x)	(ix)
388	24	out-castes	Out-casts
388	28	(xi)	(x)
398	6	indicrete	indiscreet

INDEX OF AUTHORS

The method of transliteration adopted herein follows that adopted by the Bhāndārkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.

Abbe Dubois 245
Angiras 360
Annie Beasant 5
Āpastambha 208, 222, 280, 286, 324, 329, 331, 337, 338, 341.
Aristotle 4
Āshvalāyana 22, 321
Atri 341, 359, 360, 361, 368
Bādarāyaṇa or Vyāsa 11, 120, 122, 281, 325
Bauddhāyana 296
Bhandarkar 116, 120, 121
Bradley 9, 15, 83
Bṛihaspati 185, 225, 242
Buch M. A. 16 (8), 376
Buhler 16 (11), 184, 203, 332
Chandāvarkar J. 230
Colebrook 83
Daksha 328, 329
Dayānand Swāmi 347
Deussen Paul Dr. 4, 5, 12, 55, 59, 84, 102
Dhruva A. B. 349
Dixit 20
Dutta N. K. 267, 270, 272, 318, 320, 354, 356, 362, 363
Dutta R. C. 27, 229, 377
Einstein 15, 16 (5)
Empedocles 4
Fa-Hien 355
Frazer 229
Gandhi M. K. 126, 349, 358, 361
Gangānāth Jhā Dr. 261
Gaudapada 83
George Birdwood 16 (15), 188
Ghobhila 216, 221
Gotama 11, 122, 182, 215, 219, 220, 325, 329, 367
Gough 12, 83, 85, 104
Govindarāja 322
Griffith 282
Haug 27, 268, 273
Havell 16 (23)
Herbert Spencer 96
Hiriyana 88
Holleman 87
Indirā Raman Shāstri 349
Ishvara Krishṇa 123
Jacob 12
Jacobi Prof. 20
Jaimini 11, 12, 16 (3), 52, 249, 253, 280
Jolly 244
Kanāda 11, 16(3) 122
Kant 83, 374
Kapila 11,46, 121, 123
Kātyāyana 185
Keith A. B. 188, 269
Kern Prof. 268, 273
Kulluka 211, 214, 218, 220, 222, 243, 278, 322
Kumārila Bhatta 11
Macdonell 19, 21, 212, 229, 266, 267, 320
Mādhava 122, 185, 243, 284
Madhva 13, 16 (2)

Mahidhara 346
Manu 184, 211, 216, 218, 219, 220, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 230, 232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 241, 242, 244, 245, 249, 251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 260, 262, 263, 264, 266, 278, 279, 281, 282, 283, 286, 287, 290, 291, 294, 295, 296, 307, 311, 313, 315, 317, 318, 321, 322, 324, 328, 329, 332, 336, 340, 341, 347, 368, 392, 393.
Maxmuller 12, 19, 20, 21, 41, 46, 52, 59, 127, 391
Medhātithi 185, 203, 211, 214, 242, 278, 322
Megasthenes 119
Moore Dr. 27
Mulla D. F. Sir 231, 234
Nandana 203
Nandapandita 242
Nārada 185, 205, 211, 215, 219, 232, 241, 242, 244
Neitzche 187
Nesfield 273
Nimbārka 13
Parmenides 83
Pānini 23, 118, 148
Pārās'ara 185, 186, 215, 216, 221, 242, 260, 261, 283, 284, 323, 324, 328, 330, 331, 332, 333, 339, 341, 342, 378, 387
Patanjali 11, 117, 122
Plato 4, 83
Przyluski 356
Pushpadanta 402
Pythagoras 4
Rādhākrishna Sir 16(23), 313, 398, 402
Rāghavānanda 203, 239
Ragozin 245
Rāmānujāchārya 13, 16(2) 16(6), 86, 105, 120, 121, 149, 307
Roth 27, 53
Samvarta 341, 360
Sāyaṇa 52, 53, 111, 263, 345
Schlegal 185
Schopenhaur 55
Shakespere 83
S'ankarāchārya or S'aṅkara 4, 11, 12, 13, 16(2), 16(6), 43, 83, 120, 132, 135, 138, 148, 156, 307
S'ānkhāyaṇa 321
Shridhara Swāmi 142
Socrates 4
Sus'ruta 222, 296
Telang 127
Thibeau 12
Tilak B. G. 20, 111, 126, 396
Vaidya C. V. 20, 111, 119
Vallabhāchārya or Vallabha 13, 16 (2), 16 (6), 60, 78, 86, 88, 121, 150, 155
Vasistha 180, 182, 185, 215, 217, 233, 241.
Vātsyāyana 241
Victor Cousin 55
Vijnānes'vara 16 (12) 186, 220
Vishvanāth S. V. 355
Vivekānand Swāmi 188
Vyāsa Smṛiti 361, 366
Wheeler 247
William Jones 184
Wilson 53
Yājnavalkya 185, 186, 216, 221, 232, 238, 240, 257, 300, 301, 323, 324, 328, 329, 335, 336, 339
Yama 341, 360
Yāska 52, 53, 269, 345

INDEX OF SANSKRIT WORDS WITH A GLOSSARY.

References to the principal occurrences of important Sanskrit words chiefly technical are given here with explanations and cross references to the General Index where necessary for convenience. The numerals at the end refer to pages of the book.

Abhayam—Fearlessness 177, 418

Abhyāsa—Repeated practice 145, 172

Āchaman—Sipping of water for purification 329

Āchāra—Conduct, 16 (9), 251, 254, 255

Āchāra Kānda—Section of the Dharma Shāstras dealing with rules of conduct, individual and social, 183

Āchārya—The teacher who initiates a pupil and teaches him the Veda. He is also called Guru or spiritual guide 288, 289

Adharma — Unrighteousness or sin by lapse of duty 300, 378

Adhibhūta — Essential existence or Being (God) as manifested in perishable objects in relation to the physical aspect 146

Adhidaiva—The essential deity (God) in relation to the intellectual aspect regulating objectively the cosmic forces of nature and manifested as devas or gods 145, 146

Adhiyajna—Essential sacrifice or Brahman as identical with Krishna in his incarnated bodily form as an object of worship being the very self (Ātman) of sacrifice 417

Adhyātma — The essential self (God) in relation to the spiritual aspect regulating subjectively the inward senses of individuals and manifested as their innermost self 145, 146, 154

Advaita or non-dual monism 87 (See Monism general index)

Ādya Purusha — The primeval person 46, 129

Aghnyā—One who was not fit to be killed i.e. cow 320

Agni—1 Fire 33; 2 three sacred fires in which domestic sacrifices were made viz. Gārhapatya Āhavaniya and Dakshina 305

Agni Ādhāna or Agni Ādheya—The ceremoney of kindling the sacred fire 180, 246, 289, 369

Agni hotra — Daily obligatory worship of the sacred fire by making offerings therein 180, 297, 305

Agni Pariṇayana — Part of the marriage ceremoney called circumambulation or leading the bride round the nuptial fire 210

Ahimsā — Non-slaughter of or abstention from injury to animals 16 (20), 29, 106, 120, 176, 177, 319, 322, 417

Ajnāna—Ignorance 177, 418

Akshara—The eternal, imperishable and unchanging Brahman 78, 88, 146, 151, 154, 163, 164, 173

Akshara Dhāma—Eternal and immutable abode of Brahman from which there is no rebirth 163

Akshatā Yoni—A virgin or a woman who had no marital intercourse with any person 239, 240 241

Amṛitatva—State of deathlessness or immortality, i.e. emancipation 102, 162

Anantaras—Sons begotten by Āryans on women of next lower castes 276, 277

Ananya—i.e. not separated or detached from the worshipper 155

Anāsas—Persons who could not utter civilised or refined language i.e. Un-Āryans or Dasyus 36

Anga--See Vedānga

Ansha—A part of a whole, that which occupies a subordinate position 158

Antahkaraṇa—Inner sense which is a product of not-self 153

Antaryāmin—Brahman as inner guide and controller 76, 77, 136

Antyaja—Backward classes (see general index)

Antyajanāh—Outcasts residing at the end of a city or village 347

Antyāvasāyin—One who stays at the end of a city i.e. a chāndāla or an untouchable 340

Antyes'ti—Funeral rites which constitute the last religious sacrament 263

Anuloma—(1) Union or marriage of a male of a higher caste with a female of a lower caste (2) Offspring of such marriage 16 (16), 198, 204, 275, 276

Ānvishiki or Nyāya—Logic 23

Anya Devatāh—Other Gods to whom an otherness is ascribed 141

Apapātra — Outcast persons to whom food was given from broken vessels, which had to be thrown away subsequently 277, 316, 340

Āpat-Kāla—Distressed time 262

Apātra—One who is rendered unworthy to receive gifts on account of sinful conduct 386

Apaurusheya—Not made by any person but by God. It refers to the revealed scriptures of the Āryans 9, 19

Apurva—Unseen religious merit which results from religious works as sacrifice 16 (3), 16 (9), 25, 249

Āranyakas — Forest books for anchorites 54

Ardhanārīs'vara—God Shiva with his consort Pārvatī constituting the left half of his body 313

Ardhānganā—A wife as the better half of her husband constituting his half body 201

Ārjavam—Uprightness 106, 176, 177, 418

Artha—Worldly object or wealth as an aim of life 16 (9), 248
Arthavāda—Explanatory or eulogistic statements which have no obligatory force like commandments or injunctions 12, 25, 262
Artha Veda—The science of arts e.g. sculpture, carving etc. It is an Upaveda or supplement to the Veda 24
Asanga S'astra—Axe of detachment 129
Asapinda—One who is not related to another within seven degrees from a common ancestor so as to prevent their marriage 203.
Asat—(1) Unreal 61, 88, 89
(2) Unmanifest 45, 89, 132
Ashmārohana—Part of the marriage rite in which the bride is made to tread on a stone for acquiring firmness to overcome enemies 210
Āshrama Dharma—Duties relating to the four orders of life 287
Ashuchikarana—An act which makes a man impure but not degrade him so as to be outcasted 286
Ashvattha — The sacred Indian fig-tree, which ever changes. It stands for not-self which is ever changing and unreal 129
Asprisya—Untouchable 360
Asura—(i) Wise spirit, used for Varuna 30; (2) Aborigines 35; (3) Devils 35
—and Āryans feuds between 35
—leaders of — Vṛitra 32, 35; Vala 35; Sambara 35;
—Gods of—Nagas (serpents) 36, 113; Phallus, 36; Monkeys 113; Bears 113; Birds 113
Āsuri Sampat—Devilish nature 175
Atharva Veda—The fourth Veda 21
Āthravа or Adhvaryu — The priestly class belonging to the Zorostrian faith of the Parsis 268
Āthravans — Deceased ancestors (Pitaras) invoked for blessings 50
Ati Kṛichhra—See Prāyaschitta
Ātithya—Hospitality 105
Ātman—Self, Spirit or Soul 62, 63, 74, 79, 129
Parama—Supreme Self or God 14, 164
Mahad or Mahānatmā—The great soul of Brahman as its first born 80
Pratyag—Inner Self or Spirit 130 (See general index)
Ātma-tushti — Self-satisfaction 254
Ātmavinigraha—Self-restraint 176
Avaruddhā Stree—A concubine or one who is in the exclusive keeping of a person 241
Avatāra—Incarnation of God 118 136, 137, 138
Avidyā—Ignorance of the soul, or cosmic ignorance 156

Avyākṛita—Unmanifest state of the names and forms of the phenomenal world about to be evolved 89

Avyakta—(1) Unmanifest state of nature or not-self from which its three strands, satva, rajas, and tamas are evolved 151
(2) The supreme being who is unmanifest 164

Āyurveda — Science of medicine. It is an Upaveda or supplement to Vedas 23

Bāhya — One who is outcasted from the Āryan community 276

Beeja—Seed of a person which is sown in the soil (Kshetra i.e. woman) 199

Bhakti—Devotion 137, 140, 142, 143, 166

Bhakti Mārga—The path of devotion leading to the Supreme Being 16 (1), 166

Bhārata Sāvitrī — Memorable verses in the Mahābhārata eulogising virtue 125

Bhoktṛi or Bhoktā—The embodied soul who is the enjoyer of sensual pleasures 63, 92, 159

Bhuman or Bhumā — Infinitude 68, 71

Brahmachāri—Student (see orders of life general index)

Brahmacharya Vrata—The vow of celibacy strictly enjoined for a student 290, 295, 366

Brahmaloka—The heavenly abode to which the worshippers of Brahman with attributes have access after death 72, 104 304

Brahman — The absolute (See general Index)
Para—The Supreme Being 14,60
Apara—The lower Brahman 60
Nirguna—Without attributes 60
Saguna—With attributes 60, 76
Mahad—i.e. nature (Prakṛiti) 151 born from Akshara 173
Nirvānam—eternal peace 163

Brāhmana caste — (See general index)

Brāhmaṇas—Portions of the Vedas which deal with the procedure about the performance of Vedic sacrifices and rites 22, 24, 25

Budhi—(1) Intellect 93; (2) Cosmic reason 152

Budhi Yoga—Practice of discernment i.e. work without desire 168

Chāndrāyaṇa—See Prāyaschitta

Charaṇa — Vedic schools or colleges 22

Charu — Boiled messes of food offered as domestic sacrifice 305

Chāturvarna—The institutions of four castes, their duties 16 (12), 173, 193, 264, 282

Dahara—See Vidyā

Daivi Sampat—Divine nature 175

Dama — Self-restraint 105, 106, 177, 418

Dāna — Gift 48, 106, 177, 8, 379, 418

Dānava—Devil 35
Dars'aṇ — Perception or direct vision, system of philosophy 1, 3, 402
Dāsī—A female slave or a maid servant 316, 338, 369
Dayā—Mercy 106, 177, 418
Deva—The bright gods worshipped by the Āryans as opposed to those worshipped by the Un-Āryans 36
Devatā—Gods (Vedic) 29
(a) Celestial
Varuna 30, 38, 371, 372; Surya (Sun), 31, 39, Vishnu 31, 49, 78; 163; Mitra (sun) 37, 39; Savitṛi (Sun) 39; Pushan 39; Ashvin 39; Usus (dawn) 39; Dyaus (sky) 39; Rātri (night) 35, 39.
(b) Atmospheric
Indra 31, 32, 39; Rudra 32, 33, 39; Maruts 34, 39, 41; Apām Napāt 39; Vāyu (wind) 39; Parajanya (rain) 39; Āpas or Āpah (waters) 39, 43
(c) Terrestrial
Agni (fire) 33, 39; Soma 33, 34, 39; Pṛithvi (earth) 39
(d) Abstract
Shraddhā (Faith) 37; Manyu (anger) 37; Kāma (love) 37; Dhatṛi (Creator) 37
(e) Female Gods
Vāc (goddess of speech) 35; Saraswati 35; Araṇyāṇi 35; Indrāṇi 35; Varuṇāṇi 35; Āgneyi 35
(f) Miscellaneous
Mitrā - Varuna 34; Dyāvā - Pṛithivi (sky and earth) 34; Rubhus 34; Ādityah 34, 39; Rudras (Rudra gods) 39; Vasus (terrestrial gods) 39, 40; Vishve Devāh 34, 40; Prajāpati 37, 39, 42, 43; Brahmā 37, 39; Bṛihaspati 37; Brahmanspati 43; Daksha 42; Twastṛi 42; Viahvakarman 43; Hiraṇya-garbha 43; Purusha 46; Virāt 46; Aditi 37; Diti 37
Devatā—Gods (Epic)
Rudra-Shiva 78, 114; Shiva 113,115,116,117;Mahādeva 115; Vishnu 78, 113, 117, 118, 137; Nārāyaṇa 118, 119: Rāma 118; Kṛishṇa 118, 119; Trimurti 114; Purushottama 78; Umā 115; Durgā 114, 119; Lakshmi 113, 199; Rādhā 121; Kārtikeya 113, 119, Vāsudeva 114, 120; Shankarshaṇa 120; Pradyumna 120;Aṇiruddha 120
Devayāna—Path leading to the abode of the gods 99, 160
Dhāma—Eternal and immutable abode of peace and joy as the supreme goal of life 163
Dhanurveda—Science of archery. It is an Upa-Veda or supplement to Veda 23
Dharma — Religion or morality 16 (4)
—Derivation of 16 (3), 248
—Definitions of 10 (3), 16 (4)

—Meanings of—Religion, righteousness or virtue, Spiritual Merit, duty, and Law 16 (3), 16 (9) 16(20), 143, 153, 248, 300
—Aim of life 16 (9) 248
—Righteousness or virtue 16 (20), 112, 124, 174, 177, 181, 182, 192, 300, 303
—Legal duty 16(3), 16(9), 248, 249
—In the Veda 25, 28
—In the Epics 112, 124
—In the Gitā 174, 177
—In the Dharma Sutras 181, 182
—In Manu Smṛiti 192, 300, 303
—Pravṛitti—religion of works and duty 249
—Nivṛitti—religion of renunciation and knowledge 249
Dharma Shāstras—Codes of law in the form of verses 16(9), 16(10), 16 (11), 183, 186 (see general index)
Dharma Sutras—Short aphorisms in prose on law, virtue, conduct etc. 180, 182
Dhṛiti—Fortitude 177, 418
Dhyāna—Meditation of God with devotion 144, 166, 310
Dikshā—Initiation for Vedic sacrifice 288
Divākīrti — One who is allowed to move about in day time only i.e. a Chāndāla 341
Durāchāra—Bad conduct 251
Dwandwa—Pairs of opposites e.g. heat and cold, joys and sorrows, etc. 129, 153, 158
Dwija—Twice born person, the first birth being from parents and the second from initiation by the teacher 16 (12), 288
Ekāntika—Monotheistic religion as observed by the Vaishnavas of the Pancharātra School 120
Ekapatnī—A faithful and dutiful wife having one husband only 228
Gandharvaveda—Science of music. It is a supplement (Upaveda) to Veda 23
Garbhādhāna—Rite of consummation of marriage 220, 263
Gāyatri—The sacred hymn of the Ṛig Veda containing prayer of sun God and chanted by every Brāhman as a part of his daily morning religious duty 31, 195
Gokula—Place of birth of Vāsudeva-Kṛishna 121
Goloka—Heavenly abode of God Vāsudeva-Kṛishna 102, 118
Gotra—Family name derived from the name of its original founder 271
Gṛihapatnī—The newly wedded wife as queen and mistress of the house 211, 213
Gṛihastha — Householder (see orders of life, general index)
Guṇa—Strands or constituents of nature (Prakṛiti) which are three in number viz. (1) Satva (the principle of purity and knowledge) (2) Rajas (the principle of energy and activity) and (3) Tamas (the

principle of darkness and ignorance 143, 150, 151, 152, 153, 171
Guru—The Brāhmaṇa priest who as a venerable person performs the religious domestic rites 288
Havyavāhana — Sacrificial fire which carries the offerings to gods 33
Hira yagarbha—The golden germ or the first born who created the world 41, 42, 43
Homa—Sacrificial offerings in the fire 283
Indriya—Senses of perception and action five of each 93
Īsha or Īs'vara—Supreme God as ruler of the Universe 14, 77, 132, 136, 147
Ishta—Works of sacrifice 302, 303
Itihāsa—History 297
Japa—Muttering of holy prayer as Sandhyā 283
Jātaka—Books of Buddhist literature 354
Jātavedas—One who knows all created beings i.e. the holy fire 33
Jāti—Small groups of castes determined as such by birth, also professional castes 271, 272, 273
Jāti-Brams'a—A sinful act making a man liable to be outcasted from his caste 385, 386
Jnāna Kānda—Section of the S'rutis including Upanishads dealing with spiritual knowledge and philosophy 14
Jnāna Mārga—The spiritual knowledge leading to the Supreme Being 16 (1), 165
Kailāsa—Heavenly abode of God Shiva 102, 118
Kāma—(1) God of love 37; (2) Sensual desire as an aim of life 16 (9), 248; (3) Lust 419
Kanyā—Unmarried girl, a virgin 239, 241; Nagnikā 215, 216; Gauri 215, 216; Kanyā 215, 216; Rajasvalā 215; Ṛitumatī 216; Rohini 216
Kanyādāna—Part of the marriage ceremony in which the girl is given in marriage to the bridegroom for protection 208
Karma—Actions; law of or retribution (see general index)
Karmās'raya—Substrate of actions 93
Karma Kānda—Work section of the vedas dealing with actions 14
Karma Mārga—The path of action leading to the Supreme Being 16 (1), 166
Karmayoga—The doctrine of action without desire 168
Karuṇā—Compassion 176
Kevalādwaita—Doctrine of non-dual monism or absolute idealism 16 (6)
Kosha—Sheath, Aṇnamaya 94, 95; Prānamaya 94, 95; Manomaya 94, 95; Vijnānamaya 94, 95; Ānandamaya 94, 95
Kravyād—Funeral fire which devours corpses 33

Kṛichhra - Ati - Kṛichhra — See Prāyaschitta
Kshamā—Long suffering 178, 418
Kshānti—Long suffering or endurance 177
Kshara—The perishable existence identified with lower nature (Prakṛiti-Kshetra) 145, 146, 151
Kshatā Yoni—A non-virgin whose virginity was destroyed by sexual intercourse with a man 240, 241
Kshetra—The field or nature (Prakṛiti), or physical body 134, 151, 152, 159, 160
—The soil in which the seed is sown i.e. a woman 199
Kshetraja—The son begotten on the wife of a person by another by Niyoga 235
Kshetrajna—The knower of the field or the true self, individual or cosmic 134, 151, 152, 155, 159, 160
Kutastha—The imperishable, unchanging and immutable Brahman which is exalted over the objects of nature and untouched by them 88, 146
Loka—World
Brahma—Of Brahman 99, 104, 160, 161
Deva—Of gods 49, 160, 161
Pitṛi—Of fathers 48, 49, 50, 161
Sukṛita—As reward for good deeds 48
Pati—Of husband 229
Bhuta—Of ghosts 161
Lokasangraha—Philanthropic and altruistic works of general usefulness 147
Madhu—See Vidyā
Madhuparka—(1) Ceremony of honouring a distinguished guest visiting a householder with a a repast of flesh etc. 16 (23), 300, 322, 323 (2) Compound of honey, milk, curd, ghee and sugar offered to a distinguished guest 335
Mahābhuta—Five great elements 152
Mahā Vākyāni—Supreme propositions in the Upanishads 66
Mahad Brahma — The great Brahman as the womb and matrix of the universe. It stands for nature (Prakṛiti) 151
—Ātman — The great soul of Brahman as its first born 80
Mahāpātakas—Mortal or grave sins 182, 285, 315, 380, 384
Maitra—Friendly 176
Malāvaha—Sins which make a man impure but not make him liable to be outcasted from his caste 386
Māmsah—Flesh (i.e. the animal killed will eat me in the next world) 318
Manas—Mind 93
Mantras — Metrical verses and formulas in the Vedas 22, 25
Mātaris'van—The Indian Prometheus who brought the celestial

fire from the heaven to the earth 33
Maunja or Upanayana—Rite of initiation to the sacred thread of a twice-born person 263
Maunjibandhana—Tne tying of the girdle of grass round the waist as a part of the initiation ceremony of the twice-born 288
Māyā—(1) Nature (Prakṛiti) or not-self, 85, 131, 143
(2) Illusion or delusion 68, 83, 85, 129, 139, 144, 155
(3) Delusive power of God 155, 156
(4) Ignorance (Avidyā) 156
(5) Mysterious power of Brahman 15, 16, 63
Māyā Shakti—Mysterious power of Brahman, the Supreme Being; cosmic immanent power 15, 16, 63, 130, 132.
Māyā-Vāda—The theory of illusion or unreality of the world 43, 62, 83-88, 155, 156
Mīmānsā or Purva Mīmānsā—System of philosophy of Vedic rites and rituals and dealing with interpretation of the Vedas 10, 12, 16 (3), 23, 280 (See general index)
Moha—Delusion, 419.
Mohajāla—Net of illusion, 419.
Moksha—(1) Emancipation, release, salvation, deliverance, absolution or perfect freedom as the supreme goal of life 54 see Mukti. (2) an aim of life 16(9), 248
Mukhya Prāna — Chief (vital) breath 95
Mukti—Emancipation or perfect freedom 1, 54 (See emancipation, general index)
Videha Mukti—Achieved after death 14, 105
Jivan Mukti — Achieved even during life before one's death 14, 75, 105
Krama Mukti—Graded emancipation achieved by gradations and stages 105
Naivedya—Offering of food made to a god 315
Naraka—Hell, 419.
Nāsadīya Sukta—A philosophical hymn of the Ṛig Veda containing the germ of Māyā Vāda 43-46
Nirvāṇa—(1) Entry into the abyss of void in Buddhism 163; (2) eternal peace within Brahma the Absolute according to the Gitā163
Nishādasthapati—The chief of the tribe of Nishādas 369
Nishedha—An injunction or a prohibitory statement restraining a specified act 25, 261, 389
Nivṛitti—Renunciation or cessation of action, 249, 419.
Niyama—Rule regulating ceremonial observances and conduct 301, 328
Niyama Vidhi or Vidhi Niyama—A positive rule of commandment or injunction in the holy texts 25, 222, 223, 261, 322, 323

Niyoga—The practice of begetting a male offspring on the wife or widow of another 235 et seq.
Nyāya or Anvikshikī—Logic; or system of philosophy dealing with logic 10, 23, 122, 297
Panchagavya—A purificatory drink of five ingredients, viz. cow's urine, dung, milk, curd and clarified butter to be taken by a sinner for penance 331, 381
Panchāgni—See Vidyā
Panchāgni tapa—Heat of 5 fires to which an anchorite exposed himself in summer 306
Pancha Janah—People of the five tribes 106, 269, 345, 346
Pañchama—The fifth class which was outside the pale of caste 36, 198, 266
Pañcha Mahā Yajna—Five great daily sacrifices viz. Deva Yajna (to gods), Brahma Yajna (to the Vedic Ṛishis), Pitṛi Yajna (to the ancestors), Bhuta Yajna (to living creatures) and Nara Yajna (to man e.g. guest) 16 (14), 195-197, 297, 305
Panch Nakhah—Five toed animals whose flesh was interdicted except of five specified animals 318
Pāni-Grahana—Part of marriage ceremoney in which the bridegroom takes hold of the hand of the bride 201, 209
Para or Parama—Higher
Para Brahma 14, 60, 64, 132
Para or Parama Purush 156, 164
Para Akshara 164
Para Avyakta 164
Paramātman 14, 164
Parā Prakṛiti (Higher Nature) 151
Parama pada—The highest step of God Vishnu i.e. the highest heaven 31, 49, 117, 118
Parāka—See Prāyaschitta
Paramparā—Traditional mode of handing down knowledge in regular succession 16 (10), 254, 289
Parapurvā Pati—Husband of a remarried woman 243
Pariṇāma Vāda—The theory of creation by conversion of God 88, 149
Parisankhyā—A negative rule in a text interdicting a certain act with an option giving permission only to do a certain positive act 222, 223, 322, 323
Parishad — Legal Assembly of learned persons competent to decide doubtful points of law etc. 258, 380, 388, 389
Parva—Certain holy days in a month interdicted for marital intercourse and on which one was enjoined to worship images of gods, 220, 299.
Paryānaka—See Vidyā.
Pas'upatāstra—A missile of war given to Arjuna by God Shiva. 115.
Patiloka—The world of husband in the heaven reached by a

faithful and virtuous wife after her death where she is reunited with her deceased husband, amidst celestial pleasures, 229.

Patitas—Degraded and outcast persons, 298.

Paunarbhava—The son of a remarried woman, 239.

Pavamāni—Certain purificatory verses of the Ṛig Veda glorifying God Soma to be uttered by a sinner undergoing a certain penance, 382.

Pitṛi—Deceased fathers or ancestors staying in the higher worlds, enjoying celestial pleasures in company with the gods, 48, 49.

Pitṛiyāna—Path leading to the abode of deceased fathers, 99, 160

Prajāpati—The creator, 37, 42.

Prājāpatya Kṛichhra—See Prāyaschitta.

Prājna—The individual soul in a state of dreamless sleep, 95.

Prakṛiti—(1) Nature or not-self consisting of three strands (gunas) satva (principle of purity and knowledge), rajas (principle of energy) and tamas (principle of darkness) which are in a state of equipoise and rest before creation until disturbed by contact of Purusha or (the principle of consciousness) when evolution or creation of the world takes place 45, 134, 151, 152, 153, 156, 157, 171, 173; (2) Illusion or Māyā 85, 156; (3) Ignorance (Avidyā) 156

—Parā—Higher self 143, 145

—Aparā—Lower self or not-self 143, 145 (See Nature general index)

Prāṇas—Vital breaths-Prāṇa 93, Vyāna 93, Samāna 93, and Udāna 93, Mukhya 95.

Prāṇashakti—Potential energy of God, 150.

Prapatti—The path of dedication and surrender of oneself to God as a means to emancipation, 149.

Pras'āsana—The power of regulating the universe by commandments of the Supreme Being, 76.

Prasthāna Trayī—The three canonical books of highest authority in the orthodox schools of philosophy, viz. the Vedas or S'ruti, the Bhagwad Gitā, and Vedānta or Brahma Sutras, 13, 128

Prasutā—A woman who has given birth to a child, 241.

Pratiloma—(1) Union or marriage of a female of higher caste with a male of lower caste. (2) Also hybrid offspring of such marriage, 16 (16), 198, 204, 205, 275, 276, 277.

Prātis'akhyas—Vedic readers or text-books for different schools of Vedas, 22.

Pratisthā —Place of refuge or seat of activities 130, 153, 163

Pravara—Names of certain leading Ṛishis by which a particular Āryan family (gotra) of the twice-born is distinguished, 271.

Pravṛitti Dharma — Religion of duty and works 249, 419

Prāyaschitta — Penances: Prājāpatya Kṛichhra, 381, Sāntapan Kṛichhra 381, Tapta Kṛichhra 382, Parāka 381, Ati Kṛichhra, 382, Kṛichhra Ati Kṛichhra,382, Chāndrāyaṇa, 305, 378, 382, 383, Tulāpurusha 378.

Prāyaschitta Kānda—Section of the Dharma Shāstras dealing with penances for atonement of sins, 184.

Preyas—Mundane good, 107.

Prokshita—Sprinkled with consecrated water, 317.

Pujā—Worship of idols and images of gods 283, 284, 291, 299

Punarbhū—A remarried woman, 240, 241.

Punarjanma—The doctrine of reincarnation or rebirth in bodily form (See transmigration of the soul, general index)

Punassanskāra—The rite of reinitiation e. g. second marriage of a woman, 239, 240.

Puraṇas—Old mythological chronicles as a source of authority (See general index).

Purtam—Works of charities, erecting alms houses, building hostels, hospitals etc. 302, 303

Purusha—The principle of intelligence and self-consciousness in a person 45, 46, 123, 145, 146, 151, 152

Ādya—Primeval person or the first cause, 129

Parama—Supreme person i.e. God 156, 164

Divyam — Supreme celestial person i.e. God 164

Adhidaiva — Essential deity manifested as God and controlling objectively the forces of nature 146

Akshara—Imperishable person 146, 151

Kshara—Perishable person with reference to nature 146, 151

Purushottama—The supreme person or Brahman 145, 164

Purushārtha—Aims or purposes of life:

Dharma—(Virtue) 248; Artha-(wealth) 248, 249; Kāma-(Desire of worldly good) 248, 249; Moksha - (Emancipation) 248, 249

Purusha Sukta — Philosophical hymn of creation in the Ṛig Veda, showing the divine origin of the four castes 46

Purushottama — The Supreme person or Brahman 78, 145, 146, 164

Purva-Mimānsa—See Mimānsa.

Putra—Son—Fourteen kinds of-Aurasa — (legitimate) 207;

Putrikā Putra—(Daughter's son) 207; Kshetraja-(begotten on the wife of another by Niyoga) 207; Gudhaja (born secretly) 207; Kanina (Maiden's son) 207; Sahodha-(son taken with the bride to her newly wedded husband) 207; Paunarbhava-(son born to a remarried woman) 208; Nishad-(son by a Sūdra wife) 208; Parāsava-(son by a concubine) 208; Dattaka-(adopted son) 208; Kṛitrima-(son made artificially) 208; Kṛita-(son bought for a price) 208; Appaviddha-(son cast off) 208; Swayamdatt-(son self given) 208.

Rajas—The component strand or constituent of physical nature which is the principle of energy 152, 153

Rākshasa—Devils or uncivilised aborigines 112

Rāma-Rājya—Ideal rule of Rāma 112

Ṛig-Veda—21

Ṛik or Ṛicha—Metrical hymns of the Ṛig Veda 21

Ṛita—(1) Law and order and harmony 30, 371 (2); right dealing (arjavam) 105

Ṛitu—Age of puberty of a girl or the period of season of a woman when she is fit for marital consummation 215, 217, 218, 221. Not synonymous with menstruation, 217, 218

Ṛitvik — The officiating priest who performs a Vedic sacrifice for another 289

Sacchidānand—The Supreme Being having eternal existence (sat), eternal knowledge (chit), eternal Bliss (Ānand) as His essential nature 15, 59

Sadāchāra — Good conduct 250, 251, 254, 301, 38

Sādhvi—A virtuous and faithful wife 226, 238

Sahadharmachāriṇi — A dutiful wife co-operating with her husband in all the social and religious duties of life 201

S'aivas—Followers of the sect which believes in Shiva as the highest God 78

S'aivism—The faith of persons believing in God Shiva as the highest divinity 116

S'ama—Tranquility 105

Samam—Equal minded 309, 396

Sāman — Matrical hymns and verses of the Sāma Veda which were sung in the form of music 21

Samānodaka—One who is related to another beyond seven degrees from a common male ancestor, and who offers libations of water to the latter 332, 388

Samāvartana — A religious rite indicating the completion of the order of student and fitting him for embracing the order of a house-holder 201, 263, 295

Sāma Veda 21
Sāmayikāchāra—Observances,practice and conduct based on traditions and customs 183
Samhitā -- Compilation of the Mantra including metrical songs which contains prayers to gods and ritualistic formulas 22
Sampat—Nature of human beings 175
Daivi—divine 175
Āsuri—devilish 175
Samuchhaya—Doctrine of union of action and knowledge 134
Sāmya—State of equality 396
Sanātana— Eternal religion as observed by the caste Hindus traditionally from times immemorial 16 (1)-16 (3), 262, 284
Sandhyā — Twilight prayers to Sun god enjoined for every twice born person 31, 180, 195, 291, 298
Sanghāt—Human body made up by a combination of the physical elements and evolutes of nature, 152, 158
Sankara or Varnasankara—Hybrid offspring of mixed marriages between persons of different castes, Anuloma and Pratiloma 16 (16), 348
Sankari Karana—Sins and offences degrading a man to a mixed caste, 386
Sānkhya—System of philosophy, 10, 45, 121, 152
—Theistic (originally) 123
—Atheistic or classical (subsequently) 123 (See general index)
Sansāra—Migration of embodied souls to several rounds of births and deaths in this mortal world 93
Sansarga—Attachment 310
Sanskāras—Religious sacraments 262
Sāntapan Krichhra—See Prāyaschitta
S'antim Paramām—Eternal peace of the Absolute 163
Sanyāsi—Ascetic (See orders of life-general index)
Sapinda—(1) One who is related to another on the father's side within seven degrees from a common male ancestor and who offers funeral cakes to the latter and is an agnate relation 203, 332, 388.
(2) One who is related to another on the mother's side within five degrees from a common ancestor 203
Saptapadi—The part of marriage rite in which the married parties take seven steps before the nuptial fire 210, 211
Sat—(1) Empiric reality 61, 89
(2) Supreme reality 59, 85, 88, 89, 129
(3) Manifest 45, 132
Sati—The practice of self immolation or burning away alive on the funeral pyre on the part of a dutiful wife along with her deceased husband 229

Satva—The component strand or constituent of physical nature (Prakṛiti) which is the principle of purity 152, 153

Satyam—(1) Empiric reality 61, 86; (2) Supreme reality or essential existence 59; (3) Virtue of truthfulness 105, 106

Satyasya Satyam—The truly real in the world of empiric reality 61, 86

Saucha—Purity 326

Sautramani—A kind of Vedic sacrifice at which spirituous liquor was drunk 322

Savana—Rite of pressing of Soma for libation of sacrificial juice, three times a day-Prātas (morning) Mādhyandina (midday) and Sāyama (evening) 34

Shākhās—Vedic schools of thought 22, 179

Shandilya Vidyā—A mode of worship or prayer of Brahman 73, 74; See Vidyā.

Shishna Devāh—Phallus worshippers 36, 117

Shodash Kalā—See Vidyā.

Shrāddha—The rite of worshipping the manes of the deceased ancestors of a person by offering funeral cakes and water with faith accompanied with holy Mantras.

—In the Vedas 49, 50

—In the Gitā 174

—In Manu Smṛiti 196, 317, 321

Smṛiti — Tradition; recollections handed down traditionally and based on S'ruti 9, 183, 253. (See general Index)

Snātaka—One who has taken his holy bath as indicating the completion of his studies and as preparatory to the order of house-holder or a Vedic Graduate 263, 296

S'ramana—Wandering mendicants and ascetics, who beg for food 124

S'reyas—Spiritual merit 107

S'ruti—Revealed scriptures containing the spiritual wisdom of God heard by sages by intuition and acquired by direct experience 8, 19, 252 (See general Index.)

S'uddhādvaita—Doctrine of pure monism 16(6)

S'udras—

Asat—Of impure origin 16 (15), 279, 359, 366, 367

Sat—Of pure origin, 16(15) 279, 359, 366, 367, 368, 369

Sukshma Sharira—Subtle body 93, 95

S'unya—Indefinite abyss of void or nothingness 163

Surā—Wine 315

Sutras—Short aphorisms in prose on various subjects including systems of philosophy 10, 23, 179, 180, 183

Srauta (Kalpa)—(Vedic or ritualistic) 23, 180, 183

Gṛihya—(Domestic) 23, 180, 183

Dharma—(Legal, social & moral) 16(11), 23, 180, 181, 183
Svabhāva—Nature (Prakṛiti) 131
Svadharma—The duty laid down for one's own conduct 170, 174, 177, 252
Svādhyāya—The daily study of the Vedas as enjoined in the Vedas for the twice-born 291
Svarāt—Self-dependent monarch having self-government or perfect freedom 371
Svayamvara—Choice marriage of a girl 214
S'vetadwipa—White island or the Heavenly abode of God Nārāyana 118
Swairini—Wanton woman 240,241
Swārājya—Perfect freedom or emancipation 191
Swarga—Heaven 1, 25
Swayambhu—Self-existent or Prajāpati, the creator of the world 317
Taijas—The individual soul in a dreaming state 95
Tamas—The component strand or constituent of physical nature which is the principle of darkness 152, 153
Tapas — Austerity 105, 106, 378, 379
Tapta Kṛichhra—(See Prāyaschitta)
Traivarnika—One who belongs to the three higher castes 24
Trayi Vidyā—Knowledge of the three Vedas, viz., the Ṛig Veda, the Yajur Veda and the Sāma Veda 21
Trimurti — Indian Trinity 39, 114; (See Trinity Indian, General Index).
Tulāpurush—A kind of penance 378
Uchhishta — A person who has not washed his mouth after eating 331
Upādhyāya—A sub-teacher who teaches a portion of the Veda or its appendages (Anga) for his livelihood 288
Upakosala—See Vidyā
Upanayana—Rite of initiation to the sacred thread on the part of the twice-born 263
Upāngas—Sub-appendages of the Veda.
Nyāya (Logic), Mimānsā (Science of interpretation of Vedic rites),
Dharmashastras (codes of religious law), and Purānas (ancient mythological narratives) 23
Upanishad—(1) Secret knowledge taught by the teacher in private to select students who were qualified for the same; (2) the revealed scriptures which form the end of the Vedas and are called the Vedānta 55 (See General Index)
Upapātakas—Sins less grave than mortal sins 385, 386

Upāsanā—Meditation or worship of God 71
Pratika Upāsanā—Meditation of symbol or symbol worship 71,72
Saguna Upāsanā—Meditation of God with attributes 72
Aha graha Upāsanā—Inward meditation of God with knowledge of the spiritual identity of the devotee and the divinity 73
Upāsanā Kānda—Theological section of the Vedas and Upanishads dealing with meditations of God 14
Upa Vedas — Supplements to Vedas. Āyurveda (science of medicine) 23;Dhanurveda (science of archery) 23; Gandharvaveda. (science of music) 23 and Arthaveda (science of arts e.g. sculpture, carving etc.,) 24
Vāgdāna — Verbal promise to give a girl in marriage 201
Vaikuntha—Heavenly abode of God Vishnu 102, 118
Vairadeya—Wergild or punishment by fine, inflicted in primitive times for offences 375
Vairāgya—Renunciation or conquest of desire 172
Vais'nava—One believing in God Vishnu or any of his incarnations as the supreme deity 60, 78, 116, 118, 119, 319
Vais'navism—The faith of persons believing in Vishnu or any of his incarnations as the highest divinity 120
Vais'vānara—(See Vidyā)
Vānprastha — Anchorite (See orders of Life, general Index)
Varna—Colour or caste 16(10), 16(12)
Savarna—A person belonging to one of the four Āryan castes 266, 351
Avarna—A person belonging to a class having no caste, i.e. an Un-Āryan 266, 351
Varṇasankara—(1) Mixture of blood by intermarriage of persons belonging to different castes 174 (2) hybrid offspring of mixed marriages, Anuloma and Pratiloma 16(16), 348
Varnās'ram Dharma—Eight fold religion of four castes and four orders of life 27, 106
Vāsanā—Attachments of an individual to relations of the phenomenal world and the impressions imbibed therefrom which lead to rebirth 95, 158.
Vāsudeva—Supreme God 118,120
Veda—The four, Ṛig Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma Veda and Atharva Veda 21 (See general Index)
Vedānga—Appendages of the Vedas 389
S'ikshā—The science of phonetics or pronunciation and committing to memory the Vedas 22
Kalpa—The science treating of Vedic rites and rituals 22

Vyākarana—Science of grammar 23
Nirukta—Science dealing with the etymology of Vedas 23
Chhandas—Science dealing with the meter of Vedic hymns 23
Jyotish—Science of astronomy 23
Vibhūti—The glorious forms of Vāsudeva-Krishna manifested in the world 137, 138
Vidhi—A positive commandment or injunction enjoining a certain specified act 12, 25, 261, 389
Vidvat - Parishad — Synod of Pandits and learned men. See Parishad.
Vidyā—Congnitions or modes of worship of God 72; Paryanka 72; Panchāgni 72; Upakosala 72; Dahara 67, 72; S'āndilya 72, 73, 74; Vais'vānara 72; Madhu 72; Shodas'a Kalā 72
Vikalpa — An alternative mode of interpretation of a text 239, 253, 262, 322
Virāt Purush—The evolved person created by God (Purusha) by whose sacrifice the creation was made 26, 46
Viruddha Dharmās'raya — The doctrine according to which Brahman is the substrate of opposite attributes as constituting its nature 60
Vis'ishtādvaita—Doctrine of distinguished monism 16 (6)
Vis'va—The individual soul in a waking state 95
Vivāha—Marriage rite of 208–213
Forms of–Brahma 205; Daiva 205; Ārsha 205; Prājāpatya 205; Āsura 205; Gāndharva 205; Rākshasa 205; Pais'ācha 205 (See Marriage general index)
Vivāha Homa — Nuptial sacrifice 209
Vivarta Vāda—The theory of creation as an illusion or an unreality 88. See Māyā Vāda.
Vrātya—One who is degraded from his caste by neglect of his religious duties 272, 276, 288, 347
Vrātyastoma—A special rite of purifying the Āryans who had been degraded to a fallen life, including reconversion of those who had been converted to other faiths 16 (18), 288, 364, 378
Vyavahāra Kānda — Section of the Dharmashāstras dealing with rules of conduct governing social and legal relations of a man 184
Vyuha—The forms assumed by God Vāsudeva in which he was worshipped in the Pāncharātra school 120
Vāsudeva 120
Sankarshana 120
Pradyumna 120
Aniruddha 120
Yajna—Sacrifice 106, 378, 379
Vedic:
Vihita—Obligatory 28
Agni hotra—Daily fire sacrifice 180

Yajna—
Vedic-(continued)—
Darsapaurnamāsa—New and full moon sacrifices 297
Kāmya Yajna—Sacrifice with desire of rewards 28
Rājasuya Yajna—Sacrifice performed by a king for universal sovereignty 28
Asvamedha Yajna — Horse sacrifice performed by a king for progeny etc., and universal sovereignty 28, 29
Domestic:
Vivāha Homa—Nuptial sacrifice at the time of marriage 209
Pancha Mahā Yajna—The five great sacrifices done by a house-holder as a part of his daily obligatory duties 195-197
Pāka Yajna—Domestic sacrifices of vegetables in place of animals 321
Ishi Prājāpatya—Sacrifice to Prajāpati done by a Brāhman while embracing the holy order of ascetics 307
Miscellaneous:
Rudra Yāg — Sacrifice to Rudra which a Nishāda chief was entitled to perform 369
Yajurveda—Black and white 21
Yajus—Formulas and utterances in the Yajurveda used for Sacrificial purposes 21
Yama:
(1) King of the blessed world of fathers in heaven enjoying celestial pleasures 48, 49
(2) God of death 309
(3) Rules of self restraint and conduct 301
Yoga:
(1) Control or balance of mind 168, 169
(2) Skill in work 168
(3) Action without desire (Karma Yoga) 165, 166, 168, 169, 170
(4) Union with God by contemplation 168
(5) System of Philosophy 10, 11, 122
(6) Ascetic practices 308-310
Yogangas:
Subservients of Yoga practices Yama 301; Niyama 301; Āsana 308; Prāṇāyāma 309; Pratyāhāra 310; Dharana 310; Dhyāna 310; Samādhi (supreme contemplation).
Yoga Māyā—Power of delusion of God 156
Yuga ages:
Satya 16 (22) 259
Tretā 16 (22) 259
Dwāpara 16 (22) 259, 260
Kali 16 (22) 259, 260

GENERAL INDEX

The names and subjects in the Sanskrit index have not been included here except in a few instances and considerations of space have likewise required the omission of names of secondary importance. The names of authors are given in a separate index. The numerals at the end refer to pages of the book.

Aborigines, 16 (16)-16 (19), 35, 266, 270
Absolute, See Brahman
Absolute idealism or non-dual monism, 14, 15, 16, 47, 64, 65, 132, 154, 155, 191
Actions (Karmas)
  and knowledge theory of union of 134, 135
  and knowledge relation of, 166
  Inaction, denouncement of, 167
    with desire, 167, 168
    without desire (Karma Yoga), 166, 168
  Practice of Self control (Yoga) and work with detachment, 168-171
  In the Vedas, 25, 28
  In the Upanishads 105-106
  In the Gitā, 168, 172
  In the Dharmashāstras,249,255
Adoption by husband, 232; by wife, 233; (2) widow, 233-235
Agastya, 112, 319
Ahur Mazd, 35
Akshamālā (Arundhati), 228
Anchorite, order of
  Rules of conduct and duties of, 304-306
Angas or Vedāngas—Appendages of Veda, 22
  Shikshā (Art of studying by committing to memory the Vedas), 22
  Kalpa (rules relating to Vedic rituals and sacrifices), 23
  Vyakarana (Vedic grammar), 23
  Nirukta (Vedic etymology), 23
  Chhandas (rules relating to Vedic meter), 23
  Jyotis (Science of astronomy), 23
Anthropomorphism, 15, 69
Antyajas (See Backward Classes)
Apāntaratamas, 122
Āranyakas—Forest books for anchorites, 54
Arjuna, 114, 115, 126, 128
Arthavāda—Explanatory or eulogistic statement which has no obligatory force, 12, 25, 262
Āryans and Un-Āryans, 36, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271
Ārya Samājists, 217, 223, 224, 274, 279, 280, 281, 320, 347, 365
Ascetic, order of
  Rules of conduct and duties of, 306-311
  Whether a Sudra can be an ascetic, 307

Impostor ascetics, 308
and extreme asceticism in Jainism Buddhism and some faiths of Christianity, 312, 313
Assembly of learned men (Vidvat Parishad)
to decide doubtful points of law, 258
to confess sins before, 380
to dictate penances and purificatory rites, 388, 389
Asuras, 35
Ātman—Derivation of, 62, 63 (See Self.)
Atmospheric world, 161
Atom, 16 (5), 96
Atomic theory, 16 (5)
Authority sources of,
Vedas or S'rutis, 8, 189, 252
Smṛiti (tradition), 9, 189, 253
Good conduct and custom, 189, 254
Reason, 8, 254
Purāna, 9, 23, 252, 253
Backward classess (Antyajas), 16 (16), 16 (17), 340, 347, 359, 360, 361, 366, 367
Seven classes of, 359
not untouchables, 16 (17), 358
not unworthy of touch like Chāndālas, 359–361
relation with Chāndālas, 366
several of them not in need of special protection, 362
uplift of, 362–364
exploitation of by the reformers, 368
Purification movement (Shuddhi) for readmission to caste of, 364–365
elevation of status of by leading a pure and moral life, 368
religious learning imparted to them through Purāns, 370
Path of devotion in the Gitā thrown open to them, 370
integral parts of the Hindu community, 370
no apathy towards them, 370
Baruda, 359
Beatitude—See emancipation
Bhagvad Gitā (the holy song sung by Lord Shri Kṛishna)
Historic, 126
Tributes to, 126
Commentaries on, 126
Date of, 127
Opinions about the teaching of, 127
Main purpose of, 128
Non-sectarian religion of, 141
Catholic spirit of, 141
Religion of devotion in, 140–142
Bhāgwat Purāna, 138, 314
Bhāgwat school of theology, 120
Bhakti (devotion), 137, 140, 142, 143, 148, 166. See devotion
Bhangi, 16 (17), 356, 358
Bhāradwāja hermitage of, 112
Bhārata, 111
Bheel, 347
Brigu, 51
Birds two:
Supreme and Individual Souls contrasted as, 76

Body physical:
Gross, 92; Subtle, 93; Causal, 93; Elements of, 93.
Bolshevism, 16 (22), 397
Brahman — The Absolute or Supreme Being.
Derivation of the word, 59
Nature of, 59-62, 64, 129, 130
Sole reality, 61, 67, 68, 90, 129
Double aspect of, transcendent and Immanent, 131, 132
Identity in essence of the Supreme and the Individual Souls, 65-68
The Supreme Being and Nature, relation of, 87
Triune Unity of the Supreme Being, 95, 96
Brāhmaṇa (Caste):
Pre-Vedic origin of, 27, 268
Divine origin of from the head of Virāt, 26, 106, 264
Created on the principle of nature and works, 173
Duties and professions of, 174, 175, 193, 282, 283
As the type of virtue and self-sacrifice, 200
Brāhmaṇas, 22, 25
Breaths vital, five, 93
Brotherhood, Universal, 16, 197
Buddhism, 16 (10), 111, 123, 312, 320, 350
Caste:
Four castes, 26, 173, 193
Pre-Vedic Origin of: 27, 268, 269
Caste-(continued)—
As a divine institution origin of, from the body of Virāt, 26, 106, 173, 264, 265
Glowing tributes to the institution of, 187, 188
A social institution based on the principle of division of labour, 287
Origin and growth of: 26, 106, 173, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268-271
Distinctions of, on basis of colour, (Varna), 267, 272-273
Determination of, by birth and not profession, 273-274
Based on the biological law of heredity, 287
Origin of from mixed marriages 198, 272, 273, 275-277
Professional: 16 (16), 277, 278, 347, 355, 356, 359
Change of, whether in this life or next one, 278-280
Duties religious and professional of,
Brāhmaṇa, 174, 193, 282
Kshatriya, 174, 175, 194, 282, 283
Vais'ya, 175, 194, 283, 284
S'udra, 175, 194, 283, 284
Autonomy of, 284
Backward, 16 (16), 359
Degraded and untouchable, 16 (16), 16 (17), 339, 340
Right to excommunicate from, 284, 387, 88
Right to re-admit to, 364, 385, 388

In the Vedas, 26
In the Upanishads, 106
In the Gitā, 173
In the Manu Smṛiti, 193
In the Dharmashāstras, 262–287
Caste Hindus and the casteless, 266–267
Causation law of, 80, 81, 157
and transmigration, 162
and retribution, 157
Chaitanya, 16 (2)
Chamār, 16 (17)
Chāndālas classes of, 16 (13), 16 (16), 16 (17), 16 (21), 36, 198, 275, 330, 340–344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 363, 366, 367
Charvāka, 123
Child Marriage Restraint Act, 219, 296
Christian theology and Indian Philosophy 4
Christianity and the Religion of the Gitā, 141
Cogito ergo sum (I think I exist) 97
Communism, theory of, 16 (22), 297, et seq
fallacies underlying, 397
Some phases of, 397, 398
Opposed to democracy, 398, 399
Restraining influence of Dharmashastras in combating, 399, 401
Conduct—See good conduct.
Contemplation of the Supreme Being–Is it an empty abstraction? 103, 104
Cosmology or creation.
theories of, 43–47, 79–81
triple, 81, 82
Quintuple, 81, 82
sānkhya mode of, 45, 123
criticism of the theories of, 88
a process of evolution from an exoteric point of view, 90
esoteric doctrine of, 90
by the Lord of dual nature, 149, 150
Order of evolution, 151
Creative medium (Prakṛiti) 156
and the law of causation, 157
In Vedas, 43–47
In the Upanishads, 78
In the Gitā, 149–158
In Manu Smṛiti, 190
Cow:
Utility of 319
Sacred Character of, 320
Worship of, 321
Interdiction of beef-eating, 321
Injunction for non-slaughter of, 320
Creation—See Cosmology
Customs ancient, 254–256
as source of religion and authority, 189
as transcendental law, 254
legal enforcement of, 257
not to be immoral, 257
Non-interference by Āryans with, customs of the conquered races 256
of districts, classes, guilds and families, 256

injunction for preservation of, 255, 256, 257
Wholesale substitution of new for old, unjustifiable, 257
Paramount duty of the sovereign to preserve existing, social or religious, 257
Evidence of, 257
Hindu law mostly consisting of, 255
Dars'ana - perception or direct vision; system of philosophy, 1
Dāsas; 35, 36, 266, 267, 269, 270, 271, 345, 362, 363
Dasharatha, 246
Dasyus, 35, 36, 266, 267, 270, 277, 345, 346, 362
Debts three owed by every man, discharge of, 201, 307
Defilement—See Impurity
Deism and theism, 77
Destruction of the Universe, 82, 83
Devotion (Bhakti) doctrine of, 140
Universal and non-sectarian, nature of, 140, 141
Moral effect of, 141
with love, 142
with knowledge, 144
Emancipation as fruit of, 144
Two modes of viz., to the manifest and the unmanifest Lord, 144
Dharmashāstras (Smṛitis), 9, 16 (11), 16(12), 183-187, 253
early history of, 179, 180
authoritativeness of, 183, 253 254
Theistic basis of, 16(21), 393
classification of, 181, 184
commentaries on, 186
Digests of law on, 186
Special purpose of, 389-401
catholicity of, 16(22) - 16(24) 260
ethics of, 181-182
Dharma Vyādha 16(18), 369
Dhed, 16(17), 356, 358
Dictator, 399
Dirghatamas, 41
Divine Grace Doctrine of,
In the Upanishads, 76
" " Gitā, 148, 149
Divorce, opposed to the sacramental theory of marriage, 199, 244-245
Doms, 16(17), 356, 358
Draupadi, 247
Dualism and monism, 124
Duties:
Sacrificial, 25, 28, 172, 195
Social as relating to castes (Varna) 26, 106, 173, 193, 262-287
relating to the four orders of life (Āshrama) 26, 106, 287-314
Moral, 28, 105, 175, 192, 198, 254
relating to worship and devotion, 29-38, 68-79, 113, 114, 140-145, 189, 195
Marital, 200, 201, 212, 213-248
Customary and traditional, 250-258

Legal 254, 258, 259, 260, 314–326, 326–339, 392, 393, 399–401
Obligatory daily duties of the twice-born, 195–197
Duties varying for different ages, 259
Electrons theory of, 16 (5), 96
Elements:
of the physical body, 93, 96
of matter, 81, 82, 96, 143, 150, 152
Emancipation, 1
Positive conception of, 162
Kinds of:
(1) Oneness with the Supreme Being, 101–104, 163
(2) Companionship with the Supreme Being, 104, 105, 164
(3) Release by stages, 105
(4) as an eternal abode, 163, 164
means to, 165
In the Vedas, 48
In the Upanishads, 101–105
In the Gitā, 162–166
In Manu Smṛiti, 191
In Yājnavalkya, 193
Epics:
Historic, 111
Ethics of, 112, 124, 125
Theology of, 113, 114–119
Philosophical systems in, 120–124
Equality of all, criticism of the theory of, 394–397
Eschatology:
Reward of heaven for virtue, 48
Punishment of hell, for vice, 50, 161
atmospheric and nether worlds, 161
world of Brahman, 99, 104, 160, 161
world of Gods, 48, 49, 160, 161
world of fathers, 48, 49, 50, 161
world of ghosts, 161
transmigration, 3–5, 98, 99, 100, 161, 191
Doctrine of five fires (Panchāgni), 99
Paths of the fathers and Gods, 99, 160
In the Vedas, 48–51
In the Upanishads, 96–101
In the Gitā, 160–162
Ethics, 16 (19)
Eastern and Western, 16 (8)
Place of in Indian Philosophy, 107, 108
Place of in Gitā, 178
Moral Virtues, 28, 105, 106, 175–177
Rules of castes and stages of life (Varnāshrama) 26, 28, 106, 107, 173
Doctrine of action without desire (Karma Yoga) 168
Practice of self-control, 168
Sacrificial Acts, 25, 28, 172
Cause of sin, 171
In the Vedas, 28
In the Upanishads, 105, 108
In the Epics, 112, 124

In the Gitā, 166–178
In Manu Smṛiti, 192
In the Dharma Sūtras, 181
In Dharma Shāstras, 254
Eugenics, 219
Evil Doctrine of, 5–7
Evolution:
Creation a process of, from an exoteric point of view, 90
Sānkhya mode of, 45, 123
Origination of the three strands of nature, 123, 143
Order of in creation, 151, 152
Exogamy rule of, 203
Faculties:
Five, of perception and knowledge, 93
Five, of action, 93
Fathers (Pitṛis) deceased, invocation and worship of, (Shrāddhas) 49, 196, 317
Gautama Buddha, 16(20), 111, 123, 124, 314
God—worship of:
Polytheistic, 29, 30
without attributes, 59, 60, 74
with attributes, 72, 73, 74
as impersonal self (Ātman) 74
theistic mode of with devotion, 75, 135, 136
two modes of manifest and unmanifest, 144
realisation of God by three modes – knowledge, devotion and action, 13, 14, 165, 166
Good conduct, 16(19), 28, 254, 255
Gopāla Kṛishna, 120, 121
Government of India Act, 351, 352
Guest, hospitality to, 16(14), 197, 198, 297
Guha, 369
Heaven, Pleasures of, 48, 49
Hell as infernal region, 50, 51, 161
Henotheism, 41
Heredity law of, as governing castes, 287
Hermit—See Anchorite.
Hindu widow remarriage Act, 231
Hospitality to the guest, 16 (14), 197, 198, 297
Householder-order of:
Rules of conduct and duties of, 296–304
Term of householdership, 304
Husband and wife, rights and duties of, 224–228
Idealism or Spiritualism and materialism, 16 (5)—See Absolute Idealism
Idols of God, worship of—See Images.
Illusoriness or unreality of the world, theory of—See Māyāvāda
Images of God, worship of, 71, 72, 74
Immortality of the soul, doctrine of, 4, 96, 97, 102, 129
and total annihilation, 4
and eternal retribution, 4
and emancipation, 4
Impurity
by touch of impure persons, 330–331

by touch of certain animals, 330
by touch of a corpse, 331
by suicide, 332
by touch of a woman in menses or in confinement, 333
purification from, special rules for, 334–338
pure and impure things, 334–337
Incarnations of God:
Ten and twenty-four as mentioned in the Purānas, 118
Of the Supreme God as Kṛishna-Vāsudeva, 137
Inference or reason as a source of knowledge, 8, 254
Inner Voice, 171
Interpretation:
Mimānsā rules of, 12, 23, 187, 253
Of Vedas modes of, 51–53
Intuition, as a source of knowledge 2, 9, 19, 103, 134, 165
Islām and the religion of the Gitā, 141
Izava, 355
Jainas and Jainism, 4, 16 (10), 98, 111, 123, 312, 320, 350
Jambuvati, 115
Janaka Janadeva, 123
Jātakas, 354
Jnāneshwara, 16 (2)
Judaism and the religion of the Gitā, 141
Kaivarta, 359
Kakshivat or Kakshivan, 16 (18), 271, 369
Karma or retribution law of, 3
Genesis of, 51, 99
and transmigration, 3–5, 100, 101, 191
and causation, 157
In the Vedas, 5
In the Upanishads, 100, 101
In the Gitā, 161, 162
In Manu Smṛiti, 191
Kautsa, 52
Kavasha Ailusha, 16(18), 271, 369
Kāyastha, 359, 361
Kirāta, 347
Knowledge spiritual:
Doctrine of, 64, 68, 131–4, 165
means and sources of, 7, 10
their relative value and authority, 8
and action theory of union of, 134, 135
and action relation of, 166
Kṛishna:
and Arjuna, 126
as a great teacher of the doctrine of devotion, 126
performing Sandhyā and fire worship, 113
propitiating God Shiva for having a son, 115
cult of Vāsudeva-Kṛishna, 114, 118
cult of Gopāla Kṛishna, 120, 121
cult of Rādhā Kṛishna, 121
an Incarnation of Vishṇu, 117, 126
an Incarnation of Vāsudeva-the Supreme deity, 137

Krishna-Vāsudeva—devotion to, 136, 147, 148-9
as a divine incarnation, 137
the embodied form of, a part manifestation of the glories of Brahman, 138
the embodied form of, illusoriness of, 139
organic unity of the cosmos in, 139
Spiritual form of a concrete manifestation of Brahman, 140
as a God of worship, 147, 148
Kshatriya:
Pre-Vedic origin of, 27, 268
Divine origin of from the hands of Virāt, 26, 106, 264
Created on principle of nature and works, 173
Duties and professions of, 174, 175, 194, 282, 283
Laxman, 112
League of nations, 16 (24)
Legislative Assembly present day whether competent to make religious laws, 259
Liberation—See Emancipation
Light and shadow:
the Supreme and individual souls contrasted as, 76
Love, universality of, 16, 197
Magi, 21
Magical practices, spells and incantations, 21, 36
Mahār, 356, 358
Mahāsabhites, 320, 365
Māhāvira, 16(10), 111, 123, 124
Mahomedan theology and Indian Philosophy, 4
Maintenance:
of wife, 230, 231
of widow, 231, 232
effect of unchastity on right to, 230, 231, 232
Malyālis, 247, 274
Manu Smriti:
historic, 16(11), 184
date of, 16(11), 184, 185
tributes to, 16(11), 184, 187, 188
summary of, 188
doctrines of, 189-200
Marriage:
A religious sacrament 199, 200
A religious obligation, 200
for perfection of man, 199, 200
for one's purification, 201
to beget a son to discharge the three debts owed by every man, 201
indissolubility of the tie of, 199
Hindu ideal of, 212
Unity of interest of husband and wife by, 199, 212, 213
Prohibition of, outside one's caste, 198, 204, 275-277
forms of, 205
Rites and ceremonies of, 208-213
Restrictions of, based on principles of sociology and eugenics, 203
Qualifications of Bridegroom for, distinguished by good qualities, agreeable, and handsome, 202, 219

Qualifications of Bridegroom (continued)
Of same social standing and same caste 202
Examination of virility of, enjoined 202
Whether a eunuch is competent to marry? 203
Whether a mad man can marry? 203
Qualifications of a girl for,
Not related within prohibited Degrees (Asapindā) 203
Outside family (Asagotrā) 203
Of the same caste (Savarnā) 204
A virgin (Kanya) 204
free from bodily defects, 203
beautiful and younger than husband 204
Selection and choice of husband by the girl's father with her consent according to the Vedic ideal, 213, 214, 215
Age of parties for, 214-219, 296
Divorce opposed to Brahma, form of, 199, 244, 245
Monogamy as Vedic ideal, 245
Polygamy inconsistent with the Vedic ideal of, 245, 246
Polyandry uncommon among the Āryans, 246, 247
Child marriage restraint Act 219, 296
Second marriage of widows, 237-243
Marriage: (continued).
Niyoga, practice of, 235-237
Sale of girls, denouncement of, 248
Husband and wife, rights and duties of, 224-228
Mātanga, episode of, 367
Materialism and Spiritualism, 16 (4) (5) (6)
Matter analysis of, 96
Māyā—(1) Nature (Prakṛiti) or not-self, 131, 143
(2) Illusion, 68, 83, 85, 129, 139, 144, 155
(3) Delusive power of God, 155, 156
(4) ignorance, 156
Māyā Vāda—Illusion or Unreality of the world doctrine of, 43, 62, 83-88, 155, 156
Mimānsā or Purva Mimānsā:
System of Philosophy, 10, 12, 16 (3), 23, 280
Rules of interpretation, 12, 187, 253
Mind, 93
Mirābāi, 16 (2)
Mitākshara, 186, 204, 218, 220, 238, 240, 323
Mixed marriages, 198, 204, 275-277
Mlechhas (Barbarians), 277, 342
Monism non-dual, doctrine of, 14, 15, 16, 47, 64, 65, 87, 124, 132, 154, 155, 191
In the Vedas, 47
In the Upanishads, 64, 65

In the Mahābhārata, 124
In the Gitā, 132, 154, 155
In Manu Smṛiti, 191
Monogamy:
as Vedic ideal, 245
strictly observed by the Vadnagrā Nāgar caste as an an ideal, 246
Monotheism:
and Monism, 14–16
and deism, 77
History of, 68, 69, 77, 78, 135, 136
In the Vedas, 41
In the Upanishads, 75
In the Mahābhārata, 114
In the Gitā, 135, 136
In the Dharma Shāstras, 393
See devotion
Morality: 16 (9), 105, 112, 124, 125, 175, 181, 192, 251, 254
Eastern and Western systems of, 16 (8), 16 (9)
and religion, 16 (19)
theistic basis of, 16 (21)
moral qualities, 28, 105, 176–177, 182
moral life preferred to that by birth, 198
rules of, paramount to those of purity of conduct, 301
lists of virtues:
in the Vedas, 28
in the Upanishads, 105
in the Gītā, 176, 177
in the Dharma Sūtras, 181, 182
in the Dharma Shāstras, 192, 193, 301
Nairs, 274
Nambudri, 355
Nārada Saṁhitā, 121
Narsiṁha Mehta, 16(2)
Nature (Prakṛiti)
lower (Aparā) or not-self, 143, 146, 150, 172
higher (Parā) or self, 143, 145, 150
strands or constituents (Gunas) of viz. satva or principle of purity, rajas or principle of energy and tamas or principle of darkness, 143, 151, 152
Nāyadi, 355
Nether world or Hell, 161
Niruktas, 269
Nishādas, 36, 116, 117, 266, 269, 275, 345, 346, 347, 349, 354, 363, 369
Niyoga, 235-237
Not-self, (Prakṛiti) See Nature
Nyāya system of philosophy, 10, 23, 122, 297
Ontology:
Nature of the Absolute (Brahman) or the Supreme Being, 59–62
The Absolute (Brahman) as sole reality, 61, 67, 68, 90, 129
Double aspect of Brahman, transcendent and immanent, 60, 61, 131–133
Nature of Ātman or Self, 62, 64, 129–131
Identity of the Supreme Self and Individual self, 65–68

Discrimination of self and non-self, 129
In the Upanishads, 58-68
In the Gītā, 129=135
Orders of life, (Āshrama) viz those of student, house-holder, anchorite and ascetic and their duties, 27, 106, 107, 287, 311, 314
Outcasts: 35, 36, 117, 198, 266, 267, 269, 270, 275, 277, 330, 340, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 358, 366, 367
non-association with, 298, 339-341
their occupations, 277, 340
special rules of purification from defilement by, 341-344
excommunication for intercourse with, 387-388
Panchamas: 36, 198, 266
Pāncharātra or Bhāgwat School of theology, 120
Panchashikha, 123
Pantheism, 39
false sense of, or lower, 87, 92, 138, 155
true sense of, 155
and absolute idealism, 155
In the Vedas, 39
In the Upanishads, 80
In the Gītā, 154
Pantheon of Gods in the Vedas, 29-30
classification of Vedic Gods as celestial, atmospheric and terrestrial, 38, 39
Major Gods:
Varuna, 30; Sun, 31; Indra, 31, 32; Rudra, 32; Agni, 32; Soma, 32
Minor Gods: 34
Gods of the Āryans and Asuras, 35, 36
Abstract Gods, 37
Names of God as creator:
Daksha, 42, Twastṛi, 42, Brahmanaspati, 43; Vishwakarman, 43; Hiranyagarbha, 43
Indian Trinity, 39
Purusha, 46
Virāt, 46
Pantheon of Gods in the epics:
Indian Trinity (Trimūrti), 114, Vishnu, 114; Shiva, 114, 115; Kubera, 113; Kārtikeya, 113; Kāma, 113; Gangā, 113, Laxmī, 113; Skanda, 114; Durgā, 114
Paradise—See Heaven
Pāria, 355
Pāshupata System, 121, 122
Paths:
Paths of Fathers (Pitṛiyāna) and Gods(Devayāna), 99, 160
Paths of religion, viz., action, devotion, and knowledge, 16 (1), 165, 166
Paths for emancipation and realisation of God, 13, 14, 165, 166
Penances:
By way of purification from sins, 377, 378, 379

Value of, 380
Classes of difficult, 381–4
Dictated by the synod of learned Brāhmans, 388–389
Perception, as source of knowledge, 9
Phallus worship, 36, 116–117
Philosophical systems:
Orthodox systems:
Sānkhya, 121, 123; Yoga, 121, 122; Mimānsā, 10, 12; Vedānta, 10, 12, 122; Nyāya, 10, 23, 122; Vaisheshika, 10, 122; Pāncharātra, 120, and Pāshupata, 122
Unorthodox and atheistical systems:
Buddhism, Jainism and Chārvāka, 123, 124
Philosophy:
History of, 10
Object of, 1
Subjects of, 2
And religion, 2
Of the Vedas, 38–47
Of the Upanishads, 58, 68
Of the epics, 121–124
Of the Gitā, 129–135
Of Manu Smṛiti, 191
Physics Sānkhya, 45, 78, 123, 152
Pluralism doctrine of and Monism, 68, 85
Polyandry, 246, et seq.
Polygamy:
opposed to Vedic ideal of marriage, 245
practice of, 246
Polytheism:
in the Vedas, 39, 40
in the Epics, 113, 119
in the Gītā, 141
Potential energy, (Prakṛiti), 96, 151
Prāchīnagarbha: 122
Practices of good men, 254, 255
Prakṛiti–nature or not-self, See nature
Proletariat, 399
Psychical organism, 93, 94
Psychology:
Embodied soul, 91, 158, 159
True self and false self, 92
Free and bound souls, 160
Gross, subtle and casual bodies, 92
Waking, dreaming and deep sleep, 95
In the Upanishads, 91–96
In the Gitā, 158–160
Pukkasas or Pulkasas, 16 (17), 275, 340, 347, 354, 358, 363
Punishment for religious offences:
Divine sanction of, to preserve law and order, 371–373
Theories of, retributive, 373
Deterrent, 374
and reformative, 374–375
Primitive:
by ordeals, 375
by fines, 376
Corporal punishments: 377
Purāṇas, 9, 16(2), 23, 111, 252, 253, 297
Pure and impure things, 334–335, 337, 338

Purification from impurity,
Special rules of, 335–337
Purity of conduct:
Regulations about, 326–328
Injunction of bath for, 328
Sipping of water for, 328–329
Regulations for cooks, 338
Relaxation of rules about in times of distress, 339
Pūrva Mimānsā, See Mimānsā.
Rāma:
an ideal king, an ideal husband and an ideal son, 112
the great hero of the Rāmāyana, 113, 247
performing Sandhyā and fire worship, 112, 113
later on an incarnation of Vishnu, 113
cult of Rāma worship, 118
embraced by Gūha a Nishāda King, 369
Ramānand, 16(2)
Ramnād case, 257
Rantideva, 314
Rathakāra (class of charioteers), 369
Reality (Sat), ultimate, 61, 67, 68, 89, 90, 129
Reason or Inference as source of knowledge, 8, 254
Relativity doctrine of, 15, 16(5)
Release: See Emancipation
Religion (Dharma):
Definitions of, 16 (3), 16 (4), 193, 248, 249, 250
Hindu religion, 16(1)
Two-fold nature of Hindu religion viz., of duty (Pravṛitti) and renunciation (Nivṛitti), 248–250
Vedic and Puranic, for the initiated and the uninitiated, 24
General and particular, 193
and Philosophy, 2
and Ethics, 16(19),–16(22)
and Sacred Law, 16 (9) (10), 248, 249
Eastern and Western standpoints of, 16(6)
Sanātan religion, 16(1), 16(3), 262, 284
Religious cults:
Rudra-Shiva, 78, 115–117
Vishnu, 78, 117
Rāma, 118
Kṛishna-Vāsudeva, 119
Gopāl-Kṛishna, 120, 121
Rādhā-Kṛishna, 121
Remarriage of widows, 237–243
Requital, theory of double:
In the Upanishads, 99, 100
In the Gitā, 160–162
In Manu Smṛiti, 192
Resurrection:
and transmigration, 4
and eternal retribution, 4
and emancipation, 4
Retribution law of—See Karma law of
Sacraments religious, 262, 263
Sacrifice:
of fire-Vedic, 25, 28, 33, 173, 180

domestic, 16(4), 195–198
five great daily sacrifices, 16 (14), 195–197, 297
sacrificial acts, 172, 173
Sākalya, 39
Sanātana religion, 16 (1), 16 (3), 262, 284
—and Islam, Judaism, and Christianity 16 (1)
Sānkhya:
method of knowledge, 13, 14, 133, 165
system of philosophy, 10, 45, 121, 123, 152
Theistic, 123
Classical or atheistic, 123
Sārda Act, 219, [illegible]
Sati:
Custom of, 229–230
Sātvata Samhitā, 120
Saunaka, 111
Sauti, 111, 119
Schools of law, 187
Self (Ātman) or Soul:
Derivation of the word Ātman, 62, 63
Nature of, 62, 63, 64, 129–130
Immortality of Soul, 4, 5, 96, 97, 102, 129, 130
Indentity of the Supreme Self and individual self, 65–68, 91, 101, 130, 134, 154, 155, 160, 163
Worship of self (Ātman) 74–75
Embodied Self and Supreme Self, distinction of, 91, 92
True Self and False Self, 73
Five sheaths of self, theory of, 94
Triune unity of the Supreme Self, 95–96
Transmigration of the Soul, 3–5, 98, 99, 100, 161, 191
Self not a doer but a knower only, 130–131
Empiric or embodied soul, nature of 63, 91, 158
as doer and enjoyer, 159
Souls free and bound, 160
Senses:
Five of perception and knowledge, 93
Five of action, 93
Sex-life, 312
S'ankara school of philosophy, 16(6)
Sin:
Theories of (1) due to transgression of divine law, 371(2) due to ignorance and natural tendencies, 171 (3) due to defiance or neglect of one's duties, 177
Classification of as:
1. Mortal or grave (Mahāpātakas) 384, 385
2. less grave (Upapātakas) 385
3. Minor, 386
4. Secret, 386, 387
Austerities as purifiers from, 378, 380
confession of with a vow not to commit in future, 379
Penances for, 381–384
Shandilya Vidyā a mode of worship and prayer of Brahman 73, 74

Sitā—an ideal wife, 112, 247
Smṛitis—9, 183 et seq, 253
Social service, 16(14), 16(18), 197, 357, 362-366
Sociology—203, 219
Soul (Ātman)—See Self
Spirit—Supreme, 95, 96
Spiritualism and Materialism, 16 (4), (5)
S'ruti, Revealed Texts, 8, 9, 19, 152
Stages of life, (Ashrama)—See Orders of life.
Strands or constituents (Gunas) of nature, Satva (purity), rajas (energy) and tamas (darkness) 143 150, 151, 152, 153, 171
Student order of:
Rules of conduct and duties of, 287-296
Term of studentship, 295
Studentship till death, 295
Rite on completion of the term, 295
Svapacha, 16 (17), 275, 342, 358
Substrate moral, of body, 93
Sūdra caste:
Pre-Vedic origin of, 269
Divine origin of, from the feet of Virāt, 106, 264, 265
Origin from Dāsas, 36, 270
Created on principle of nature and works, 173
Duties and professions of, 175, 194, 283, 284
Sat-Sūdras, 16(15), 366-368
Asat-Sūdras, 16(15), 366-368
and Dāsas or Dasyus, 270,271
disqualified to perform sacrificies, 280
up-lift of, by moral lessons, 298, 362
elevation of status of, by good qualities, 362, 363, 368, 369
purification of, by Vrātya-stoma rite, 364, 365
exploitation of by the reformers, 368
Supreme Being—See Brahman
Sūtras or aphorisms, 10, 179, 180
early history of, 179, 180
three kinds of, 180
Dharma Sūtras, classification of, 181
ethics of, 181, 182
Symbol, 71
Symbol worship, 71, 72, 74
Synod or legal assembly of learned men, 258, 380, 388, 389
Techurs, 274
Temples Hindu, 114, 115, 350, 351
not public places like museums etc., 353
whether Untouchables entitled to entry in, 350, 351, 352, 353
Temple Entry of the Untouchables whether Legislation justifiable for, 16(24), 351-354
Theism — See Monotheism and devotion
Theology :
of Vedic Gods, e. g. Indra, Sun, Fire, Varuna, etc., 29-38
Classification of Vedic Gods,38

Indian Trinity (Trimūrti), 39, 114
In the Upanishads, 68–79
In the Epics, 113
In the Gitā, 135–149
In Manu Smṛiti, 189
Tiyārs, 247, 274
Todās 247, 274
Traditions, 16(9), 16(11), 248, 249
Traditional:
method, 16(10), 250, 251, 289
law, 16(9), 249, 252, 253
religion, 248, 249, 262
Transcendental cult, 16(4)
Transmigration of the Soul, the doctrine of:
and the law of retribution, 3–5, 100, 101, 191
Genesis of, in the Vedas, 51, 99
In the Upanishads, 98, 99, 100
In the Gītā, 161, 162
In Manu Smṛiti, 191
Trinity Indian:
The Supreme Being having three aspects (Trimūrti), 39, 114
Doctrine of, 95, 145
Triune unity of the Supreme Being, 16, 95
of Kṛishna as Purshottama, 145
Tukāram, 16(2)
Tulsidās, 16(2)
Un-Āryans, See Āryans and Un-Āryans
Untouchability, Practice of:
Origin of the practice of, 345, 346, 347, 348, 355, 356
Whether a modern innovation or had Vedic sanction, 344–350
Whether warrants entry of the Untouchables into Hindu temples, 350–354
Practice of, recorded in Buddhist literature, 354
Practice of, recorded by Fa-Hien, 355
excesses in practice of due to Pre-Drāvidian influence, 355–357
Anti-Untouchability movement, 357–358
Bogey of Untouchability as a political instrument, 361
Untouchables:
Genesis of:
Un-Āryans Races of aborigines, 36, 266, 345
Created by God as punishment for sins in past life, 16(13) 16(21), 100, 191
Origin of according to Aupamanyava school, 345
Origin of according to the etymological school, 345
Classes of, in Vedas, 345, 346
In Buddhist literature, 16(16), 354
In Dharma Shāstras, 191, 198, 266, 275–77

Classes of, in S. India, 355-6
and backward classes, 16(17), 358
Duties and occupations of, 277-278
Non-association with, 298, 339-341
Upamanyu 116
Upanishads, 54, 55
Teachings of, 12
Classification of, 56
Principal topics in, 58
Uplift of backward classes: 16(18), 357, 362, 363, 364
Usage—See Custom
Us'astichākrāyaṇa, 325
Vadnagrā Nāgar caste, 246
Vaiseshika system of philosophy, 10, 121, 122
Vaishampāyana, 111, 119
Vaishya caste:
Pre-Vedic origin of 27, 268
Divine origin of, from the the thighs of Virāt, 26, 106, 264
Created on principle of nature and works, 173
Duties and professions of, 175, 194, 283, 284
Vedānta or Uttara Mimānsā Philosophy, 10, 12, 121, 122, 281
Vedas:
Revealed Texts (S'rutis), 8, 9, 19, 252
Not of human but of divine authorship 19
A common fund of national philosophy, 19
Oldest aud highest literary work in the history of the World, 19, 20
Teachings of, 12
Age of, 20
Field of subjects of, 20
The Four Vedas, 21
Appendages of, Angas, 22 Upangas, 23, Upavedas, 23-24
Interpretation of, 51-53
Vices:
Punishment in Hell and by way of rebirths for, 28, 99, 100, 161, 162, 191, 192
List of in the Gītā, 177
List of in the Dharmashāstras, 182
Vidūr, 16(18), 369
Vīrmitṛodaya, 260
Virtues:
in the Vedas, 48
in the Upanishads, 105, 106
in the Gītā, 176, 177
in the Dharmasūtras, 182
in the Dharmashāstṛās, 192, 193, 300, 301
Vishnu Purāṇa, 236
Vishwāmitra:
hermitage of 112
eating dog's flesh of a chāndāla to save life, 325
Vrātyas, 117, 276, 288, 347
Vyāsa, 111, 236
Widows:
rights and duties of, 224, 225, 228, 229

Sati custom of, 229, 230
second marriage of, 237–243
Niyoga of, 235–237
right to maintenance of, 231
adoption by, 233–235
Wisdom spiritual, See knowledge
Woman:
high status of, 199, 200
freedom of, in conformity with law, 200
Protection of, 224, 225
duties of, 224, 225, 226
duties in distressed times, 227
duties of widows, 228, 229
maintenance of, 230, 232
adoption by, 233–35
Worship of God :
Polytheistic, 29, 30, 39
Symbolic, 71, 72
with attributes, 72, 73
as impersonal self, 74
Theistic, 75, 135, 136
two modes of, as manifest and unmanifest, 144
Yādav v/s Nāmdeva, 234
Yājnavalkya—the great philosopher, 39, 74, 75, 319
Yoga :
Etymology, 168
Definitions of, 168
Method of work (Karma Yoga) 165, 166, 168, 169, 170
System of philosophy, 10, 121, 122
Yudhisthira, 113, 125, 247
Zorostrian theology and Indian Philosophy, 4

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