

THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS IND



Y:1.2
N30
4.7296

THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS 'IND

By K. T. SHAH

Some Opinions on the Author's English Works

The Calcutta Review: "A new book by Prof. Shah is always welcome, his name itself being a sufficient guarantee for the quality and quantity of information."

The Asiatic Review (London): "Prof. Shah is a voluminous writer, and his works have enjoyed a great reputation even outside India."

The Times, Literary Supplement : ".....Thoughtful and exhaustive."

The Hindustan Review: "Prof. K. T. Shah is one of our voluminous writers, having already placed to his credit no less than eight solid and authoritative works."

The Mahratta: "The works of Prof. Shah, the distinguished Economist of Bombay, have become almost Classical. He has already made his name as an authoritative and assiduous writer on Indian problems."

The Ceylon Daily News: "Very interesting and comprehensive."

The Modern Review: "Prof. Shah is a well-known writer on Indian Economics. His style is delightfully trenchant."

The Statesman: "Prof. Shah's books constitute interesting and thought-provoking contributions to the most important topics of India."

The Servant of India: "In the list of Economists in India the name of Prof. Shah stands very high, and his new works serve only to enhance an established reputation. A high order of scholarship and a becoming restraint characterizes all his works. One finds in his treatment of his subjects all that is acceptable and praiseworthy."

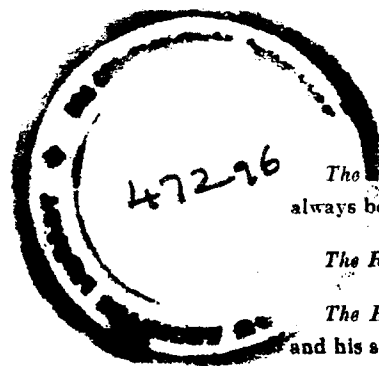
The Straits Times: "Prof. Shah, who has written extensively on Indian questions, is a writer of much clarity in the methods employed in explaining the intricacies of the problems which he tackles."

The Hindu: "Prof. Shah reveals a lucidity of style and facility of expression which make his expositions easily understood by the layman."

The Times of India: "Prof. Shah has a happy knack of publishing materials of topical interest..... The analytical side of his works is distinctly good."

The Englishman: "Prof. Shah's weighty contributions on Indian problems have already earned for him a reputation for painstaking research, careful and accurate analysis of the data and a constructive indication for further progress. A work from the pen of so accomplished a writer arouses high expectations."

The Bombay Chronicle: "An excellent scientific treatment of difficult subjects, the lucidity of expression and wealth of information given in Prof. Shah's works will doubtless entitle them to an abiding-place in Indian Economic and Political Literature."



The Forward: "Prof. Shah's themes are of abiding interest, and his treatment has always been dispassionate and scholarly."

The Rangoon Times: "His works of considerable value in several respects."

The Englishman: "To all acquainted with the *"Sixty Years of Indian Finance"* and his subsequent works, Prof. Shah is known as a clear thinker, an able writer and a painstaking researcher."

The Searchlight: "The lucidity of expression, the scientific method and the interesting manner in which he discusses the various aspects of the problems before him enable the reader to have a clear grasp and understanding of the evolution of the system from one stage to another."

People: "In comprehensiveness of survey Prof. Shah leaves nothing to be desired. His works are a veritable mine of information."

The Civil and Military Gazette: "Prof. Shah has compiled very useful works based on genuine research. He presents his arguments with moderation and good sense. His striking criticism firmly founded on knowledge always is valued."

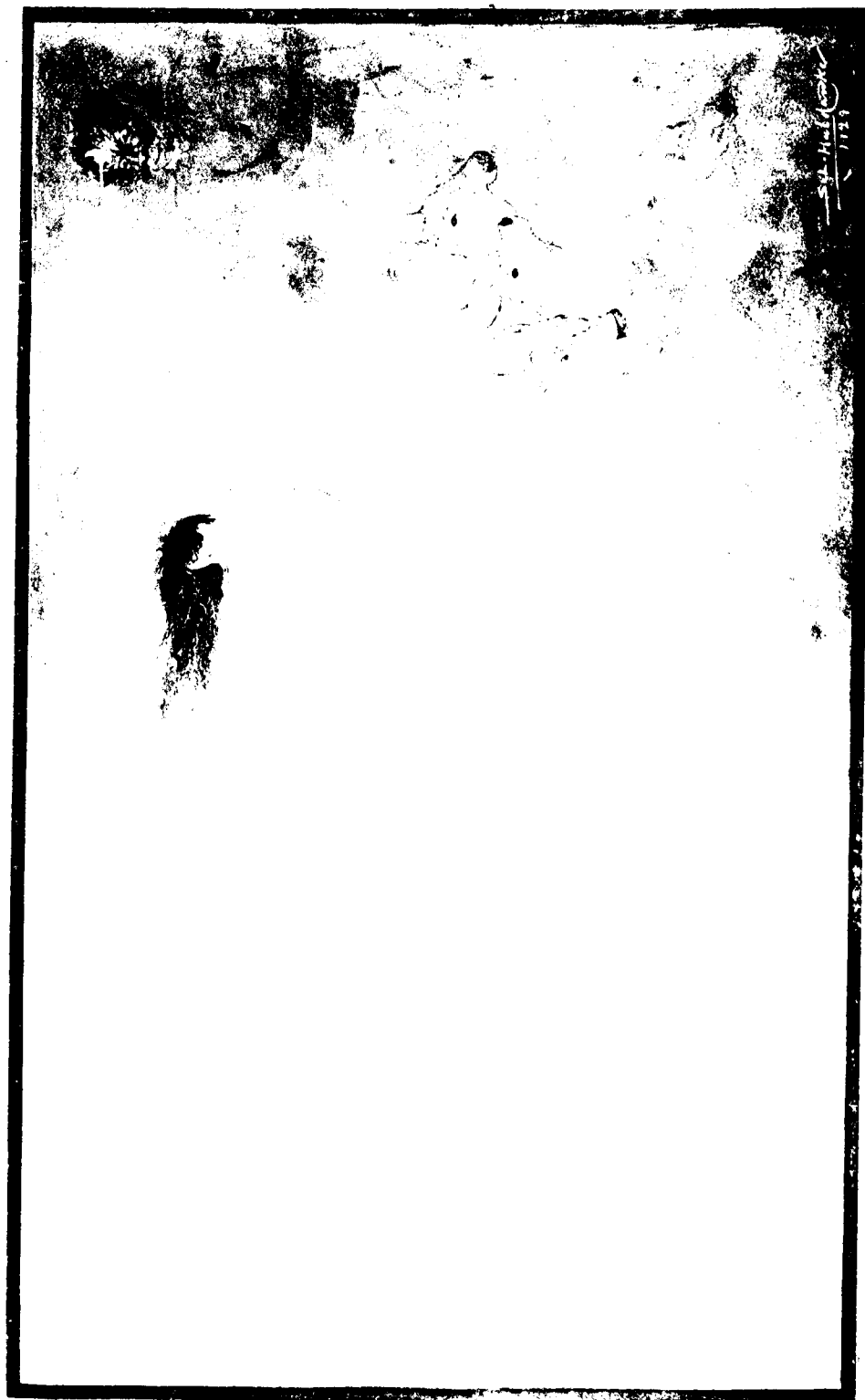
The Madras Mail: Prof. Shah's works are worthy of the attention of the public men no less than of the Economics Students."

The Indian Review: "In Prof. Shah's works a vast array of useful information is offered to us which implies patient and extensive investigation."

The Times of India: "Prof. Shah's books contain many well-considered conclusions and much praiseworthy work."

WORKS OF PROF. K. T. SHAH

1. <i>Sixty Years of Indian Finance</i> , 2nd Edition		Price: Rs. 10/-
2. <i>Trade, Tariffs and Transport in India</i>		10/-
3. <i>Wealth and Taxable Capacity of India</i> , (in collaboration with Mr. K. J. Khambatta)		10/-
4. <i>Constitution, Functions and Finance of Indian Municipalities</i> , (in collaboration with Miss G. J. Bahadurji)		10/-
5. <i>Governance of India</i> (2nd Edition), (in collaboration with Miss G. J. Bahadurji)		6/-
6. <i>Indian Currency, Exchange and Banking</i>		4/-
7. <i>The Russian Experiment, 1917-1927</i>		2/-
8. <i>Post-War Germany</i> , (1928)		2/8
9. <i>Federal Finance in India</i> , (1929)		6/-



जगदंशां देविमुषसमपि नंदे भगवतीम् HAIL, USHAS! VIRGIN GODDESS OF THE DAWN

THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS IND

A SURVEY OF INDIAN CULTURE AND CIVILISATION

(FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE DEATH OF EMPEROR AURANGZEB)

BY

K. T. SHAH, B.A., B.SC. (LOND.)

Barrister-at-Law.

Professor of Economics, University of Bombay.

FOREWORD

BY

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

(formerly Earl of Ronaldshay) Author of

"The Heart o. Aryavarta," "The Life of Lord Curzon," Etc.

With 11 Illustrations in Colour,
329 Half-tone Illustrations and 5 Maps.

BOMBAY:

D. B. TARAPOREVALA SONS & Co.

"Kitab Mahal": Hornby Road

1930

The Edition is Limited to two thousand copies.

First Published 1930

COPYRIGHT 1930

BY

D. B. TARAPOREVALA SONS & Co.
BOMBAY

4 12 10



H. O. M. D.

RESURGAM

स्वप्नो नु माया नु मतिभ्रमो नु ।

क्लिष्टं नु तावत्फलमेव पुण्यम् ॥

असंनिवृत्त्यै किमतीतमेतत् ? —

मनोरथानैव तदप्रपाताः ॥

(adapted from *Shakuntalam.*)

FOREWORD

BY

The Marquess of Zetland, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E.

(formerly Earl of Ronaldshay)

It may well be thought that in undertaking to give, within the compass of a single volume, a picture of India through the ages—for that in effect is what he here sets out to do—Professor Shah is embarking upon a task of no ordinary difficulty. The canvas is so vast, the span of time so great, the material under view so varied, that a mind of unusual grasp is required to wield the brush, which shall prove capable of painting a picture in true perspective without at the same time unduly sacrificing detail. It seems to me that Professor Shah has faced this difficulty courageously and with success. He has realised the fact that a survey within these limits must be descriptive rather than disputatious; popular rather than learned—learned, that is to say, in the more technical meaning of that word, for of the learning and scholarship of the author there is ample evidence on almost every page. And since it is with the permanent rather than with the ephemeral in the life story of the Continent that the author is concerned, he has brought his tale to a close with the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire, two centuries and more ago. Hence it is that the political controversies which hum so persistently and so jarringly round modern India are very properly ignored.

In his opening chapters Professor Shah sets the scene, so to speak, amid which the story of India has been enacted. With a few rapid strokes of the brush he paints in the physical characteristics of the land; and from the handiwork of Nature he passes on to the craftsmanship of man. We see great cities rising before our eyes—Ayodhya, the Capital of the Raghus; Pataliputra, the seat of Government of the famous Mauryan line; and—speeding down the centuries—Vijayanagar, a Hindu capital whose beauty was such as to surprise Abdur Razaak the Persian into declaring, that neither the pupil of the eye had ever seen a place like it, nor the ear of intelligence been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world. And in a later chapter devoted to architecture, he examines in greater detail the claims of the Indian peoples to distinction in this particular field of human achievement. Here the relationship between Hindu and Indo-Muhammadian architecture is traced, and the characteristic features of each discussed. Outstanding examples of different types of building—temples and palaces, tombs and mosques—are depicted for purposes of illustration. And better still, the reader is provided with data, which enable him to grasp not merely the outward appearance of a building, but the origin and significance of its component parts. Whence, for example, comes what Professor Shah speaks of as “the most peculiar feature of temple architecture throughout India,” namely, the Shikhara or curvilinear spire? To this, as to many similar questions, he provides the answer: “The spire or Shikhara was, in its earliest form . . . a kind of chimney over the temporary tabernacle of the Vedic cult, to permit the smoke from the sacred fire to escape.” It is scarcely necessary to point out that the religious buildings of India, striking as they undoubtedly are even to the uninstructed gaze, acquire in the eyes of the visitor, furnished with information on points such as these, a new interest and a more impressive beauty.

And what of the peoples to whose aptitudes and genius has been due the Splendour that was Hind? From its earliest days India has been a land of Saints and Heroes, and from the capacious

wallet at his disposal, the author selects with a nice discrimination figures from the long procession of Gods and demi-Gods which pass imposingly across the epic literature of the Continent. Yet it must not be supposed that modern research has not furnished material for accounts scarcely less picturesque, perhaps, and certainly more accurate than those contained in folk tales and the epics; and from story we pass to history, from Divinities and Super-men to Kings, great, indeed, judged by all human standards, but lacking the aura of mystery which crowns the half-mythical heroes of tradition. Professor Shah lays stress on the curiously regular rhythm with which the greatness of India as an Empire has ebbed and flowed. From the decline of the Mauryas we have to wait a hundred and fifty years for Kanishka before India rises once more on a wave of Imperial greatness; and from the death of Kanishka a further two centuries before the coming of the Guptas ushered in a golden age in the story of Indian statecraft, literature and art. And so the tale unfolds in alternating periods of flowering and decay, until a new turn is given to Indian history with the advent, 1,000 years after Christ, of the militant vanguard of Islam. It is to the author's credit that he pays generous tribute to the contributions made in many directions by these invaders to the Splendour that was Hind.

But the greatness of India is not to be found solely—nor even mainly—in the achievements of her warriors and kings. The genius of the Indian peoples has found its happiest, and perhaps its highest, expression in literature, philosophy and art; and in Professor Shah's pages the reader will find spread before him the gradual evolution of Indian culture from its earliest ascertained beginnings in the archaic Sanskrit of the Vedic hymns. In a chapter devoted to poetry and the drama the relationship is traced between the epics in their earliest forms sung in the vernacular by village bards, and the polished Sanskrit poetry of Kalidasa; while the place of the drama in Indian literature provides the author with a subject for suggestive and instructive discussion. To names familiar to all who claim any acquaintance with the better known masterpieces of Indian literature, are added many others less generally known, but with equal claims to fame in one or other of the different branches of the Indian literary tree.

From Poetry and Drama Professor Shah passes on to Philosophy and Religion; and here the difficulty of compression must have been great indeed. So many and so fine-spun are the webs woven by the speculative minds of India round the great central doctrine of the Hindu peoples—that of Karma and Rebirth—that a less skilful writer might well have lost the thread of his own narrative in a maze of intricate and bewildering detail. That he has not done so is greatly to his credit. The place of Buddhism and Jainism in Indian metaphysics is deftly shown, and a brief sketch is then given of the main tenets of the six orthodox systems, proper but not undue stress being laid on the idealistic monism of the Vedanta as expounded by the most famous of the Commentators Shankaracharya, and the dualistic realism of the Sankhya system associated with the name of Kapila. But congenial though speculation in the sphere of metaphysics always was to the meditative Indian mind, other mental sciences were not neglected; and Professor Shah next indulges in a rapid but highly informative survey of some of these, notably those of language and of political economy. In this section of his work attention is rightly drawn to that mine of information on social and political organisation of the times, the Artha-Shastra of Kautilya.

Perhaps the aspect of Indian civilisation on which the average Westerner is least instructed is the extent and richness of its culture. The man who reads Professor Shah's pages will thereafter have no excuse for pleading ignorance on this score. And herein lies the special value of his book.

No one who knows anything of India at all is unaware of her achievements in such arts as architecture and sculpture. Proof of her proficiency in these respects meets the eye of the visitor at every turn. Professor Shah, as must be clear from what I have already written, ignores neither the greatness of her master-builders nor the genius of her artists; but he places her achievements along these lines in proper perspective by displaying the many other arts and sciences in which from time to time her peoples have excelled. Tradition, he tells us, speaks of 72 arts for gentlemen claiming to have enjoyed a liberal education. And these arts ranged from proficiency in the lore of love to a mastery of mathematics, and from skill in music and dancing to a capacity of horse judging and chariot driving. In the case of women, a supreme dancer, he declares, could trace the pattern of a peacock blindfold on the dancing floor, simply by the rhythmic placing of her toe marks; and if packets of colour were placed on the floor with appropriate tints at the required distances she could give all the variegated hues of this brilliant bird. There is a delightful dissertation on Indian music which may be commended to those whose knowledge of the subject is based on the casual hearing of a tom-tom; and there is an equally interesting treatise on Indian painting. And when Professor Shah comes to consider the standard attained to by Indians in by-gone days in the sphere of industry and commerce, he is able to call in as witnesses to their skill in metal working, those remarkable iron pillars of Delhi and of Dhar, which prove conclusively that centuries ago iron was wrought and welded in India on a scale which has become possible only in very recent times in the largest foundries of the West.

In his chapter on the Social System of the Hindus, Professor Shah has naturally a good deal to say on the subject of Caste. Unlike the more extreme social reformers, he holds the view that this ancient institution if shorn of undue rigidity, "with its catholic welcome to all—old as well as new—races and creeds to be absorbed into a common though complex unity," is an essential condition of the welding of the polygenous and polyglot peoples of the continent into an Indian nation. Here he is doubtless treading on delicate and controversial ground. But he states his view temperately, and in support of it he appeals to the teaching of history: "Rebels, of course, there always will be, as well as protestants. Saints and seers have in the past, from Mahavira and Buddha to Nanak, Kabir and Keshub Chunder Sen, more than once attempted to eradicate the very principle of caste; but like some pliant bamboo grove in one of her primeval forests, the caste-system of India has bent before the blast and has reasserted itself the moment the fury of reform has spent itself." Similarly, the Western reader will listen with interest and respect to all that Professor Shah has to say on the frequently misunderstood question of the position of Woman in Indian society, and upon the Indian ideal of Marriage.

In the space appropriate to a Foreword it has been possible to touch upon a few only of the many subjects dealt with by Professor Shah. But enough has, perhaps, been said to make it clear that the Indian reader will find much in the ensuing pages to add to the feelings of legitimate pride with which he contemplates the goodly heritage that is his; while for the Western reader the book will provide a key to much that ordinarily remains hidden from him, and will furnish him with the means of viewing, with added interest and a more sympathetic understanding, the varied achievements of many centuries of human endeavours, which have gone to the making of the Splendour that was Hind.

Zetland.

PREFACE

This work has developed out of a series of Lectures on the *Outlines of Indian Civilisation*, planned for the second term of 1927-8, and delivered in the first term of 1928-29, at St. Xavier's College, Bombay. The scope of the work has been considerably increased since the first plan was made; but even so, it is necessarily a bare survey only of the several directions in which the spirit of the Indian Civilisation manifests itself. The model ultimately kept before my mind was Mr. J. C. Stoddart on the *Glory That Was Greece*, and the *Grandeur That Was Rome*. But to any one familiar with the relative size, either of Greece, or of Rome in the Republican times on the one hand, and of India on the other; to any one bearing in mind the more extensive scope in time adopted in this work, it will not at all be surprising that the sketch here attempted to be made of the *Splendour That Was 'Ind* gives only glimpses of the arts and graces, the beauty and culture, of the several races and provinces that make up the India of history. Each of the great natural divisions of India has enough in the story of its civilisation to provide material for a work similar to this; each of the epochs into which our history naturally divides itself could furnish substance enough for such a purpose; each of the topics here considered has already inspired more than one remarkable monograph, and further researches may afford still more material for similar enrichment.

Naturally, then, the present work is in the form of a mere outline, a kind of general introduction to the manifold beauties and glories of Ancient, Medieval, and Muhammadan India. In the models on Greece and Rome already named, the treatment is more definitely chronological than it seemed suitable to the present writer to adopt for purposes of this work. A purely historical treatment for such a vast and complex entity as India through the ages is all but impossible, if one desires to have anything like a complete outline of the picture under each head. Besides, a chronological account may give the position without showing clearly the importance of a given topic, especially on such a canvas. The plan has, therefore, been followed in this work, as in the Lectures on which it is based, of viewing the progress of the several subjects herein selected as evidencing *The Splendour That Was 'Ind*, each in its own setting, through successive centuries, until we come to the decline of the last great Empire on the Indian soil. The survey stops, in most chapters, with the end of the Great Mughals, (1707 A.C.); contemporary history being avoided, not only as likely to crowd the picture unduly, but also as not unlikely to introduce a discordant note in the general harmony of the theme.

The work being, thus, only an attempt to popularise the knowledge about many an unseen beauty and splendour of India, it would be out of place in this Series of University Extension Lectures to look for any original research, or special contribution to the sum total of our knowledge about India. Marks of scholarship have, therefore, been studiously avoided,—even such as the careful transliteration in Roman characters of Sanskrit or other Indian words. Names of places and persons already standardised in their English garb (like *Delhi* for *Dehli*); and words of Indian origin already assimilated in the Anglo-Indian glossary, have been used in the familiar form, without the scholarly index of a dash or a stress or a point on any particular letter. Besides, the scholarly writers do not seem themselves to be quite agreed upon the canons of transliteration; and

so, if a meticulous reader discovers the same word spelt differently in the same section,—e.g. Sanchi spelt also *Sanci* by certain of the more modern writers, he will lay the blame, it is to be hoped, at the door of the right party. The style and scope of this work, just as much as my purpose, also forbade any needless display of borrowed scholarship or special research; though the ingrained vanity of a writer cannot but be tickled, if some painstaking reader flatters him by the discovery of any original contribution to the lore about India in the following pages. Even the Bibliography is select, rather than sufficient, or exhaustive. It is for the reader to judge how far the attempt has succeeded.

A Preface is not the place for inserting a special pleader for the success of the work. But it may well be taken advantage of to mention my debt of gratitude to those who have helped me in the work. Special mention and acknowledgment have been made in each instance, throughout the body of the work, of each standard author and his work, wherever the same has been relied upon, or borrowed from, for statements made in the text. In consonance with the ideal held in view throughout the work of making it popular rather than learned, quotations from such writers have been kept within a reasonable margin; while references to them have been minimised to the utmost possible. That does not mean, however, that I am unaware of my debt to other workers in this vast field, or unwilling to make ample acknowledgment of the same. A short, but, it is hoped, a select Bibliography appended will indicate the nature and extent of my obligation in this behalf.

Of more direct personal assistance, four or five cases at least must be specifically mentioned. The Rev. Fr. Heras, S.J., Professor of History, St. Xavier's College, Bombay, is too devoted a worker in the field of Indian historical research to demand a special expression of gratitude for himself. I, however, cannot, for that reason, pass in silence over the invaluable assistance received from this passionate student of Indian history, not only in organising the Lectures on which the work is based, but also in discussing many points dealt with in these pages, in supplying rare or little known sources of information and in providing Illustrations for the Lectures which accounted in no small degree for their success. The Rev. Fr. Zimmermann, S.J., Professor of Sanskrit in the same College, is another friend, whose willing consent to read over parts of this work,—particularly those concerning the Literature and Philosophy of this country,—has been of immense help to me, as also the similar contribution of Prof. Radhakrishnan of Calcutta. Captain Gladstone Solomon, Principal of the Bombay School of Art, was kind enough, at the instance of another friend, to look over and make useful suggestions regarding the Section on Painting in India. He has also glanced through the Sections dealing with the Sculpture and Architecture in India. Dr. Ghurye, my colleague in the University School of Economics and Sociology, has helped very considerably to make the Chapter dealing with India's Social System as exact as was possible under the circumstances.

Sir T.W. Arnold was obliging enough to read through the entire MS., and make many detailed as well as general suggestions, for the full benefit of which I cannot but be immensely grateful to that old friend and kindly scholar. In fact, his warm appreciation of the work in MS., went a long way in restoring confidence, which at first was somewhat shaken because of the comparative unfamiliarity with the field to be surveyed; and hence the obligation to Sir Thomas is doubly due.

X

The appreciation of the Marquess of Zetland, implicit in the Foreword, demands another expression of gratitude, which I am deterred from a more ample recognition by a fear lest the reader should suspect us,—the writer of the Foreword and of the work proper,—of having formed a Mutual Admiration Society.

Other friends, too numerous to be particularised, have also contributed to the enrichment of this work by discussion or suggestion, to all of whom I am grateful.

I am indebted to my son Sharatchandra for helping to compile the Index and the Bibliography.

Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., the Publishers of this work are really the originators of the idea embodied in this work. They have spared no pains in securing appropriate illustrations wherever suggested by me and in ensuring a fitting get-up for the work. If the work meets with the success hoped for, it will in no slight degree be due to them.

There is one friend and helper, however, whose contribution is so considerable to this work, that a separate, specific, mention is impossible to avoid. Miss G. J. Bahadurji, M. A., L. T., C. L., Principal, Alexandra High School for Girls, has, from the very inception of this project, helped materially in every part of it, and through every phase of it. She has carefully read through every line of the work, and made in almost every instance the most invaluable suggestions for improvement, which I must gratefully acknowledge. The Chapters and Sections relating to the Fine Arts in India are virtually her creations. Herself a painter of note, her criticism and suggestion in connection with that portion of the work were reinforced by the opinion of Capt. W. E. Gladstone Solomon, obtained at her instance. A master of the technique and theory of Music, her advice and comment in that Section have also proved most materially useful. Even if I were to regard it as a contribution, the debt of gratitude would be unspeakable. As a matter of fact, however, the work is practically as much hers as mine and only an inveterate sense of native modesty has prohibited the addition of her name as a joint author. Under the circumstances, it would be meaningless to express my debt of gratitude in mere words to such a selfless collaborator.

K. T. SHAH.

School of Economics and Sociology,
Bombay, 1st October, 1929.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

With the increasing interest in India, so widely felt at the present time, there is a distinct need for illustrated works to provide a vivid presentment of India's glorious achievements in Art, Architecture, History, Science, Literature, Philosophy, Religion, etc. Several very finely illustrated works, on one or more of these subjects, are now available; but their high prices place them out of the reach of the majority of the readers. The publishers have, therefore, felt that there is room for such a work as the present one, of moderate price, and so accessible to the majority of readers. They have been fortunate in securing the pen of Prof. K. T. Shah whose qualifications for this comprehensive presentment of India's manifold achievements may best be expressed in the words of Sir T. W. Arnold, who was kind enough to go through the whole of the typescript. Says he:—

“I can unhesitatingly recommend you to undertake the publication of this finely conceived and admirably carried out volume. The comprehensiveness of the subject-matter leaves out no aspect of the subject-matter deserving of mention and its pages contain something to appeal to every class of reader. It would be impertinent on my part to praise the learning and scholarship of Professor Shah and (so far as my knowledge of the history and literature of India extends) his text appears to me to be historically correct. The enthusiasm of the author for his subject reveals itself in the elevation of style and the choice of his diction; the interest of the reader is sustained throughout, and the arrangement of the text is clear and logical.”

As regards the illustrations reproduced in this work, the publishers have been advised by the author of the work; but they alone are responsible for the actual selection for reproduction. They are greatly indebted to all those who have supplied them with photographs and paintings. They have also selected several illustrations from various publications. Every care has been taken to make appropriate acknowledgment to the owners of all copyrighted pictures; but if any necessary acknowledgments have been omitted, the publishers trust that the copyright-holders will accept this, their acknowledgment and apologies.

CONTENTS

Foreword	Page V—VII
Preface	IX—XI
Publishers' Note	XIII
Bibliography	XVII—XXIV
List of Illustrations	XXV—XXXV
Maps	XXXV
Chapter I. India: A Panoramic View.	1- 16
Chapter II. The Pageant of a People.	17- 81
Chapter III. Heroes and Saints	82- 54
Chapter IV. Makers of History and Builders of Empire	55- 72
Chapter V. Poetry and Drama	73- 95
Chapter VI. Religion and Philosophy	96-111
Chapter VII. Music and Dancing; Painting and Sculpture	112-146
Chapter VIII. Temples and Tombs; Palaces and Pleasances	147-173
Chapter IX. Industry and Commerce	174-193
Chapter X. The Social System	194-219
Epilogue	220-221
Index	222-236

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. GEOGRAPHICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE

	<i>Cambridge History of India</i> Vols. I and III.
	<i>Records of Geological Survey of India</i> , (Vol. XXIX), <i>Ancient Geography of Gondwana Land</i> , by W. S. Blanford.
	<i>Murray's Handbook for India, Burma and Ceylon.</i>
HOLDICH, SIR T. H.	<i>India</i> , (Regions of the World Series, Ed. Mackinder).
MACKINDER, H. J.	<i>Eight Lectures on India.</i>
FORREST, G. W.	<i>Cities of India, Past and Present.</i>
CUNNINGHAM, A.	<i>The Ancient Geography of India, Buddhist Period.</i>
ABBOT, G. F.	<i>Through India with the Prince.</i>
MENPES AND STEEL	<i>India.</i>
WHISTLER, HUGH	<i>In the High Himalayas.</i>
THURSTON, E.	<i>Madras.</i>
DOUIE, SIR J.	<i>The Punjab.</i>
O'MALLEY, L. S. S.	<i>Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Sikkim.</i>
VILLIERS STEWART, C.M.	<i>Gardens of the Great Mughals.</i>
MOLYNEUX AND YOUNG-	
HUSBAND	<i>Kashmir.</i>
FANSHAW	<i>Delhi—Past and Present.</i>
MOIN-UD-DIN AHMED	<i>The Taj and its Environments.</i>
HUNTER, W. W.	<i>Indian Empire.</i>
„	<i>Imperial Gazetteer.</i> (26 Vols. and 27th of Atlas).

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL

	<i>Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.</i>
	<i>Journals of the Royal Asiatic Society.</i>
	<i>Cambridge History of India.</i>
	<i>Census Reports</i> (1871-1921).
	<i>Epigraphia Indica.</i>
CODRINGTON,	
K. de B.	<i>Ancient India.</i>
LASSEN	<i>Indische Alterthumskunde.</i>
DUTT, R. C.	<i>History of Civilisation in Ancient India.</i>
STEEL, F. A.	<i>India Through the Ages.</i>
BARNETT, L. D.	<i>Antiquities of India.</i>
RAPSON E. J.	<i>Ancient India.</i>
ANDERSON, J. D.	<i>The Peoples of India.</i>
HOLDERNESS, T. W.	<i>Peoples and Problems of India.</i>
RISLEY, H. H.	<i>The Peoples of India</i> (2nd Ed.)
GRIERSON, G. A.	<i>The Linguistic Survey of India.</i>
BEAL, S.	<i>Buddhist Records of the Western World.</i>
TILAK, B. G.	<i>Vedic Chronology and Vedanga Jyotisha.</i>
CHILDE, V. G.	<i>The Aryans.</i>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

III. and IV. HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

DUTT, R. C. *Ramayana and Mahabharata.*
SMITH, V. A. *Early History of India.*
" " *Cambridge History of India Vols. I and III.*
" " *Asoka.*
" " *Akbar, the Great Mogul.*
" " *The Oxford History of India.*
" " *History of India.*
ELPHINSTONE, M. *History of India as Told by its own Historians.*
ELLIOTT *India of Aurangzeb.*
SARKAR, J. N. *History of Aurangzeb 5 Vols.*
" " " *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb.*
" " " *Mughal Administration.*
" " " *Shivaji.*
RANADE, M. G. *The Rise of the Maratha Power.*
GRANT DUFF, J. C. *A History of the Marathas.*
SEWELL, R. *A Forgotten Empire: (Vijayanagara).*
IRVINE, W. *The Later Mughals.*
TOD *Annals of Rajasthan.*
MONRO, W. D. *Stories of Indian Gods and Heroes.*
MANNUCCI *Storia di Mogor 4 Vols.?*
SACHAU, E. C. *Alberuni's India.*
BERNIER, F. *Travels in India of European Travellers.*
DOWSON, J. *Hindu Classical Dictionary.*
NIVEDITA (SISTER) AND
COOMARASWAMY, A. K. *Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists.*
MUKERJI, R. *Shri Harsha (Rulers of India Series).*
BANA-BHATT *Harsha-Charita.*
KALHAN (ED. A. M.
STEIN) *Rajatarangini.*
KINCAID, C. A. *Folktales of Sindh and Gujerat.*
MC. CRINDLE, J. W. *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian.*
ABUL FAZL *Ain-i-Akbari, or Institutes of Akbar Blochmann's as well as
Gladwin's Translations.*
IRVINE, W. *The Army of the Indian Mughals.*

V. LITERARY

(N. B. Works on Indian classical and Vernacular Literature named in the text are separately listed).

MAX-MÜLLER, F. *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature.*
FRAZER, R. W. *Literary History of India.*
MACDONELL, A. A. *Sanskrit Literature.*
" " " *India's Past.*
KEITH, A. B. *A History of Sanskrit Literature.*
" " " *Sanskrit Drama.*
CALDWELL, R. *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.*
P. GRIFFITHS, R. T. H. *The Hymns of the Rig Veda.*
PADHYE, K. A. *Beauties from Kalidas.*
POPE *History of Manikka Vachagar (also Naladiyar).*
SUNDARAM PILLAI, P. *Some Milestone in the History of Tamil Literature.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

VI. SCIENTIFIC WORKS (Indian Classical Works in this Section listed separately).

BARTH, A. *The Religions of India.*
SHAMASHASTRY, R. *Kautilya's Arthashastra.*
DEUSSEN, P. *The System of Vedanta.*
OLDENBERG, H. *The Life of Buddha.*
ARNOLD, E. *The Light of Asia.*
DASGUPTA, S. *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion.*
MAX-MÜLLER, F. *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy.*
RADHAKRISHNAN, S. *Indian Philosophy, 2 Vols.*
" *Hindu View of Life.*
BOULTING *Four Pilgrims.*
WOODROFFE, SIR J. *The Serpent Power.*
RONALDSHAY, EARLOF. *The Heart of Aryavarta.*
COWELL AND GOUGH *Surva-Darshana-Sangraha.*

VII. FINE ARTS

SMITH, V. A. *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon.*
FOUCHER, A. *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art.* (Ed. L. A. and F. W. Thomas).
CLEMENTS, E. *Introduction to the Study of Indian Music.*
FOX-STRANGWAYS, A. H. *The Music of Hindustan.*
MARSHALL, J. A. *Guide to Sanchi.*
COOMARASWAMY, A. K. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art.*
" " " *Mirror of Gesture.*
" " " *Dance of Siva.*
" " " *Rajput Painting.*
" " " *Portfolio of Indian Art.*
MEHTA, N. C. *Studies in Indian Painting.*
GRIFFITHS *Paintings in the Buddhist Caves at Ajunta.*
SOLOMON, GLADSTONE,
W. E. *The Women of the Ajunta.*
BROWN, PERCY *Indian Painting under the Mughals.*
KÜHNEL AND GOETZ *Indian Book Painting.*
HURLIMANN, M. *Picturesque India.*
BHATTACHARYA, B. C. *Indian Images.*
HAVELI, E. B. *The Ideals of Indian Art.*
" " *Indian Architecture.*
" " *A Hand-book of Indian Art.*
" " *Indian Sculpture and Painting.*
" " *The Himalayas in Indian Art.*
" " *Artistic and Industrial Revival in India.*
KRISHNA SHASTRY, H. *South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses.*
JAGADISHA IYER, P. V. *South Indian Shrines.*
BINYON, L. *Court Painters of the Great Mughals.*
DEY, M. C. *My Pilgrimage to Ajunta and Bagh.*
BOULTING *Four Pilgrims.*
" *Dancing Ancient and Modern.*
" *Indian Art at the British Empire Exhibition.*
" *Examples of Indian Sculpture at the British Museum.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

VIII. ARCHITECTURAL AND MONUMENTAL.

FERGUSSON, J.	<i>Indian and Eastern Architecture. 2 Vols.</i>
HAVELL, E. B.	<i>Indian Architecture.</i>
”	<i>Cambridge History of India.</i>
”	<i>Guide to Ellora and Ajunta.</i>

IX. INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL

SMITH, V. A.	<i>Akbar, the Great Mogol.</i>
MORELAND, W. H.	<i>India at the Death of Akbar.</i>
”	<i>From Akbar to Aurangzeb.</i>
KENNEDY, J.	<i>The Early Commerce of Babylone with India (1898) (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society).</i>
RHYS DAVIDS, T. W.	<i>Buddhist India.</i>
RHYS, DAVIDS, T. W.	<i>Economic Condition in Ancient India (Economic Journal).</i>
MCCRINDLE, J. W.	<i>Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian.</i>
SACHAU, E. C.	<i>Alberuni's India.</i>
SEWELL, R.	<i>A Forgotten Empire.</i>
MUKERJI, R. K.	<i>A History of Indian Shipping.</i>
ABUL FAZL	<i>Ain-i-Akbari.</i>

X. SOCIAL—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

BÜHLER	<i>Digest of Hindu Law.</i>
JOLLY	<i>Law and Custom in India.</i>
G. D. BANNERJI	<i>Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhan.</i>
B. K. SARKAR	<i>Positive Background of Hindu Sociology.</i>
P. N. BANNERJI	<i>Public Administration in Ancient India.</i>
ABUL FAZL	<i>Ain-i-Akbari.</i>
NIVEDITA, SISTER	<i>Web of Indian Life.</i>
DE LAET	<i>The Empire of the Great Mogol. Translated by J. S. Hoyland, Ed. by S. N. Banerjee, 1928.</i>
LANMAN	<i>Jatakmalā (Harvard Oriental Series (Vol. I). Imperial Gazetteer of India. Annual Reports of Moral and Material Progress. Census Reports, 1871-1921.</i>

LIST OF CLASSIC SANSKRIT, PRAKRIT, OR INDIAN
VERNACULAR WORKS AND AUTHORS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

AUTHOR	WORK
	Rig-Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda
TISSA	Katha-Vattu (Prakrit)
KASHYAPA	Abhidhamma-Pitaka (Buddhist Metaphysics)
UPALI	Vinaya-Pitaka („ Rule of Ecclesiastical Life)
ANANDA	Sutta-Pitaka („ Aphorisms or Parables of Buddha)
	Questions of King Milinda (System of Dogmatism)
BUDDHA-GHOSHA	Visuddhimagga (Compendium of the <i>Hinayana</i> ideal of Arhat)
”	Atthashalini (being commentary on Dhammasamghani)
	Chronicles :—Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa
VALMIKI	Ramayana (Sanskrit Epic)
VYAS	Mahabharata „ „
ASHWAGHOSHA	Buddha-Charitra (Sanskrit Epic of Buddha's Life)
”	Sundarananda (Sanskrit Poem)
”	Gandistotra (Sanskrit Lyric)
”	Sari-Putra-Prakarna (Sanskrit Drama—Life of Sari-Putra)
KALIDASA	Kumrara-Sambhava (Sanskrit Epic on the Birth of the War God)
”	Raghu-Vamsa (Chronicles of the House of Raghu—S. Epic)
”	Megha-Duta (Sanskrit Lyric—Cloud Messenger)
”	Ritu-Samhara („ „ —The Seasons)
”	Abhignana-Shakuntalam (Sanskrit Drama)
”	Malavika-Agnimitram („ „)
”	Vikramorvashiyam („ „)
VATSABHATTI	Prashasti (Panegyric of Sun in the Temple at Mandasor)
BHARAVI	Kiratarjuniyam (Sanskrit Epic—Fight of Arjuna with Shiva)
”	Bhattikavyam (Sanskrit Epic)
BHARTRIHARI	Niti-Shatakam (Ethical Centaine)
”	Shringara-Shatakam (Erotic Centaine)
”	Vairagya-Shatakam (Renunciation Centaine)
MAGHA	Shishupala-Vadha (Sanskrit Epic)
KUMARADAS	Janaki-Harana (Sanskrit Epic)
KAVIRAJA	Raghava-Pandaviyam (Sanskrit Epic)
	Nalodaya (Sanskrit Poem on a Mahabharata Episode)
AMARU	Amaru-Shatakam (Sanskrit Lyric Erotic)
JAYADEVA	Gita-Govindam („ „ „)
SHUDRAKA	Mrichha-Katikam (Sanskrit Drama—The Little Clay-Cart)
BHASHA	Plays (Sanskrit Drama)
BHAVABHUTI	Uttara-Ramacharित्रam (Sanskrit Drama—Later Phase of Rama's Life)
”	Malati Madhava („ „ „)
SHRI HARSHA	Ratnavali (Sanskrit Drama)
”	Priya-Darshika (Sanskrit Drama)
”	Nagananda (Sanskrit Drama)
VISHAKHADATTA	Mudra-Rakshasa (Sanskrit Drama)
BHATTA-NARAYANA	Veni-Samhara (Sanskrit Drama—Binding of the Braid)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AUTHOR	WORK
RAJA-SEKHARA	Bal-Ramayana (Sanskrit Drama for Juveniles)
„	Bal-Bharata (Sanskrit Drama for Juveniles)
„	Karpura-Manjari (Prakrit Poem)
KRISHNA-MISHRA	Prabodha-Chandrodaya (Sanskrit Drama)
DANDIN	Dasha-Kumara-Charitra (Sanskrit Romance - Prose - Story of 10 Princes)
„	Kavyadarsha (Sanskrit Treatise on Poetics)
SUBANDHU	Vasavadatta (Sanskrit Romance - Prose)
BANA BHATTA	Kadambari („ „ „)
„	Harsha-Charita (Sanskrit Biography - Prose)
„	Tilaka-Manjari (Sanskrit Romance)
DHANAPALA	Brihat-Katha (Sanskrit Stories)
KSHEMENDRA	„ „ (Original by Gunadhya in Prakrit - Paishachi)
SOMADEVA	Yasastilaka
„	
JAIN MONKS	Naladiyar (Tamil Poem)
TIRUVALLUVAR	Kurral („ „)
MANIKKA-VACHAGAR	Tamil Poems
TIRU-GNANA-SAMBANDHA	„ „
TULSIDAS	Ramayana (Hindi Epic Poem)
SUR DAS	Sur-Sagar (Hindi Poem)
CHANDA	Prithwi-Raj Rasa (Hindi Epic)
KABIR	Hindi Poems - Shabdavali; Sukha-Nidhan
NARSIMHA MEHTA	Gujarati Poems
MIRABAI	Gujarati (Hindi) Poems
RAMANANDA	Hindi Poems
CHANDIDAS	Bengali Poems
BIDYAPATI THAKUR	Bihari (Hindi) Poems
TUKA-RAM	Marathi Abhangs (Poems)
	Ghata-Karpana
	Chaura-Panchashika
	Pancha-Tantra (Sanskrit Prose (?) - Collection of Fables)
	Katha-Surit-Sagara (Collection of Stories - Prose)

LIST OF PHILOSOPHIC OR SCIENTIFIC WORKS, MENTIONED
IN THE TEXT, FROM CLASSIC SANSKRIT OR PRAKRIT

AUTHOR	WORK
HINDU CANONICS	The Vedas and Commentaries thereon Brahmanas Aranyakas—Forest Treatises Upanishads Sutras, Angas, Upangas, Mul Sutras, Chheda Granthas The Three Pitakas
JAIN CANONICS	Sarva-Darshana-Samgraha (Compendium of Indian Philosophy)
BUDDHIST CANONICS	Commentaries on the Upanishads
MADHAVACHARYA	Moha-Mudgara
SHANKARACHARYA	Purva-Mimamsa-Sutra (Commentators: Shabara, Kumaril, Madhava)
„	Vedanta-Sutra (Commentator—Shankaracharya)
JAIMINI	Sankhya-Karika (Treatise on Sankhya, system of Kapila)
BADARAYAN	Bhagvad-Gita (Commentator Shankaracharya)
ISHWAR-KRISHNA	Yoga-Sutra
KRISHNA (?)	Nyaya-Sutra (Indian Logic)
PATANJALI	Nirukta (Grammatical Work on Vedic Sanskrit)
GAUTAMA	Shabdanushasana (Standard Sanskrit Grammar)
YASKA	
PANINI	
KATYAYANA AND	
PATANJALI	Sanskrit Grammarians
VAMANA AND JAYADITYA	Kashika-Vritti (Sanskrit Grammatical Treatise)
BHATTOJI DIKSHIT	Siddhanta-Kaumudi (Sanskrit Grammatical Treatise)
HEMACHANDRA-ACHARYA	Works on Grammar and Philology (Jain)
VARARUCHI	Grammar of Prakrit Languages
AMAR SINH	Amar-Kosha (Sanskrit Lexicography)
HALAYUDHA, YADAV-	
PRAKASHA	Lexicographers (Sanskrit)
DHANANJAYA AND HEMA-	
CHANDRA-ACHARYA	Lexicographers—Jain
MANU	Apastambiya-Dharmashastra (Sociologic Treatise)
YAGNAVALKYA	Manava-Dharma-Shastra (Sanskrit Sociologic Treatise)
VIGNANESHWARA	Smriti (Sanskrit Sociologic Treatise)
JIMUTAVAHANA	Mitakshara—Commentary on Yagnavalkya's Treatise
KAUTILYA	Dayabhaga—Commentary on the Hindu Law of Inheritance
VATSAYANA	Arthashastra (Compendium of Economics, and Politics)
VARAHA-MIHIRA	Kamasutra (Treatise on the Science of Love)
ARYABHATTA	Pancha-Siddhantika (Treatise on Astronomy)
BRAHMA-GUPTA	Astronomer anterior to Varaha-mihira, holding Heliocentric Theory
BHASKARA-ACHARYA	Astronomer of the VII Century A. C.
BHASKARA-ACHARYA	„ „ XII „ „
„	Lilavati (Treatise on Arithmetic)
BHARATA	Bija-Ganita (Treatise on Algebra)
SHUSHRUTA AND CHARAKA	Natyashastra (Science of Dramaturgy)
	Indian Medicine and Surgery

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AUTHOR

WORK

Abhinaya-Darpana—Mirror of Gesture	
Sangita-Ratnakara—Treatise on Music	
Vishnudharmottara—Treatise on Indian Painting and Image-making	
Jyotish-Vedanga	Works on Astrology or Astronomy
Garga-Samhita	
Surya-Pannati	
Surya-Siddhanta	
Shilpa-Shastras—Science of Mensuration	
Manasara—Compendium of Measurement for Architects, etc.	

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Hail, Ushas! Virgin Goddess of the Dawn (reproduced in colour) *Frontispiece.*

CHAPTER I. INDIA: A PANORAMIC VIEW

PLATE		<i>Facing Page</i>	
I.	1. The Gateway of India, Bombay	2	
	2. Entrance to Prince's Dock, Bombay	2	
II.	3. Ballard Pier from the Harbour, Bombay	3	
	4. A Panoramic View of Mt. Abu	3	
III.	5. Udaipur: Palace in the Lake	4	
	6. Maharana of Udaipur	4	
	7. Khyber Pass—(Aerial View)	4	
	(Photo: Royal Air Force)		
	8. Train in Khyber Pass (Aerial View)	4	
	(Photo: Royal Air Force)		
IV.	9. Kohat City and Fort—(N. W. F. P. Aerial View)	5	
	(Photo: Royal Air Force).		
	10. Aerial View of Frontier Lines	5	
	(Photo: Royal Air Force).		
	11. Mahenjo Daro Excavations—"Tank Buildings" and sur- roundings	5	
	(Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)		
V.	12-20. Mahenjo Daro Discoveries (a) Painted Vase. (b) Silver Vase containing Jewellery. (c) Terra-cotta Bull. (d) Copper statuette of Dancing girl. (e) Stone head. (f) Stone statue, stucco finished and painted. (g, h, i.) Polychromatic vases and urn. (Archaeological Survey of India Photographs)	6	
VI.	21. Mountain Scenery in Kashmir	7	
	22. The Jehlum at Shrinagar, Kashmir	7	
VII.	23. The Jehlum at Pandrethan	8	
	24. The Canal Leading into the Dal Lake	8	
VIII.	25. The Sutlej in its Himalayan Home	8	
	26. Bridge on the Chenab in Kishtwar, Frontier of Kashmir	8	
IX.	27. A General View of Simla	8	
	28. The City of Muttra, on the Jumna	8	
X.	29. Tara Devi Hills, Simla	9	
	30. Bathing Ghat, Muttra	9	
	(Photo: Indian State Railways)		
	31. Ganges Canal, Cawnpore	9	
	(Photo: Indian State Railways)		
XI.	32. Krishna and Radha (reproduced in colour)	10	
	(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")		
XII.	33. The Amar Singh Gate, Agra Fort, on the Jumna.	12	
	34. Taj Mahal on the Jumna	12	
	35. View of Ganges at Dangully	12	
XIII.	36. The Ganges at Derali	13	
	37. Benares: Temples	13	
	38. General View of Benares	13	

PLATE		Facing Page	
XIV.	39. Dalhousie Square, Calcutta	14	
	40. Kalighat Canal, Calcutta	14	
XV.	41. Wai, Near the Source of the Krishna	14	
	42. The Kaveri near Seringapatam	14	
	43. Garsoppa Falls, Sharavati	14	
	(42-43 Photo: The Palace Studio, Mysore)		
XVI.	44. The Godaveri at Nasik	14	
	(Photo: Indian State Railways)		
	45. River Scene (Kaveri), Tanjore	14	
XVII.	46. The Rock, Trichinopoly	15	
	47. The Marble Rocks of the Nerbada	15	
CHAPTER II. THE PAGEANT OF A PEOPLE			
XVIII.	48. Munda Female	18	
	49. Oraon Cole (Chhota Nagpur)	18	
	50. Hill Naga (Cachar)	18	
	51. Sonthal	18	
	(48-52, From Watson and Kaye's book "The People of India")		
XIX.	52. Group of Nagas	19	
	(Cachar)		
	53. Cole National Dance	19	
	54. Rengam Naga	19	
XX.	55. Brahmin	20	
	56. Rajpoot	20	
	(Indo Scythian Type)		
	57. Kashmiri Pundits	20	
	58. Bujgotees	20	
	(Rajputs of Oudh)		
	Pure Types of Aryans: Brahmins and Kshatriyas in Groups		
XXI.	59. Bhali Sooltans	21	
	(Oudh)		
	60. Pathans	21	
	(U. P.)		
	61. Mohamedan Lady	21	
	(Allahbad)		
	62. Gurkhas Khas Tribe	21	
	(Mixed Type)		
XXII.	63. Frontier Tribesmen	22	
	64. Kashmiri Girl	22	
	65. Akbar in Old Age	22	
XXIII.	66. A Toda Girl (reproduced in colour)	24	
	(Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)		
XXIV.	67. A Kashmir Girl (reproduced in colour)	26	
	(Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)		
XXV.	68. A Gond Woman (reproduced in colour)	28	
	(Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)		
CHAPTER III. HEROES AND SAINTS			
XXVI.	69. Brahmanam Isham Kamalasamasthan	34	
	(The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)		
XXVI.			

PLATE		Facing Page	
	70. Krishna	34	
	(Hiding on a tree with the Clothes of the Gopis)		
	71. Vishnu	34	
	(On Garuda with Sbri Devi and Bhu Devi)		
	72. Parvati	34	
	(Wife of Shiva)		
	73. Krishna (Dancing on the Kaliya Serpant)	34	
	74. Surya (On Chariot)	34	
XXVII.	75. Hanumana	38	
	(The Government Museum, Madras)		
	76. Rama's Departure	38	
	(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")		
XXVIII.	77. A Village Beauty (reproduced in colour)	42	
	(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")		
XXVIII-A.77A.	77A. Krishna with Gopis	46	
	(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")		
XXIX.	78. Siege of Lanka	50	
	(From Coomaraswamy's "Rajput Painting")		
	79. Arjuna begging Krishna's help in the Great War	50	
	(The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)		
	80. Vyas Muni (Author of the "Mahabharata")	50	
	81. Rai Pithora (Prithwi Raj, Last Hindu King of Delhi)	50	
XXX.	82. Maharana Pratap	51	
	83. Mahmud of Ghazni	51	
	84. Empress Razia	51	
	85. Chand Sultana of Ahmednagar	51	
	(Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)		
XXXI.	86. Humayun's Accession Durbar	54	
	87. Nurjehan Entertaining the Emperor Jehangir and his son	54	
	(86-87: Victoria and Albert Museum, London)		
CHAPTER IV. MAKERS OF HISTORY AND BUILDERS OF EMPIRE			
XXXII.	88. Coins of India	55	
	1. Round Punch-marked coin. 2. Rectangular Punch-marked		
	coin. 3. Mathura: Rajuvala. Saphytes (Saubhuti). 5. Menander.		
	6. Western Kshatrpa: Damasena. 7. Gondopharnes.		
	8. Kanishka. 9. Kanishka. 10. Kanishka. 11. Samudragupta		
	Standard type. 12. Samudragupta. Lyrist type. 13. Samudra-		
	gupta: Chandragupta I. type. 14. Samudragupta: Asvamedha		
	type. 15. Chandragupta II. Arher type. 16. Chandragupta II.		
	Horseman type. 17. Siladitya (Harshavardhana) of Thanesar.		
	18. Mihiragula. 19. Delhi and Ajmer: Prithvi Raja 20. Padma-		
	tanka. 21. Pandya. 22. Eastern Chalukya: Rajaraja. 23. Chola.		
	24. Pallava or Chalukya (?). 25. Vijayanagar: Krishna		
	Deva Raya. 26. Vijayanagar: Harihara II.		
XXXIII.	89. Inscribed Pillar of Samudra Gupta of Bhitari	62	
	(Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)		
	90. Pulakesin II receiving the Persian Ambassador (Ajunta	62	
	Frescoes)		
	91. Babur	62	
XXVII			

PLATE		<i>Facing Page</i>	
	92. Humayun (91-92: Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)	62	
XXXIV.	93. Akbar	63	
	94. Akbar's Mother, Hamid Bano Begum	63	
	95. Jehangir	63	
	96. Nur Jehan (93 and 95, Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)	63	
XXXV.	97. Shah Jehan	66	
	98. Mumtaz Mahal	66	
	99. Aurangzeb (97 and 99: Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)	66	
100.	Shivaji (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	66	
XXXVI.	101. Coins of India 1. Altamsh. 2. Raziya. 3. Ghiyās-u-d-din Balban. 4. 'Alau-d-din Muhammad. Delhi. 5. Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Delhi. 6. Muhammad bin Tughlaq: Forced Currency. Tughlaqpur. 7. Firoz Shah. Delhi. 8. Bahlol Lodi. Delhi. 9. Bahman: 'Alau-d-din Ahmad II. 10. Malwa: Ghiyās Shah. 11. Gujarat: Mahmud Shah III. 12. Babur: Lahor. 13. Bijapur: A'dil Shah. Larin. 14. Humayun. 15. Sher Shah. Agra. 16. Akbar. Agra. 17. Jahāngir. 18. Jahangir: with Nur Jahan. Surat. 19. Shah Jahan I. 20. Aurangzeb.	67	
CHAPTER V. POETRY AND DRAMA			
XXXVII.	102. Inscription of Ashoka on the Grinar Rock	80	
	103. Coins of India- Ancient Indian Scripts (1. Brahmini 2. Kharoshti 3. Gupta 4. Nagari.)	80	
	104. Denudation of Draupadi (Painting by S. L. Haldankar)	80	
XXXVIII.	105. Apsara Dancing (reproduced in colour) (From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")	88	
XXXIX.	106. Kabir (From Coomaraswamy's "Rajput Painting")	94	
	107. Guru Nanak	94	
	108. Baj Bahadur and Rupmati	94	
CHAPTER VI. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY			
XL.	109. Shiva (Ceylon)	95	
	110. Buddha Statue from Taxilla (From M. Hurlimann's "Picturesque India")	95	
	111. Ruins of Ancient University of Taxilla	95	
	112. Paraswanath, XXII Jain Saint or Tirathakar (Mathura)	95	
XLI.	113. A Jain Nun (reproduced in colour) (Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)	98	
XLII.	114. Abu: Side Chapel in the Nemnath Temple	102	
	115. Ceiling Painting in Jain Temple (Conjeevram)	102	
	116. Dilwara Temple: Adinath Temple Hall	102	
	117. Buddha Statue (Sanchi)	102	
XLIII.	118. Temptation of Buddha (Photo: Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad)	108	
XXVIII			

PLATE		<i>Facing Page</i>	
	119. Siddharta (Boston Museum)	108	
	120. Buddha's Parnirvana (Boston Museum)	108	
	121. Division of Buddha's Bones (Government Museum, Madras)	108	
XLIV.	122. Buddha-Gaya, Navagraha Temple, Orissa	106	
	123. Khajurao—Shrine of the Surya Temple	106	
	124. Aihole Temple, Bijapur, Early Chalukyan Style, Bijapur District (Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)	106	
	125. Konarak—Wheel of the Sun Chariot	106	
XLV.	126. Jai Sing's Astronomical Observatory, Delhi	107	
	127. Jaipur—Instruments in Jay Singh's Astronomical Observatory	107	
	128. General View of Ajunta—Ancient University (Photo: Indian State Railways)	107	
	129. General view of Ellora—Ancient University	107	
XLVI.	Scenes from Nalanda—An Ancient University	110	
	130. Various Carvings	110	
	131. Monolith and Buddha Scriptures	110	
XLVI. A.	131A. Lady Musician (From H. I. Parekh's Collection, Bombay)	110	
	131B. Hindu Ascetics	110	
XLVI. B.	131C. Portrait of Jehangir Mughal line drawing (From N. C. Mehta's Book "Studies in Indian Painting")	111	
CHAPTER VII. MUSIC AND DANCING; PAINTING AND SCULPTURE			
XLVII.	132. Dance of Shiva	112	
	133. Music Party (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	112	
XLVIII.	134. A Music Party (Bagh Frescoes) (From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")	113	
XLIX.	135. Todi Ragini	114	
	136. Hindol Rag	114	
	137. Megh Rag	114	
	138. Sorath Rag (136-138 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. Photo: J. S. Taraporevala)	114	
L.	139. Vasant Ragini (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	115	
	140. Flying Gandharvas and Apsaras (Ajunta Cave) (140-141 Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	115	
	141. Shiva's Tandava Dance (Ellora Cave).	115	
	142. Shiva Dancing as Nataraj (Government Museum, Madras)	115	
L.I.	143-144. Dancing to-day: Illustrative of Gestures	116	
L.II.	SOME INDIAN INSTRUMENTS		
	145. A Professional Sitar Player	117	
	146. Music Lesson	117	
XXIX			

PLATE		<i>Facing Page</i>	
	147. Hindu Music	117	
LIII.	148. Padma Pani	118	
	149. Shiva, The Prince of Dancers (Government Museum, Madras)	118	
	150. Mother and Child (Frescoes; Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	118	
LIV.	151. Rasa-Mandala (From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")	119	
LV.	PAINTINGS IN AJUNTA FRESCOES		
	152-156. Panel Decorations	120	
	157. Brahmana Begging	120	
	158. Chhaddanta Jatak (152-158 Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	120	
LVI.	PAINTINGS IN AJUNTA FRESCOES		
	159. Queen's Toilet	121	
	160. A Love Scene (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	121	
	161. Another Ajunta Painting, Cave XVII (159 and 161 Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	121	
LVII.	PAINTINGS IN AJUNTA FRESCOES		
	162. Type of Female Beauty	122	
	163. Women's Heads (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	122	
	164. A Princely Couple (163-164 Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	122	
LVIII.	RAJPUT PAINTINGS		
	165. The Month of Margashirsha (165-166 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	123	
	166. A Rajput Lady	123	
	167. Krishna and Radha	123	
	168. Ladies Bathing (From Coomaraswamy's book "Rajput Painting")	123	
LIX.	MUGHAL PAINTINGS		
	169. Camels Fighting (169-170 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	124	
	170. A Black Buck and his Mate	124	
	171. A Himalayan Cheer Pheasant (By Ustad Mansur) (Victoria and Albert Museum, London)	124	
LX.	MUGHAL PAINTINGS		
	172. Akbar Hunting (from "Akbarnama") (Outline by Basawan, Painting by Dharm Das)	125	
	173. Emperor Babur Dictating his Memoirs (Painting by Hashim)	125	
LXI.	MUGHAL PAINTINGS		
	174. Emperor Shah Jehan	126	
XXX			

PLATE		<i>Facing Page</i>	
	175. Empress Nur Jehan (174 and 176 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	126	
	176. Emperor Aurangzeb in Old Age	126	
LXII.	177. Saraswathi Playing on the Vina (British Museum)	127	
	178. Gautama Buddha (Sarnath)	127	
	179. Torso Representing Prince Siddhartha (From the Sanchi Topc)	127	
	180. Besnagar Yakshi	127	
LXIII.	181. Cauri-Bearer (Patna Museum)	128	
	182. Bimaran Casket	128	
	183. Piprawa Inscribed Vase (containing relics of Buddha)	128	
	184. Reliquary Casket, Peshawar (containing Buddha's Ashes)	128	
LXIV.	185. Lower Part of Asoka's Pillar (Lauriya Nandangarh)	129	
	186. Asoka's Pillar (Lauriya Nandangarh)	129	
	187. Seals from Mahenjo Daro	129	
	188. Railings round the Buddha Temple, Gaya	129	
LXV.	189. Buddha-Gaya Medallion from the Rail Pillars	132	
	190. Lion Capital (Sarnath Pillar)	132	
	191. Cathedral Cave, Karle	132	
	192. General View, Sanchi Stupa (Photo: Indian State Railways)	132	
LXVI.	193. Interior of a Chaitya Showing Stupa, (Ajanta) (Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	133	
	194. Carvings on North Gate, Sanchi Stupa (Photo: Indian State Railways)	133	
LXVII.	195. Sanchi Stupa, North Gateway	136	
	196. Sanchi Stupa, East Gate	136	
	197. A Tree Nymph, Sanchi	136	
	198. Asoka's Pillar, Lumbini Grove (Birthplace of Buddha)	136	
LXVIII.	199. The Goddess Kali—Sculptures from Kailas (Ellora) (Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	137	
	200. Chaitya Slab, Amravati Stupa (Government Museum, Madras)	137	
	201. Geometrical Patterns and Carvings, Sarnath	137	
	202. Amravati Stupa, Disc from a bar of the Outer Rail (Government Museum, Madras)	137	
LXIX.	203. Trimurti Elephanta	140	
	204. Inscribed Figure of Buddha, Monghir	140	
	CHAPTER VIII. TEMPLES AND TOMBS: PALACES AND PLEASANCES		
LXX.	205. Taj Mahal, Agra (Photo: Indian State Railways)	148	
	206. General View of the Cave Temples, Ajanta (Photo: Indian State Railways)	148	
	207. Ellora: Vishwa-Karma Cave Chaitya Hall (Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	148	
	208. Sarnath Stupa	148	

PLATE				
LXXI	CHAITYA SPECIMENS			
	209.	Chaitya Cave X. Horse shoe window, Ajanta	<i>Facing Page</i>	149
	210.	Chaitya Cave, Bedsa (Bombay)	" "	149
	211.	Chaitya Cave, Nasik	" "	149
	212.	Chaitya Cave, Karli	" "	149
LXXII.	213.	Sculptures from the Exterior Screen at the Buddhist Cave at Karli	" "	150
	214.	Daghoba at Cave XXVI Ajanta	" "	150
LXXIII.	215.	Cathedral Cave, Badami (Verandah of Cave III from the West End)	" "	151
	216.	Cathedral at Kanheri (Bombay) (215-216 Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)	" "	151
	217.	Interior, Main Hall of Vihara, Ajanta Caves XIX	" "	151
LXXIV.	AJANTA CAVES			
	218.	Chaitya Facade	" "	152
	219.	Horse Shoe Window (218-219 Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	" "	152
LXXV.	220.	The Great Temple, Buddha Gaya	" "	153
	221.	Mukteshwar Temple, Bhubbhaneshwar, Orissa	" "	153
	222.	Kailas Temple: Elephants supporting the Main Temple	" "	153
	223.	Kailas Temple, Gallery, South Side (Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	" "	153
LXXVI.	ELLORA CAVES			
	224.	The Kailas Temple, General View	" "	154
	225.	Kailas Temple—Central Shrine and Lamp-post	" "	154
LXXVII.	226.	Ruins of Somnath Temple	" "	155
	227.	Ceiling of Jain Temple, Abu	" "	155
	228.	Mount Abu—Jain Temple (Interior Carvings)	" "	155
	229.	Dilwara Temple, Carved Pillars (Mount Abu)	" "	155
LXXVIII.	230.	General View of Jain Temples, Palitana	" "	156
	231.	Chitorgarh, Tower of Victory (Details of Lower Portion)	" "	156
	232.	Chitorgarh, View of Fort Walls and Palace (From Martin Hurlimann's book "Picturesque India")	" "	156
LXXIX.	233.	Udaipur: Royal Palace and Lake	" "	157
	234.	Udaipur: Marble Ghat, Rajnagar	" "	157
	235.	Fort of Jhansi	" "	157
	236.	Famous Fortress of Daulatabad	" "	157
LXXX.	237.	Fort of Gwalior	" "	158
	238.	General View of Bharatpur	" "	158
LXXXI.	239.	Fort of Bharatpur	" "	159
	240.	Ruins of Council Hall at Vijayanagar	" "	159
	241.	The Arhai-din-ka-jhonpra, Ajmer	" "	159
LXXXII.	242.	Colonnade of Hindu Pillars near Q'utb Minar, Delhi	" "	160
	243.	The Pillar of Asoka, Firozabad, Delhi	" "	160
XXXII				

PLATE				
LXXXIII.	244.	A Street Scene in Jaipur (Showing the Palace of Winds and the Great Square)	<i>Facing Page</i>	161
	245.	Mosque in the Precincts of the Mausoleum of Shah Alam, Ahmedabad	" "	161
LXXXIV.	246.	Chitorgarh (Tower of Victory, Chitor)	" "	162
	247.	Q'utb Minar	" "	162
	248.	Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur	" "	162
	249.	Gol Gumbaz, Bijapur	" "	162
LXXXV.	250.	Tomb of Sher Shah, Sasaram	" "	163
	251.	Jumma Masjid, Ahmedabad	" "	163
	252.	Shah Alam's Mausoleum, Ahmedabad	" "	163
	253.	Hall of 300 Pillars, Ahmedabad	" "	163
LXXXVI.	254.	Perforated Stone Window (Sidi Sayid Mosque, Ahmedabad)	" "	164
	255.	Step-well, Ahmedabad (From Havell: "Indian Architecture")	" "	164
	256.	The Jumma Masjid, Delhi (256-257 Photo: Indian State Railways)	" "	164
	257.	Shah Jehan's Mosque, Agra Fort	" "	164
LXXXVII.	258.	Interior of Pearl Mosque, Agra	" "	165
	259.	Tomb of Humayun, Delhi	" "	165
	260.	Archway near Akbar's Tomb, Sikundra	" "	165
	261.	Akbar's Tomb, Sikundra	" "	165
LXXXVIII.	262.	The Tomb of Emperor Jehangir, near Lahore	" "	166
	263.	The Taj Mahal, Agra (The Tomb of Mumtaz Mahal, Wife of the Emperor Shah Jehan)	" "	166
LXXXIX.	264.	Gateway of the Taj Mahal, Agra. A Magnificent Structure of red sandstone inlaid with marble	" "	167
	265.	Marble Screen in the Taj Mahal, Agra (Photo: Indian State Railways)	" "	167
XC.	266.	Et-mud-daula's Tomb, Agra	" "	168
	267.	Buland Darwaza, Fatehpur-Sikri (Gateway of Victory)	" "	168
	268.	Panch Mahal, Fatehpur-Sikri	" "	168
	269.	Carved Pillars in Panch Mahal, Fatehpur-Sikri (266-268 Photo: Indian State Railways)	" "	168
XCI.	270.	Lotus Shaped Throne Pillar, Fatehpur-Sikri	" "	169
	271.	Hiran Minar—Elephant Tower, Fatehpur-Sikri	" "	169
	272.	Old Palace, Datia	" "	169
	273.	Carvings in Lokendranath Palace, Datia	" "	169
XCII.	274.	The interior of <i>Diwan-i-khas</i> or Hall of Private Audience in the Fort, Delhi	" "	170
	275.	The Lahore Gate of the Fort, Delhi	" "	170
XCIII.	276.	Shah Jehan's Seraglio, Delhi	" "	171
	277.	<i>Diwan-i-am</i> , Delhi (Photo: Indian State Railways)	" "	171
	278.	Shah Jehan's Pavilions, Ajmer	" "	171

PLATE			
CHAPTER IX. INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE			
XCIV.	279.	Silver and Copper Smiths—Chasing, Gilding and Polishing	<i>Facing Page</i> 176
	280.	Silver and Copper Smiths at work, Hammering out Shapes	„ „ 176
	281.	Wood Sawing in India	„ „ 176
	282.	Carpet Weavers	„ „ 176
XCV.	283.	Shawl Embroiderers	„ „ 177
	284.	Cotton Spinner	„ „ 177
	285.	Women Laying Warps for Native Cloth	„ „ 177
	286.	Dyers	„ „ 177
XCVI.	287.	Iron Pillar, Delhi	„ „ 180
	288.	Tinsel Workers	„ „ 180
	289.	Carpet Designers	„ „ 180
	290.	Making and Polishing Paper	„ „ 180
XCVII.	291.	A Mughal means of Transport, Bullock Chariot by Abu Hasan. (reproduced in colour)	„ „ 184
		(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")	
XCVIII.	292.	Persian Embassy at the Court of Shah Jehan	„ „ 188
	293.	Ancient Transport	„ „ 188
XCIX.	294.	Ambari—Lady's Litter on Elephant	„ „ 189
	295.	Chandol—Road Conveyance of Zenana Ladies	„ „ 189
	296.	Palaki	„ „ 189
	297.	A Litter on Camel Back	„ „ 189
CHAPTER X. THE SOCIAL SYSTEM			
C.	298.	Tulsi Puja	„ „ 192
	299.	Phallic Worship	„ „ 192
	300.	Worshipping the Goddess of Wealth	„ „ 192
CI.	301.	Marriage of Shiva and Parvati, Ellora Caves	„ „ 193
		(Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	
CII.	302.	Decorating the Door Steps	„ „ 193
	303.	Bathing Ghat, Benares	„ „ 196
	304.	Pilgrims Bathing in the Godavari	„ „ 196
CIII.	305.	Vishram Ghat, Mathura	„ „ 196
	306.	The Burning Ghat, Benares	„ „ 197
	307.	The "Jauhar" (Rajput Ladies' Self Immolation during the siege of Chitor Rajputana (1567-1568) from "Akbarnama")	„ „ 197
CIV.	308.	Jehangir's Palace, Agra	„ „ 200
	309.	Jasmin Tower, Agra	„ „ 200
	310.	Saman Burj, Agra	„ „ 200
	311.	Interior of Saman Burj	„ „ 200
CV.	312.	Mughal Zenana Ladies Playing Polo	„ „ 201
		(Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	
	313.	Damayanti's Swayamwara	„ „ 201
CV. A.	314.	Sports—An Elephant Fight and other contests—at Babur's Darbar	„ „ 201
	A.	Courtship of Krishna and Radha	„ „ 204
		(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")	

PLATE			
CVI.	315.	Akbar Hunting Game, with trained Leopards in a rocky country (From "Akbarnama")	<i>Facing Page</i> 205
	316.	Elephant Fight, Shah Jehan's Durbar	„ „ 205
CVII.	317.	A Mahomedan Dancing Girl (reproduced in colour)	„ „ 206
CVIII.	318.	<i>Dicean-i-khas</i> , Agra	„ „ 208
	319.	<i>Dicean-i-am</i> , Agra	„ „ 208
	320.	Zenana, the Fort, Agra	„ „ 208
CIX.	321.	Akbar receiving Mansabdars in a Palace Garden Painting by Manohar.	„ „ 209
		(Victoria and Albert Museum, London)	
	322.	The Throne, Delhi	„ „ 209
CX.		(Photo: Indian State Railways)	
	323.	Shah Jehan in Court Costume	„ „ 209
		(Victoria and Albert Museum, London)	
CX.	324.	Aurangzeb returning from Hunting	„ „ 212
	325.	Radha's Toilet	„ „ 212
	326.	Fully armed Mogul Warrior	„ „ 212
CXI.		(Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	
	327.	Shah Jehan receiving a European Embassy	„ „ 214
		(reproduced in colour)	
CXII.	328.	A Mughal Empress	„ „ 216
		(Daughter of Bihari Mal and wife of Emperor Akbar)	
	329.	Jodhbai, wife of Emperor Jehangir	„ „ 216
CXIII.	330.	Mughal Noble in Court Dress	„ „ 216
		(Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)	
	331.	A Rajput Cavalier (Kalian Rai Rahtore ready for Battle)	„ „ 216
CXIII.	332.	Persian Nobleman Drinking	„ „ 217
		(Photo: Archaeological Dept., Hyderabad Dn.)	
	333.	Banquet of the Mughal days	„ „ 217
CXIII.	334.	Portrait of a Lady with Sunlight effect	„ „ 217
		By Govind Das	
		(333—334 From Smith's "History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon")	

MAPS			
		Empires of Asoka and Kanishka	„ „ 58
		Gupta Empire	„ „ 59
		Mogul and Maratha Empires	„ „ 70

THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS 'IND

CHAPTER 1

INDIA: A PANORAMIC VIEW

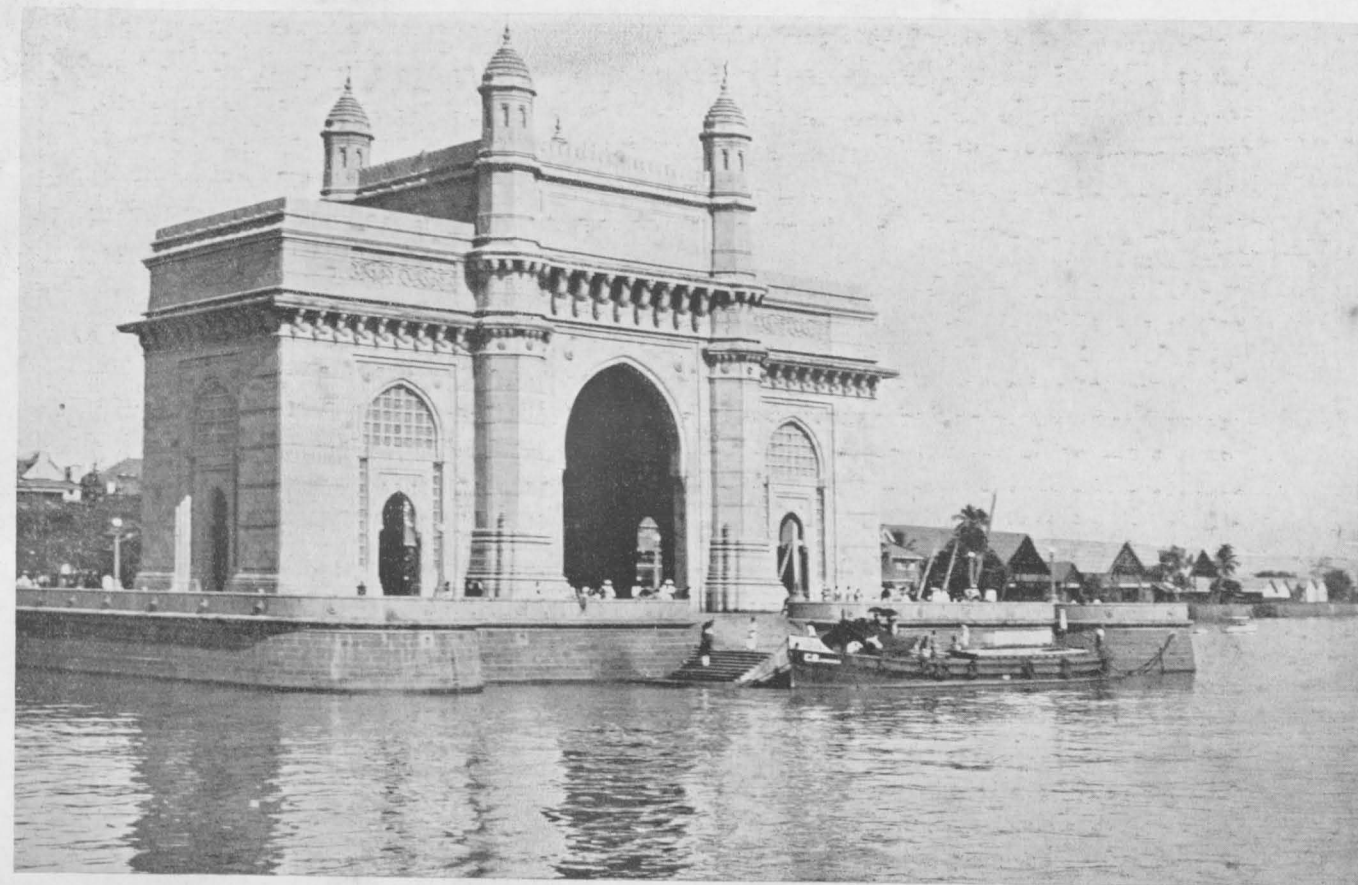
“No one who travels through the length and breadth of the continent of India,” says the Imperial Gazetteer, “can fail to be struck with the extraordinary varieties of its physical aspects. In the North rise magnificent mountain altitudes, bound by snowfield and glacier in eternal solitude. At their feet lie smooth wide spaces of depressed river basins; either sandy, dry, and sun-scorched, or cultivated and water-logged under a stormy moisture-laden atmosphere. To the South spreads a great central plateau, where the indigenous forest still hides the scattered clans of aboriginal tribes; flanked on the west by the broken crags and castellated outlines of the ridges overlooking the Indian Ocean, and on the south by gentle, smooth, rounded slopes of green upland. Something at least of the throes and convulsions of nature which accompanied the birth of this changeful land is recorded in the physical aspect of the mountains and valleys which traverse it; and an appeal to the evidence of the rocks is answered by the story of its evolution.”

India is an ancient land,—even as age goes in geology. The records of her people are lost in mist still hanging thick on the origins of modern civilisation. Without speculating upon earlier civilisations, now vanished from the ken of mankind except for fossil remains, offering more a challenge to the imagination than a conviction to the intellect as to the morals and manners of the races that peopled the continents now buried underneath the stormy billows of the Indian Ocean; without straining unbearably the suggestion of the Vedic hymns, or stressing impossibly the evidence of geologic strata in and around the first Aryan home in India; the remark may still be ventured that the forefathers of the modern Indian in the Indo-Gangetic plain came to this country 4000 or 5000 years ago; and that when they left the defiles of the Hindu Kush debouching on the Kabul and the Indus Valley, they were faced by peoples as respectable as any that the adventurous vanguard of the Indo-European family found in any part of Europe or Asia. The Dravids of the South, beyond the all but impenetrable barrier of the Vindhya and the Satpura Ranges, were a mighty race, boasting their own independent culture and civilisation of an antiquity before which the Aryans invading India from Iran and Turan were veritably moderns; and though the North was North, and the South was South, and never the twain did meet for countless centuries; though even after centuries of impact and close interaction, each race retained its own individuality in speech, in skin, in features, the Indian people of to-day throughout the vast peninsula from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Calcutta have erected, by ages of contact and mutual influence and intermixture, a common heritage, which might well suggest to a modern student a sacred thread of fundamental unity binding the people of the peninsula into an indivisible whole.

This is true only of India proper. That which now makes up the political entity known as the British Empire of India contains units—both geographic and ethnological,—which are by no means one with the India of classic tradition or modern ambitions. The frontiers of India have been well defined by Nature herself; and though her handiwork has more than once been sought to be improved upon by the ambition of man, the only unity of the Indian continent and the Indian people is to be found within the limits set by Nature herself. The foam-flecked waves of the Indian Ocean, dashing upon her age-old shores, define a boundary along a coastline of 2000 miles on the west and the east, which no ingenuity of man can set back. The steep escarpment of the Western Ghats coming sharply down almost to the thin white line of the sandy-shore only serves to throw in bold relief this natural boundary, giving at the same time a warning to the ambitious visitor from over the Seas that the home of the chosen people, walled in by mountains and girt round by oceans, is safe, at least on that side, from his designs. On the east, the rise of the land from the coast westward is gentle and gradual, but unmistakable. But even there the defence of the people is amply provided for, if not by an impenetrable wall of mountains, by the absence of any safe harbourage or steady anchorage on that long open coast. The broad, fair bosom of the Daughter of the Creator—Brahmaputra—marks, with her collateral, the Meghna, the natural frontier of India on the East; and though the political boundary on the East stretches far beyond Brahmaputra through dense forest and impenetrable jungle up to the confines of China, that region and its people have no greater affinity with India proper than Burma and the Burmese. From the south-westward bend of the Brahmaputra to the turn of the Indus on the north, are the giant Himalayas, guarding eternally the home of the Aryans. Like sleepless sentinels they stand, armed in all their panoply of unpioneered forests, and unsealed summits, each with its dazzling helm of flashing snow, for a serried length of 1500 miles. Passage for the seasoned mountaineer and his hardy beast might be found at infrequent intervals through this stupendous wall of nature. But the cost in time and energy would be so immense, that no considerable wave of human invasion has ever worked its way to the fertile plains of the Gangetic Delta.

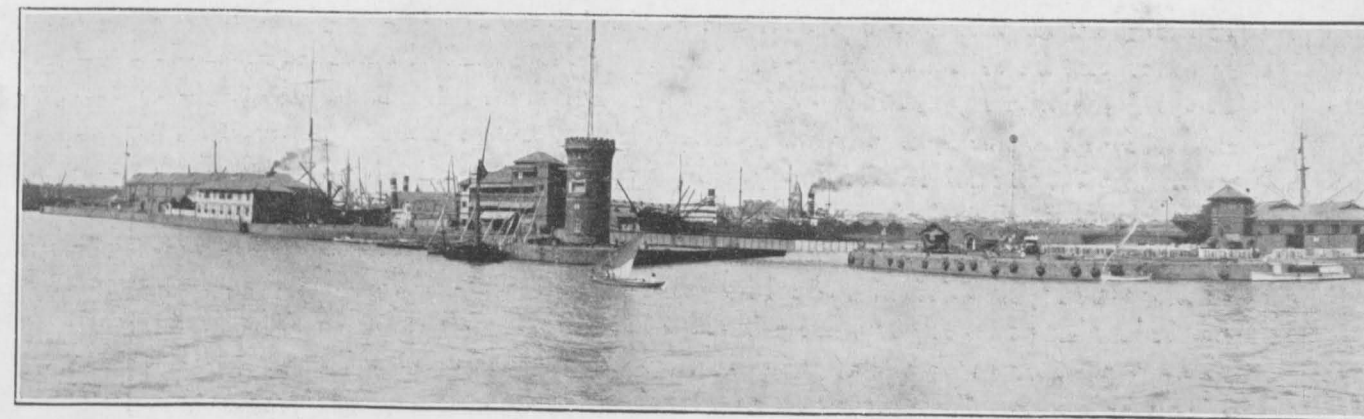
The natural boundary of India in this region almost coincides with the actual. On the north-west, however, the vicissitudes of history have moved the frontier back and forth, like the tide-line on an open coast. The Indus is the River of India *par excellence*. It gives the land its name and forms its natural boundary. And yet, for countless centuries, the ebb and flow of the might of India has traversed its mighty stream far into the basin of its western tributaries, and receded to the banks of the eastern and southernmost of its Punjab confluents. The Land of the Seven Rivers as known to the ancient Aryan of the Vedic Age, or of the Five Rivers as familiarised in the classic style of the Persian, Punjab, has ever been held to be Indian soil. But the land beyond the Indus on the west had always been equally debatable ground. The mountains in this region are a limb of the sprawling giant Himalayas stretching from the confines of China to the borders of Iran and

PLATE I



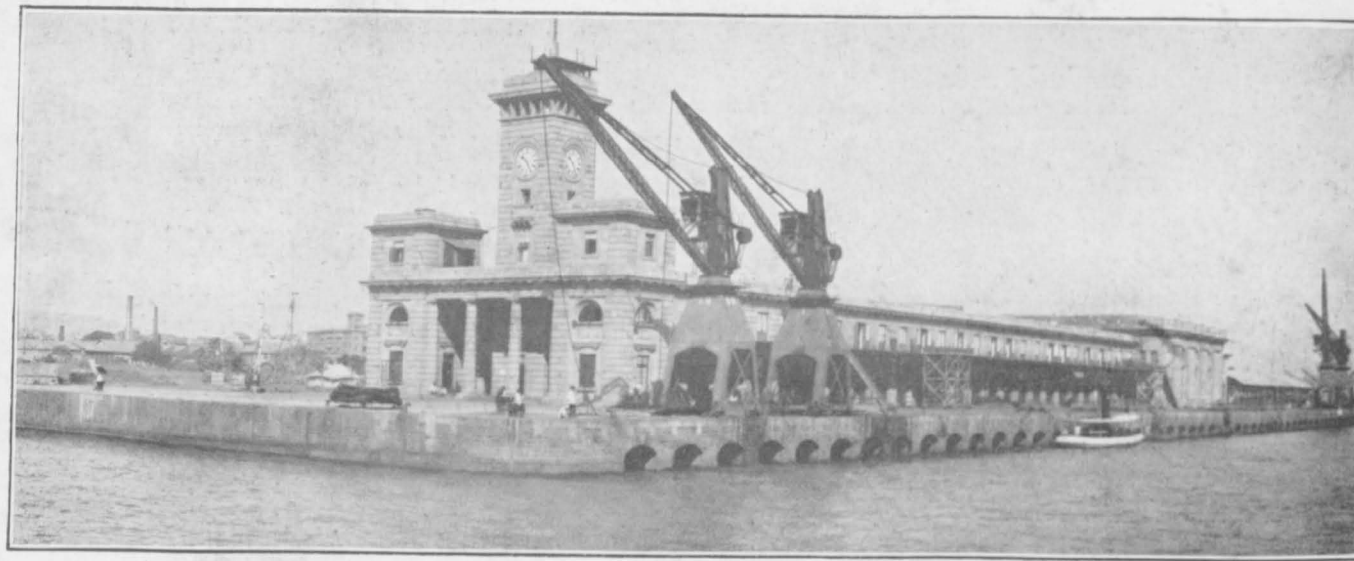
1

THE GATEWAY OF INDIA, BOMBAY

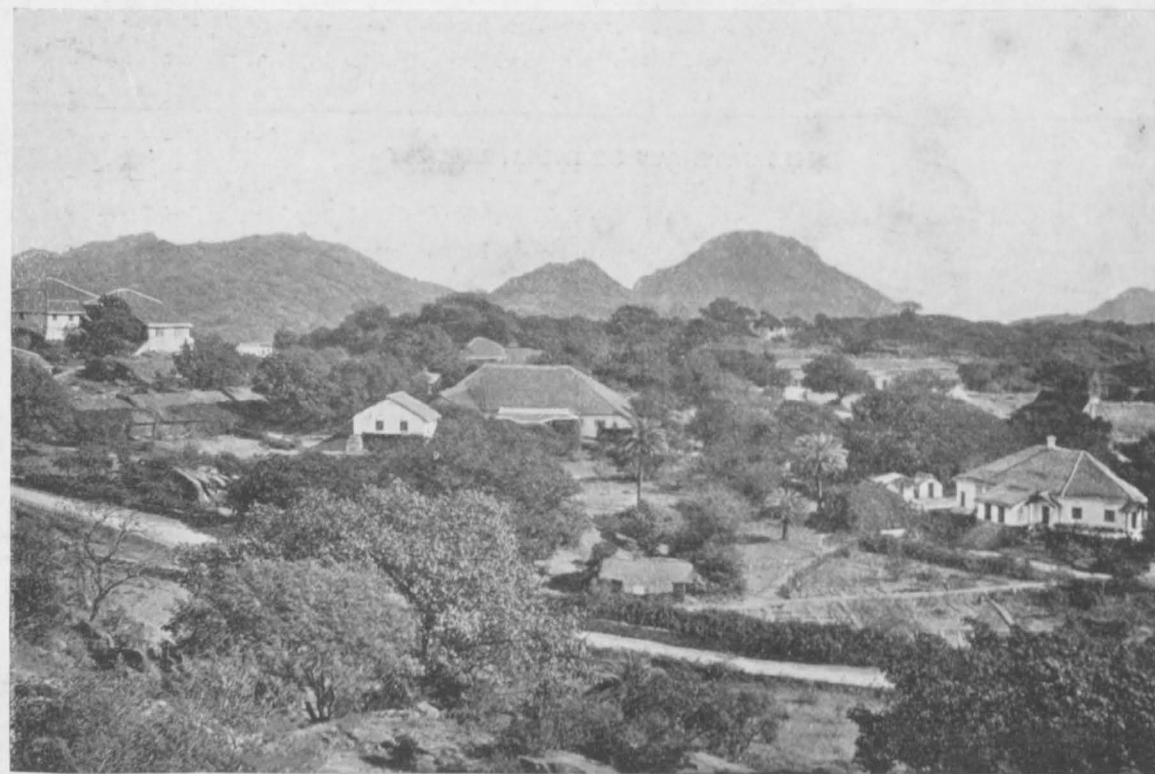


2

ENTRANCE TO PRINCE'S DOCK, BOMBAY



BALLARD PIER FROM THE HARBOUR, BOMBAY



A PANORAMIC VIEW OF MT. ABU

Turkestan. But the trans-Indus mountains are not impenetrable, as the serried phalanx of the Himalayas. The passes across the towering Hindu Kush are few and perilous, but well-defined and richly frequented. Through them have rushed wave upon wave of foreign invasion and conquest in the countless centuries of our recorded history. The search for a "scientific frontier" has pushed the debatable margin in recent times many a broad league to the west of the Indus; but it may be questioned if the mighty classic stream does not itself provide a sufficient and efficient frontier, even as the Rhine does between the warring Franks and Teutons. Certainly, with the exception of the people of Sind on both banks of this ocean-like stream, the tribes and races to the northward and westward of the Indus hold no affinity in race or culture to the people of this country. And so we may complete the outline of nature's boundary for India by these two mighty rivers on the West, and the East, the Indus and the Brahmaputra, both having their origin in the snow-fed lakes of the Himalayas, but each ultimately flowing into the sea that bathes and refreshes the feet and the flanks of the Mother 2000 miles from the other.

Let us, now, cast a glance at the sub-continent thus defined. In everything but mere area, India rivals the most considerable countries of the world. By itself it is larger than all Europe minus the Russia of the Tsars; and though Russia, the United States, and China excel her in point of size, China alone could surpass her in point of man-power. Taken collectively, her history and traditions are more ancient; her peoples more varied and numerous; her civilisation more rich, more gripping, and more lasting, than those perhaps of any other single country of the modern world. A rapid survey of the principal features of this wonderful mother of the arts and graces, of the religions and philosophies, of civilised humanity would amply repay the trouble of a careful study.

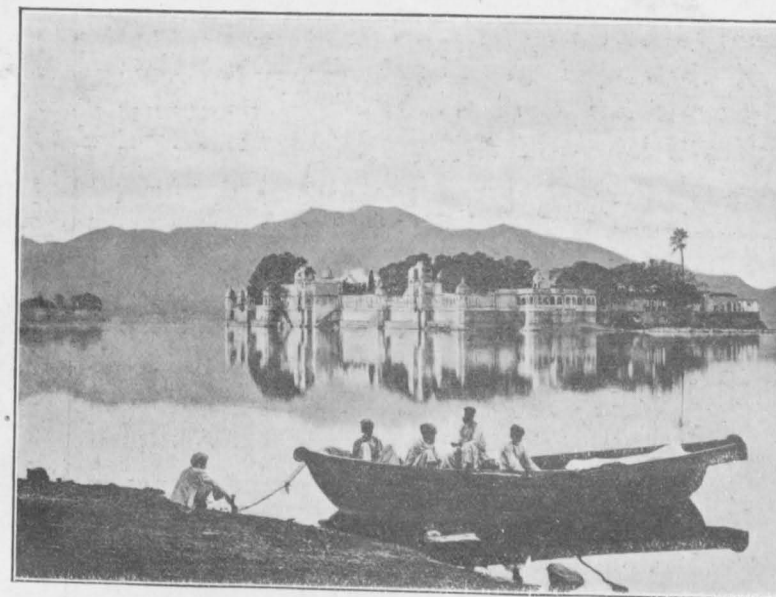
India may be studied from innumerable starting points. A modern painter has pictured the map of India as a *grande dame* of to-day, with her head in the heights of the Himalayas to the north, her hair streaming in the shape of mighty forests along the foot of this, with one arm curved kimbo to represent Kathiawar, and her feet dipping into the waves of the southern ocean. Her classic laureate, unfamiliar with the modern aeroplane, has nevertheless described her as seen by the Cloud-Messenger flying in the sky from the summit of the South-Western mountains, where the rain-charged clouds even now seem to have their port of entry, from the ocean to Mount Kailasa, the abode of the Gods, the source of the Holy Ganges and of the Mighty Indus. But his idiom is inaccessible, his diction inimitable, his imagery unfamiliar, his sonorous strains, his deft and delicate touches of a master-hand, impossible to a mere modern, even though he may be familiar with the pilot's view of the land from the cockpit of a coursing airship. A better if more prosaic alternative is the tourist itinerary, especially if the visitor is august enough not to be allowed to leave India without seeing almost every important feature of the land.

Let us assume, the visitor enters this—to him a land of mystery and romance—by the usual portal, the gateway of India at Bombay. The city of Bombay is a new comer, a mere baby, as the age of cities goes in the immemorial East. Before the

holy Benares and the historic Pataliputra, Bombay the Beautiful is a city of yesterday. Until the opening of the Suez Canal, the European ships coming round the extremity of Africa could more easily reach the Malabar than the Maratha or the Gujarat ports. Cochin and Calicut in the extreme south of India were hence for centuries better known to the Arabs and the Portuguese, the French and the Dutch and the English, than the little group of fishing islands off the mainland in the very centre of the Western Coast, which now proudly style themselves *Urbs Prima in Indis*. Bombay owes a goodly portion of her prosperity to the Canal linking up once again the Red Sea and the Mediterranean; for it made her the first port of call for European liners after rounding the base of the Arab Peninsula. Karachi is nearer; and ports on the Kathiawar and Gujarat littoral cheaper. But the magnificent system of railways which radiates from Bombay to the north, the East and the South, not only links up the island city with the principal centres of the Indian Government, but also gives her command of the vast hinterland in all directions behind the Ghats, which, in the days before the Railways, were inaccessible to the City of Bombay. She has a magnificent natural harbour, whose twinkling light dancing on the waves spread a gorgeous picture—a fit symbol of the India of Romance—before the mail-boat from Europe or America steaming slowly into her berth in the early hours of a winter morning. The modern city—this Queen of the West—was yet in the womb of time, when the great fleets of Arab and Egyptian traders were draining the wealth of the Roman Empire to pay for the fabrics of the Indian loom, or the marvels of the Indian mines. The decaying town of Broach is to-day a pitiable relic of the ancient Baruagaza (or Bhrigukaccha), in whose broad river a regular forest of masts was for centuries present to impress and bewilder the inland native. Even Surat, on the South, or Cambay on the North, have a history before which the lustre of Bombay pales like the evening star before a full-orbed moon. The ships and sailors of Surat and Broach and all the ports to the very land's end of India ventured in every sea and were known in every port in the East and the West from Java to Zanzibar. They had an ample, unfailing where-withal for their business. The marvellous evergreen plain of Gujarat had tempted, a thousand years ago, the insatiate Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, who wondered if it were not the Garden of Allah. He would have made it his home, could he have afforded to be so far away from the seat of his Empire. The produce of Gujarat alone may not have sufficed to freight the countless ships that thronged her harbours; but behind Gujarat lay the rich hinterland of Malwa and Rajputana and the home provinces of the most ancient as well as modern Empires in India. These, with their varied products of the farm and the forge and the loom and innumerable needs, kept the double stream of imports and exports flowing perennially through these ports, and kept for ever piling up the riches which made this land the envy and the temptation of the world.

Gujarat, including the large peninsula of Kathiawar, is mostly a low-lying plain. Mount Abu stands a solitary sentinel at the north end, loaded with temples and palaces. Their art was a marvel five hundred years before the Taj Mahal was

PLATE III



5

UDAIPUR: PALACE IN THE LAKE



6 MAHARANA OF UDAIPUR



7

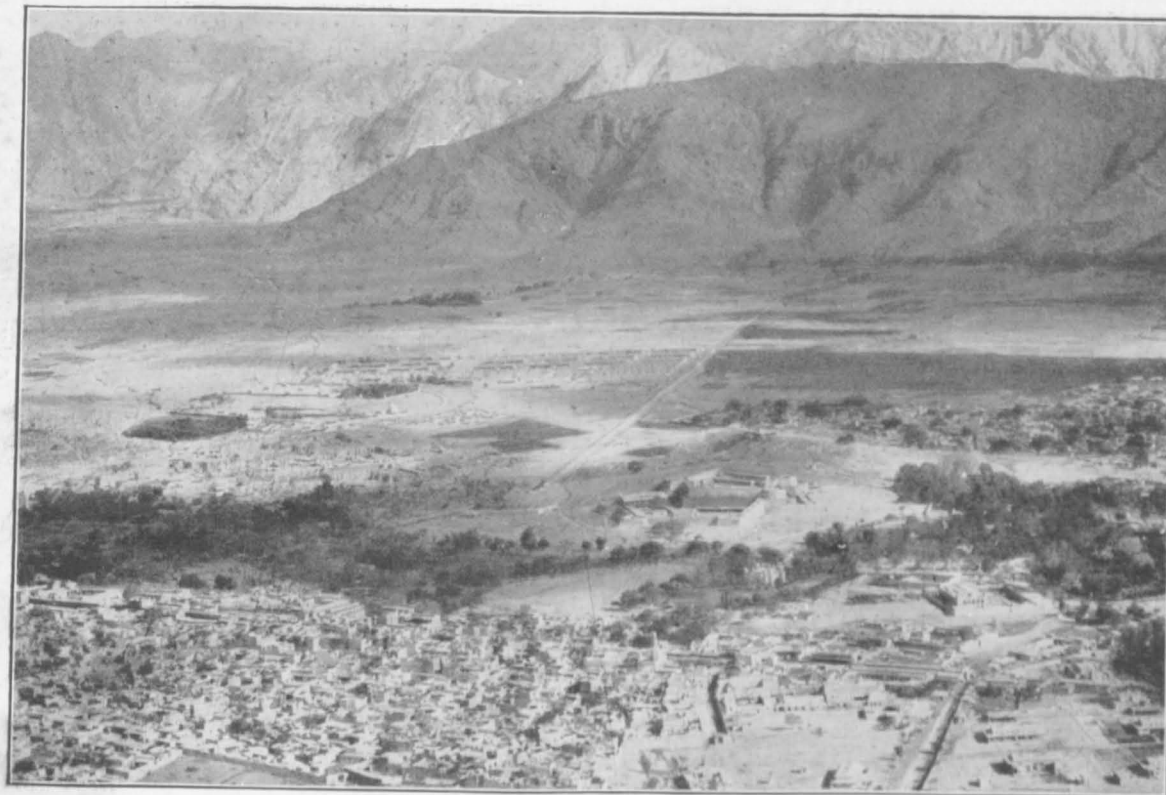
KHYBER PASS—(AERIAL VIEW)

(Photo: Royal Air Force)



8 A TRAIN IN KHYBER PASS (AERIAL VIEW)

(Photo: Royal Air Force)



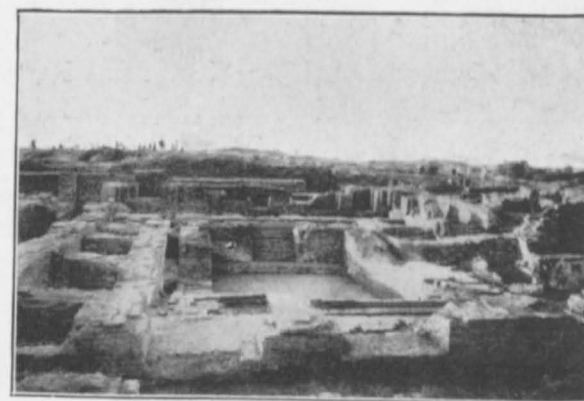
9 KOHAT CITY AND FORT—(N. W. F. P. AERIAL VIEW)

(Photo: Royal Air Force)



10 AERIAL VIEW OF FRONTIER LINES

(Photo: Royal Air Force)



11 MAHENJO DARO EXCAVATIONS—
"TANK BUILDINGS" AND SURROUNDINGS

(Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)

conceived. But though Abu is 5000 feet high, it is cut off from the main range of the Aravallis, of which it is an outlying spur. This most ancient range in the land of the Rajputs stretches diagonally across Rajputana, dividing the desert from the habitable region, and marking the edge of the continent, beyond which ebb and flowed the tides of a shallow sea in prehistoric times. The Ridge of Delhi marks the north-eastern limit of the range. In the plateau enclosed by the double range of the Aravallis on the North and the West, and the Vindhya on the South, and watered by the Chambal and the Banas, lie the homes of the most famous warrior clans of India. Descendants of the Sun and the Moon, these are warriors by birth and temperament, who have not learnt to tame their wild spirit of adventure after a thousand years of ceaseless fighting. The canons of courtesy and the laws of chivalry they developed in their centuries of ceaseless strife, *inter se* as well as with the Musalman, cannot but move admiration in every age. Courage is contagious, and the freemasonry of the really brave is incomprehensible to the ordinary mortal; so that even if the Pathan and the Mughal could not thoroughly assimilate in five hundred years the real spirit of Rajput chivalry, the best of the Pathans and the Mughals failed not to pay their tribute of admiration to this supreme trait in their opponents. In the whole wonderful book of Indian History, there is perhaps nothing so touching, so eloquent, so exalting as the story of the succour by the Mughal Emperor Humayun of the distressed Queen Regent of Udaipur. His father had fought and vanquished the Maharana Sanga, the leader of the Rajput confederacy; and his still greater son was to fight and praise the force and courage and pride of the indomitable and immortal Pratap of Udaipur. He himself was, at the moment the call came to him, at grips with the rising might of Sher Shah in Bengal. But because a Queen in distress, his sister by the law of chivalry, though alien in faith and enemy in tradition, had sent him a call for aid against Bahadur Shah, the Muslim Sovereign of Gujarat, Humayun left the field in Bengal to rush to the rescue, risking thereby not only his life but also his empire. The modern cities of Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur are but faint reminders of their past grandeur. But though the rushing automobile in eternal hurry may have replaced, even here, the gallant steed or the gorgeous elephant; though the siege-gun has rendered useless their walls, and the machine gun their incomparable warriors, the mighty spirit of an unforgettable past still hovers over the land. The martial figure of the Maharana of Udaipur is still unbent, in spite of the snows of eighty winters lying on this head. And though his sword and shield may be only symbolic, such symbols have a message of hope to a people conscious of their ancient heritage.

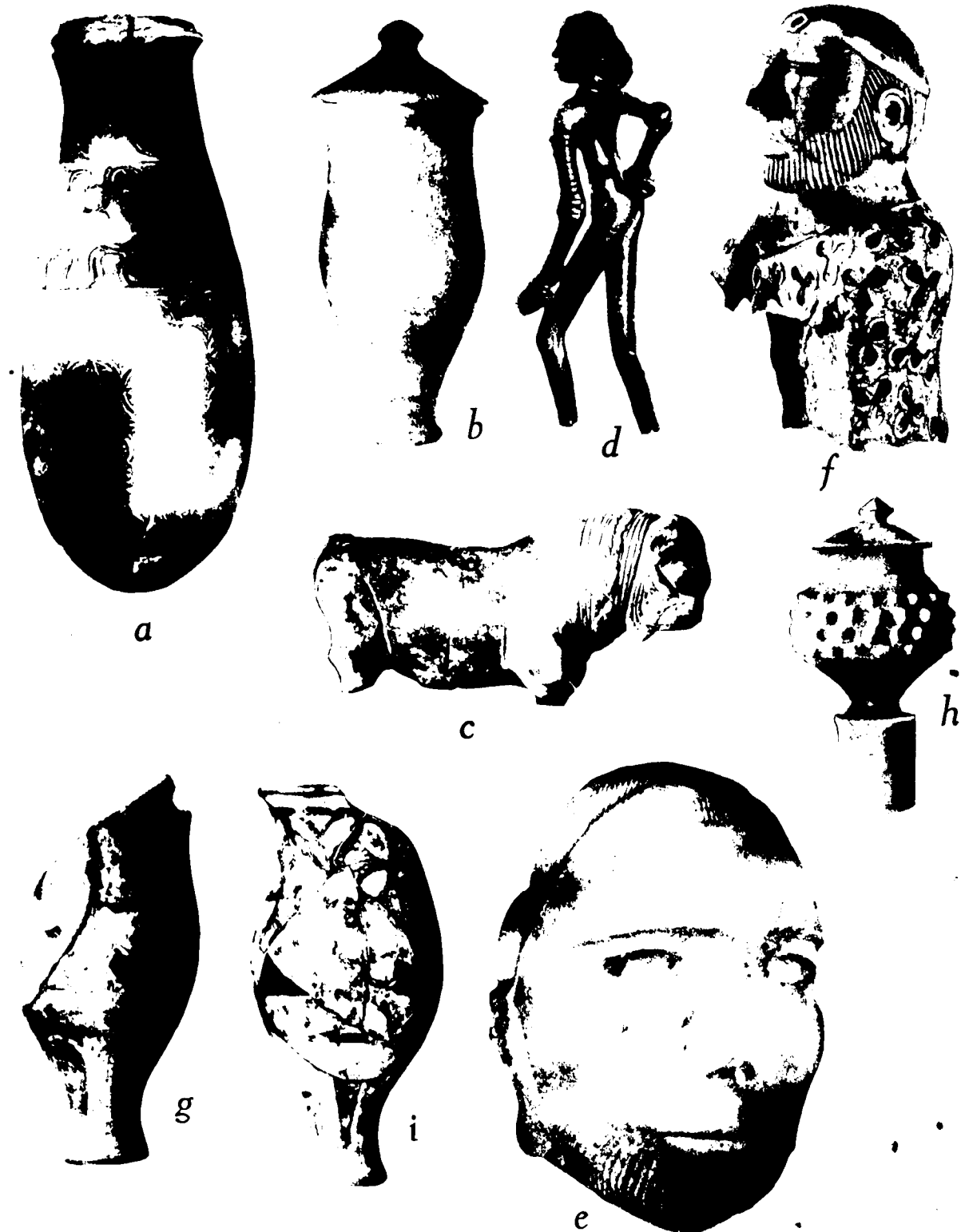
The great Indian desert lies to the north and west of Rajputana, on the site where once ebb and flowed the waves of the ocean. It has ever proved an effective barrier to the invader. The sands of desert are piled in hillocks of 50 or 100 feet high, and march in rhythmic curves in obedience to the winds from the western seas. The cities of the desert—Jaisalmer and Bikaner,—testify to the bracing character of the climate in this hot, arid, desolate region. Housed in an inhospitable soil, these oases in the desert gather round them all the slender stock

of human as well as vegetable life in these parts. Their massive ramparts present even to-day marvels of military architecture, which once made them proverbial for invincible security. "So constant and unceasing is the steady sun-glare of the desert," says the Imperial Gazetteer, "that a tradition (supported by a certain amount of evidence) relates that in days long anterior to the date of our introduction of the heliograph, bazaar prices of the wheat and grain in the Punjab were signalled by means of reflecting mirrors across Rajputana to Sind and Bombay all the year round."

The traveller in India on pleasure bent usually leaves Rajputana by the Delhi Gateway for the fertile plains of the Ganges Valley, without a glance at the desolate plains of the Indus Valley called Sind. Judging, however, from the remains now slowly being unearthed after their sleep of centuries, the civilisation of this arid valley is more ancient and amazing than that in the more historic provinces of this vast continent. A flat alluvial land, its wealth is the creation of the annual inundation of the great stream slowly wandering to the sea. Like the Nile in Egypt, the Indus compensates Sind for the absence of the regular monsoon, which is such a peculiar feature of the rest of the Indian continent. Like an ace of hearts, the province of Sind is based on the Sea and the Salt Marsh known as the Rann of Cutch; but the rain-charged current of air from the Arabian Sea sweeps over the plain without any resistance from a coastal or continental range of mountains, which would force it to part with its moisture to water the parched land. Right until it reaches the confines of the Punjab, the rain-laden wave has no inducement to exhaust itself. Even the great and wealthy land of the Five Rivers,—the classic *Sapta Sindhu* and the modern Punjab,—appears at first sight a flat, treeless waste of level plains, where wave upon wave of the same landscape rolls on to an ever expanding horizon. Lacking in the gifts of Nature, the provinces of Sind and the Punjab have been converted into an eternal envy for the rest of India by the ingenuity and enterprise of man. The marvellous system of irrigation based on the Indus and its tributaries are modern—only in the scale of their dimension. But, despite the gigantic irrigation works, which literally make millions of stalks of corn and blades of grass grow where previously not a single seed could thrive, the ancient forests of the Indus banks have become a thing of the past. The towering elephant and the ponderous rhinoceros no longer find a home in the valleys of these mighty rivers, as they no longer afford shade or swamp enough for these lords of the brute creation.

If the arid waste of Sind has, as yet, no attraction for the foreign visitor, the frontier abounds in marvels of defence and strategy which no one who may would care to leave unscen. From Delhi north-westwards, through Sirhind and Patiala, to Lahore; and thence on to Peshawar along the Jumna and the Sutlej, between the desert on the south and the mountain on the north; the land is strewn with battlefields of ancient, medieval, as well as modern history. Every square mile of ground has its own tale of courage and carnage. The parent stream of all invasion started on this frontier where the big-boned, blue-eyed, light-coloured Pathan

PLATE V



12-20

MAHENJO DARO DISCOVERIES

(a) Painted Vase. (b) Silver Vase containing Jewellery. (c) Terra-cotta Bull. (d) Copper statuette of Dancing girl. (e) Stone head. (f) Stone statue, stucco finished and painted. (g, h, i.) Polychromatic vases and urn.

(Archaeological Survey of India Photographs)



21

MOUNTAIN SCENERY IN KASHMIR



22

THE JHELUM AT SHRINAGAR, KASHMIR

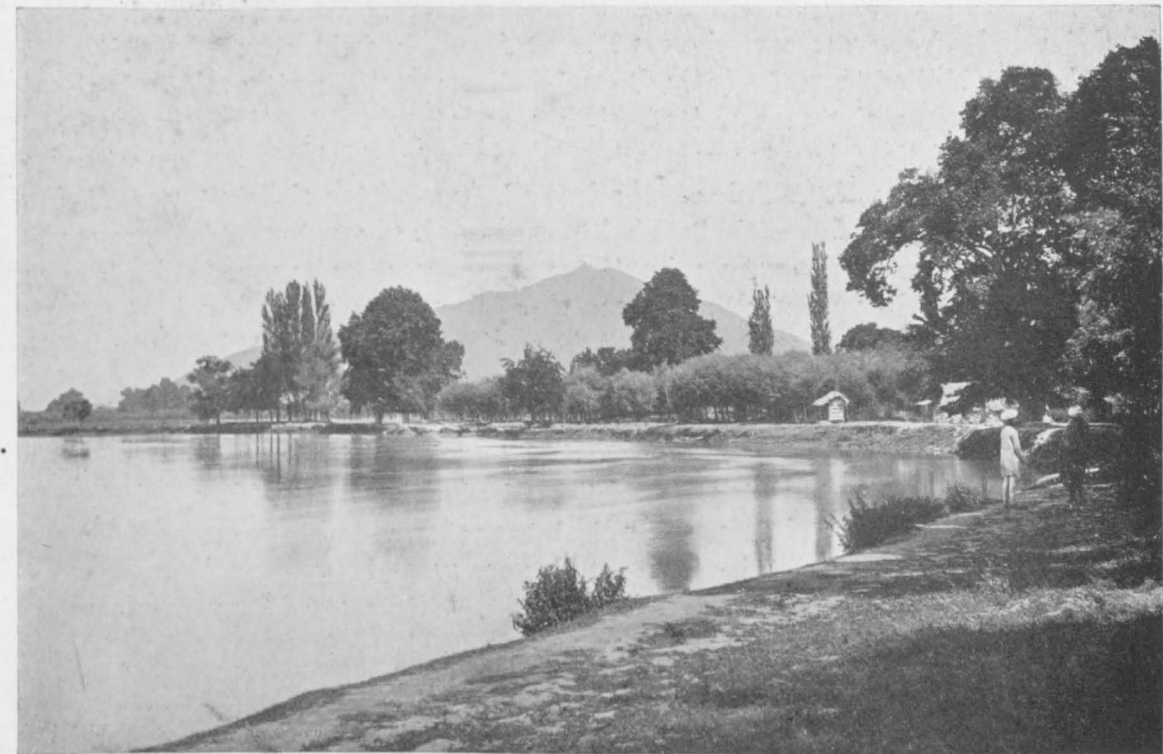
jostles with the milder yet tenacious native of the Punjab. With the possible exception of the Gurkhas of Nepal, there are no braver or more fearless soldiers in the Indian Army than those recruited from the Rajputs and the Sikhs, the Jats and the Dogras, the Punjab Musalmans and the Pathan mountaineers, of this region of eternal warfare. India is at peace, for the moment, with all her trans-frontier neighbours. But it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the restless ambition of a successful adventurer in the yet unsettled land of the Afghans, or the missionary, even if mistaken, zeal of the more distant Russian, may once more force conclusions on the Indian frontier at any time. Hence it is that the entire organisation and distribution of the army in India, and the lay-out of the railways in the border province, are made with an eye predominantly to the frontier. At two points only—the Khyber and the Bolan Passes—is the land frontier of India on the north-west considered to be vulnerable. The highlands of Afghanistan, narrowing to a single, though lofty, ridge of the Hindu Kush, almost opposite to the valley of the Indus near Peshawar, open in several passes to the valley of the Kabul River flowing into the Indus. The most famous and frequented of these passes is the Khyber, crowned by the fort of Ali Masjid, some three thousand feet above sea-level. Peshawar, the ancient Pushkalavati, is a city of the plains on the further side of the Indus, serving as capital of the newly formed Frontier Province. Nine miles of slowly rising ground to the west of it is the entrance to the Pass at Jamrud, which forms the halting ground for the caravans between India and Central Asia. The Pass, beginning at Jamrud and passing by the crowning fort of Ali Masjid, descends into Afghanistan on the other side of the Hindu Kush at Landi Kotal; and through this has flowed in historic times wave upon wave of invasion into India with varying fortunes. For nearly a hundred years, however, the stream seems to have dried up, and the people of India are now immune from the danger they apprehended for centuries.

Five hundred miles to the south and west lies another indenture in the hilly barrier round the continent of India. An open plateau at the foot of the Afghan mountains descends into the low-land of Lower Indus in Sind through the Bolan Pass, named after the last gorge through which the plain of Sind is approached. This gateway, however, opens, unlike that of the Khyber Pass, almost opposite the great desert of India, which makes an effective and insurmountable barrier to any considerable invading force. The construction of the railway in Sind and the rest of the frontier district has ever kept in view the needs of military strategy for offensive as well as defensive purposes; so that the North-Western Railway, ordinarily choked in some months of the year with the heavy produce of the wheat fields and cotton belts of the Punjab canal colonies, is ever ready to transport troops and stores to Quetta in Baluchistan, which, with Peshawar, forms the only key-position to the gateways into India. To ensure the commercial success of this railway line, and to add to the material prosperity of the Sindi people, vast projects of damming the Indus at Sukkur, and flinging out a network of irrigation canals over millions of acres of until now barren soil are making rapid progress.

Sceptics are not wanting who question the commercial possibilities of the Sukkur schemes; and there are political pessimists who foretell the intensification of inter-provincial jealousies when one and the same river-system has to be drawn upon for the benefit of more than one province. But the rail-road is above these jealousies, and flings out one arm through the Bolan Pass forking out in two branches over the Mushkaf Valley, and over the more easy gradient of the Harnai Loop through the Pishin Valley. Quetta is itself on a plateau, a mile from sea-level, strongly fortified, overlooking and protecting the railway through the Khojak Pass into India. All along this hilly region, the watchful might of the Indian army is ever on the alert, ready to march at the first signal of disaffection into the heart of a possible enemy whether from Persia or Afghanistan. The coastal strip of Makran, though a conceivable source of invasion, is, ever since the disastrous march homewards of Alexander, regarded as utterly impracticable for such a purpose.

If the survey of the Frontier is interesting to the traveller for historical and political reasons, the view of the inland provinces along the river of the frontier is not an iota less interesting for its own peculiar reasons. But for the vast irrigation works, from the point where the Sutlej debouches on the plains from its home in the Himalayan gorges to the final merging of the last of the Five Rivers into the ever-swelling volume of the Indus waters, the Punjab partakes of all the natural characteristics of the hot and arid province of Sind. But the engineering triumphs of our days have converted thousands of square miles of her territory into one of the most wealthy and productive regions of the British Empire.

The Indus, a mighty stream of 1800 miles, and ranking among the dozen largest rivers of the world, rises in Tibet, almost due north of the sacred city of Benares, and flows north-westwards from its source till it reaches the further angle of the Kashmir Valley in the north-west. Here it suddenly bends southwards, and breaks through the Himalayas by the most magnificent gorge in the world. The venturesome visitor, if he ever reaches there, may stand on the right bank of the river and look across its roaring, yellowing waters to the titanic mass of a Nanga Parbat rising sheer into the air to the vertical height of four miles, double that of the Matterhorn. From there, the river cleaves its way to the plains of Peshawar and Kalabagh, through deep canyons, over a distance of 200 miles, receiving on its way its Afghan tributaries of the Kabul and the Kohat. The bed of the river in its lower reaches through the desert soil of Sind has ever in history been constantly shifting. Vestiges of ancient river-beds abound in the deltaic flats to the east of the Indus. By these ancient channels must have been watered and fructified the now dessicated region, under which lie buried and forgotten, perhaps innumerable cities of a vanished and amazing past, greater than the one recently dug up at Mahenjo Daro considered to be 5000 years old. At least one historic river—the Vedic and vanished Saraswati—is definitely traceable; and though in modern years the tradition may sound fantastic which says that the vanished river has turned on its own watershed, its dried up bed is even to-day an indelible proof of the vicissitudes of physiography.



23

THE JEHLUM AT PANDRETHAN



24

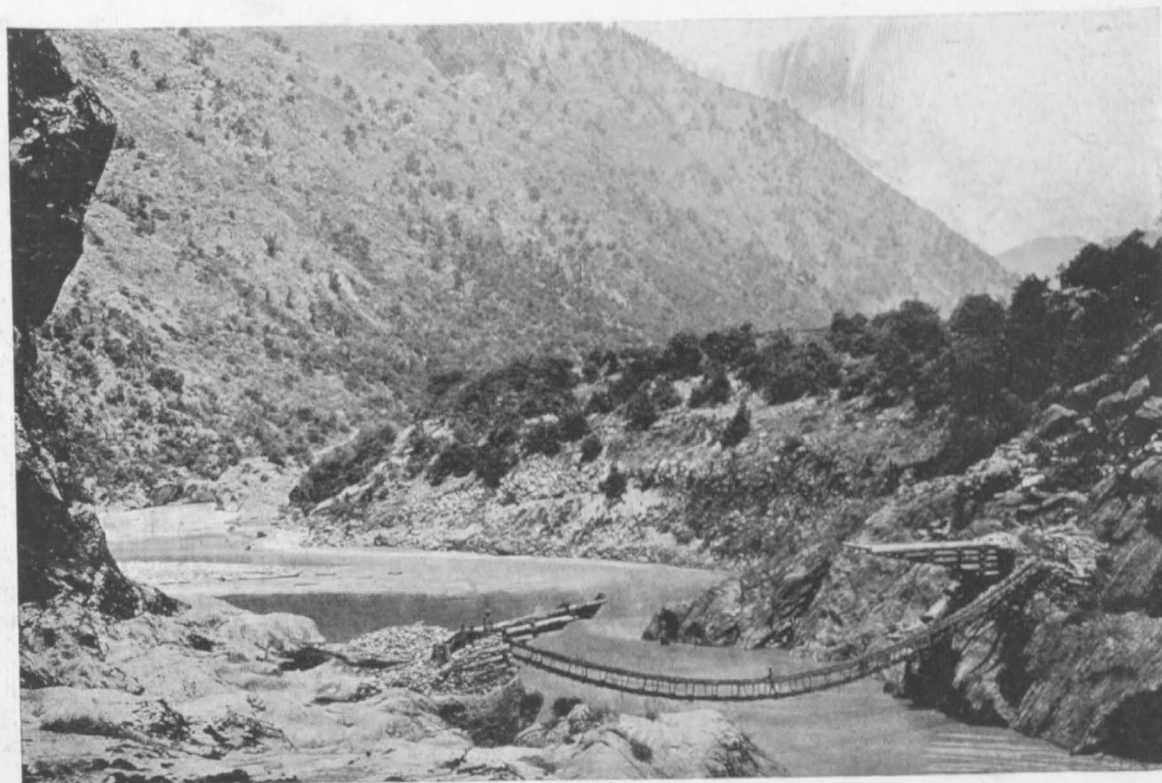
THE CANAL LEADING INTO THE DAL LAKE

PLATE VIII



25

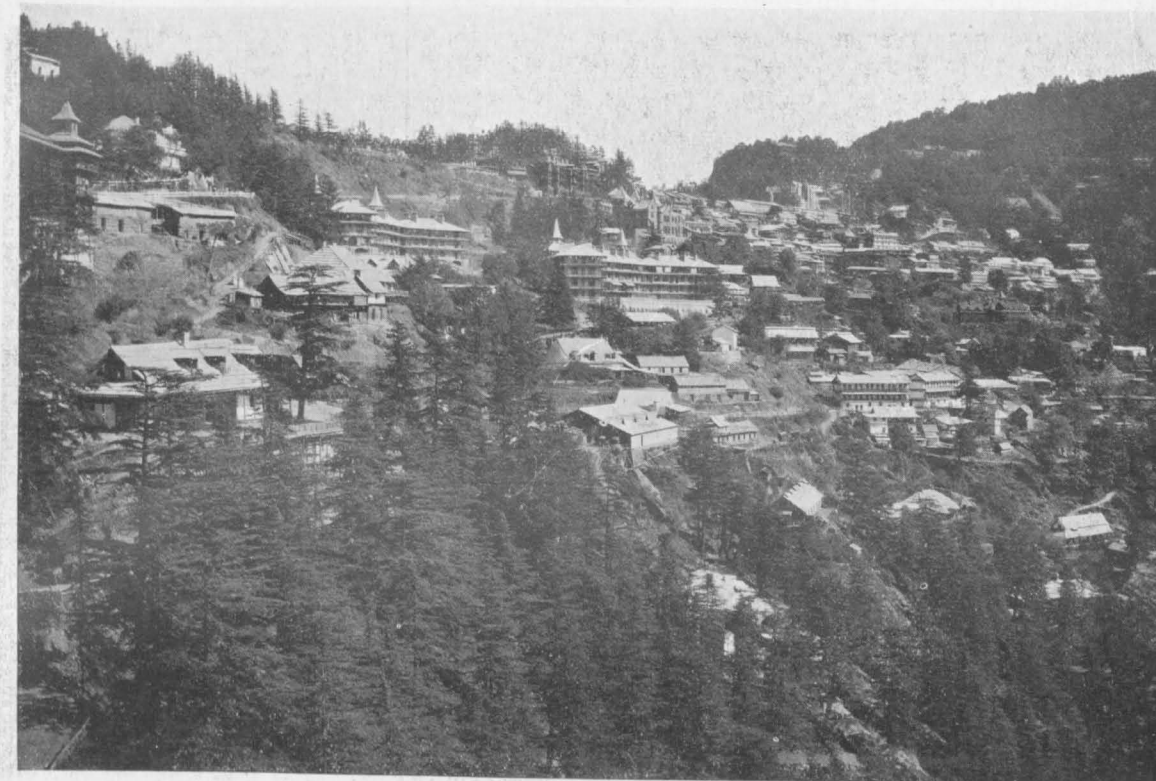
THE SUTLEJ IN ITS HIMALAYAN HOME



26

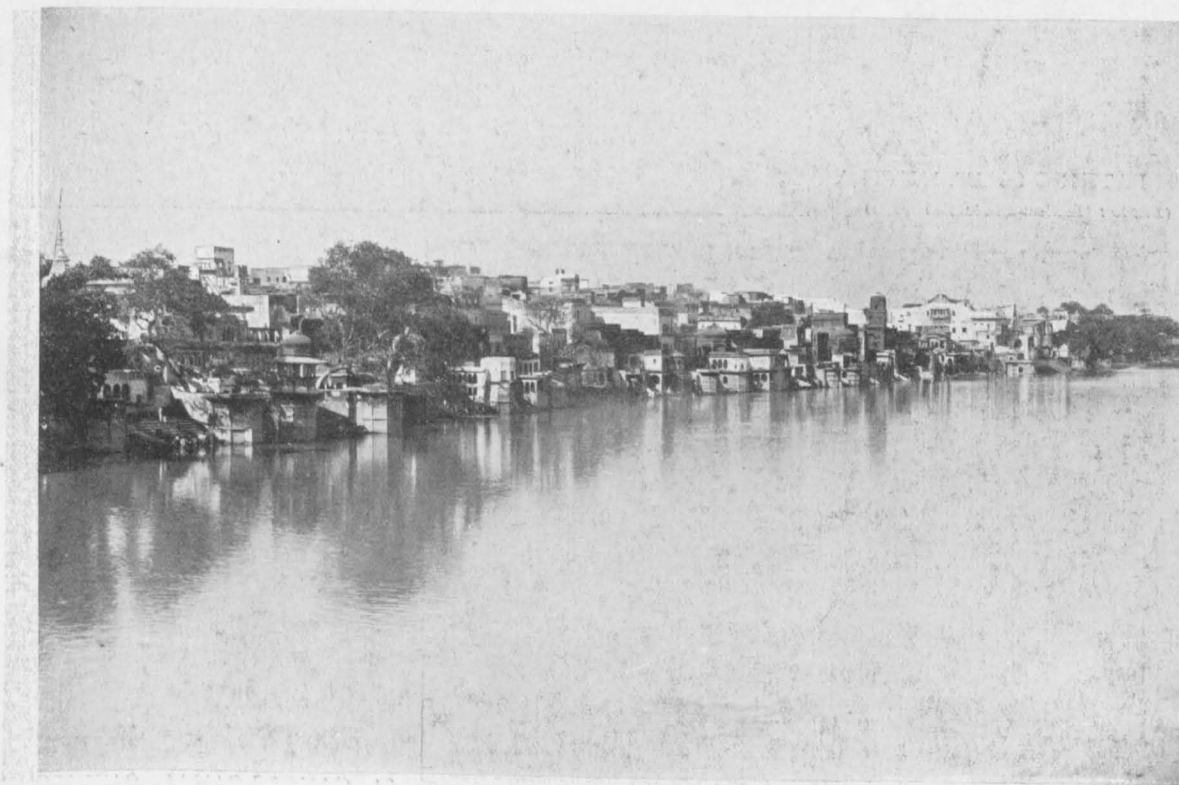
BRIDGE ON THE CHENAB IN KISHTWAR, FRONTIER OF KASHMIR

PLATE IX



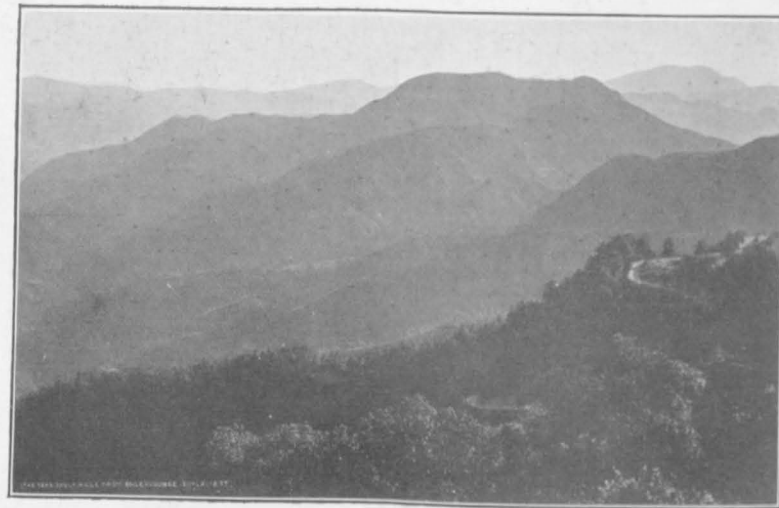
27

A GENERAL VIEW OF SIMLA



28

THE CITY OF MUTTRA, ON THE JUMNA



29 TARA DEVI HILLS, SIMLA



30 BATHING GHAT, MUTTRA
(Photo: Indian State Railways)



31 GANGES CANAL, CAWNPORE
(Photo: Indian State Railways)

The vale of Kashmir—what a marvel of nature! The land of Romance and Lalla Rukh, it is made up of the valleys of the Jhelum and the Sutlej, rolling in endless vistas of snowy ranges and silver streams and pine-clad dales of unspeakable scenic grandeur. The Indian State of Kashmir is nearly a square block of territory, watered mainly by the Indus on the north and on the west, and the Jhelum winding its way round the capital, and flowing south-westward through the Punjab into the Chenab and thence to the Indus. Walled in on the north by the magnificent Mustagh Range—an extension of the Karakorum Mountains,—the Kashmir of the tourist and the holiday-maker, is not the land of the Indus, but of the Jhelum basin. This river rises in the western spurs of the Himalayas east of the vale of Kashmir, and flows past the city of Srinagar, washing its temple steps and lapping the piles of its wooden bridges, till it reaches the narrow outlet of Baramula. Here the surrounding hills ring it round, and the river bends southwards to the plains of the Punjab. The curves and loops of the Jhelum are so frequent that the pattern on the world-famous Kashmir shawl and carpet is traditionally said to be modelled on these windings of the country's principal river. Vast, inexhaustible stores of alluvial soil have been accumulating since countless ages along the passage of the river to make the unrivalled fertility of this glorious garden of India. The entire beauty of the land of Lalla Rukh is centred in the districts of the south and the west, where the gigantic *massif* of the Nanga Parbat looks serenely, like some ages-old Yogi lost in the contemplation of the riddle of the universe, across the valley of shadows, along the Indus banks to Rakaposhi; or where the purple waters of the Woollar Lake reflect the splendour of Haramukh. Not one, however, in every ten thousand of India's teeming millions, is able to visit Kashmir during a whole life-time to revel in the magnificence of Nature at her lavishest; but nineteen out of every twenty inhabitants of the plains of the Punjab and the Indus have to be thankful for their daily bread to these immense reservoirs of water in Kashmir, which fertilise perennially the otherwise uncultivable wastes of the plains.

Of the other rivers of the Punjab, the Sutlej (900 miles) is the most considerable. It may be taken to be the natural boundary of the land of the Five Rivers. Rising in the paradise of Sanskrit literature, the Kailasa mountain near Manasarowar, not very far from the source of the Indus and the Brahmaputra, the Sutlej flows south-westwards, cutting a gully of 4000 feet deep, between Himalayan Ridges, which make of the winding river channel a veritable mountain trough of giant dimensions. Emerging into the plains near Rampur, the river leaves Simla, the summer capital of the Government of India, and takes a more pronounced westward curve, meeting the Beas at Sultanpur near the famous battlefield of Sobraon, the Jhelum-Chenab-Ravi at Jalalpur, and the mighty Indus at Mithankot, some 900 miles from its source.

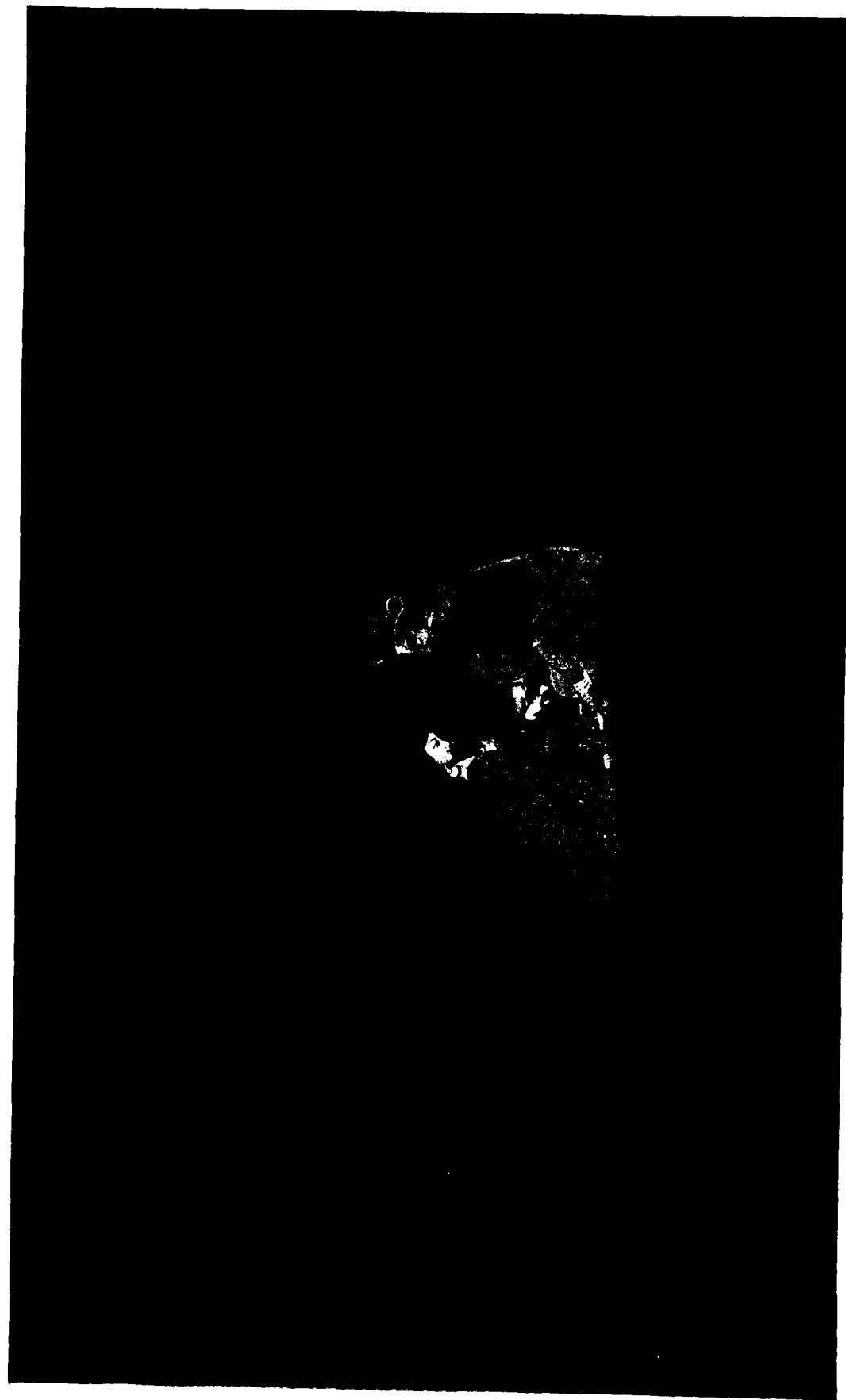
The geographical position of Simla is on the water-divide between the rivers of the Indus system on the west, and those of the Jumna Ganges system on the east. It overlooks, and, in a way, dominates the famous battlefields of the Sutlej, where

the prize was often the mastery the entire continent. The Ravi, the River of Lahore, and the Chenab, the more northerly of the five rivers, have practically the same geographic characteristics of Sub-Himalayan streams,—mountain torrents cutting their way through deep gullies, flanked by gigantic mountain ridges for a good portion of their earlier course of rapids and cascades, and placid streams wandering through slowly falling plains to the parent stream. The vast network of irrigation canals from Kashmir to the confines of the Patiala State, from Bilaspur to the Indus at Sukkur, is a marvel of modern history, which, however, is not entirely without a respectable model and precedent in the past.

Returning from the Punjab, our traveller re-enters the Indo-Gangetic plain at Delhi. Though the court of the Viceroy of India and the assemblies of the Diwan-i-am are no longer held in the jewelled halls of the marble palace of Shah Jahan; though Indraprasth is a name, and Tughlukhabad a ruin; Delhi, the scene of so many struggles and suffering, of so much splendour and glory, is once more the seat of a mighty empire. The classic Jumna, the playground of Krishna, runs past the palace in the fort and the modern city—Shah Jahanabad—in a southward course. The Ridge of Delhi, where the last struggle for the mastery of India took place seventy years ago, is the last of the outlying spurs of the Aravallis; and lies to the west of the city, which is ensconced in the angle between the river and the Ridge. Agra, another or alternative capital of the Mughal Empire, lies a hundred miles south along the Jumna. Its fame as the seat of the most wonderful poem in marble, the most eloquent memorial of marital love, has almost eclipsed the memories of Agra as the most magnificent capital of the most cultured, refined, luxurious, voluptuous Emperor. Muttra, midway between Agra and Delhi, is the playground of Krishna and his Cowherdesses, whose memory lingers imperishably in the innumerable songs of the people, familiarising them with the woods along the Jumna in a way no post-card photograph, or painted landscape, could ever do. Rising at Jannotri, not far from the mountains giving birth to the holy Ganges, the clear blue stream of the Jumna murmurs along its age-old song for an independent length, through hill and dale, of 860 miles to Prayag, on a narrow tongue of land near the modern Allahabad, to be merged, if not lost, in the Ganges. Like the rivers of the Punjab, but much earlier in point of history, both the Jumna and the Ganges have been canalised to spread immeasurable fertility in the districts along their banks. The Jumna receives only one tributary, the Chambal, from the central Indian plains; but its waters bestow no less wealth through its course.

From the delta of the Indus to the delta of the Ganges extends the most wonderful physical feature of the Indian continent. "Within it is not to be found a boulder (not even a pebble) to break the uniform regularity of its alluvial surface." The Holy River rises in a glacial hollow of the central Himalayas, known as Gaumukh or cow's mouth, and flows south-eastwards to the Bay of Bengal, a distance of 1550 miles, every yard of which is sacred to the Hindus. It is in the valley of the Ganges, and in the plains watered by its tributaries, that Indian history is at its richest. The chief kingdoms of history and mythology; the most

PLATE XI



KRISHNA AND RADHA
(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")

ancient seats of learning and religion and civilisation; of art and industry and wealth, lie in these extensive regions. Thousands visit the holy Ganges every year from all parts of India; millions believe that to bathe in her sanctifying stream is to purify oneself from all sins, to die and be burnt on her banks is to get straight to paradise. While yet in its parent heights, the Ganges is a furious snow-fed mountain torrent for a little less than 200 miles, known as the Bhagirathi, and flowing over rapids and shoals and pools towards the plains on the south-east. At Hardwar it issues from the hills in a clear stream of crystal waters, to which every year the Magha Mela attracts thousands of pious pilgrims. There is only one other city on the Ganges,—the sacred and the learned Benares—which can rival the holiness of Hardwar for the Hindus. The Ganges irrigation also commences here. From Hardwar to Darjeeling, the foot-hills of the Himalayas and the plains and the jungles attached to them belong to the independent Gurkha kingdom of Nepal, which supplies the most famous soldiers of the Indian army. The Nepalese is Hindu by religion,—the Maharaja a Rajput; but by race a cousin of the Mongol. On the south and east, the districts of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh,—the former a seat of Mughal magnificence, the latter the homeland of the classic Raghus,—and Bihar stretch in mile upon mile of brown, waving plains, studded with mud villages more ancient in history than the proudest modern capitals, shaded by lovely groves of mango and tamarind, banyan and nimb, that are gradually changed in the lower reaches of the stream into lines of tall bamboo, or the broad-leaved banana, or the coronated palm. The basin of the Ganges and its affluents differs from that of the Indus in that the entire region is here within the range of the monsoon current. At Allahabad, the Ganges is joined by the Jumna, while the Gogra and the Gandak from the hills of Nepal join it on the north at Chapra and Patna, the capital of Bihar. Near about the same place, the Son from the Vindhya mountains delivers its tribute. A broad shining stream of muddy turgid waters, the Ganges now flows in easy channels through a flat alluvial plain, broken only once in a length of 500 odd miles by the heights and slopes of the Rajamahals Hills. From Allahabad onwards, the fall in the land surface is barely 6 inches in a mile; while in the last 200 miles of the course the sluggish current has not force enough to carry all the silt it has brought from the mountains. The silt is thus deposited, and the river split into more than one channel as it nears the sea; while new land is formed to add to the available surface in the crowded delta.

The Delta proper of Bengal begins where the Hooghly branches off from the parent stream. Between that point and the basins of the Brahmaputra and the Meghna lie some of the richest and the most densely peopled land in India. A line drawn from Delhi to Patna and thence to Calcutta measures the length; and another from Bareilly to Agra,—or Lucknow to Allahabad—measures roughly the breadth of this crowded area, where there are something over 500 souls per each square mile of surface. In this region of over 50,000 square miles, there are only two mountain ranges of any considerable importance. East of Bengal is a

range which divides Burma and the Irrawady Basin from the delta of Bengal. Deeply forested and copiously watered, its most prominent spur is named the Garo Hills on its western edge. The Assam Valley, through which the Brahmaputra trenches its way to the delta, lies between the Garo Hills and the Himalayas. Southward of the Garo Hills, the drainage forms another delta watered by the Meghna, which extends almost to the edge of the sea at Chittagong—second, but a very poor second, to the port of Calcutta. Opposite the Garo Hills on the South-west is another range—an offshoot of the central Indian mountain-system—the Raja Mahal Hills. Through the broad low-land portal between the Garo and the Raja Mahal Hills, the Brahmaputra and the Ganges bend southwards in parallel streams to the sea. It is in these parts that the record average rainfall of the world occurs every year.

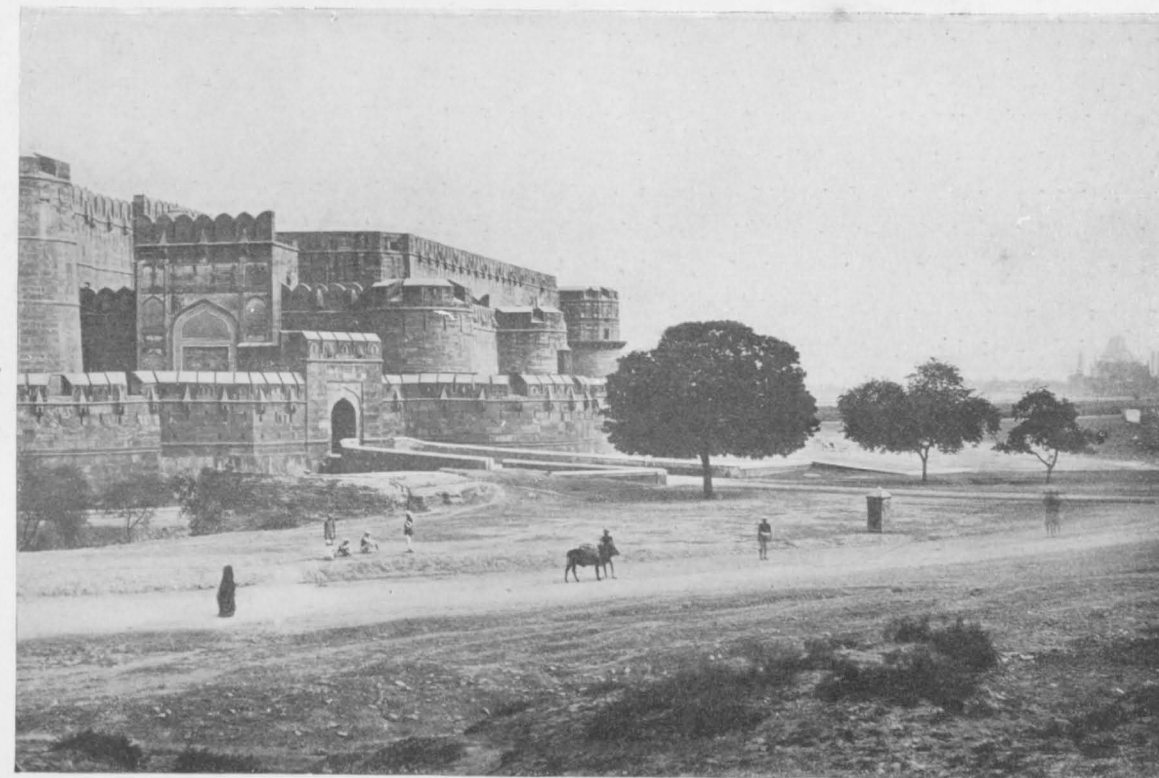
The Brahmaputra is, like the Indus, a Himalayan stream. Rising on the eastern slopes of Mount Kailasa, this Daughter of the Creator (Brahma) flows through Tibet for half its length under the name of Tsan-po. Rounding the corner of the farthest Himalayas on the east, it enters British Indian territory near Sadiya, and changes its name to Digang. On the way it absorbs the Ditang and the Luhit, and the united stream once more changes style to be now called Brahmaputra. A vast sheet of silting water, broken by innumerable islands, and constantly shifting its channel if the slightest impediment of its own creation meets its course, the river rolls its way in majestic windings for 450 miles down the valley of Assam. It leaves the Assam Valley in another magnificent curve at the foot of the Garo Hills, changes the name yet again to *Jamuna*, and flows almost due south for 180 miles to meet the Ganges at Goalundo. Here the two deltas unite. Between this and the sea, fresh tributes are received from the Meghna, itself a mighty river, to swell the main stream.

Unlike other rivers, the Brahmaputra does not now allow its channel to be utilised for irrigation. But the same purpose is achieved by the tremendous annual floods in this river, which act like natural irrigation works on the adjoining lands. From the sea to Dibrugarh, its length of 800 miles is navigable; and though the railway has killed the river traffic in India, rarely is the river equalled anywhere else even now in its picturesque beauty of quaintly-rigged country craft crowding the surface.

The Tarai forest at the foot of the Himalayas, fringing the British districts to the north of Bengal and Bihar, is still the home of big game and paradise of the hunters, though deadly to man, owing to its everlasting malaria. In these yet unexplored depths lie buried many a remains of the most famous cities of the Buddhist period. The Siwalik mountains to their north-west are similarly rich in the fossil remains of a still more ancient ancestry of man and animal in India. In the *Sunderbuns* at the mouth of the Ganges—Meghna, there are gigantic creepers of gorgeous hues festooning the trees—their height and thickness.

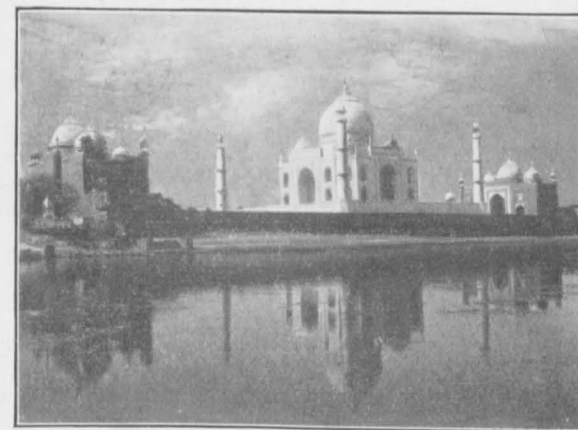
The forests of the central highlands,—of the Vindhya and the Satpura mountains, of the Godavari and the Mahanadi Basin in the Deccan,—are radically different in

PLATE XII



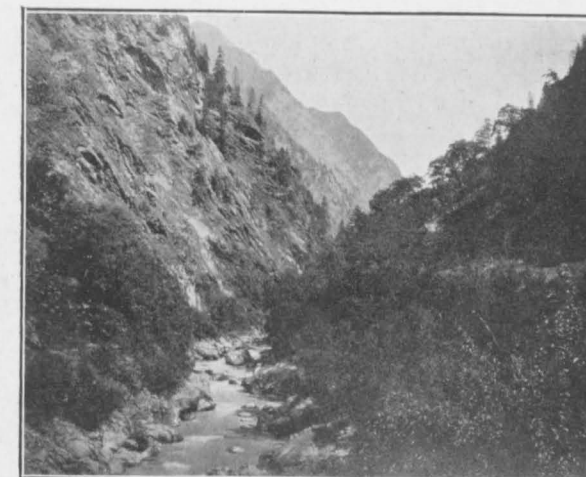
33

THE AMAR SINGH GATE, AGRA FORT, ON THE JUMNA



34

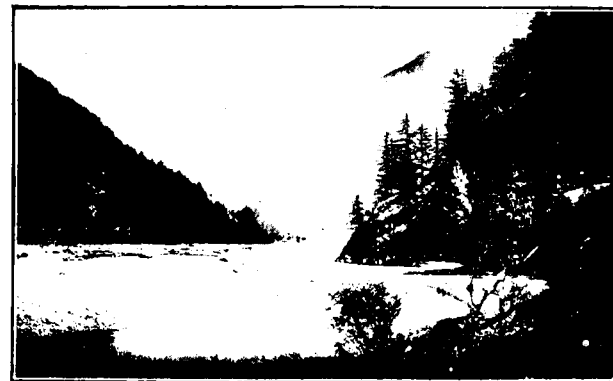
TAJ MAHAL ON THE JUMNA



35

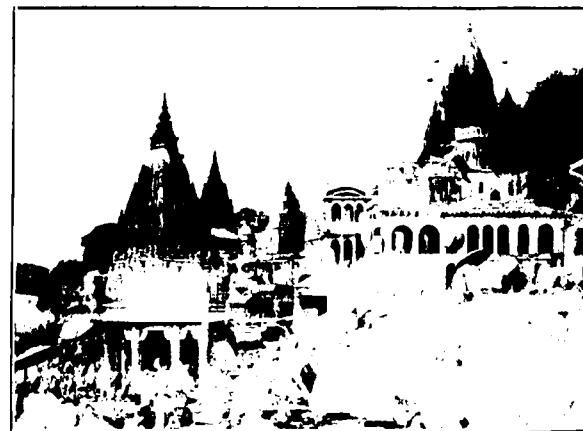
VIEW OF THE GANGES AT DANGULLY

PLATE XIII



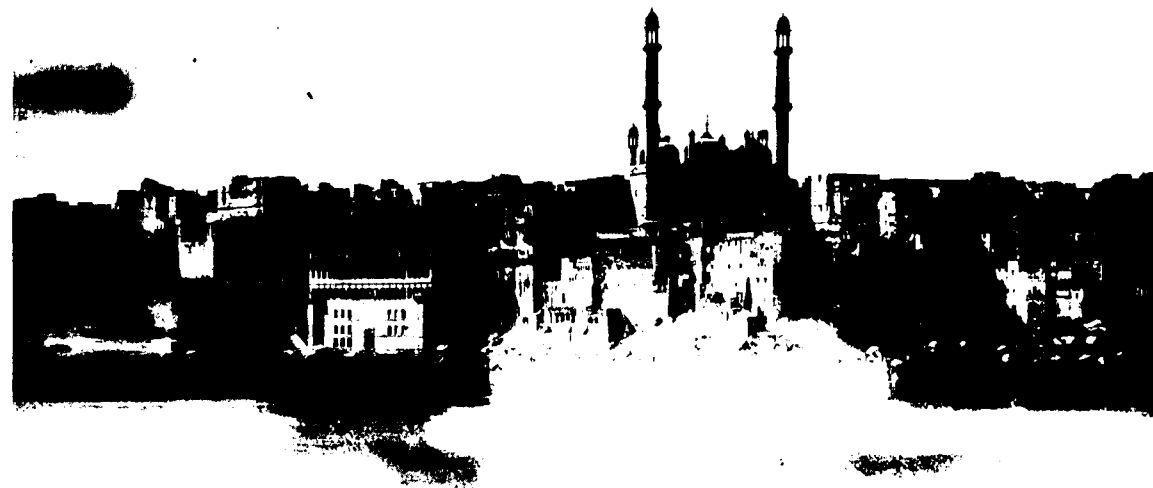
36

THE GANGES AT DERALI



37

BENARES : TEMPLES



38

GENERAL VIEW OF BENARES

character. Sal and teak and tamarind and bamboo grow there; but they do not prevent the light of day streaming through the foliage. When their thorny shrubs have put out new buds and are gowned afresh in lovely verdure, these jungles display a strange riot of gorgeous colouring. The scarlet blossoms of the stiff-standing cotton tree, without any background of leaves, remind one strangely of the old-time red-coat soldier of the line; while the vermillion bunches of the velvet-leaved Dhak offer a rich contrast that in no way modifies the blinding glare of the summer sun.

The tourist's next halting place is at Calcutta. Eighty miles from the mouth of the Hooghly, this is the richest, the largest and the most crowded city in India, and second only to London, in the whole of the British Empire. But Calcutta cannot compare in its importance to the inner life of the people around to the great triangle of the holy cities on the Ganges—Benares, Patna and Gaya. Gaya is the Jerusalem of Buddhism, as Benares is the Rome of Hinduism. Millions of souls even to-day from Karachi to Tokio look upon this triangle as the centre of holiness and source of refinement. Calcutta is described as a city of palaces; it would be fitter to name it the haunt of bastis. The palaces of Calcutta, such as they are, are more often the offices and residences of alien commercial magnates, than the cultured homes of a native aristocracy of birth or brains. It is, however, the gateway for what wealth India still receives in the east, in exchange for the products of her fields and factories, mines and forests.

Leaving the low-lying plains of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, the traveller might go by sea to Rangoon on the Irrawady, the port and practical capital of Burma, which, as already noticed, is not intrinsically a part of the Indian continent. Instead let him steam or sail along the coast of India south-westwards by Puri and Vizagapatam to Madras and Pondicherry, and thence down to the very last promontory on the Indian continent. Along this route lie the mouths of the Great River (Mahanadi), the mighty Godavari, the wealthy Krishna, and the holy Kavery. Southward from the valley of the Ganges, the continent slopes gently upwards till it reaches the Vindhya Range, running horizontally almost like a waist-line in the Mother's gown. The Vindhyas divide the watershed of the Hindustani from the Deccani rivers, the affluents of the Ganges from those of the Mahanadi. The Vindhya range is by no means so regular as the Ghats on the Western coast, or the Himalayas on the North and the East. But its elevated plateaux provide a most bracing winter and a tolerable summer, its irregular hills and their deep dark ravines and roaring torrents making in parts a scenic grandeur, rare in other regions of the country.

Let us now take, with our imaginary traveller, a voyage along the south-eastern sea-board of India from Calcutta to Cape Comorin. The first considerable river is the Mahanadi. It rises on the fringe of the Vindhyas, and, passing through the Central Provinces, enters the plain of Orissa near Raigarh to discharge its volume of water into the sea beyond Cuttack.

The Godavari, merging in the sea next to the southwards, rises in the far away Western Ghats, almost within sight of the sea, near Nasik, and flows in gentle

curves, in wide, shallow channels, through three political divisions of the country. The scenic magnificence of the Godavari banks and forests is famous since the days of the exile and adventures of Rama and Sita; and is repeated along its principal tributaries the Wardha, Penganga, and Wainganga. When it re-enters British territory from the Nizam's dominions, it receives the Indravati and the Shabari, classic names in the story of Rama, and develops into a broad channel broken by many an islet along its meandering course. In the unpioneered depths of the Mardian forests along the banks of the Indravati live the Ghonds, the most ancient perhaps of the aborigines of India, ruder or more primitive in their mode of living than even the Bhils of Dahod in the Narmada basin. Sixty miles from the sea coast, the stream of the Godavari narrows and deepens, thanks to the hills along the shores closing round, till at one point the river roars its way through a magnificent gorge in a mighty torrent barely 200 yards wide. The Delta of the Godavari is turned into a perennial garden by the great irrigation works watering some 780,000 acres of the most remunerative land. Past Rajahmundry, it flows into the sea by a variety of mouths between Point Narasapur and Coconada.

The Krishna rises near the Summer capital of the Bombay Government, Mahableshwar, forty miles from the sea. Receiving on its way the Bhima from the north and the Tunga-Bhadra from the Mysore State, the Krishna winds its way through regions similar to those of the Godavari. The great Bahmani kingdoms were cradled and nurtured in these parts, expanding farther to the south and the east on the downfall and decay of the now forgotten Empire of Vijayanagar. The river flows in a rapid stream over a rocky bottom, not permitting any irrigation works on a large scale, till it breaks through the Eastern Ghats at Bezwada on to the Madras Plains. Here an ancient anicut arrests the flow of the river, and two main canals carry its waters over an area of 226,000 acres.

The third great delta in the south-east corner of India is formed by the Kavery,—the southern Ganges, the river of Tanjore, known as the Garden of South India. This river takes its birth in the mountains of Coorg, in the western corner of the great Indian State of Mysore. Tortuous in its course and rocky in the bed, the Kavery winds its early way between steep banks covered with rank vegetation. The enlightened and enterprising rulers of Mysore have constructed a dozen dams at various points in the course of the river to irrigate their lands, and have harnessed the stream at the holy island of Shivasamudram, near the borders of the Madras Presidency, where it forks and rushes down a perpendicular slope of 300 feet in two channels. The hydro-electric works there established are amongst the earliest and the most considerable in India, and are rapidly solving the problem of motive power for India.

Three other rivers,—the Pennar of Nellore, the Palar of Madras, and the Vaigai of Madura,—add to the wealth of the sea-board lands in the Southern Presidency. The population of these parts is easy-going, rice-eating, poverty-stricken and enervated, despite the fact that little more than a hundred years ago it was the



39

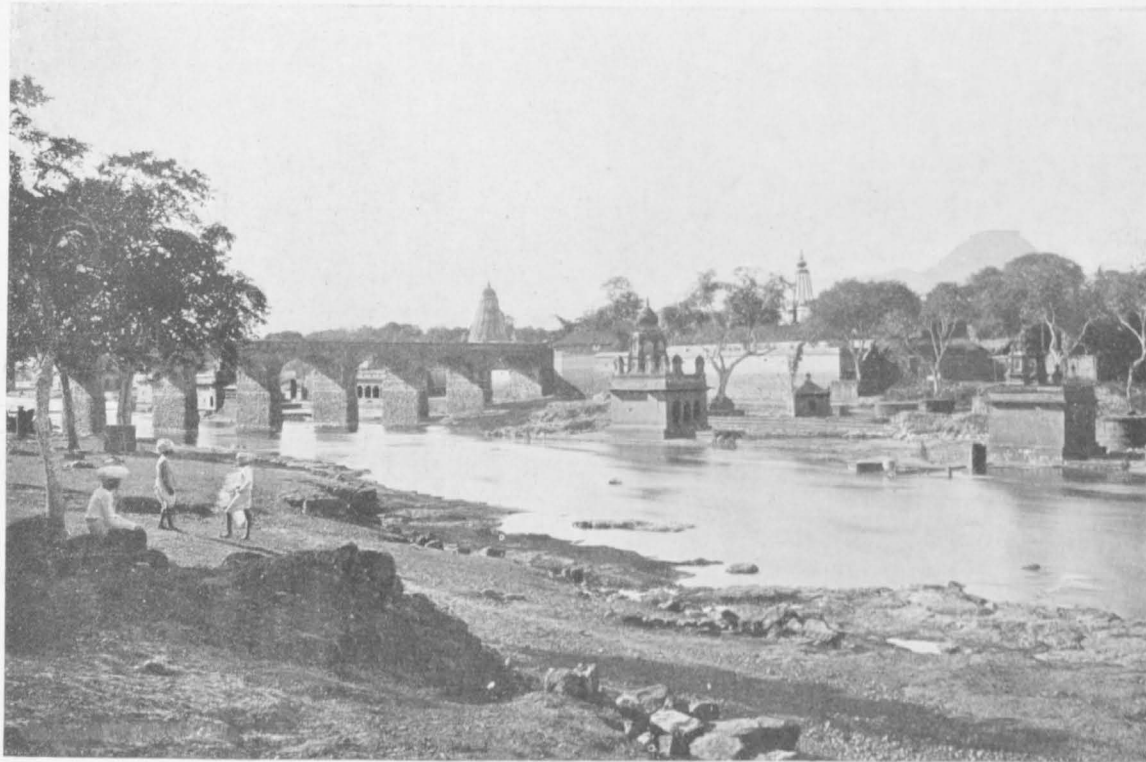
DALHOUSIE SQUARE, CALCUTTA



40

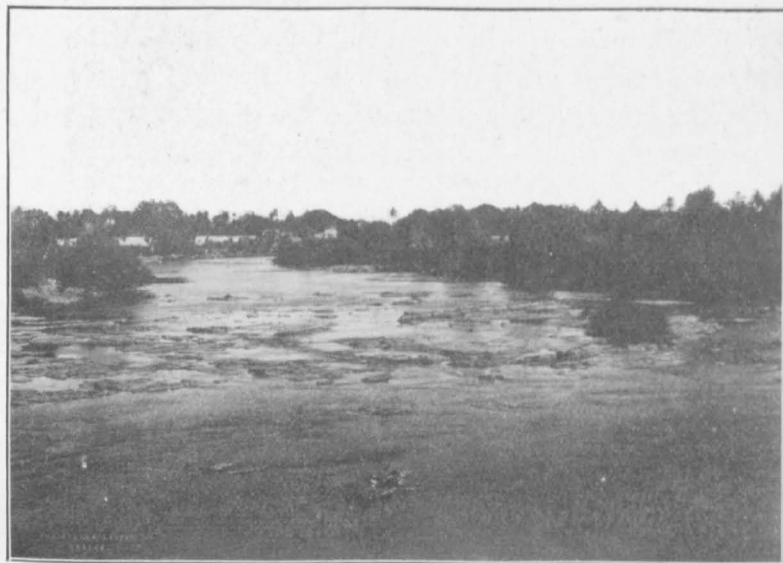
KALIGHAT CANAL, CALCUTTA

PLATE XV



41

WAI, NEAR THE SOURCE OF THE KRISHNA



42

THE KAVERI NEAR SERINGAPATAM

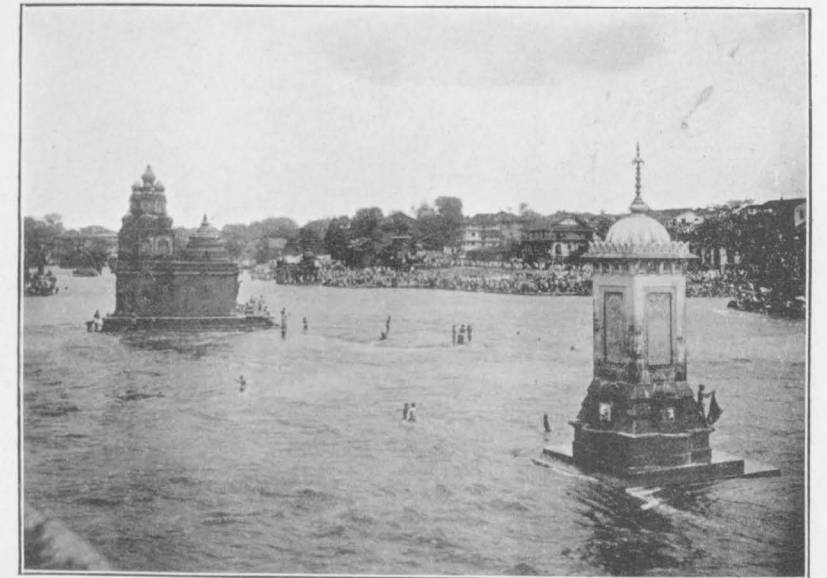
(42-43 Photo: The Palace Studio, Mysore)



43 GARSOPPA FALLS, SHARAVATI

PLATE XVI

44 THE GODAVERI AT NASIK
(Photo: Indian State Railways)



45

RIVER SCENE (KAVERI), TANJORE



ceaseless battle-ground for the Marathas and the Muslims from Mysore, and the European from overseas.

The traveller has now surveyed the whole of the region, commonly known as the Deccan. The southern half of the Indian peninsula is divided from the Indo-Gangetic plain by a thousand miles of mountains and forests along the Satpura and the Vindhya ranges, which thus form its northward boundary and escarpment. A land of open valleys and broad plains; of noble rivers and impenetrable forests; the country yet admits of good cultivation in the States of Hyderabad and Mysore, as well as in the alluvial plains of the Madras coast. The coast is poor in natural harbours, the best of them being little better than open, unprotected roadsteads, at the mercy of the first hurricane that blows. The rivers do not permit,—or at least are not encouraged to allow—of any navigation even in the level regions near their mouths. The mines of Golconda no longer yield the world-famed diamonds; but the gold veins in the Kolar fields in Mysore still testify to the fabulous wealth for which India was once famous among the peoples beyond the seas. Even now agricultural wealth in this region is second to none in the whole of the continent. There is no soil more remunerative to the ryot than the black cotton soil of the central highlands; while the weird, awful grandeur of the giant tors and bosses dotting the landscape of the Deccan makes the region unique in its natural aspect. The famous rock of Trichinopoly, or the great curved bull of the Chamundi Hill dominating the city of Mysore, are typical examples.

The Ghats on the west are serried rows of flat-topped, castellated hills, making a veritable rampart along the coast. The sturdy highlanders of these regions became, under the inspiring leadership of Shivaji and his successors, the champions and redeemers of Hinduism against the last of the Great Mughals. Their spirit breathes still in the regiments of Marathas forming no inconsiderable part of the Indian army; while their leaders maintain the traditions of sturdy independence and intense patriotism implanted in their blood in the days when the terror of the Maratha light horseman was spreading from sea to sea, and from Tanjore to Lahore. The lowland strip of coastal land at the foot of the hills—Konkan—is nourished by the sea-borne mists condensing on the crests of the hills, and streaming down the mountain gullies in copious rains during the monsoon months.

The rain-bearing current is squeezed of most of its moisture by the time it has passed the crests of the Western Ghats; so that the country lying under the lee of these hills is very poor in rainfall. The Bombay Deccan is thus peculiarly exposed to famine, where they badly need, but cannot easily construct, irrigation works. Even so, man has not remained wholly inactive; and though the Bombay Deccan works cannot compare in scope and grandeur to those of other provinces, they too have managed to reclaim or protect thousands of acres from perennial famine.

On the east, or Coromandel coast, the Ghats are neither so steep nor serried, nor quite so contiguous to the sea. The broad rivers of the Deccan have built up a wide margin of alluvial plain near the coast on the Madras side, where their waters help to raise the most abundant crops for a teeming multitude. The absence of the



THE ROCK, TRICHINOPOLY



THE MARBLE ROCKS OF THE NARBADA

South-west monsoon is made up for by the North-east current, bringing moisture from the Himalayas in December and January. These lowlands are the home of the palm and paddy; of magnificent temples and classic monuments; of indigenous culture and craftsmanship, where they have still managed to preserve the germ of our native art. The marvels of the Dacca muslin are dead, as also the beauties of Burhanpur silks; but Coconada still claims to make the finest khaddar to clothe the ardent and idealistic patriot of the Gandhi days.

The Eastern Ghats follow the coastline north-east from Madras at a distance of fifty miles from mountain-crest to sandy beach. Small and scattered and irregular, they are probably the stunted relics of a more magnificent range, contemporary, in prehistoric days, to the Aravallis of Rajputana.

In the extreme south, the districts of Tinnevely and Madura present a new feature in Indian physiography. Shut off by the southern ghats from the sea-board States of Travancore and Cochin, they are mostly regions of treeless waste sloping gradually to the sea, their coast being fringed with groves of palmyra and coconut palms. The districts of Malabar are walled in by the closing range of the Western Ghats, now broken and irregular, till they merge in the highlands of the Nilgiris, which house on their lofty terraced slopes smiling tea-gardens and eucalyptus plantations and a variety of other exotic plants, that have turned the Blue Mountains into a multi-tinted garden of green. On a clear day, the western sea can be seen from the higher peaks near Ootacamund, the summer capital of the Madras Government. On the South, the Nilgiris fall abruptly down to a narrow gateway from the east to the western coast, the so-called gap of Palghat, through which a railway now winds to connect the east with the west. Malabar in the south-west corner of India is another Kashmir, but lacks the eternal snows and titanic peaks of the northernmost regions of India. For here are the same inlets and backwaters which serve the purpose of the lakes and rivers of the Kashmir Valley; the same cascades falling down steep sides of forest-clad hills, lit up with the iridescent hues of unending rainbow; the same clearness of complexion and regularity of features, at least among the superior strata of the Nair and Nambudiri men and women, with a much greater degree of personal cleanliness than in the lovely land of Lalla Rukh.

Our traveller has now completed the circuit of the continent, except a very small bit along the Narmada and the Tapti rivers. These are the rivers of Gujarat. Rising in the central mountains, they run in nearly parallel channels, between steep banks flanked by sharp heights and dense forest, till they emerge in the fertile plain of Gujarat. Unlike almost all other principal rivers of India in the north as well as the south, they are peculiar in flowing east to west. The Narmada is the western Ganga, almost equal in holiness to its more celebrated namesake; while the Tapti marks the northernmost limit of the Western Ghats. They both flow into the Arabian Sea past ports famous for centuries in the foreign commerce of India, and exhibiting, in themselves splendid specimens of the splendour that once was India.

CHAPTER II

THE PAGEANT OF A PEOPLE

History has no complete record of the peoples who lived in and loved this ancient land. The connected, chronological, reliable narrative, now available, takes us back only 3,500 years at most; but records not less significant or authentic than the written word, or tradition not a whit less reliable, carry on the story into dim vistas of the past for another thousand years or more. Every new discovery, however, of the relics and monuments in stone or marble, in wood or bronze or gold, serves only to deepen the mystery hanging over the story of human life in this country, till the very earliest beginnings seem to be shrouded in impenetrable mist and darkness. The actual commencement of the story of human life on earth is certainly untraceable precisely in every country; but whether it goes back fifty thousand years or five million years, lands like India appear to be inhabited since the very beginning. Evidence of language, even now spoken in some parts of India by certain tribes, shows a marked relationship with the existing speech in the farthest east, reaching so far away as the southern Continent, thereby indicating a most intriguing possibility, not only of the present Peninsula of India and the modern island of Australia being, at some remote date in the past, a single block of land; but also of their being inhabited by a common, or at least a connected, race of people. The Munda languages, spoken chiefly to-day in Chhota Nagpur and in some districts of Bengal, Orissa, Central Provinces and Madras,

"are amongst those which have been longest spoken in India, and may, with great probability claim to be aboriginal. It is of importance to note that there exists a common element in them on the one hand; and in the Mou-Khmer languages of further India, in the dialects of certain wild tribes of Malacca and Australasia, and in Nicobarese, on the other, although the two sets of speech are not otherwise connected. This is best explained by the supposition that a common language was once spoken over further India and a great part of India."

(*Imperial Gazetteer.*)

The race, if there was one, that originally spoke a common or connected language between the Vindhya and the Australian continent is represented to-day only by a few straggling, backward tribes, who may justly claim to be the real natives of India, before whom the Indian home of the Aryan peoples is only a creation of yesterday; while even the more ancient and aboriginal Dravidian seems to be an invader of comparatively recent times. The Aryan invasion of India is some four thousand years old, though to-day the peoples of Aryan speech and descent inhabit the largest section of the country, and aggregate the largest proportion of the population. When they first came into the land of the Five Rivers, they already found there a people, who were, on the Aryans' own evidence, strong and civilised enough to merit the new comers' lasting hostility. They are known in the earliest

hymns of the Rig-Veda as the *Panis* or merchants, and the Aryan looked down upon them, almost in the same light in which an English peer of Queen Victoria,—tracing his genealogy to some marauding companion in arms of the Bastard of Normandy,—looked down upon the honest tradesman or burgher with Saxon or British blood in his veins inherited from unrecorded generations of simple working men. "Let the *Panis*, who do not perform sacrifice and do not give gifts, sleep the eternal sleep," says one Poet, addressing the Vedic Goddess of Dawn (R. V. I. 124, 10); while another wonders why the mighty twins, the Aswins, tarry with the *Panis*: "Ignore them, destroy them," exhorts the Seer (R. V. II. 83, 3). Mr. Ramprasad Chanda, writing in the *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* No. 31, says:—

"It appears to me that the aboriginal towns-folk with whom the Aryans came into conflict in the Indus Valley are called *Panis* in the hymns of all the books of the Rig-Veda. These are merchants, according to the commentator Yaska; and as the Vedic Aryan had no place in his social system for trade and traders (cp. R. V. 9, 112), the conclusion is not difficult that the much maligned *Panis* were the representatives of an earlier commercial civilisation."

Who were the traders,—despised by the agricultural Aryans,—by race? Were they the advance wing of the Southern Dravidian? Once again, if we rely on the existing speech, we find a most curious phenomenon that may well be related to throw considerable light upon this question. In the hills around Quetta there is a most curious linguistic island. The highlanders speak a dialect, Brahui, which is distinctly Dravidian in its origin. The speakers are, by ethnic characteristics, utterly unrelated to the true Dravidian of southern India; nor is there around them any other tribe or nation speaking a cognate tongue. Being isolated, the language has grown on its own lines independent of the other offshoots of the parent stock, though it lacks a literature of its own and is defective in cultivation. How did this language get into the highlands of Baluchistan? How did the whole Dravida race enter India? Are they the aboriginal natives of the old and vanished Lemurian Continent, now lost under the waves of the Indian Ocean, who, advancing from the South, not in massed bands perhaps, but as isolated adventurers, seeking commercial gain wherever they could find it, colonised each newly discovered and promising land? Even thus did the Phœnician trader, voyaging in the unknown recesses of the Mediterranean, come upon and settle in and colonise and develop into the mighty naval power of Carthage. Even so might the adventurous Dravidian merchant have led his caravans, or sailed his caravels through the Rajputana Sea into the Indus Valley, and thence into the mountain fastnesses of modern Baluchistan, to trade, to develop, and at last to own.

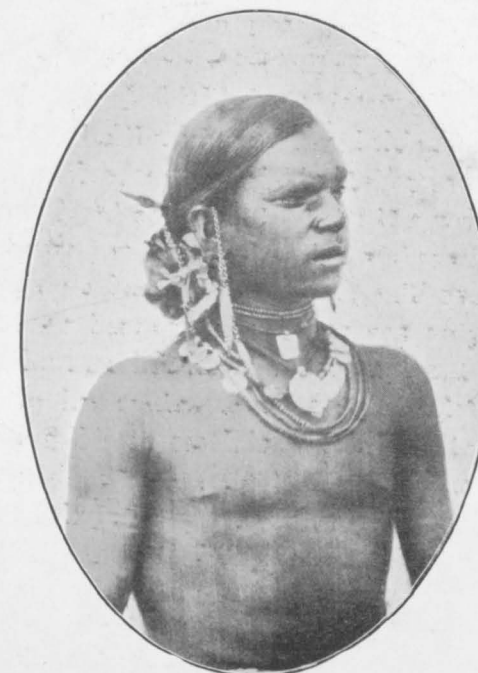
Whatever their origin or wherever their introduction into India, the Dravids are certainly the older inhabitants, older by centuries if not millennia. The evidence for an old, vanished mesozoic Indo-African continent,—in which India, Africa, Australia, and possibly also South America, formed one block of territory,—is by no means so slender or fanciful as to be negligible.¹ But even if we leave it aside as

¹ cp. W. T. Blanford—*On the Ancient Geography of Gondwana-Land* in the Records of Geological Survey of India, Vol. XXIX.

PLATE XVIII
ABORIGINES OF INDIA



48 MUNDA FEMALE



49 ORAON COLE
(Chhota Nagpur)

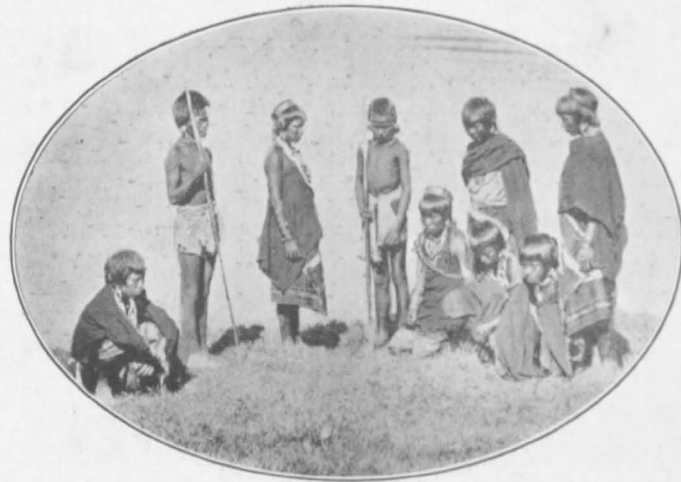


50 HILL NAGA (CACHAR)



51 SONTHAL

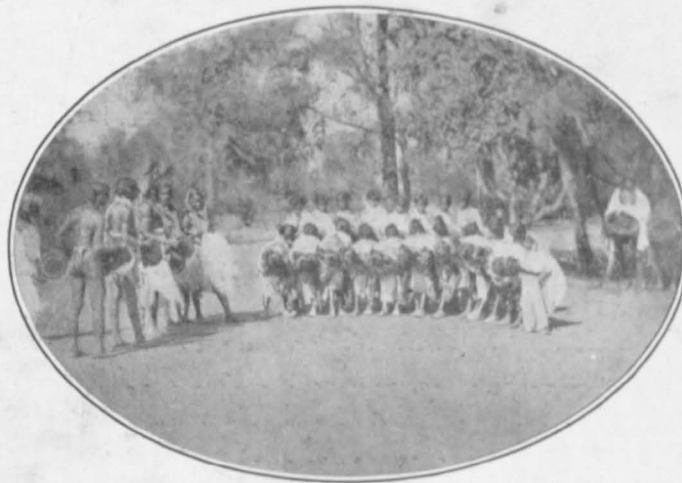
(48–52, from Watson and Kaye's book "The People of India")



52 GROUP OF NAGAS
(Cachar)



54 RENGAM NAGA



53 COLE NATIONAL DANCE

an open question whether human life had come to be in those remote ages; and even if we consider it improbable that a continuity in race and homogeneity in type has been maintained during all these ages, the Dravidian even now continues to be a type by himself, distinct in all important particulars from the Aryan or the Indo-Chinese.

Evidence of the nature and the extent of this ancient, pre-Aryan, Dravid civilisation of India,—though abundant in the South in the shape of stone-circles and megalithic tombs containing cremated remains of the departed heroes,—came to light in the Punjab and Sind only a few years ago. The Harappa and Mahenjodaro remains in several strata indicate a very high degree of advancement.

“Some of the material, presumably the oldest, evinces obvious parallelism to early Mesopotamian remains; the use of brick for building, the interments of contracted bodies in brick cist graves, the shell inlays, the mace-heads and pestles all have the most exact analogues in early Sumerian levels in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. The beautiful stamp-seals engraved with figures of *Bos Primigenius* and (?) unicorns, and the curious symbols of their legends, likewise have good Sumerian counterparts, and so, to a less striking degree, have the clay models of rams and female figurines. Finally the painted pottery from the Indus sites is connected through Baluchistan with Elam and southern Mesopotamia, and more vaguely with Seistan and Transcaspiæ.”¹

The writer dates this connection between India and Western Asia anterior to 2880 B. C., when the cylinder seal was generally adopted in Mesopotamia; and quotes the authority of Dr. Hall (*Ancient History of the Near East*) to argue that the Dravidians of India resemble, in anthropological type, the Sumerians of Mesopotamia. Mr. Codrington, in his *Ancient India* (1926), considers the non-Aryan culture in India to be not only Dravidian but also “the original culture of almost all India;” and finds in it strange parallels to the ancient civilisation of the peoples on the Mediterranean shores.

“The use of ruddle, gold diadems, trumpets and drums, phallic lucky images and of images in general are a few of the bonds between the two cultures; but above all in importance is the worship of the Great Mother, which is found universally wherever that culture is dominant, which must be called non-Semitic and non-Aryan.”

That trade formed no small share of the Dravidian's activities, and adventure no insignificant trait of his character, is amply evidenced, not only by the passages in the Vedic hymns already sampled, but also by the Dravidian words occurring in the ancient Hebrew for certain purely Indian products like the peacock, or rice, or spices. The sea-borne commerce at least, if not the entire foreign trade, of India, was throughout the early recorded history,—and perhaps for centuries before the dawn of history,—indebted for its origin and magnitude to Dravidian enterprise, as is evident from innumerable tales of imperishable folklore, glimpsed by the modern cultured world in such stray creations as the *Jataka* fables. The Vedic Aryan was certainly a stranger to the mysteries of trade; and perhaps because, in his heart of hearts, he envied the enterprise of these sturdy little traders in the lower reaches

1) cp. Gordon Childe; *The Aryans*. p. 34. 1927.

of the Indus, he prayed to his tutelary deities for the destruction of these "price-makers," as even now perhaps some intelligent Zulu or advanced Maori might be praying in the unfathomed recesses of his inner consciousness for the speedy destruction of the European traders. To the Arab and the Jew and the Phœnician of the Old Testament days, as well as to the Chinese and the Ceylonese, the spectacle of the Dravid ships and sailors must have been as familiar as the Europeans became in the Indian waters in the age of the Great Mughals. The Dravidian was, however, gradually pressed back in recorded history by the advancing Aryan, whose instinctive race-snobbery is as much in evidence in the epic poem of *Ramayana*, as in any Kipling of our own days. Because the Aryan Valmiki pictures the denizens of the Deccan as monkeys, it would not be historically correct to conclude that the people of the far south in the epic age had not advanced beyond the stage of the Missing Link. On the contrary, there is the amplest evidence to show that the Dravidian Indians had reached a high degree of civilisation, perhaps rather rapidly as all commercial peoples are likely to do; were excellent ship-builders and experienced sailors; good carpenters and passing brick-makers; knew the mysteries of the starry firmament, and had unearthed treasures from the bowels of the earth; could build houses and towns, and even castles and forts, of a defensive value. They knew the mystery of painting and pottery, as shown by the discovery of painted pots in a village of modern Baluchistan, and repeated in the remains near Mahenjo Daro; and seem to have understood the place of fashion in dress and ornament, as evidenced by the fine blue glass-paste bangles, and the statuettes of a goddess wearing a high, out curving head-dress, which was to come into fashion in Europe in XV century A. D. What more could they need to provoke the undying hatred of the snobbish Aryan? Linguistically, these Dravidians might suggest a distant relationship with the primitive Mundaris, who may be remote cousins of the aboriginal Australians. But physically, ethnically, they are a far advanced race, with better brains, if not greater brawns, before whom, it is no wonder, the primitive natives—who have even now not emerged from the Stone Age—went down.

The Dravidians, however, yielded, in their turn, before the greater virility, if not the superior science as well, of the Aryans. These entered India at the close of the third millennium before Christ at the earliest. Who were the Aryans? What was their civilisation like? These are difficult questions, the attempts to answer which have, so far, been more tantalising than satisfying. There are many who claim the Aryans to have been natives of India from time immemorial; but their claim still lacks convincing evidence before the tribunal of history. There are others, who, relying on some astronomical passages in the oldest body of hymns now extant in the whole world, claim for the Vedas and their authors an arctic home and a 7000-year-old origin. There are others yet again, and these the latest and now most fashionable, who have studied the fauna and flora indicated by words of a like sound or a common stem in the various tongues collectively styled the Indo-Germanic languages, and have come to the conclusion that the homeland of all these peoples, when they were yet an undivided family, must have been somewhere between the

TYPES OF PRESENT DAY ARYANS



55 BRAHMIN

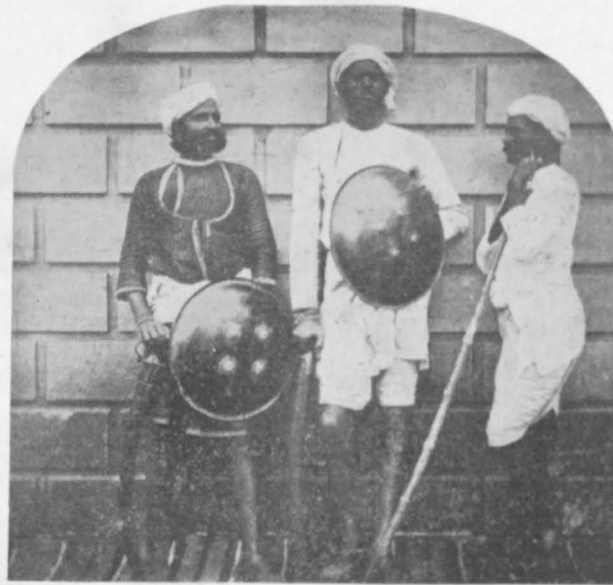
56 RAJPOOT
(Indo Scythian Type)

57 KASHMIRI PUNDITS

58 BUJGOTEES
(Rajputs of Oudh)

PURE TYPES OF ARYANS: BRAHMINS AND KSHTRİYAS IN GROUPS

MIXED TYPES (MOHAMEDANS—OUDE)



59

BHALI SOOLTANS
(Oudh)



60

PATHANS
(U. P.)



61 MOHAMEDAN LADY
(Allahbad)



62 GURKHAS KHAS TRIBE
(Mixed Type)

Carpathians and the Erzgebirge mountains and the Balkans and the Alps in Central Europe (cp. Dr. Giles in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I. p. 68). These disquisitions would appear to a beginner in history only an argument for arraigning all history as a lying jade.

But, whoever the Aryans may have been originally, and wherever they may have originated, whether they were the Wiros out on a grand hunt from the hills and plateaux of Hungary, or the nomads in search of pasture for their cattle in lands more sunny than the Steppes of Siberia, they appear in the hymns of the Rig-Veda to be settled somewhere along the banks of the Five Rivers. They call their home *Sapta-Sindhu*, which might have been made up of the five existing rivers of the modern Punjab, plus the mighty Indus (Sindhu), and the vanished Saraswati or the Harau'vtis of the Avestan description; or perhaps they included the Kabul and the Kurrum and the Gomul rivers of modern Afghanistan, plus the minor rivers of the Punjab, without counting the final absorbent of them all, the ocean-like Indus.

Whatever their native home, they were a rollicking lot,—these ancient Aryans,—when they first came to this country, and as they appear in the solemn, stately spirited rhythm in the most ancient poetry of the world. A race of tall, stalwart, high-nosed, fair-skinned warriors and priests and peasants, they had the most wonderful genius for poetry. They deified and worshipped all the powers of nature they came to know in their new home; and were by no means averse to the pleasures of the table or of the chase, of dancing and dicing. Their mighty war-god, the thundering Indra, takes the pride of place over the still greater Varuna, who held the post of honour when the Indian and Iranian branches of the Aryans were yet one people and worshipped the same gods. In Greece, another branch of the same family witnesses an identical phenomenon in the gradual displacement of Neptune, the sea-god and father of all gods, by Jove the Thunderer, who heads the pantheon in the classic mythology. The Indian poet of the Vedic hymns made Indra in the image he was most familiar with, or which he most idealised. Drunk with Soma, and fed by welcome oblations of milk and meat and curds and ghee, he slays the dragon Vratra, sets at liberty the fairy princess Ushas (the Dawn), and brings home to the Aryan the much needed kine (rain-clouds). The Aryan's wealth was mostly in cattle, and horses; but though the cow is styled *Aghnya* (not kill-worthy), they did not eschew altogether her flesh or milk. Usually, however, the cow or horse flesh was eaten only after a sacrifice,—horse-flesh particularly to get the strength and swiftness of this most favourite animal of man in all ages.

The Aryans were, however, from the beginning excellent husbandmen; and no prayer is more intense, or more repeated, than that for rains and the success of their husbandry.

“Oh Lord of the field, we will cultivate this field with thee. May the plants be sweet to us; may the rains be full of sweetness; may the Lord of the Field be gracious to us.”¹

¹) F. A. Steel—*India Through The Ages*.

The cry has been echoed in India through countless centuries, and is even now as fresh and intense as when it was first uttered in the solemn measure of the Rig-Veda, despite the achievements of modern engineering in irrigation.

So these Aryans lived and thrived in India for two thousand years, stringing their immortal odes to the gods of their hearth and home, and praying for the wealth of their field and fold. Their rhythm is impossible to render in its inimitable sweetness and simplicity in even the filial tongues of the Vedic Sanskrit. But a glimpse of the unrivalled grandeur of their poetic imagination may be had in attempts like these:—

“Many tinted Dawn! Th’ Immortal daughter of Heaven!

Young, white-robed, come with thy purple steeds;

Follow the path of the dawns; the world has been given,

Follow the path of the dawn that the world still needs.

“Darkly shining Dusk, thy sister, has sought her abiding,

Fear not to trouble her dreams; daughters ye twain of the Sun,

Dusk and Dawn bringing birth! O sisters! your path is unending;

Dead are the first who have watched; when shall our waking be done?

“Bright luminous Dawn; rose-red, radiant, rejoicing!

Shew the traveller his road; the cattle their pasture new;

Rouse the beasts of the Earth to their truthful myriad voicing,

Leader of lightful days! softening the soil with dew.

“Wide-expanded Dawn! Open the gates of the morning;

Waken the singing birds! Guide thou the truthful light

To uttermost shade of the shadow, for—see you! the dawning

Is born, white-shining, out of the gloom of the night.”

Thus they lived and loved, and at times fought amongst themselves, no doubt, as brethren are wont to do. More often they warred with their dark-hued Dasyus, whose lands they gradually invaded and overran, till the whole of India from the Himalayas to the Vindhya, from the Indus to the Ganges and Brahmaputra, became peopled by races of their descent. In the south, beyond the hills of the Vindhya and the Satpura ranges and the streams of the holy Narmada and the sacred Godavari, the Dravidians still held their own. But whatever may have been the intrinsic strength and wealth of their earlier civilisation, it yielded at every step before the steady onward march of the Aryan culture. If the Aryans were Indianised by residence in India, in build and stature and complexion, the Indians were Aryanised in thought and cult and even speech itself. The story of these two thousand years and more is a magnificent epic, rolling on and on in ever-increasing splendour and beauty, with glorious empires and mighty warriors and men like gods, now rising in one spot and anon in another, some conquering and colonising and building and beautifying wherever they went; others preaching and teaching the truth man has ever yearned for, and ever missed. A full picture of Aryan India needs a vast canvas; but a cinematographic glimpse may be attempted even in this restricted space.

D F. A. Steel *India Through The Ages.*



63

FRONTIER TRIBESMEN



64

KASHMIRI GIRL



65

AKBAR IN OLD AGE

Of all the races whose advent and acclimatisation in India we have reviewed, we can make three main groups, which, by intermixture, might be increased into any number of divisions: the original Dravidian, the predominant Aryan, the leavening Mongol. Of course, centuries of common life render it more than doubtful if we can find to-day an absolutely pure and unmixed type of any of these. The earliest—aboriginal—type, like the latest super-imposed group, may remain apart. But the principal racial groups mentioned above cannot but have intermixed in the past, and must produce many a mixed type. The outstanding racial characteristics have been thus summarised:—

- (1) The pure Dravidian is small in stature, dark—almost black—in complexion, curly-haired, dark-eyed, long-headed and flat-nosed. The nose has always been regarded in India,—at least since the advent and settlement of the long and fine-nosed Aryans,—to be an excellent index of race. Sir Herbert Risley might well generalise “A man’s social status in India varies in inverse ratio to the width of his nose.” But the inevitable intermixing has made it increasingly difficult to rely on the nose as an unfailing index. Even when joined with eyes and hair, colour and stature, the index is seldom satisfying absolutely. The Dravidian has mixed on the one hand with the advancing Aryan, getting, in the process, an improvement in features and stature and complexion, and formed the Aryo-Dravidian type; on the other hand he has mixed with the Scythians from the north (“lower stature than Turco-Iranian, greater length of head, higher nasal index, a shorter nose”) as exemplified by the Marathas principally; as well as with the Mongols in the east, who have broad heads, yellowish complexion, scanty hair and low stature; nose fine to broad, face flat, eyes small and oblique.
- (2) The Indo-Aryan, on the other hand, chiefly found in Kashmir, the Punjab and Rajputana, is tall, fair, dark-eyed, even as his ancestor of four thousand years ago. Long headed, and fine nostrilled and high-nosed, he is a type still in evidence in the home countries of the Aryans. He has mixed in innumerable sub-groups with the Dravidian and also with the other aborigines, with noticeable variation in feature and complexion.
- (3) The peoples of the frontier districts show a greater affinity with the Turco-Iranian than with the Indian types. The characteristics of the former are: high stature, light or fair complexion, dark or grey eyes, broad head, medium nose in width, but high and long and plentiful hair; and the Pathans, Balochs, Sindis, and the allied peoples exhibit these features in the most conspicuous degree.

These various groups necessarily shade off into one another, and are often difficult to demarcate. Corresponding to these, their physical or ethnic differentia, there may be moral and intellectual differences as well. Let us study them through

their marks on the history of this country, and their quota to the enrichment of the civilisation of this people.

The Vedic Aryans lived in scattered hamlets or small villages, but their descendants soon learnt the art of city-building, and the chief amongst them lived in splendid capitals of gorgeous palaces, with parks and gardens and fountains that never failed to call forth the envy of every intelligent and observant foreign visitor. Look at his very likely contemporary picture of Ayodhya, the capital of the Raghus:—

“And his town like Indra's city, tower and dome and turret brave—
Rose in proud and peerless beauty, on Sarayu's limpid wave,
“Altar blazed in every mansion, from each home was bounty given
Stooped no man to fulsome falsehood, questioned none the will of heaven.
Strong barred gates and lofty arches, tower and dome and turret high,
Decked the vast and peopled city, fair as mansions of the sky.”¹

This may seem to the cold critical eye of the historian an over-coloured picture. If so, let him consider the unbiassed description of the capital of the mighty Mauryas by a Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta. The Mauryan capital was founded in the fifth century before Christ, at the confluence of the Ganges and the Son, on the site of modern Patna and Bankipore, and remained the Imperial capital of India to the end of the Gupta dynasty—a period of close on a thousand years. It was a long, narrow parallelogram, 9 miles by 1½ miles. A wooden palisade went all around the city, serving it for a rampart; and the defence was further secured by a broad (200 yards), deep (30 feet), moat, which also did duty as the common sewer. The rampart was at intervals pierced with loop-holes for the guardians of the city to shoot through on an approaching or besieging enemy; while towers or bastions, 570 in all, helped along the palisade as rallying places for the garrison. The city opened upon the river by no less than sixty gates, a wealth of exit greater than even that of the classic Delhi. Though an Imperial seat of Government, the situation of Pataliputra forbade any but a wooden rampart like in a Vedic Pur, as the heavy rain and tremendous floods in the river would make as little account of stone or brick walls as of wood. Other towns, however, more favourably situated on the crest of hills in the depths of a forest, were fortified with much stronger and more durable defences, with battlements, towers, covered approaches, and strong-barred gates, flanked by guard-houses, for the defence of the city in war and its good order in peace.

The royal palace of the Mauryas at Pataliputra was a vast enclosure, made chiefly of timber. Within, it was in no way inferior in size or magnificence to the palaces of Susa and Ecbatana, or even to those of the Great Mughals two thousand years later. Round the Royal palace stretched a noble park, in which peacocks—prime favourites with Indian princes all through our history—preened themselves for the delectation of the Prince and his consorts.

¹) R. C. Dutt's *Ramayana*.

PLATE XXIII



"There were shady groves and trees set in clumps and branches woven together by some special cunning of horticulture..... Birds are there free and unconfined; they come of their own accord and have their nests and roosting places in the branches, both birds of other kinds and parrots which are kept there and flock in bevvies about the King..... In this Royal pleasance there are lovely tanks made by hand of men, with fishes in them very large and gentle, and nobody may catch them except the sons of the king, when they are yet children."¹

So wonderful was the structure of this gorgeous edifice that the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, seven hundred years later, ascribed it to special divine creation.

The Emperor Chandragupta was served in basins and goblets of solid gold, some of them 6 feet in diameter, or copper plate studded with precious stones.

"When the king condescended to show himself in public, he was carried in a golden palanquin, adorned with tassels of pearls, and was clothed in fine muslin embroidered with purple and gold. When making short journeys, he rode on horseback, but when travelling longer distances he was mounted, like a modern Raja, on an elephant with golden trappings."²

As a pendant to this picture, let us take a leap of some seventeen hundred years and note, in passing, the testimony of another foreign visitor to another Imperial seat. Abdur Razzak, the Persian ambassador to the court of Vijayanagar, becomes almost dythrambic while speaking of the Emperor, Deva Raya II, and his palace. He records:—

"Over all this magnificent space were erected numerous pavilions, to the height of three, four or even five storeys, covered from top to bottom with figures in relief. * * * * Some of these pavilions were arranged in such a manner that they could turn rapidly round and present a new face; at each moment a new chamber or a new hall presented itself to the view." * * * *

"The throne, which was of extraordinary size, was made of gold and enriched with precious stones of extreme value. * * * * Before the throne was a square cushion, on the edges of which were sewn three rows of pearls. * * * * When the feast of Mahanavami was ended, at the hour of evening prayer, I was introduced in the middle of four estrades, which were about ten *gaz* both in length and breadth. The roofs and the walls were entirely formed of plates of gold enriched with precious stones. Each of these plates was as thick as the blade of a sword, and was fastened with golden nails."³

These, alas, are splendours of a vanished past; let us rather continue the outlines of the picture of society among the ancient Aryans. The early Aryans were a people divided amongst themselves by the narrowing sentiment of the family, the clan, the tribe, and united only in their common hatred of the native Dasyus whom they were anxious to overthrow. From the earliest days and in the earliest hymns we read of kings. It may safely be affirmed that the tribes of the Rig-Vedic Aryans were under kingly rule; they might have evolved more liberal and freer

1) Aelian—quoted in *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 411-12.

2) Vincent A. Smith—*Early History of India*, p. 128. (Oxford, 1924.)

3) Sewall—*A Forgotten Empire*.

forms of Government. From the moment of its birth on the Indian soil, the Aryan royalty was hereditary, though the rules of descent are by no means definite. Election might have had its chance at times, or in a round manner, somewhat in the same style, perhaps, as the First Commanders of the Faithful may be said to have been elected. The story of Rama and Bhishma, paralleled many a time in more recent Rajput history, may be taken to illustrate the growing custom of primogeniture, though the historic precedents of the designation of their successors by the Maurya as well as the Gupta emperors implies a latitude of choice somewhat at variance with the uniform rule of primogeniture.

The chief—or at least the most emphasised—function of the Vedic King was to lead his hosts in war, and to perform sacrifices in peace. His companions were also more soldiers than statesmen, except, perhaps, the family bard, the Minstrel and Herald and Chaplain combined. So passionately, indeed, was military renown loved, that no great name in Indian history, —from Divodasa and Sudas of the Vedic days, and the Mauryas and the Guptas and Harsha of medieval times, to the last of the Great Mughals, —is without its resplendent halo of war-like fame. Even Asoka the Pious can scarcely be ranked as an exception. The thirst for military renown was tempered and refined by the laws of chivalry, evolved by an unbroken practice of untold centuries. A stratagem permissible to a general must not degenerate into a subterfuge degrading to an individual warrior. Alexander of Macedon, fierce warrior as he was, could not but admire the ringing challenge of the beaten Porus, — a foeman worthy of his steel.

“With one, who has thrown away his sword, with one fallen, with one yielding, with woman and one bearing the name of woman, or with a low, vulgar fellow, — with all these I do not battle,”

says the mighty Bhishma, the first and greatest and strongest of the myriad warriors met on the epic field of Kurukshetra; and this code of the Warrior's honour was ever obeyed wherever Aryan chivalry was understood and practised.

When however foes began to swarm in the country, who could not understand, or would not respect, these refinements of War's high etiquette, the valiant vanquished marked their contempt of their conquerors by the awful rites of *Jauhar*. Rather than fall into the hands of these barbarians, women mounted the funeral pyre with every token of rejoicing; and their men, now safe from the sting of any outrage on their beloved, rushed out with one single thought to kill and be killed, without quarter asked or offered.

Another noteworthy trait of Aryan chivalry was in regard to their duty of asylum to the distressed.

Their kingdoms may be lost; their capitals destroyed; their palaces ruined, their places of worship desecrated; but the princely Rajput would never refuse shelter to him who asks for it even though an enemy.

During the period of Aryan supremacy in India, the country witnessed many an Empire, before the size and wealth of which the modern British Empire in India

PLATE XXIV



67

A KASHMIR GIRL.

(Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)

loses all its characteristics of awful grandeur. Setting aside the legendary grandeur of epic or Pauranic *Chakravartins*, we find the earliest known authentic empire of the Mauryas as extensive, as powerful, as prosperous, as the greatest that has since grown up on the same soil. Chandragupta, the first and greatest of the Mauryas, had served his apprenticeship under Alexander of Macedon. Graduating through the school of adversity, the Maurya,—perhaps a royal bastard like William of Normandy,—fought and won his patrimony in Magadha; cajoled, coerced or conquered his allies; vanquished in battle, as well as in diplomacy, the most considerable of Alexander's successors; and built up an empire, which stretched from the Oxus and the Jordan, through modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan, down to the barren coast-line of Mekran on the Arabian Sea, and to the mouths of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra in the Bay of Bengal. His more famous successor, the Emperor Asoka Vardhana, added only the coastal strip along the Coromandel Sea-board, which served to round an empire that for a hundred and fifty years was guarded by the might and governed by the wisdom of a succession of warlike, yet pious, rulers.

The Empires which took its place in the succeeding centuries never quite attained to the might or magnitude of the Maurya State. The sovereignty of the Kushan Kanishka extended, it is true, far beyond the limits of the Mauryan Empire, at its best. But it may be questioned if Kanishka could really be called an Indian, despite his capital at or near modern Peshawar, and despite his ardent Buddhism, which bade fair to eclipse the fame even of the great Asoka. The Kushan dominion from A. D. 40 to A. D. 220 was followed by the more truly Indian Empire of the Guptas, which was at its zenith from 308 A. D. to 455 A. D. and struggled on for another 75 years, more or less in the manner that the descendants of Aurangzeb struggled on after the end of the Great Mughal. The Gupta dominion is famous for the conquests of three successive warriors, who carried their standards to within sight of the southern seas. It was more famous still for that unparalleled blossoming of the literary genius of India, which has justly earned for this epoch the title of the Golden Age of Sanskrit Literature. The incomparable Kalidasa, courtly and cultured prince of dramatists as he was the dramatist of princes; the Astronomer-Royal and Master of Mathematics; and the Lexicographer Imperial—were all gems that stand towering for all time, and were eminent even amongst that brilliant galaxy of talent and genius that adorned the court of the Guptas. The Government of the Guptas was strong yet popular, not merely because it was native and sympathetic, but because it practised to its utmost the one great virtue of successful government in India: perfect toleration of all forms of belief, perfect freedom to all forms of worship, perfect aloofness of the State from all forms of ritual and symbolism. The Emperors were not without religion; but they were also not without enlightenment. And so they protected and cherished and governed all alike,—the Brahman and the Buddhist, the Jain and the Charvak. They felt, if they did not avow, the futility of man striving to solve the riddle of the universe, to determine the aim of being, to define the purpose of life.

"But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
 The quarrel of the Universe let be:
 And, in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
 Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.
 "For in and out, above, about, below,
 'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow Show
 Play'd in a Box whose candle is the Sun,
 Round which we Phantom Figures come and go."

Their less worthy successors suffered a decline in Imperial possessions as well as splendour, till early in the seventh century rose the great Shiladitya or Shri Harsha, with his capital at Kanauj. His conquests extended the Empire in the East almost to the borders of Assam, and on the west to the shores of the Arabian Ocean. The King of Kamarupa—modern Assam—was his ally, even as the Nizam to-day is the ally of the King-Emperor. The friendship and obedience of the King of Valabhi—Gujarat—was secured by the charms of the Emperor's daughter given in marriage to a grateful prince. The fame of Harsha has been immortalised by the greatest novelist of classic Sanskrit,—a master-craftsman, whose versatile genius scintillates through countless pages of his patron's biography, as much as through the deathless story of Kadambari. The Emperor was a creative artist, himself, of no mean genius. His appreciation, therefore, was doubly welcome to the lesser stars of the Imperial firmament, because he could enter fully into the adoration of the tuneful muse. A warrior in camp and a statesman at court; a poet in his palace and a devotee in the temple; a refined diplomatist and a respected despot, he was a worthy successor to the glories of the Mauryas and the grandeur of the Guptas.

For five hundred years after Harsha, the history of India,—even of Hindusthan proper,—is either unknown or uninteresting. In the interval before the Muslim invasion, there are, indeed, individual peaks and isolated eminences, all the more impressive because they seem to be solitary specimens of loftiness of soul or grandeur of purpose. The exploits of a Siddha-Raj of Gujarat might claim our admiration, as the courage and misfortunes of a Prithwi-Raj claim in turn our wonder and our commiseration. But to the student pursuing the thread of continued solidarity, the imperial idea does not seem to blossom forth until the throne of the Mauryans and sceptre of the Guptas had passed into the hands of a new race.

With the advent of the Muslims, a few surface changes seem to be manifest. These new-comers were alien by race as well as by religion, by culture and civilisation as well as by tradition and temperament. It is only when we review the consequences of their conquest and assimilation in India, in the dispassionate atmosphere of centuries after the event, that we may be able at all to claim to be rendering them justice. The vision of contemporaries is bound to be narrow, their outlook prejudiced, their judgment too much biassed in the clash of continued conflict, perhaps with its open festering sores, to be able to be just, impartial, and trustworthy on

PLATE XXV



all points. The cultured and poetic, even though bigoted and iconoclastic, Arab never really found a footing on Indian soil, though the sovereigns of India who reigned at Delhi for six hundred years claimed the Prophet of Arabia as their Light in this world and intercessor in the next. But what the gentle, refined, chivalrous Arab could not accomplish, the convert to his sword had little difficulty in achieving. The fierce, untutored, half-savage hordes, which the iconoclastic zeal of Mahmud of Ghazni, or the more constructive statesmanship of Shahabuddin, led into India, proved lucky as they were fanatical, ferocious and determined. After a couple of centuries of struggle and vicissitudes, and thanks chiefly to the internecine jealousies of the contemporary Indian potentates, the Muhammadan power was at last established at Delhi in the closing years of the twelfth century of the Christian era. From Delhi, the new power rapidly spread, till, within a hundred years of its establishment, it had overrun the entire continent from north to south, from east to west. A mosque was built by an ennobled slave and enterprising general of Alauddin Khilji on the Southernmost extremity of India to mark the triumph of the Crescent, even if it did not mean an equal spread of the Quran. And though raids like these could scarcely be dignified by the name of permanent conquest, the cry of the Muezzin, acknowledging the one God as the only God and Muhammad as His Prophet, was destined thenceforth to resound through all the centres of the Indo-Gangetic plain. Hindu India was not destroyed; Hindu creed and culture could not be annihilated; Hindu power and pride could not be extinguished altogether. On the contrary, driven to be on the defensive, Hinduism unconsciously arrested the process of development; and reinforced itself by a timely alliance with the sentiment of self-preservation, which thenceforward mobilised all that was virile and living, the ideals as well as the forms, the philosophy as well as the ritual, of a people on the defensive.

Islam began aggressively; continued to act on the offensive, and has remained in the country by assimilating all that was worth acquiring and adopting in the Indian civilisation and organisation. It failed to Islamise India. But the magic spell of this ancient land fell upon Islam, and Islam was Indianised in art and culture, in social grouping and political structure. Caste, for instance, is the most outstanding peculiarity of the Indian—the Hindu—social organisation. Nothing can be more foreign to the genius of Islam,—or of Christianity, for the matter of that,—than caste. And yet the Musalmans in India are as minutely split up into castes as the Hindus in any part of India. Even idolatry,—in the guise of deification of saints and heroes,—is not altogether unknown in Islam as practised in India to-day. If the Muslim has been Indianised in these essential matters, need we at all question the prevalence of the process in the less important concerns of dress and manners; of food and furniture?

The submission to this unspeakable magnetism of India was, in fact, the measure of the real greatness and success of the Musalman dominion in this country. Though the Afghans and the Turks, who gave us the early Musalman rulers, came rapidly under this spell, they were not so completely acclimatised and assimilated as the

Mughals. It may be regarded as an accident or a mystery of history that the race of Timur should have bred a cultured soul and a poetic statesman like Babur. But given Babur—the warrior-poet and the philosopher-emperor,—it is not surprising that we should have Akbar the Great, Jahangir the Esthetic, Shah Jahan the Magnificent, and even Alamgir the Annexationist. Art and literature; science and philosophy; industries and commerce, had never flourished in India as a whole quite as much as in the 150 years of the Great Mughals' rule, with the possible exception of the Gupta Empire of a thousand years before. Akbar was the greatest of the Mughals, and perhaps the greatest of all Indian rulers for a thousand years, if not even since the days of the mighty Mauryas. But, without detracting in the least from the genius of the man or the inheritance of his birth, it may yet be said that Akbar was so great, because he was so thoroughly Indianised. His genius perceived the possibilities, and his courage undertook the task, of welding the two communities into a common nation by the universal bond of common service and equal citizenship of a magnificent empire. Akbar was born a master of men, and bred an autocrat in an age of despotism. It would be unjust to criticise him by the canons of another age, or from the standpoint of other ideals. Within the legitimate limits of a most searching criticism, there is much, very much, indeed, in his life and outlook and achievements, which must demand our unstinted, unqualified admiration, and little that could merit just censure. His successors were, indeed, not of his calibre. But the wonder is rather that such a high average of talent should be maintained by such a number of succeeding sovereigns of the same family. Even Alamgir, the last of the Great Mughals, who is blamed by many historians, by a sort of *post factum* wisdom, for the Decline and Fall of the Empire of the Mughals, was great in his own way, had his own strain of lofty ambition, his own conception of imperial solidarity. If events have proved his policy to have been mistaken at times, we must remember, in judging him, the tradition and environment in which he lived. The fact of conquest and annexation, even of Musalman kingdoms, could not possibly be a fault, and much less a crime, in the eyes of a scion of the warrior House of Timur. And the overthrow of the Shia power in the Deccan must needs appear a meritorious act in the eyes of a strong Sunni like Aurangzeb, especially as he could justly claim, for his reign at least, to have extinguished the Maratha menace after the defeat, capture and death of Sambhaji Maharaj. Aurangzeb may have lacked, in his personal character, all that is amiable or attractive. We may censure him as a son, condemn him as a brother; we may accuse him as a master, and arraign him as an associate; we may doubt his sincerity, question his loyalty, condemn his fanaticism. But we cannot deny his courage as soldier, talent as commander, acumen as statesman, devotion, simplicity, and, withal, greatness as Emperor.

Thus flits the pageant of the Indian people on the stage of history. The story is too vast, its parts too intricate and complex, to be effectively summarised as we have here sought to do. The glimpses here given are but the outstanding features from

an endless, deathless story; but even these few glimpses would suffice to give some idea of the greatness and glory, the splendour and magnificence that was India in the past.

* * * * *

In the panorama of the Indian people we are here picturing, the ups and downs of the last two hundred years are relatively unimportant. The Maratha outburst is only a Hindu resurgence, short-lived, though wide-spread; neither deep nor abiding, perhaps, but still significant, if only of the undestroyed and indestructible vitality of the Indian race. Greece and Rome and Egypt have vanished from the face of the earth, their gods a myth, their people a name, their civilisation,—mostly ruins. But India still lives. She may be eclipsed; she may be oppressed. But she has an immortal soul, an invincible spirit that will not yield. The soul of a people cannot die.

CHAPTER III HEROES AND SAINTS

In a history so long as that of India, and for a people so mixed and varied as the Indian, there could be, of course, no paucity of the stories of saints and heroes that charm our infancy, fire our youth, and are our support in an age of decline and decay. There is a veritable *embarras de richesse* in the selection of suitable illustrations of heroism or goodness, both of men and women, which would show, in their endless variety, something that may fairly be called India. Heroism is native in every people; so that in the heroes of our history it would be absurd to claim a pride of exclusive proprietorship. Even goodness is not the peculiar privilege of any one people or any single age; though its forms are infinitely varied, and the conception of true saintliness may often differ from country to country and from time to time. The Heroes and Saints of India still await a greater than Plutarch to sing their praises in bewitching strains and divine rhythm. We shall here select only a few outstanding examples of heroes and saints, who, without owing very much to their birth or environment, are yet entitled by their achievements to rank among the master-builders of national life and character.

The heroes of the earliest age of Indian history are vague personages, so mixed up with their prototypes the idealised and deified personalities, that it is impossible to segregate and consider apart their human achievements. The one great event of the earliest Vedic Age, which is at all historical, is the war of the Ten Kings. The leader of the Bharata tribe in this conflict was King Sudas, of the Tritsu family, whose family priest was the celebrated Vashishtha. The classic strife also, between the rival sages, the Brahman Vashishtha and the Warrior Vishwamitra, makes its appearance on the stage of Indian history for the first time in this war. Revenge, said the ancients, is the food of the gods. It was to avenge his wounded vanity that Vishwamitra, superseded in his pontificate with the Bharatas by his hated and unapproachable rival Vashishtha, effected an alliance of the Ten Tribes against the undutiful Sudas. But, unlike the later similar alliance made for the Maurya hero, Chandragupta, by his immortal guide, friend and philosopher, Vishnugupta, better known to history as Chanakya, this Vishwamitra was doomed to disappointment. Sudas defeated his enemies in a mighty battle on the banks of the Purushni, the modern Ravi. Little, — a very little — more is known of this mighty warrior of the Vedic Age, except that his was a life of incessant warfare, and a career of unbroken victories. Immediately after this battle of the Ravi, he had to rush back, — almost like Hindenburg rushing from the Western Front to fight the magnificent battles of the Masurian Lakes, — to the other extremity of his kingdom, to fight and defeat on the Jumna another alliance of three other clans, who were made uneasy by his growing dominion.

Shadowy and legendary as this personality is, Sudas seems to have sprung from an illustrious warrior stock. His father, — or perhaps grandfather, Divodas, — was no less a warrior and conqueror. He had won by his mighty exploits the cognomen of the "Servant of Heaven," and the "Slayer of Kine for Guests" (*Atithigra*), somewhat perhaps in the style of Clovis's title of the Eldest Son of the Church, or Henry VIII's *Fidei Defensor*. He fought all round and everyone, just because war was the breath of his nostrils. He fought and beat the Aryan tribes of the Turvacas, Yadus, and the Purus, with as much zest as he fought the non-Aryan Dasa, Shambara, or the Panis, the merchants of the Indus Valley. But of solid achievement or Empire-building, as the result of these wars, we have little evidence worth the name.

The gods of the Vedic age, were, perhaps, none other than deified heroes, who had once worn a mortal shape, but the grandeur of whose achievements had so dazzled contemporaries as to find them a special niche in the Pantheon for all generations to come. Indra and Mitra, if not Varuna and Agni, seem little better, at least in their personified aspect. Though dual or multiple gods, — like the Earth-and-Sky, or the Maruts, — not to mention the single, but elusive, yet fascinating personality of the Goddess of Dawn, may suggest greater resemblance of the entire Pantheon to deified powers of nature, one regrets to relinquish the amazingly personal magnetism of these human — all too human — beings. One-fourth of the hymns in the Rig Veda are in honour of Indra, the mightiest, but also the most human, of the gods. A mighty fighter, — big of bone and large of limbs, golden-haired, broad-chested, mace-bearing hero, — he loves to drink Soma; and is not above loudly singing his own praises. His greatest exploit is the conquest of the demon *Vritra* who had imprisoned the cows (rains), a common calamity even now to the countrymen in India. It is but in the fitness of things that against this common curse of the nation the greatest of the Gods should engage in ever-renewed strife. His mighty thunderbolt, that none may withstand, cleaves the Demon into two, and the ever welcome rains are free to fructify the parched fields of the Aryans.

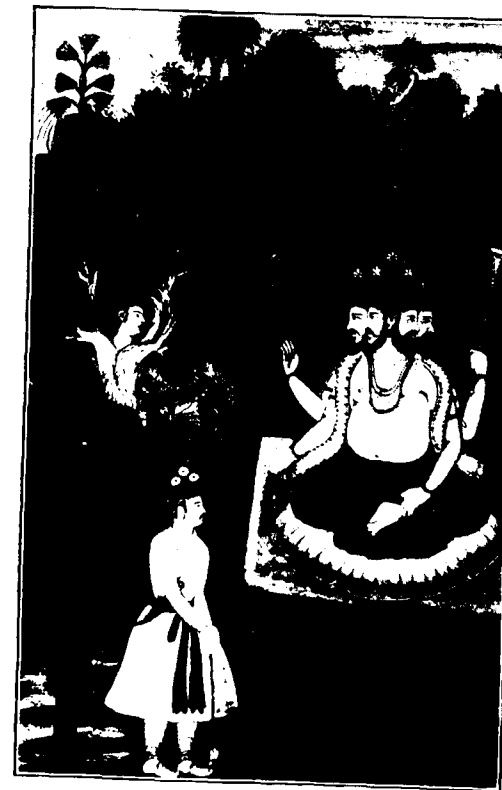
In marked contrast with the rollicking fighter, is the calm, serene, steady image of Varuna, second only to Indra in importance in the Vedic Pantheon; and that, too, if we reckon by the number of hymns dedicated to him. He is the presiding deity of the sacrifice, the genius of law and order in the universe. Endowed with all the human features, he is yet the author of heaven and earth, the creator of the sun, the father of fire, the parent of air. The moon and the stars shine by his orders; rivers flow at his command, while the ocean marks for ever the limits laid down by him. His dominion is universal; his omniscience is unquestioned. But his greatness is of the mind, and not of the brute force that Indra personifies. Nowhere else in all the hymns of the Rig Veda do we find that note of real trust in the Divine adored — that veritable *cri de coeur* — as in the hymns of Varuna.¹

1) *Hymns from the Rig-Veda* by Macdonnell, with changes.

"Who is, O Varuna, Thy constant kinsman?
Once dear, though sinful now, he claims Thy friendship.
As guilty, make us not, O Wise one, suffer!
Do Thou, O Sage, grant shelter to Thy praiser.
O make us in these earthly homes abiding.
Find favour now in Aditi's lap residing!
And may from his chains Varuna release us.
Ye Gods— for ever more protect and bless us."

It would take us too far afield, if we strayed to cast even a glance at the minor gods of the Pantheon. The goddesses in the Vedic Age are few and insignificant, probably because in the Aryan society woman's less spectacular virtues could not arrest attention. Indrani—the wife of Indra—is little better than a charming plaything of the warrior god. Not so, however, the ever young Goddess of the Dawn—Ushas. This Aurora of the Vedas is ever fleeing the Sun in his golden chariot, drawn by fiery steeds, in endless pursuit of an unattainable and yet unrelinquishable ideal. This Goddess of Youth is the spirit of childhood, innocent as insouciant, clothed in spotless raiment, bright and filmy. Like some heavenly dancer, she has sworn eternal war with the spirit of Darkness and all its brood of nightmares, ghosts and evil thoughts. "Daughter of Heaven", she is the longed-for bride of the Sun, and yet his mother, because to the world of mortals she is ever the harbinger of his light and warmth. The humble, homely god, Agni—the deity of every Aryan home—is also her lover, whom she kindles into life afresh each morning on every hearth as soon as she appears.

More human, though still shadowy in point of history and achievements, are those great High Priests of the early Aryans, who first composed the Vedic hymns. The sacred books of the Hindus represent the Seven Sages, the first Seers of the eternal Rig—as the mind-born sons of Brahma, the God of Creation. These seven, whose names are not identical in every list, are immortals, now residing in their stellar mansions in the constellation of the Great Bear. Gautama, Bharadwaja, Vishwamitra, Jamadagni, Vashishtha, Kashyapa and Atri are the Seven most commonly given. Their doings are, in general, fabulous and incredible. But the frequently mentioned and long-continued duel between Vashishtha and Vishwamitra obviously embodies a substratum of historical truth that cannot be denied an element of grandeur. Vashishtha is reputed to be the author of the seventh Mandala in the Rig Veda, while Vishwamitra is credited with the composition of the third. According to classic mythology, Vashishtha had the advantage of birth, being born a Brahman; though a hymn in the Vedas considers his birth to be the result of a passing fancy of the Gods, Mitra and Varuna, for the heavenly nymph Urvashi. Vishwamitra, however, has a less romantic origin, and was better endowed with worldly wealth. Born a king's son, he had no difficulty in attaining to the dignity and powers of a Royal Sage, when he was so minded. But the boundless ambition of this determined, austere, unswerving Kshatriya would not be satisfied with that rank. He would rather be first in hell than second in heaven. Sudas, the Vedic King, seems to have



69 BRAHMĀNAM ĪSHAM KAMALASANASTHAM
(The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.)



70 KRISHNA
Hiding on a Tree with the Clothes
of the Gopis



71 VISHNU
On Garuda with Shri Devi and
Bhu Devi



72 PARVATI
(Wife of Shiva)



73 KRISHNA
Dancing on the Kaliya Serpent
(69-74, The Government Museum, Madras)



74 SURYA
On Chariot

been his first protege and experiment for displaying his vast powers. But that prince preferred the priestly Vashishtha for his Primate, and was justified in his choice by the end, in which he defeated the Ten Tribes whom the furious Vishwamitra had allied against him. This much appears to be sober history. The rest, even if it is grounded in fact, is so highly embroidered by fancy, that, in these days of hard-headed materialism, it will be summarily dismissed as incredible. The moral, however, is perfectly clear. Vishwamitra was determined, as he was daring. He is beaten again and again; but he holds on in grim determination, till at last he achieves his mighty ambition.

Equally fabulous is the origin of Vashishtha's uterine brother, Agastya; but the latter's role is much more modest. A renowned sage, and an author of several hymns in the Rig-Veda, his credit must needs have a dose of the marvellous. If the legends of his drinking the ocean, and beating back the Vindhya mountains to make him a pathway to the unknown South, have no foundation in fact, he seems to have been the first of the great Aryan Seers to cross the mountains and reach the ocean on the south-western coast. The Ramayana speaks of him as living in a hermitage on Mount Kunja, south of the Vindhya mountain; and, if we may read this legendary lore in a historical perspective, he seems to have been the first to Aryanise the Deccan. He is held to be the first teacher of science and literature to the Tamils, whose language he took a great share in moulding.

The ideals and conditions of the Vedic age become sensibly modified in the mould of Indian environment by the time we come to the epic age. The personages of the Epics are distinctly Indianised, even though they still mark the original type very clearly. Take the instance of Ramachandra, the hero of the *Ramayana*. A warrior born and bred, he is as different from the Indra of the Vedas as could possibly be imagined. A dutiful son, a loving brother, a devoted husband, he is unavoidably a good king, a gentle knight, a noble friend, a generous foe, whose human perfections seem to be so complete that one is not surprised at all when one is told he was the essence of Godhead incarnate. A man, he has all a mortal's share of sorrow and suffering, of trial and hardship; but these serve to bring out his indisputable humanity. The eldest born of King Dasharatha of Ayodhya, the modern Oudh; and renowned in his youth by his great exploit of breaking the bow of the Great God Shiva at the time of Princess Sita's choice of a husband, Rama yet experiences the mortal's lot of disappointment on the very eve of realisation. On the day he was to have been anointed Heir Apparent, his father is compelled by his step-mother to exile him for a period of 14 years, and give the dignity of the Crown Prince to her own son Bharata. Kaikeyi, the petted queen of Dasharatha, was only asking payment of an old bond—the fulfilment of a promise her lord had made to her in a moment when her pluck and courage had stood him in excellent stead. Dasharatha could not refuse her without being forsworn, though it killed him to comply. And Rama was not a Prince to commence his new role by making his father be forsworn. So to the forest he would go, though his own mother weep, and his

father swoon, and his peoples break their hearts. Only Sita, — his wife and Queen, — will not be denied, and Lakshmana his devoted brother. Rama tried to dissuade Sita from accompanying him into the forest, but the high-souled Princess would have none of it: —

“Lightly I dismiss the counsel which my lord hath lightly said,
For it ill becomes a warrior and my husband's princely grade!
For the faithful woman follows where her wedded lord may lead,
In the banishment of Rama, Sita's exile is decreed.”

The brother's devotion is even more touching, though the wife's has come down to us for all these countless generations as the model and the ideal of wifely devotion. Anyway, these three went into exile; and the story of that exile is perhaps the most touching portion of the poem. The plot thickens, and the action quickens, and the drama moves on to its inevitable *denouement* when the sister of the demon king, Ravana of Lanka sees Rama and falls in love with him. Denied by him as well as his brother, she flies into a rage, and rushes to fetch Ravana to avenge her wounded vanity. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned; and Surpanakha was true to type. But Ravana, — mighty, ten-headed warrior as he was, and lord of all the demons, — dared not touch Sita while Rama or Lakshmana were by. And so he devised the ruse, with the help of a Rakshasa sage Marichi, of a golden deer, which Sita had but to see to covet. Sita was a veritable woman in her love of the beautiful; and though common sense told Rama a golden deer was impossible; and that, even if real, it must conceal some plot, he could not refuse the prayers of Sita to kill it and fetch its skin. Thereupon Rama leaves her in charge of Lakshmana. Ravana durst not brave even the cadet of the Raghus; and so he instructs his tool Marichi to cry for Lakshmana, as the arrow of Rama pierces him, letting Sita fear her husband was worsted. Lakshmana would no more believe that it was Rama's veritable cry for succour than Rama himself had believed that there could be a real, live, golden deer! But Sita's reproaches became atrocious; she charged Lakshmana with coveting the wife of his elder brother as the only reason for his indifference to the safety of Rama! Poor Lakshmana could bear it no longer. He drew a charmed circle to protect Sita, and left the cottage in search of his brother. All that was, however, of little avail against the wiles of Ravana and the impulsive hospitality of Sita. She left the charmed circle only for a moment to give alms to a mendicant who came begging at her door. But that moment was fatal. The mendicant was Ravana in disguise, who bore her away to his capital in the far, far south, girt by the seas and guarded by the demons.

The martial strain of the narrative henceforth gathers force at each step, till the end comes, in which the proud Lord of Lanka is laid low in the dust; and Sita is restored to the arms of her husband. The new personages who ally themselves with Rama in his struggle with Ravana are, in sober history, the aborigines of the Deccan. Some of them have become, like Hanuman, household names in India ever since. Rama, too, shows himself every inch a king to friend and foe alike, — to Sugriva, Hanuman and Vibhishana, no less than to Indrajit, Kumbhakarna and Ravana himself.

Only to Sita is he less than just; for had she not been defiled by the polluting touch of Ravana's arms—even though against her will? But the God of Fire is at hand to vindicate and purify the Daughter of the Earth, and silently rebuke even the god-like Rama for his doubts.

“Wherefore spake you not, my Rama, if your bosom doubts my faith,
Dearer than a dark suspicion to a woman were her death?
Wherefore, Rama, with your token came your vassal o'er the wave,
To assist a fallen woman, and tainted wife to save?”

“But a woman pleadeth vainly when suspicion clouds her name.
Lakshman, if thou lov'st thy sister, light for me the funeral flame.”

“If in act and thought” she uttered, “I am true unto my name,
Witness of our sins and virtues, may this Fire protect my fame!
If a false and lying scandal brings a faithful woman shame,
Witness of our sins and virtues, may this Fire protect my fame!”

Slow the red flames rolled asunder, God of Fire incarnate came,
Holding in his radiant bosom fair Videha's sinless dame,
Not a curl upon her tresses, not a blossom on her brow,
Not a fibre of her mantle did with tarnished lustre glow!

Rama's forehead was unclouded, and a radiance lit his eye
And his bosom heaved in gladness as he spake in accents high:
“Never from the time I saw her in her maiden days of youth,
Have I doubted Sita's virtue, Sita's fixed and changeless truth.”

The God in Rama may have known all along the purity of Sita, but the man in him was weak enough to doubt. His weakness is the more evident when, once more, crowned and reigning in his own native land, he exiles the pregnant Sita, because a citizen had voiced his suspicions of the Queen. Once again Sita's purity is proved, years after, when her twin-born sons are reciting the *Ramayana* as minstrel boys at the great sacrifice; but the long-suffering daughter of the Universal Mother would have no more of earthly bliss, and is absorbed at last into her parent earth.

The Golden age of the Aryan heroes passes away with the days of Rama and his brothers, who probably flourished late in the second millennium before Christ. Men cease to be the models of truth and simplicity and sincerity, and single-hearted devotion to whatever was their aim in life. Women also decline from the lofty standard of Sita's ideal of love and devotion and unsullied chastity of mind and body. The age of Sitas and Savitris is over; and there is even greater moral distance between them and the Kuntis and the Draupadis of the *Mahabharata* fame, than between Rama and Krishna, or the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Rama is moral perfection embodied, *a preux chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*.

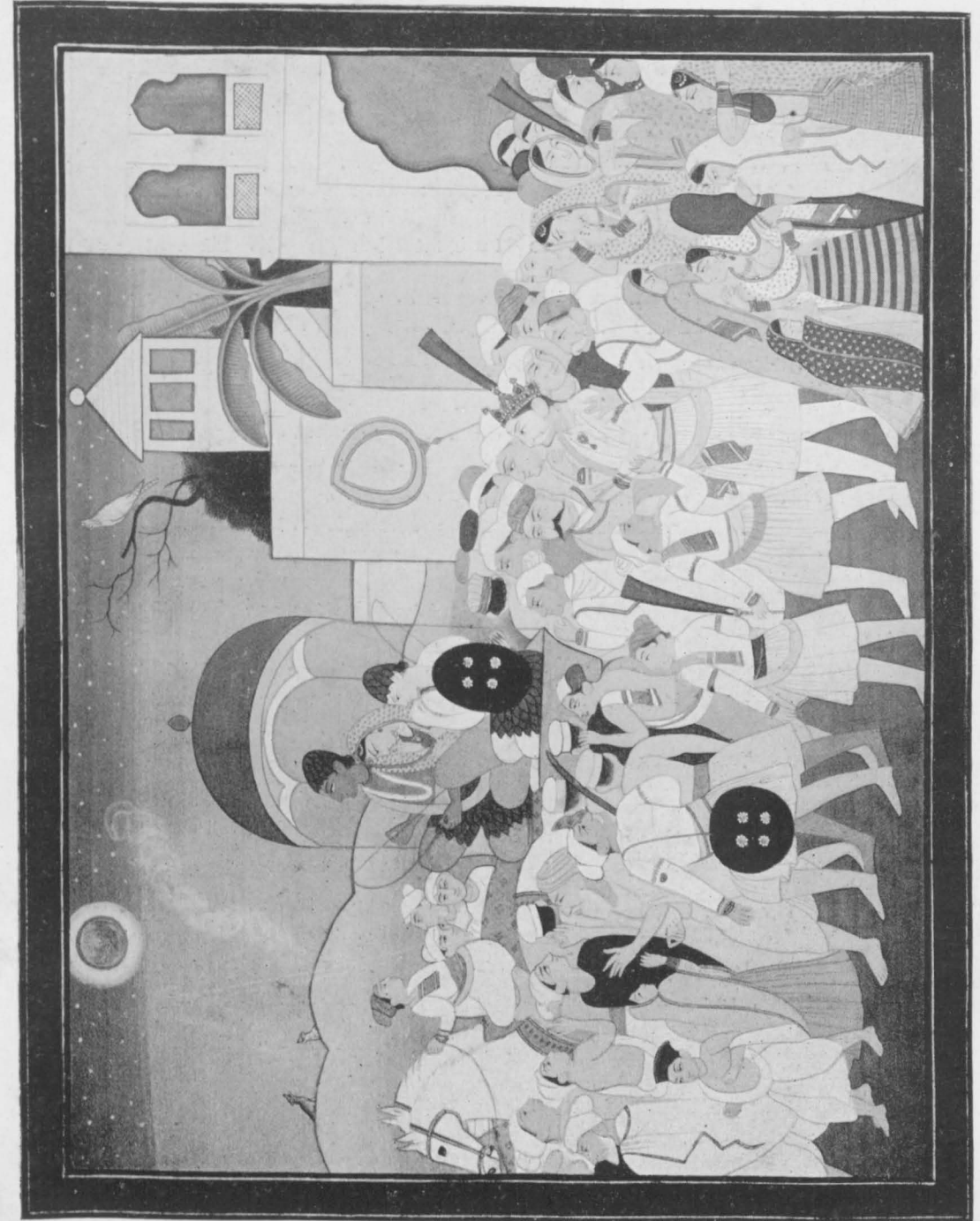
Krishna also is mighty; and if a baffling genius for diplomacy of the most tortuous kind must claim our admiration, he too is great. He is greater even, as the author and teacher of that quintessence of the Hindu philosophy known as the *Bhagavad Gita*. But though that work preaches unruffled serenity born of utter peace, Krishna himself is far from a model of lofty motives and unblemished character. He is the Indian Gay Lothario, whose flirtations with the women of Vraj are but poorly extenuated by any hint of his divine personality, whom naught can bind or besmirch.

The God Vishnu incarnate, Krishna was born man for the purpose of destroying the demon Kamsa, his own maternal uncle. His parents were in prison when he was born, as his uncle had been warned of the fatality. But the bars broke, and the guards slept, and the city-gates opened, and even the mighty Jumna in flood gave a safe crossing to Vasudev to place the child with the chief cowherd, Nanda, on the other side of the river, and return with a fresh-born female babe of Nanda's wife, Yashoda, to satisfy Kamsa. In Gokul, the home of his boyhood and youth, Krishna's endless pranks as a merry little mischievous imp of a child, and his wonderful dances and amours with the simple cow-herdresses have ever since remained the inexhaustible theme of countless generations of Indian poets and singers and dancers. More serious exploits, however, giving promise of the man to come, are not wanting even at this stage. His fight with and destruction of all the demons sent by Kamsa to kill him culminated in the death of Kamsa himself, and the restoration of the throne of Mathura to its rightful king, Ugrasena, Kamsa's deposed father. Of the splendid series of wars and conquests, of alliances and manœuvrings; of the winning of Rukmini, and the founding of Dwarka on the shores of the Arabian Sea; of the glorious fight in the Kurukshetra between the Pandavas and the Kauravas; of the last sad scene of life's closing tragedy, from which even men like gods cannot escape, and in which Krishna saw his mighty empire vanish in the fault of a single day,—in a drunken orgy,—and the divine founder of the Empire laid low in the dust by a chance arrow of the humblest hunter,—of all these there is no space to speak. But the moral is irresistible, unmistakable, unforgettable. None knew when He was born, and none was by when He was sped to his eternal rest!

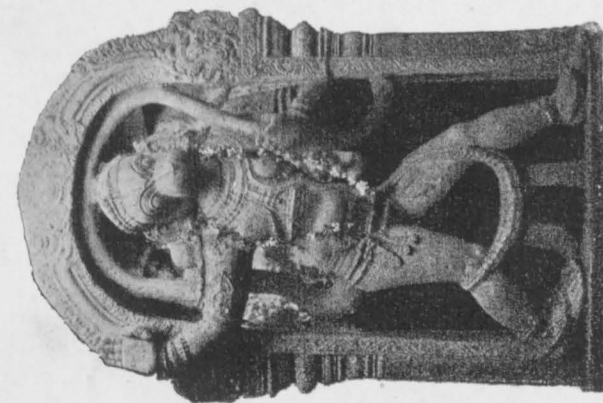
Legendary embroidery apart, Krishna seems to have been an epic hero, who perhaps embodied the first great mixture of the Arya and the aborigines. A Yadava, he was of the Yadu race, famous even in the Vedic age; but his dark complexion suggests a mixture of blood, not at all unlikely in sober history. Taking the story of his conquest of Kalinga, and also of his establishment of a capital on the shores of the Western Sea, the inference may safely be made of a slow infiltration of the Aryan influence to the south by his time.

Apart from the semi-legendary personality of Krishna and his brother, the heroes of this other epic of the *Mahabharata* have both lost and gained somewhat in stature, since the days of the *Ramayana*, and more still, since the days of the Vedas. The world of men has grown infinitely more complex. It is impossible to have a

PLATE XXVII



RAMA'S DEPARTURE
(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")



HANUMANA
(The Government Museum, Madras)

straight choice always between clear good and positive evil. No one in the *Mahabharata* is utterly blameless. Even Yudhishthira, the personification of Righteousness, has to tell one little lie at least to save his army, and lead his ancient preceptor Drona to believe that the latter's son was killed, when really only an elephant of that name had been destroyed. The war of the Pandavas and the Kauravas was as much a struggle with mortal weapons, as mental wiles. The side that prevailed could scarcely claim their victory to be a triumph exclusively of truth and justice.

Three grand personalities, at least, stand out prominently in this story;—each a type of manly virtue then prized most among the ruling class; each a hero whose like the world has seldom seen. Bhishma, the eldest of all the warring cousins, was the first-born of King Shantanu of Hastinapur, who had taken the goddess Ganga to wife. The nymph had her own purpose to serve; but the king was a mortal after all, and could not resist, in spite of his promise, asking his wife who she really was, when he had seen one after another, seven of their children consigned to a premature grave by their inhuman mother! The nymph, rather than answer, disappeared, and left the king with the eighth child, the mighty Prince Bhishma! When he grew up to the estate of manhood, his father again fell in love with a fisherman's daughter, who would not smile on the king's proposals, unless and until the infatuated monarch had promised that his throne and sceptre should descend to her offspring in preference to the Crown Prince, Bhishma. Not content with the royal word, she insists on Bhishma publicly renouncing his rights, and even taking a vow of perpetual celibacy to guard against any chance of a civil war. Bhishma, like Rama before him, makes his grand renunciation to keep his father's royal pledge, even as others of his race have done time and again in more modern times—a renunciation more difficult than that of the Buddha himself, because Bhishma had to be in the world and yet not of it. When his father died, leaving an infant son and heir, he had to assume the regency along with the Queen Mother! He did his best to bring up his brother as befitted a king. He won for him 3 brides, daughters of the King of Benares; but they could not keep the boy-king from the common curse of princes in that position. And so the boy faded away into nothingness; and the Regent and the Queen Mother had to seek afresh to provide heirs for the kingdom. The Queen now repents of her having forced Bhishma to take the vow of celibacy, and she even suggests that he should raise issue on his half-brother's relicts. But Bhishma would not fail his oath, though earth may lose her scent and water its moisture and the sun his glory. Then they found another to take his place; but the latter came to the Princess in such a horrid form that the poor bereaved Ambika would not even look at the monster; and so her son Dhritarashtra was born blind, and unfit for the kingly role. The other widow of the late king then made an effort to save the royal line from extinction; and though she paled at the sight of her companion on that fateful night, she endured, and in the fullness of time gave birth to Pandu,—the Pale Prince,—who became heir to the throne.

It is the sons of these two brothers, born of different mothers, who are the heroes of the *Mahabharata*. The blind Dhritarashtra had a hundred sons, the Kaurava brothers; and the Pale Prince had five, who are the seeds, respectively, of Dharma, Vayu (wind), Indra, and the two Ashwins. Pandu died young, and his blind brother Dhritarashtra was installed Regent, Bhishma continuing still faithful to his trust as the first of the King's subjects, and yet a sort of grandsire of them all. As the story develops, Bhishma watches with rising dismay the bad faith and the duplicity of the Kaurava Princes to cheat the sons of Pandu of their due. His heart must have throbbed with high delight at the triumph upon triumph of his best-beloved Pandu Prince, Arjuna. But, when the Civil War comes at last, he has to range himself on the side of the Kauravas, because he had ever remained the first of the King's subjects; and, for the moment, the first of the Kauravas was King. Commander-in-Chief of the Kaurava hosts, none could beat him, and few withstand his mighty blows. For ten days he battles; and the Pandu host has little chance of success, though led by the greatest warrior of the age, and guided by the God of Gods himself! At last they discover a way to kill the old lion. When the warring forces were withdrawn for the night on the ninth day, the Pandu Princes went to Bhishma's tent; and, on Krishna's advice, asked him the means of his own destruction. With a smile and a sigh the hero named Shikhandin—the man born woman—none other than the eldest and the noblest of the Benares Princesses, whom in his youth Bhishma had won for his feeble brother, but whom he had let go because she had confessed to a prior attachment. Slighted by the man whom she had preferred to the King of Hastinapur, Amba had returned to Bhishma,—only to be refused! And so, in despair, the noble lady had devoted herself to austerities, which at last had won her the boon of being the death of Bhishma in her next birth. She was, accordingly, reborn a woman, but changed into man, and was fighting in the Pandu host. Because Shikhandin was born a woman, Bhishma, the unflinching celibate, would not even look at her; for he battles not with him who had laid down his arms, or is fallen, or flying, or with a woman, or with low and vulgar people. Here is a complete code of chivalry in a nutshell. The hard-pressed Pandavas had to take the hint; and wound the old hero to the heart next day by Arjuna preceded by Shikhandin. The latter's arrows would have been less than a flea-bite to the seasoned veteran; but when his best-beloved Arjuna's arrows searched out and pierced his vitals, Bhishma at last fell! Even when he lies low on the field of battle, his warrior's heart would wish for no other couch but that of the arrows on which he was lying, nor any other pillow but what Arjuna's mighty bow could wing him through the head. Not even Arjuna, his own best-beloved Pandu Prince, approaches Bhishma in kingly courtesy and princely generosity.

Arjuna, the son of Indra, has been the *beau ideal* of the Hindu warrior for all these ages. But his exploits, marvellous as they are, sometimes feel almost monotonous. There is no chance for anyone against him—the friend of Krishna and the favourite of Indra. Even the Great God Shiva finds it difficult to beat him in a hand-to-hand fight. Krishna is always his friend, whether it is to abduct his own sister Subhadra,

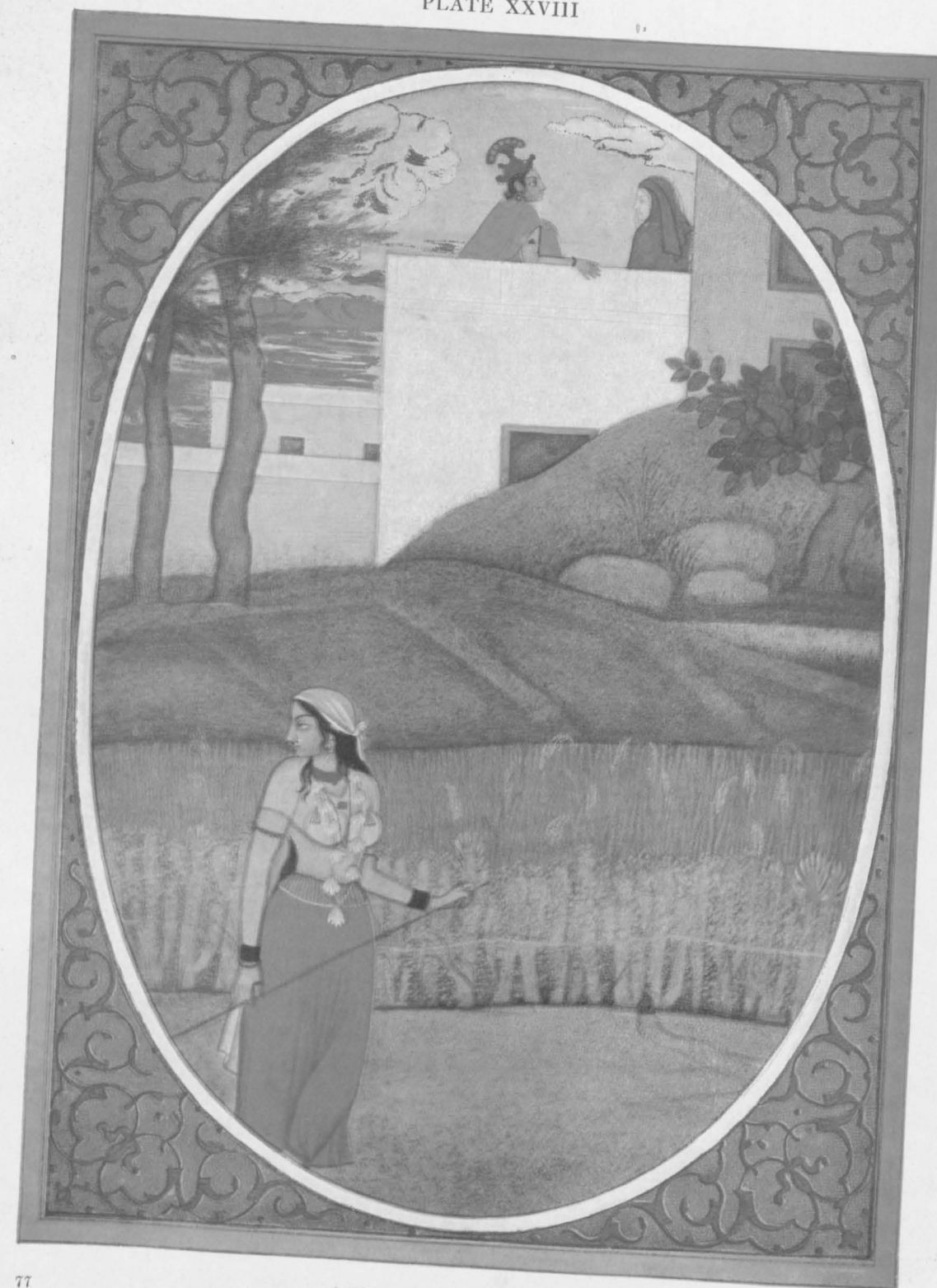
or to second him by moral support in the Great War. The only break is in that year of concealment, the last of the exile resulting from the defeat at dice of the Emperor Yudhishtira. Arjuna becomes a eunuch to give fulfilment to an old curse, lies concealed for the fateful year in the zenana of King Virata, teaching the inmates music and dancing, and all the arts of refined womanhood. At the end of the tale, its innate drama once more wakens into sudden life. Arjuna and his brothers disclose themselves to save the cattle of King Virata, that the Kuru Princes were stealing away. The disclosure forces the main issue whether the Pandavas are to have any share of their patrimony or of their own conquests. There are messages galore and negotiations, and all the elaborate apparatus of seeming to be anxious to avoid bloodshed; but all the while everybody knows that a fight there must be,—and a fight to the finish.

So the great battle is staged, and a slaughter grim and grand takes place. Arjuna is the hero of the fight. He cannot beat the fierce old war-dog Bhishma, or even his own uterine brother, Karna, without a base ruse. But he is not himself actively concerned in all the series of ruses and manoeuvres that finally wins him the war. On the contrary, on the very first day of the war, he utters sentiments to which not even the most exacting moralist could possibly take exception. It is a little trying to see the hero, after all those years of fighting and striving for mastery, holding forth in trite little sayings that could have been new to no one. But one overlooks his repugnance in the eleventh hour to fight his brethren, on account of the wonderful sayings of Krishna, his divine charioteer, embodying the quintessence of Hindu philosophy in language of ineffable beauty and unrivalled simplicity. When Bhishma is killed, thanks to the interposition of the Indian prototype of the Chevalier d'Eon; and Karna quits the scene, by being first deprived of his invulnerable body armour and then destroyed by what was a foul blow by all the codes of their chivalry, Arjuna, of course, remains the peerless hero, the ideal of Hindu chivalry, the model of manly grace, beauty and virtue.

In marked contrast to this favourite of fortune, is his own eldest brother Karna. He is all that Arjuna is, or would be; and a great deal more. For Arjuna has the advantage of birth at least, while Karna has throughout his life to battle against a supposedly inferior origin. He is the child of the Sun by Kunti, the mother of the three Pandavas; but being born before marriage, his mother had no alternative but to leave him on the banks of the Jumna at the moment of his birth. A charioteer finds him, and brings him up as his own son; but his handsome figure and princely bearing ever give the lie to his seeming origin. Early in their career, Karna and Arjuna discover themselves to be the only match for one another. But at each regular trial of strength,—until the final catastrophe,—Karna is denied the full test by a pitiless fate. Drona, the incomparable teacher of the art and science of War, would not teach him the lore of the Princes—because of his birth. Karna dispenses with a teacher, and learns by himself. When the Royal Tournament is held to display the accomplishments of the Princes, Arjuna will not meet Karna in single combat, again because of his birth. In the self-choice of Draupadi for a husband,

Karna is ready to accomplish the task set to the assembled princes; but again his birth is flung into his teeth, and Arjuna is allowed to carry off the prize. The soul of the noble Karna revolts at, but is unsullied by, the ruses and subterfuges of his friend and King, Duryodhana; for Karna trusts absolutely in the invincibility of his own strong arm. When at last the War comes, he, proud and peerless, is a veritable tower of strength for the Kaurava cause. When Bhishma has gone the way of all flesh, and Drona has fallen, Karna takes the baton of command. Long before this, he has known of his real birth; and that it wanted but a word of their common mother to make the rival champions forget their hostility. But Karna is too noble to bring a blush of shame to the cheek of the mother who gave him birth; too chivalrous to forget the father who had adopted him and brought him up; too noble to flee from a sinking ship; too proud to avoid the one and only chance of proving his valour before his only match, by acknowledging that man his brother. And so poor Kunti, mother of the greatest warriors ever born, has to remain content with the reflection that whatever happens, — whether Arjuna falls or Karna, — she would still have her *three* sons. Karna, too, is under no illusion about his doom. He fights with all the courage of his birth and breeding, — knowing, however, all the time that his best weapons are to be taken away from him, or misapplied. Thus, he was born with a body-armour, the gift of his father, the Sun; while he was covered with that breast-plate, no mortal arrow could ever pierce to his vitals. But generous as he was brave, when his own mother, — or is it his rival's father?, — begs of him the armour that covers him, off it comes to satisfy a mendicant. There cannot be a more sublime gift than this, — or one more tragic. The unprotected hero goes to fight — to meet certain doom. There is hope still. He has a lance that the Prince of Gods has promised will take one life without fail. Karna keeps it to throw it at his only rival Arjuna. But Duryodhana, his liege lord, is frightened by the havoc of Bhima's demon son on the Kuru forces; and so the King begs, and urges, and at last commands the Marshall of the host to use his lance against that champion. Karna yields against his better judgment; and that danger is over for the moment.

But now the Pandava host presses him on all sides. His own son is killed, even as Arjuna's heir had been done to death on a previous day. The conquering Arjuna, spurred by revenge, showers a ceaseless hail of arrows on Karna. Even then the hero faints not, nor blanches. He rushes in the very heart of the fray with redoubled fury; but his chariot-wheel sticks fast in the bloody mud at the crucial moment. A past-master in all that appertains to the art of war, he jumps from his seat to release the wheel, and asks Arjuna, as honourable chivalrous warrior, not to shoot while he, Karna, was on the ground and without weapons. But Arjuna is maddened by the recollection of the death of his son Abhimanyu, who had been killed in the presence of Karna, in a similar predicament. Well might he taunt Karna, where was Karna's chivalry when the lad had been done to death in that dastardly manner! He would have been greater if he had withheld that taunt; he would have been great beyond compare if he had forborn the foul blow. Fate willed otherwise. Arjuna shot, and Karna fell pierced to the heart!



A VILLAGE BEAUTY

(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")

These three heroes are unmatched throughout the magnificent epic. But even they rise not to the simple faith and dauntless courage of Rama and his brother. Amongst women, also, the decline is noticeable. Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, is honoured and upheld. But her amours with the Gods cannot be glossed over by any amount of sophistry. Draupadi is a nobler soul—a perfect warrior's bride. She is even shrewd and deep in a way that Sita could never have attained to. But the love of Sita for Rama remains unparalleled throughout the *Mahabharata*. There are noble and high souled dames in plenty in this poem too; but the very fact that the poet has to interpolate the legend of Savitri to point his moral is enough to prove the change at least, if not the decline, in the ideal of womanhood. Savitri was married by her own choice to Satyavan, though she knew her husband had only a year to live, and though his parents were driven from their kingdom and blinded. But she remained a devoted wife and faithful companion all through the brief year. And when at last Satyavan died, and the God of Death came to claim him from the charge of the chaste and true Savitri, she begged him and pursued him to his very home, and one by one persuaded him to grant her requests,—the restoration of sight to her parents-in-law, their kingdom, and a son of herself, without stain on her troth as wife and woman; which at last compels Yama, the God of Death, to restore the life of her deceased Lord.

Of the Saints in the epic age, let us mention Hanuman and Narada, Vidura and Vyasa. The claim to rank Hanuman as a saint rests more on popular tradition than on historical evidence, such as it is. The former makes of him a perfect devotee of Vishnu in the form of Rama. So much, indeed, was he devoted to Rama that, according to a most popular legend, when, on her husband's restoration to the throne of his fathers, the Queen, Sita, gave him a pearl necklace in reward of his invaluable services, he broke open every one of those priceless pearls, and, after looking into the interior of each, threw them away. The Queen was surprised,—perhaps hurt. She asked for an explanation. The great *Bhakta* (devotee) answered, "They had not got the name of Rama inscribed upon any of them". Sita, amazed, asked if Rama's name was inscribed on his own heart. Hanuman, in reply, tore open his breast with his claws, and showed his bleeding heart with the name of Rama blazing upon it. He was a monkey chief by birth, son of Anjana, by the God of Wind, an elder half-brother of the Pandava Bhima,—in sober history, perhaps, an aboriginal chieftain. Ever since he met Rama, distracted by the loss of his queen, he served and helped the King with infinite valour and unrivalled devotion, as a spy and messenger, as a warrior and ambassador; and the Rakshasas of Lanka knew to their cost the might of this Prince of Monkeys.

Narada's claims to saintliness seem to be much better founded. He was one of the Vedic Rishis—a composer of several Rig-Vedic hymns. In real history he probably belonged to the Kanva family, though legend ascribed his origin to Brahma, the God of Creation. On his father, Brahma, advising him to marry, he denounced his father, as a false teacher, because devotion to Krishna was the only

true means of happiness. Narada is also remembered as the father of Music in India, and as the inventor of the flute. A prince of wits, Narada is also famous in popular story as a mischievous imp on account of his innumerable pranks in setting people at loggerheads; but these are much too legendary to justify a specific mention.

The name of Vyasa is applied to several; but the most famous is the compiler of the Vedas, in their present permanent order. He must have flourished somewhere about the seventh century B. C. Another Vyasa—if not the same,—is also the reputed author of the *Mahabharata*, and contemporary of the chief personages of the epic.

In the next age,—the middle Aryan or Hindu period, stretching from about 700 B. C. to 1200 A. C.,—there is no lack of heroes or saints either. Leaving aside for the moment great founders of world-religions or vast empires,—like the Buddha or Chandragupta Maurya,—we still find heroic personages in every province of which we have as yet unearthed an authentic history. It is impossible,—as it would be invidious,—to select. But take the case of Porus, the heroic enemy of Alexander of Macedon. Prepared by all accounts to meet an invincible foe, and aware of the disaffection in his own ranks, he yet determined to face and withstand the advancing tide. He was out-manoeuvred,—perhaps betrayed,—and out-fought. But his spirit remained indomitable as ever. Wounded and wearied, he was led into the presence of his enemy, who gazed in wonder upon that tall, martial form, every inch a king and a hero, and looking straight before him unquenched by the fortune of war. Alexander asked him what treatment he would have. Porus cared not if it was a cheap sneer, or a vulgar display. He answered promptly: "That of a king." The Macedonian was impressed, and Porus received from him a truly Royal treatment.

The Muslim conqueror of the last of the Hindu kings of Delhi had neither the chivalry nor the perspicacity of the Greek. Prithwi-Raj Chauhan, the last of the Hindu sovereigns, the Prince and warrior and lover in excelsis, has a most romantic history. Born to the throne of Ajmer, he was called to that of Delhi by the preference for him of his maternal uncle, over his cousin Jaychand Rathod of Kanauj. A dauntless warrior himself, he was the prince of a band of mighty fighters,—brave and fearless and invincible,—whose fidelity and allegiance to their Chief is even now the model of feudal loyalty; whose love of country and religion, whose instincts of chivalry and devotion to their warrior traditions, made Prithwi-Raj the fittest guardian of the gate of India, at that time. The Chauhan Prince inflicted more than one crushing defeat on the Ghouri leader. But the high traditions of Rajput chivalry would not permit him to war with the vanquished; and so when Shahabuddin was once defeated and captured a prisoner, Prithwi-Raj must needs set him at liberty. He did not despise his enemy; nor did he fear him.

The curse of India, however, has always been internecine dissension. During 1500 years, from the Maurya Empire to the Chauhan debacle, there have, of course, been many ambitious princes and conquerors within India herself. But while the conquerors and the conquered, themselves of the same race or religion, were strong enough to settle their quarrels without the help of an outsider, India remained free from any large, lasting foreign invasion and conquest. Even Alexander of Macedon was, in the true perspective of history, a mere raider, a dazzling meteor, whose rise and blaze and fall was a matter of two short years at most. Darius and Cyrus of Persia may have been greater, more permanent conquerors; but it may be doubted if the Persian influence was of an abiding or pervading character. It is, therefore, a wrong view of Indian history to regard that country as being for ever a helpless prey to the first invader. It is only when internal dissension has coincided with foreign aggressiveness, that the path of the invader has been made easy to conquest and settlement. The Ghouri conquest was facilitated by the spite of Jaychand of Kanauj against Prithwi-Raj of Delhi. Jaychand had, indeed, good reason to feel aggrieved. Prithwi-Raj had ousted him from the throne of Delhi, and had wounded him in the most vulnerable part of his being. In revenge, Jaychand omitted Prithwi-Raj from the list of Princes invited to compete for the hand of his daughter Samyukta. Allied with Bhima-Deva of Gujarat, Jaychand felt he could very well afford to ignore Prithwi-Raj. But he counted without reckoning with either the daring of Prithwi-Raj, or the fancy of his daughter. She was in love with the beau ideal of Rajput chivalry, the hero of a hundred fights. The mystic telegraph of love was at work. Prithwi-Raj came in disguise to win himself this peerless Princess, even as Arjuna had been on a similar quest to win the princess of Panchala. Jaychand had made a golden image of the King of Delhi, and stationed him, as his doorkeeper, at the very lowest place in the *Mandap*. The Princess, however, went the round of the assembled Princes without throwing the garland she carried—the symbol of her choice—on any one, until she came to the golden image of Prithwi-Raj. On him she placed the garland. That moment a mail-clad horseman seized her, placed her in front of him, and, with sixty choice followers—the bravest of the brave—flew on the road to Delhi. The disguise was off. Jaychand was humiliated in his own court, as never a Prince had been these thousand years. He let loose his whole army in pursuit. But Prithwi-Raj and his heroes had not won in vain the first place amongst the Indian chivalry of the day. Two by two they held the road against the advancing host, while the rest flew on towards the sheltering walls of Delhi. Two by two they met and fought the champions of Jaychand and stayed their onrush. Two by two they met their death, dyeing the banks of the Jumna with their blood, falling with their face to the foe, and with never a scar on their back. It is a hundred leagues from Kanauj to Delhi; but the Prince and his bride reached the capital safely at the cost of sixty of the bravest and noblest of that peerless band of Knights.

Baffled rage and wounded pride made Jaychand seek the aid of a stranger to revenge himself. Prithwi-Raj, though sadly missing the heroes of the greatest adventure of his romantic life, was not without his allies. The Maharana of Mewar, his sister's husband, and the head of Rajput royalty as the descendant of Rama, came to Delhi: and fought in that fatal battle of Panipat where India lost for ever the Hindu sovereignty of the land. It was a gallant fight, bravely fought. Prithwi-Raj the lover was forgotten in Prithwi-Raj the warrior. Samyukta herself buckled on his mail, girt on his sword, and hastened him to the fight, as only a Rajput Princess can. When the end came, she burnt herself alive rather than fall in the hands of the sacrilegious conqueror, though her husband was a living but wounded prisoner in the hands of the Ghouri. The brave Maharana was killed,—the first of a long line of devoted kings, destined to fight the Muslim for 500 years thereafter in defence of the ancient gods of India. Prithwi-Raj was, according to some, killed after the battle by his savage foe, a stranger to any notion of chivalry. It is, perhaps, nearer the truth than that other story, which describes him as blinded and starved but still undaunted in his prison, until his faithful bard,—another Blondin to another Coeur-de-lion,—should come seeking him in the enemy's camp. Shahabuddin was so wonder-struck by Chand Barot's tales of Prithwi-Raj's mastery of archery that he would have an immediate exhibition on the spot. A mark was fixed; the blinded Prince was brought forth, and armed with his unfailing bow. The Bard was told to give him directions as to the nature and distance of the target. In a flash Chand told Prithwi-Raj,—ready with the bow-string drawn to the ear,—the distance and direction of the Sultan on his throne watching the exploit. The shaft was loosed, and the Sultan fell; and before his nobles could realise the last act of a heroic life, the Prince and the Bard had thrust their daggers into each other's hearts!

But though Prithwi-Raj was dead, his memory lingered. Countless Rajput heroes of lesser renown have emulated his exploits age after age, until even the conquering Musalman came to appreciate the nobility and grandeur of the Rajput's code of war. Let us give but one specimen—the story of Bhim Singh of Chitor and Princess Padmini. He was a cadet of the Maharana, and was appointed Regent, when his father died, to watch over his nephew, the minor Maharana. Padmini was a Princess of Ceylon, a peerless beauty, married to perhaps the most famous warrior of the age. Alauddin-Khilji, a great warrior and conqueror in his own way, who first carried the Crescent banner into the Deccan, came to hear of her unrivalled loveliness. In his insolence, the Sultan ordered Bhim Singh to surrender his wife. There can be only one reply to such a demand; and when he got it, Alauddin led a vast host into the land of Mewar. The defence was concentrated at the capital-fortress of Chitor. Alauddin had met his match,—at least in courage and the science of war. He could not possibly take Chitor by open warfare. So he had recourse to his usual duplicity. He was going to raise the siege, if only his one desire was

PLATE XXVIII A



KRISHNA WITH GOPIS

(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")

granted—a glimpse of only a reflection of the far-famed beauty. It was a little thing to grant; and Bhim Singh, unequal to Alauddin in his wiles, readily consented. Alauddin came up to the fort, and was received by his gallant enemy in the hall of his palace, where the peerless Padmini passing by, though herself unseen, was reflected in one of the mirrors hung against the wall. The Sultan was content, and began to take his leave. True to the traditions of Rajput hospitality, Bhim Singh accompanied his guest to the last outpost of Chitor, despite the warnings of his nobles. When the last gate was passed, and host and guest were bidding farewell, Alauddin whistled, and his concealed guards sprang upon the Rajput Prince. Taken unawares, the latter was overpowered, and carried to the infidel camp.

Secure in his camp, Alauddin now sent a message to the guardians of Chitor, either to deliver the Princess in his hands, or to suffer their gallant commander to be done to death. When the Chitor chiefs had met in council to consider this strange demand, they were delivered from their dilemma by a woman's wit. The Princess offered to go of her own accord as a ransom for her lord, provided the Sultan agreed to receive her with the pomp and ceremony befitting her rank and birth. This was an easy condition; though Padmini desired to be accompanied by 700 of her hand-maidens in palanquins. The agreement was soon made, and the princely cortege reached Alauddin's camp. The monarch was overjoyed, and granted easily one last prayer of Padmini for a final half-hour of farewell with her lord.

That was all she needed. The 700 pretended maidens jumped from their palanquins, each a warrior armed to the teeth; and the twenty-eight hundred palkhi-bearers were no less. A fierce yell of dismay, a resounding cry of "Har! Har! Mahadev!" and the clash of arms had begun. While the bloody carnage went on, Bhim Singh and his queen rode to Chitor, their rear-guard held by the warriors who had accompanied the Princess in disguise. Once within the fort, there was no hope for the Delhi sovereign to win back the prey that had slipped so bravely and so wonderfully from his grasp. He had to confess himself beaten, and so went his way, shamefaced and crest-fallen and smarting at the clever way a woman's wit had outwitted him.

A few years later, Alauddin again returned to conquer the heroic land of Mewar; he was met by the same men, the same courage, the same resistance,—but not the same result. Chitor was doomed. The last charge was led by Prince Bhim Singh, and at the same time every noble dame in Chitor passed into a walled up place, with the heroic Padmini bringing up the rear, to be burnt alive. When the conqueror at last forced his way into the smoking ruins of Chitor, his savage mood expressed itself in an immediate order to raze the fort to the ground. Only one building was sacred even in his savage eyes, and that was spared,—the palace where he had once seen Padmini in life!

* * * * *

The history of Mewar is a series of thrilling exploits, matchless in their courage, heroism and self-sacrifice. We can only select one more for special mention;

though the choice must not imply any diminution of the glories of Hamir; or the splendours and conquests of Kumbha. Kumbha, indeed, (1419-1469) was, in many respects, the greatest of this long line of warrior kings. Victor over the allied Muslim kings of Malwa and Gujarat in a pitched battle, he fully maintained the reputation of his house for martial renown. Conqueror of the Malwa king,—a prisoner in his capital,—he displayed at its best all that high-bred Rajput courtesy to the defeated, which their Muslim opponents had yet to learn. But as a poet, perhaps inspired by his famous wife, the poetess Mira; and as scholar, translating the classic work of Jayadeva, *Gita Govinda*,—he stands unique. Maharana Sanga, the protagonist of Babur, was no less heroic, even though less fortunate in war. But their descendant Pratap surpassed both in fame, probably because of the greatness of his enemy, perhaps also because of the contrast he makes with his father—the cowardly Udai Singh. When Akbar first invaded Mewar in 1567, the reigning Maharana fled from the fortress-capital that had witnessed so many stirring scenes of Rajput chivalry. The burden of defence fell on Salumbar, the first of the Mewar nobles. After months of arduous, unrelaxing siege, with all the appliances that the amazing genius of Akbar could devise, the first stage was reached by a massed attack at the Sun Gate, where the commandant was himself in charge. Salumbar fell mortally wounded, and the command passed on to another noble, Patta of Kelwa, a seasoned warrior at the ripe age of sixteen. He went to take one last look at his newly married bride, and seemed to waver because of his love for her. She said nothing; but when he left the palace to join his forces, she followed as a youthful warrior sheathed in complete mail. Wherever that day her young lord moved in battle, there was her guardian lance in unflinching attendance. Sheer bravery was, however, no match against the science of War, the force of numbers, and the cunning of the most consummate commander of his age. Patta fell, and with him his brave bride, clasped on her husband's bosom, as never perhaps she had been clasped in life. A third noble—Jaymal of Bednore—now took command; and would have perhaps made good the defence, had he not been picked off by Akbar's own bullet at night. To the Rajput's idea of honourable war, this was a foul blow; for it was the time of truce, and Jaymal, though clad in steel, was far from expecting a shot. Akbar, however, made what amends he could, by erecting two noble statues on elephant on each side of the principal gate of his palace—representing Jaymal and Patta of Chitor.

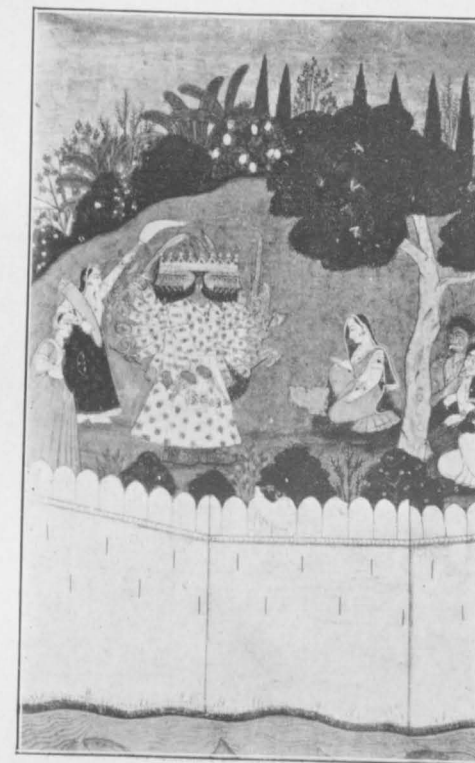
But while the great nobles of Chitor were dying one after another in vain defence of the capital; while their wives and daughters were cheerfully offering the supreme sacrifice of Rajput heroism, the recreant head of the House of Mewar lived in a new palace he had built on the shores of a lake. On his death, his second son Pratap, the most famous of a very famous line of warrior-kings, succeeded to a kingdom without a capital, without an army, without a treasury (1576). He had, however, something more than all these, a dauntless spirit. He summoned his vassals to his standard, affronted the most favoured Rajput general of Akbar, the celebrated Man Singh; and fought the Imperial forces at the historic pass of Haldighat.

Of 22,000 troops that had obeyed the Rana's call to arms, only 8,000 survived the slaughter. The Rana himself had come to the fight in the full insignia of his Royalty; but rather than that life so precious to Mewar and to Hindus be sacrificed in a vain struggle, a noble seized the Royal umbrella, and rushed with it to another part of the field, thus attracting the fury of the Mughal attack on his devoted head. Another noble forced Pratap to quit the field when the day was lost. In his reluctant flight, on his no less famous charger, the Rana was pursued by two Mughal warriors, and his own disaffected brother Sakta Sinh. Blood, however, proved thicker than ambition on that tragic day. Sakta charged his companions and wounded them; and then called to his brother, and gave him his own fresh charger to continue his flight into the sheltering hills of Aravalli. For years the Rana lived in the hills,—an implacable foe of the Great Mughal. From his mountain abode he issued his orders to his vassals and to his subjects,—the former to join him, the latter to cease cultivation so as to starve out the Imperial garrisons. For twenty years he warred in this way,—the hero of every Rajput heart, even those in Akbar's service. The latter could, perhaps, have crushed him had he so willed. But he was either too generous not to admire Pratap for his heroic resistance; or too politic to risk his own Empire by alienating the main pillars of his power. Pratap lived to fight another battle, and to re-conquer, before his death, practically his whole realm of Mewar, with the exception of Chitor. He felt that lack terribly; and the vows of self-denial he had taken until Chitor was conquered are even now observed by his descendants. For Chitor is still in ruins, and outside the Maharana's dominions!

Mewar remained the most prolific breeding ground of heroes throughout the reigns of the 5 Great Mughals. Amar Sinh, Karna Sinh, Rai Sinh, in direct succession after the immortal Pratap, maintained to the full the glories of Mewar. The last-named added to the trophies of a warrior the laurels of a statesman. His spirited espousal of the cause of Ajit Sinh, the infant king of Marwar; his romantic marriage with the Princess of Kishangarh, with all the glamour and poetry of the marriage of Samyukta and Prithwi-Raj; his determined fight in the field against Aurangzeb, make a classic chapter in the stirring annals of Mewar. But even his exploits are eclipsed by the heroism and devotion of the Rathor Chief, Durga Das. Maharaja Jaswant Sing of Jodhpur, Aurangzeb's viceroy of Afghanistan, died at Jamrud in December 1678, A. C., leaving no son to succeed him. But his Queen, a Princess of Mewar, was *enceinte* at the time of his death; and, following well-established precedent, she refrained from mounting the funeral pyre. Soon after, a son was born to her. In his name, and on his account, she claimed the kingdom of Jodhpur from the Emperor. But the perfidious Aurangzeb had already bestowed it on another Rathor Prince,—a willing tool in his hands. When the infant heir of Marwar and his mother reached Delhi, the Emperor would not let them pass. He wanted to assume the guardianship of the Prince, to bring up the latter in the imperial harem. The envoys of the Queen,—Durga Das Rathod, Ranchhod Das Rathod, and Raghunath Bhatti,—were horror-struck at this glimpse of the Emperor's intentions; and left the Presence to recount their audience to the Queen. Aurangzeb

had left them no time to deliberate. Hardly had they finished telling the Queen about the Emperor's views, when a force of the Imperial Guards was heard to approach the palace. Durga Das evolved a masterly plan of action. With a hundred chosen warriors, the Bhatti was to create a diversion by charging upon the Imperial Guard, and hold the gates of the palace as long as they could. In the Queen's chamber, a slave-girl was to be left impersonating the Queen, with an infant borrowed from a neighbouring milkman. When the shock of battle between the Bhatti and the Guards was first heard, Durga Das left the palace from the back-gate with the remaining clansmen, the Queen riding in the midst of her gallant escort with the baby-prince at her saddle-bow. Of the 100 led by Bhatti, 70 fell in the Battle of the Gates, never to rise again. The Kotwal rushed over their dead bodies into the palace,—into the chamber of the Queen,—to find a substitute! The ruse was soon discovered, and pursuit resumed, after the masquerading slave-girl and the milk-man's child had been sent on to the raging Emperor. Nine miles from Delhi, on the road to Jodhpur, on the banks of the Jumna, the pursuers came up with the pursued. Once again Durga Das divided his slender force. Forty picked lances galloped on with the Queen over the bridge; with 50 more Durga Das held the Imperial Guard, 300 strong, at bay. Never did a Horatio or a Bayard defend a bridge more gallantly than these Rathod warriors. Every mother's son among them was fearfully wounded, and forty-five killed in this Battle of the Bridge, which lasted for one brief hour. But that hour had done its work. The Imperialists were checked, daunted, and thrown back; and Durga Das resumed his gallop after the Queen with only five companions. But so wondrous had been his exploit, that every Rathor,—every Rajput,—heart had been stirred; and when the Queen reached the gates of Jodhpur she was at the head of a considerable army. The Mughal Governor fled before the avenging Durga Das had arrived; and the son of Maharaja Jaswant Sing entered the capital of his ancestors,—an acknowledged king.

These are all Rajput heroes,—all of the native Indian faith. Let us not forget in this list the names of those other heroes, who, though professing another faith, still add lustre by their exploits to the story of Indian heroism. We can scarcely claim Muhammad-ibn-Qasim, the first Muslim invader and the conqueror of Sind, as an Indian at all. But his name cannot but recall the memory of that heroic Queen of Dahir, who first gave an example of the unrivalled sense of honour of the Rajput dame. When Dahir was defeated and killed by the Arab commander, the latter found the gates of the capital still barred; and the Queen Regent, armed and determined, in command of the defenders. Muhammad was foiled in all his attempts to storm the city, and so he sat down to besiege it with all his equipments of catapults and battering rams, which left no alternative to the defenders but to surrender, or to die. They chose the latter. Throwing open the gates, the nobles and clansmen rushed out with the Queen at their head, charging the Muslims with



78 SIEGE OF LANKA
(From Coomaraswamy's "Rajput Painting")



79 ARJUNA BEGGING KRISHNA'S
HELP IN THE GREAT WAR
(The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)



80 VYAS MUNI
(Author of the "Mahabharata")



81 RAI PITHORA
(Prithwi Raj, Last Hindu King of Delhi)



MAHARANA PRATAP



MAHMUD OF GHAZNI



EMPERESS RAZIA



CHANDASULTANA OF AHMEDNAGAR

such fury, that, but for their numbers, they would have retrieved the day. The charge, however, failed. The heroic queen fell fighting to the last, along with her devoted band of followers.

If we cannot claim Muhammad-ibn-Qasim as a hero of India, still less can we claim Mahmud of Ghazni,—the Iconoclast,—or Shahabuddin of Ghor. They were essentially raiders, though Shahabuddin certainly had in him the mettle of an Empire-builder. In fact, the real sway of the Muslims in India begins with him. His courage and generalship, and astute diplomacy are beyond question; and though to the Hindu mind a perusal of his life and achievements would not acquit him of unworthy, unchivalrous action, the historian would be amply justified in discounting that feeling against the resolute persistence of Shahabuddin's fixed goal of permanent conquest of India. His slave and successor, Qutb-ud-din, is, however, the first Indian Emperor of Muslim persuasion. A matchless commander himself, the Ghor Prince was quick to perceive the gifts of his slave, whom he, therefore, rapidly raised to high rank in his army. When Delhi had been conquered and Kanauj had fallen, Shahabuddin could find none better to hold the viceregal sceptre in India than his erstwhile slave. Qutb-ud-din carried the standard of the Crescent to Bengal in the East and Gujarat in the South-west, though in the latter he did not feel it safe to remain much longer. It was on his return from the capital of Gujarat that he met with the one great defeat of his life,—all the more humiliating because inflicted by a woman and a child. The Queen of Mewar, Korumdevi of Gujarat, guardian and Regent for her infant son, Maharana Karna, called all the vassals of Mewar together in the name of her son, and with them inflicted such a defeat near Amber on the Afghan forces, that they fled in disorder to Delhi, and left the entire camp and war material in the hands of the triumphant Rajputs. Qutb-ud-din fought bravely and desperately in the battle; but he was wounded; his army demoralised; and defeat inevitable. What he lost in Rajputana, however, he made up for by gaining in Bihar and Bengal, where Muhammad-ibn Bakhtyar, a soldier of fortune, was appointed Governor under the Viceroy. In Bundelkhand Qutb-ud-din met another Hindu heroine, Malundevi of Kalanjar, under whose inspiration the cowardly Paramar put up a most vigorous resistance. The battle under the walls of Kalanjar was, perhaps, the most fiercely contested field Qutb-ud-din ever fought. But he was victorious at last. Their gods seem to have deserted the Hindus; for the great Chandel dynasty of Bundelkhand came to an end after 1203, having flourished for nearly 400 years. Two years later, Shahabuddin himself was killed by a band of revolted Gakkars while sleeping in his tent at Rohtak; and, after a short interval, Qutb-ud-din was proclaimed Sultan of Delhi by the successor of his late master at Ghazni.

This is not the place to record the achievements of the successive Turkish and Afghan Sultans of Delhi. But we must pause to name at least Altamsh, the son-in-law and successor of Qutb-ud-din, and his famous but ill-fated daughter Raziyya. Altamsh was a worthy successor of the founder of the Slave dynasty. He added Malwa to the Empire, and captured the impregnable fort of Mandu, which

had baffled even the irresistible Mahmud of Ghazni. On his death, his son Rukn-ud-din ascended the throne; but he was a wastrel and an incompetent. The real power lay with his mother, once a slave-girl of Altamsh. Her cruelties made her abhorred; and the nobles of Delhi at last rose in revolt, and asked the Princess Raziyya to assume the reins of government. Brave and accomplished as she was beautiful, she had been the constant companion and the most trusted adviser of her father, who had once even appointed her Regent during his absence from Delhi. Her brother, the shadow-emperor, demurred and opposed; but he was betrayed and surrendered, and was executed by order of the Empress. For 31 years she ruled the Empire, as a firm, wise, and just ruler. But the woman's penalty of youth and beauty was inevitable in a court unfamiliar with the lofty traditions of Rajput chivalry. Raziyya's name was linked by the tongue of scandal with that of a slave in the palace. The nobles rebelled, led by Malik Altuniya of Bhatinda. He could not resist the spell of her youth and beauty when betrayed and carried into his camp; but her own brother Bahram, head of another party, was less susceptible and less merciful. She and her husband Altuniya were beaten in the field, and were beheaded after a month's imprisonment. Her only fault, as Firishta well says, with a touch of inexpressible pathos, was that she was a woman!

Ahuddin-Khilji, the second Emperor of the second Muslim dynasty, styled himself a second Alexander. But his beginning as well as his end were bloody; and this whole life and reign unredeemed by a single trait of nobility or generosity, or lofty chivalry towards the vanquished. Courage he had in abundance; and even the talents of a general. But his conquests, though many and amazing, were stained with treachery and cruelty, that necessarily deny him the title of a national hero.

It would require too much patience, and too vast a screen, to watch the film of that procession of history, which is concerned with the 2 last centuries of the Pathan dominion. We cannot even pause to speak of the great Maharana Sangram Singh, who had rallied all Rajputs under the sun banner of the Sisodias to make one more attempt to wrest the throne of Delhi from the defiling 'Toork'. Not, indeed, because he was eventually beaten by the superior generalship of Babur; but because the rest of Sanga's career of conquest and ascendancy would, if narrated, take us too far out of the perspective of history. Even the inspiring figure of the last of the Pathan heroes, the Lion-hearted Sur, must be passed over in silence, the rather because he finds a more fitting niche in our Hall of Emperors. But we must let the procession halt for a brief while, to enable us to gaze upon the grand, awful, tragic figure of Bairam Khan, the Guardian and Prime Minister of the greatest of the Mughals. Bairam was a faithful follower and a loyal soldier of the Emperor Humayun. Gifted with all the virtues and vices of his race and his age, he was brave and bigoted, faithful and self-willed, loyal to the core, yet headstrong. He had followed Humayun in all his wars, and also in his exile. Returning with his master, he fought with Prince Akbar the historic battle that conquered the empire of India. The restored Emperor, brave and chivalrous and

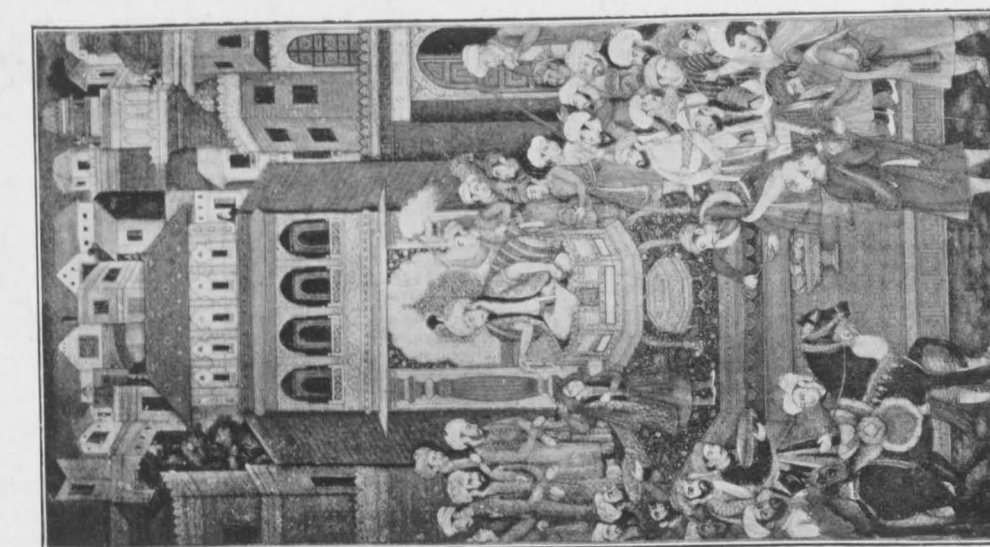
generous to a fault, was not destined to enjoy his triumph for any length of time; and his son, the boy-Emperor, was left under the ministry and guardianship of the staunchest friend of his father. Bairam was as sagacious in generalship as he was peerless in personal bravery. He fought and won another yet more historic battle for his new sovereign; but tarnished his glory, at least in the mind of his Imperial pupil, by the double execution of Tardi Beg before the battle, and of Hemu, the helpless and vanquished enemy, after. The sensitive soul of Akbar recoiled with horror from such a savagery committed in the name of religion. But he was yet too young, inexperienced, insecure to show his Minister who was the master. For four years he bided his time. When at last the hour of doom struck, by a masterly manoeuvre he unhorsed the Minister in a single charge. Politely exiled by his sovereign, Bairam at first obeyed, then rebelled, and was eventually conquered. The star of Akbar was rising. The vanquished Minister was received in audience. But instead of reproaches or humiliation, the son of Humayun only remembered the services of Bairam Khan to the House of Timur. Covering him with the Imperial mantle, he offered him the choice of active service in the field or in the Council, or a dignified retreat. Bairam chose the latter, and started on his pilgrimage to Mecca. But fate again intervened. An old enemy revenged himself upon the great *Khan-i-Khanan* as he was visiting a temple in the ancient capital of Gujarat, before taking ship for Arabia at Cambay; and Bairam Khan was no more!

Another figure, still more romantic and tragical, is that of the heroic Queen Regent of Ahmadnagar. The young king had succeeded to his father's throne after a series of revolutions; and his great aunt was the only person capable of holding the reins of government loyally for the king's benefit. But the disaffected Minister of his predecessor had already invited the aid of the Mughal Viceroy of Gujarat,—Prince Murad,—the second son of the Emperor Akbar. With the fall of the plotting minister, there was no justification for a march on Ahmadnagar. Prince Murad and his Mughals, however, had no intention of letting the prey escape from their grasp so easily. Arrived at Ahmadnagar, they were surprised to see the gates barred against them. The beauty, grace and magnetism of the heroic Queen had silenced the discordant note of faction within the city; and the natives as well as the foreigners in the State strove only to show who made the greatest sacrifice in the cause of the city. It could not be carried by storm. The Mughals therefore sat down to besiege it in real earnest, and laid mines under the walls and bastions of the fort. From one of these the dauntless Queen, clad in armour and acting the common soldier, removed the powder with her own hands. But the two others exploded before the same treatment could be applied to them. The Mughals, sure of an easy capture, delayed assaulting till the next morning. They were too late. The night sufficed the tireless Queen to fill up the breaches. The Prince was impressed by the courage of a woman, and the native chivalry of his race and breeding was aglow. He held a solemn Durbar, and formally conferred on the heroine the title of Sultana, already a Queen in her own right. Negotiations were

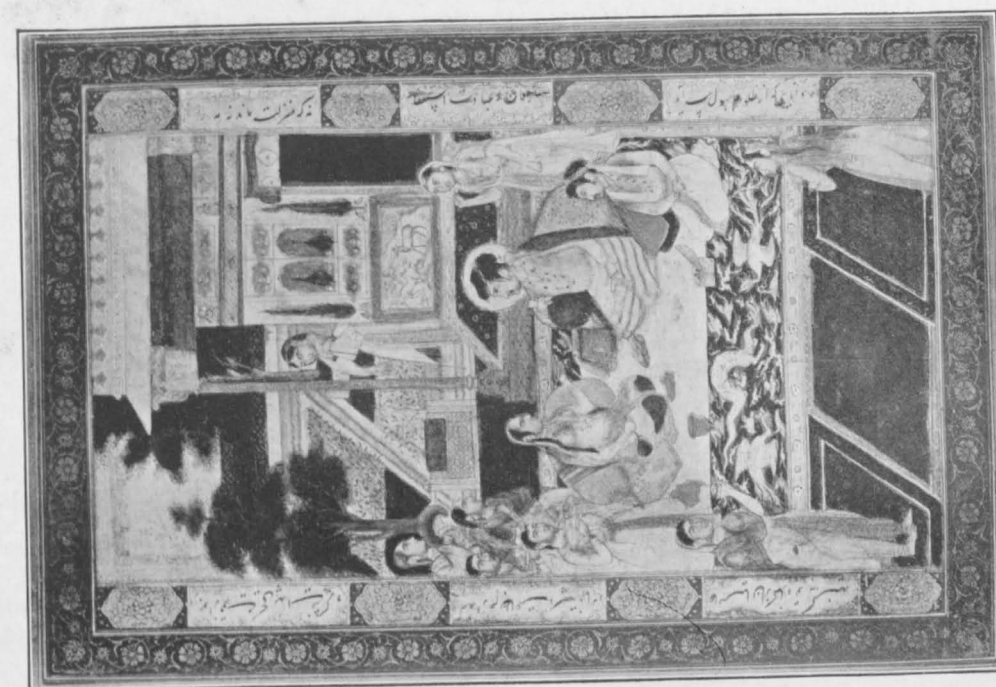
opened while this mutual admiration was at its height, and a treaty, honourable to both sides, was signed. The young Prince Bahadur was recognised King of Ahmadnagar, under the regency of his aunt, and acknowledging the suzerainty of Delhi. But the peace was short-lived. No sooner had the sense of a common danger worn off, than the internal turbulence of the Ahmadnagar nobles broke out afresh. Berar was invaded by the Ahmadnagaries, and Akbar's patience was exhausted. A strong army under Prince Danyal and the Emperor's most valued friend, Abul Fazl, was despatched to conquer. The Regent displayed all her wonted heroism; but her resources were exhausted, her troops demoralised, her councillors disaffected. It availed her little to use her own jewellery for charging the guns, when shot and shell were exhausted. Akbar's lieutenants would not, however, be too harsh on a woman—especially such a woman! And so Abul Fazl offered terms to the beleagured sovereign, far more generous than he or his council had a right to expect. But the moment the warrior-Queen pleaded for the acceptance of those terms, her doom was sealed. A disaffected eunuch ran out of the council-chamber, and told the troops their Queen was betraying them. The soldiers rushed into the council room; and, deaf to all appeals, forgetful of all the memories of her past sacrifices, unmindful of her age and sex, they put the noble, valiant, Queen mercilessly to death. So died Chand Sultana,—the noblest and the greatest of the heroines in the century of Akbar!

Other heroes there are, too, who have a claim to a recognition even in this brief review. But if any of them cannot find a place in the gallery of the Founders of Dynasties or builders of Empires,—like Hasan Bahman Shah, or Shivaji Maharaj,—they have to their credit deeds of heroism not essentially dissimilar to those instanced already; and as such there is little need to crowd still more this already overcrowded canvas. The picture, however, as unfolded so far, is rich in glowing tints of a most variegated description; and must, therefore, satisfy fully the most fastidious demands of national vanity. The types selected in this review have been chosen because of their undying influence upon the ideals of a nation, and the character of its people in successive generations. There are others still who have made these ideals live, and built out of the raw material afforded by these their mighty empires on the soil of India. These we review in the next chapter.

PLATE XXXI

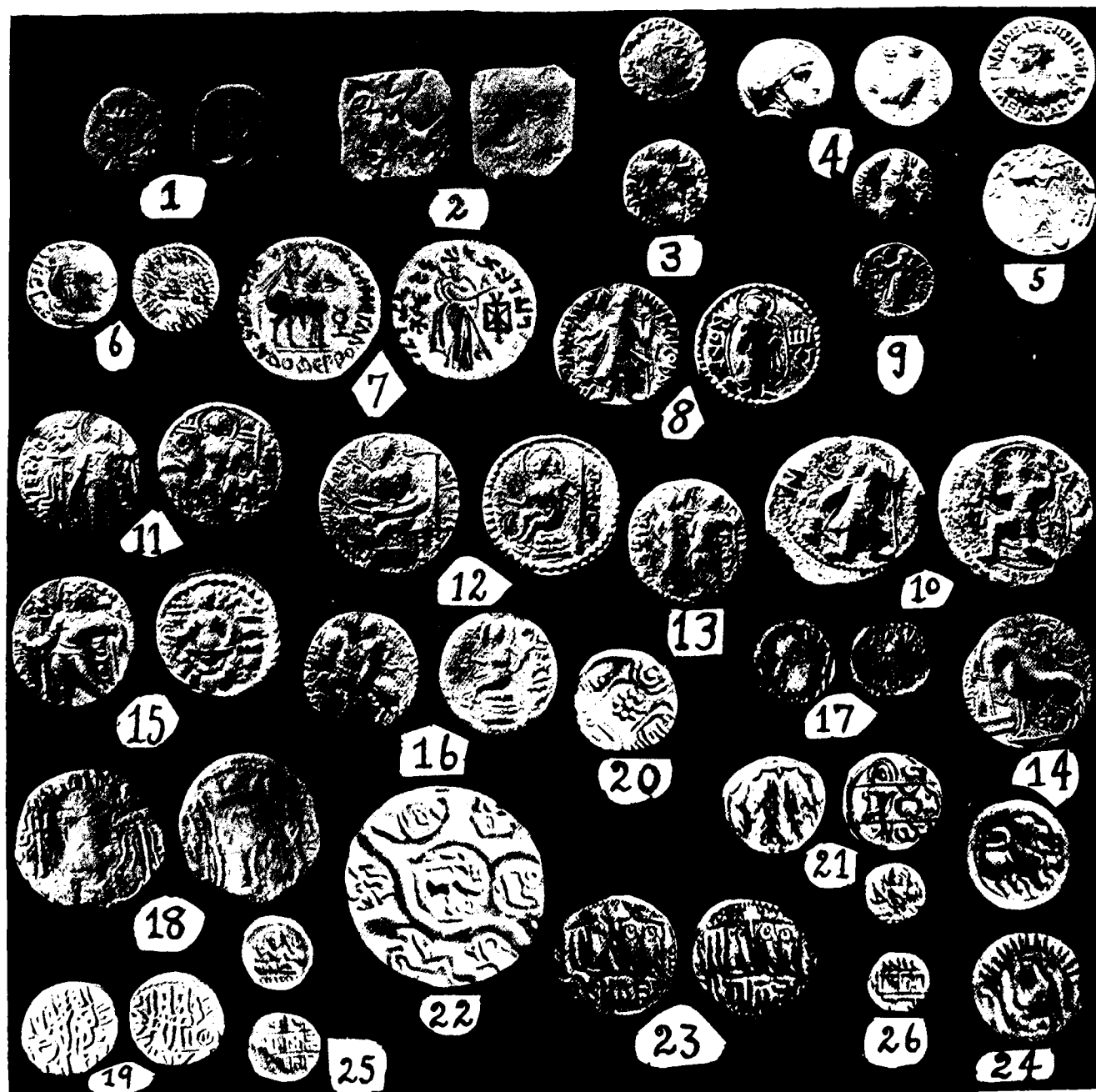


86 HUMAYUN'S ACCESSION DURBAR



87 NURJEHAN ENTERTAINING THE EMPEROR JEhangir AND HIS SON

(86-87: Victoria and Albert Museum, London)



COINS OF INDIA

1. Round Punch-marked coin. 2. Rectangular Punch-marked coin. 3. Mathura: Rajuvada. 4. Sophytes (Sambhuti). 5. Menander. 6. Western Kshatrapa: Damasena. 7. Gondopharnes. 8. Kanishka. 9. Kanishka. 10. Kanishka. 11. Samudragupta: Standard type. 12. Samudragupta: Lyrist type. 13. Samudragupta: Chandragupta I. type. 14. Samudragupta: Asvamedha type. 15. Chandragupta II: Archer type. 16. Chandragupta II: Horseman type. 17. Siladitya (Harshavardhana) of Thanesar. 18. Mihiragula. 19. Delhi and Ajmer: Prithvi Raja. 20. Padma-tanka. 21. Pandya. 22. Eastern Chalukya: Rajaraja. 23. Chola. 24. Pallava or Chalukya (?). 25. Vijayanagar: Krishna Deva Raya. 26. Vijayanagar: Harihara. II.

CHAPTER IV

MAKERS OF HISTORY AND BUILDERS OF EMPIRE

"With the Maurya dynasty," it has been well said, "begins the period of continual history in India." We may, therefore legitimately commence the film of Indian Emperors and nation-builders with the Mauryan hero, never forgetting that the ideal of a homogeneous, solid empire is by no means foreign to the soil of India.

CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

Chandragupta Maurya (320 B. C. to 293 B. C.) reigned over territory far larger, in point of area, than even perhaps the present Empire of India. A contemporary of Alexander of Macedon and his successor in the former's Indian conquests, the Mauryan hero must have gathered not a few useful hints on the art of fighting when he was a visitor, or a suppliant, in the Greek Camp. He was not slow to use this knowledge, when the hour came, against the Greeks themselves. To one, however, who had, in his day, been the commander-in-chief to the greatest power in India, the Magadha realm of the Nandas, the invaders had, perhaps, not much to teach in the science of war and the art of fighting. What little his own experience had left unprovided must have been supplied by that inimitable master of all social sciences, who is variously known by tradition as the Brahmana Vishnugupta, the *Acharya* (Teacher) Chanakya, or the author Kautilya. It is a most reprehensible terminological inexactitude to style him the Indian Machiavelli. The parallel is suggested, no doubt, by the plot of a Sanskrit drama *Mudra-Rakshasa*, of which Chanakya is the real hero. The play was written nearly a thousand years after the events it deals with, and represents as facts what are little better than a poet's wild fancies.

The facts of cold-blooded history, as far as we can gather them, are somewhat like these. Chandragupta Maurya was a scion of an ancient race dwelling at the foot of the Himalayas, and an off-shoot of the holy race of the Sakyas, from which had sprung earlier the immortal Buddha. Perhaps he owed his rapid rise to the post of the War-Lord in the Magadha Empire to a bar sinister of royal origin. Certain it is, however, that he was disaffected with the Nandas, and driven from their service, at the time the overweening arrogance of the Magadha monarch had insulted a great sage and scholar, who had enough of the old Vishwamitra in him not to take the insult tamely. The disaffected soldier joined hands with the disgruntled sage; and at last obtained the aid of the redoubtable Porus, or some other lieutenant of the Macedonian. In an incredibly short time the Nandas were overthrown and their very memory uprooted, thanks chiefly to the wonderful sagacity of Vishnugupta. The allies were either bought off, or disposed of in some other way; so that, by the time Seleucus of Babylon was ready to try conclusions

with the Indian, Chandragupta was master of India from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Indus, from the Narmada to the Jhelum and the Kabul. History does not tell us when precisely he acquired Malwa and Bundelkhand, Gujarat and Kathiawar, Sindh and the Punjab, besides the provinces of the Ganges basin. But history is quite clear about when he acquired the provinces of the modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. These were obtained from Seleucus, perhaps as a dowry for his daughter given in marriage to the Maurya. In exchange the Maurya gave only 500 elephants to the Greek.

The Maurya Empire thus extended over a vast area. It is, however, an inaccurate picture of life in the Maurya Empire which would represent the Sovereign, not only as the Lord paramount, but as the uncontrolled, absolute master of the life and property of every one of his subjects. Though free from the modern restraint of a Parliament, the absolutism of the Mauryas was subtly checked by the structure of the society itself, in which the several strata or castes had a definitely assigned place; and of which one at least was even superior to the King himself. Besides, the King governed with the help of a large, well-ordered, bureaucracy, with a very precise hierarchy. These were all his servants and the ministers of his will; but in the nature of things they must nevertheless have formed an effective, though indirect, check on the royal authority. The nobility of the sword had its own power and influence, which was not the less considerable because it was not evident on the surface. And, finally, there were civic dignitaries,—let us call them mayors of towns and presidents of guilds,—who must also have provided no mean curb on the absolutism of the Prince. Some of these civic notables were considerable merchants, whose private wealth would not compare unfavourably with the King's own majesty.

The king's personal habits reflected in equal measure the splendour of his great position, and the simplicity of a man who was by training and temperament averse to ever-lasting luxury. Within the inner apartments, Chandragupta, like Akbar, passed very few hours each day; but, while there, he was guarded by a body of foreign amazons, who had been purchased for the purpose. Every day, however, when not engaged in war or the chase, the Emperor appeared in public to hear causes of complaint in person, to give audiences, or to consult with his ministers on a thousand matters of imperial importance. So much, indeed, did the duties of his post absorb the time of the Prince, that he was probably among the hardest worked men in his empire. The Emperor's only luxury in personal habits was massage, in which he seems to have indulged even while hearing cases in court, or giving ceremonial audience; while the only display of ceremonial magnificence was the hair-washing festival, probably held on the Imperial birth-days, when the nobles and grandees made considerable presents to the sovereign.

THE EMPEROR ASOKA

The Empire of Chandragupta passed in peaceful succession to his son Bindusara, and his grandson Asoka. The second Maurya must certainly have made additions

to his father's dominions, though no definite accounts of his reign and conquests are available. The third and the most famous, if not also the greatest, made only one conquest, the country of the Kalingas,—the modern Coromandel coast. But his fame rests rather on his being the Imperial propagandist of Buddhism. The Buddhist Constantine was all the greater than his Christian prototype, because he did his very best to enforce in his own personal life as well as in his Empire the tenets of his creed. His famous rock edicts are veritable sermons in stone. From the foot of the Hindu Kush to within sight of the Nilgiris; from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, he preached Buddhism and the doctrine of universal mercy. If Chandragupta was a man of blood and iron, Asoka was as clearly a man of peace. He had even taken the minor vows of a Buddhist monk. And yet so mighty was the Mauryan name, and so firmly established the tradition of law and order in this vast Empire, that in his long reign no internal rebellion or foreign invasion of any dimensions worth speaking occurred at all. Against all accepted ideals of kingliness in India, Asoka openly asked his subjects to abandon the notion of conquest by force of arms as the only work fit for a king; while he laid down the "Law of Piety" as the only way to attain salvation. The following tribute from the historian of *Ancient India* would suffice to give a fuller outline of the pious Emperor.

"Asoka did not attempt to destroy either Brahmanical Hinduism or Jainism; but his prohibition of bloody sacrifices, the preference which he openly avowed for Buddhism, and his active propaganda undoubtedly brought his favourite doctrine to the front, and established it as the dominant religion in both India and Ceylon. Still, notwithstanding many failures, fluctuations, developments and corruptions, Buddhism now commands, and will command for countless centuries to come, the devotion of hundreds of millions of men. This great result is the work of Asoka alone, and entitles him to rank for all time with that small body of men who may be said to have changed the faith of the world."

KANISHKA

With the death of the saintly Asoka, the days of the Mauryan glories were ended. The heirs and successors of Chandragupta and Asoka were feeble voluptuaries, lacking the strength to maintain the splendours of their forbears. Their distant satraps and disaffected feudatories neglected, ignored, and eventually defied the Imperial *firman*s from Pataliputra. A host of independent principalities cropped up within what had been a solid Empire, till, once again, a mighty genius came on the field to conquer or subdue, to annex and consolidate, the immense mass into a single whole. Such a one was Kanishka the Kushan, more than 250 years after the immortal Asoka.

Very little is known, authentically, of the origin of the Emperor Kanishka to enable us to claim him justly as an Indian Prince. By his conquests, and his creed, he was decidedly Indian,—more even than Babur. His capital was at what is now called Peshawar; his favourite pleasure-haunt was the vale of Kashmir, where he seems to have founded a city; his empire extended to the shores of the Arabian Ocean and to the heart of Magadha. What exactly were his own additions to the earlier conquests

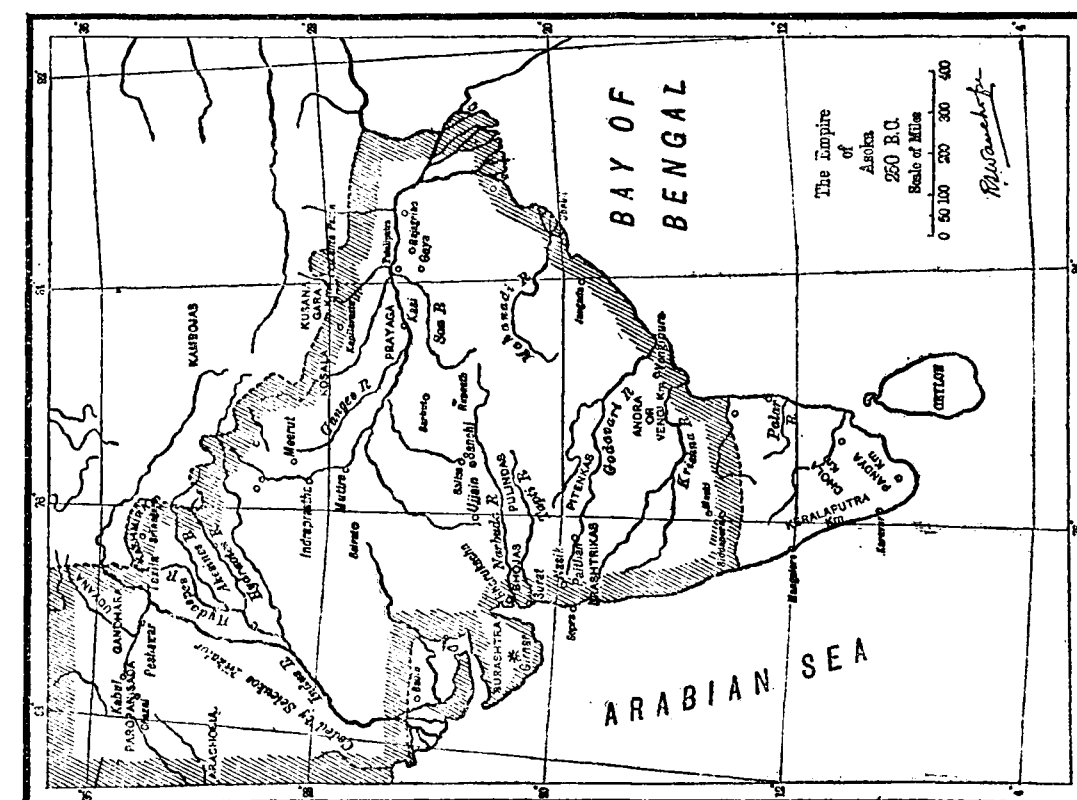
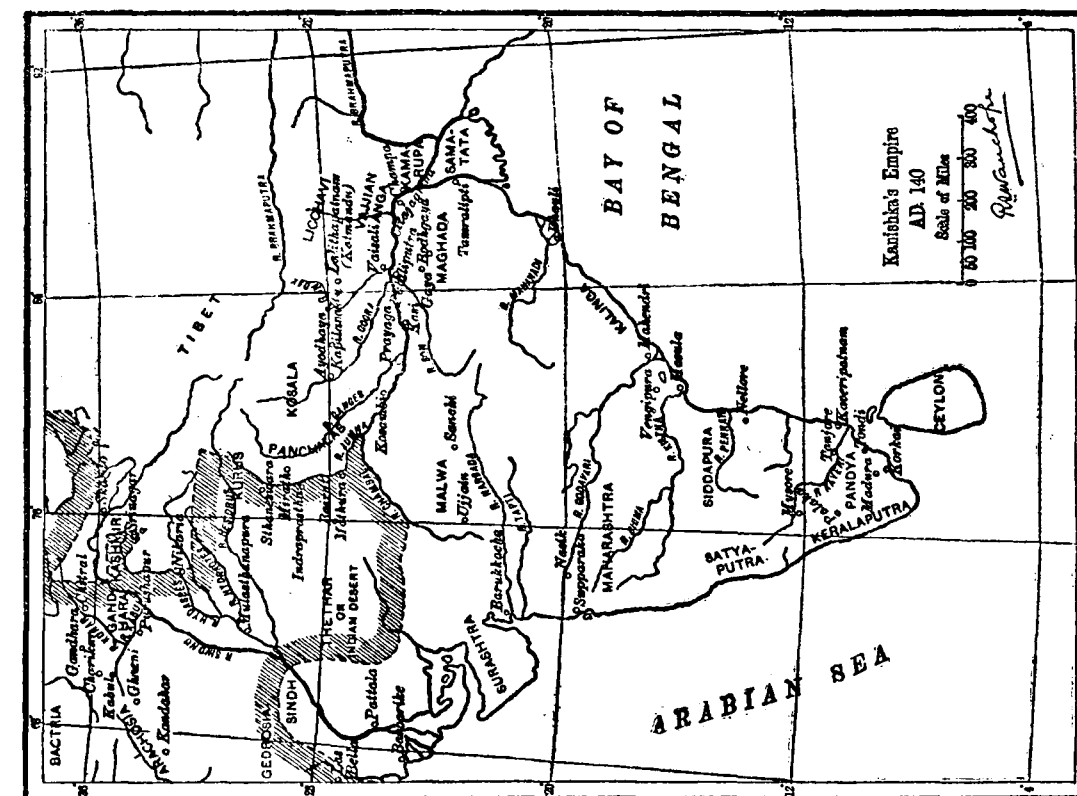
of his Kushan predecessors, it is difficult to say. He was, however, the most considerable and powerful Central Asiatic potentate of his day, able to deal with the Roman Empire on terms of equality and independence. His own conquests in Asia included Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan, which, with the Parthian, Afghan, Baluch conquests and annexations of his predecessors, must have formed a very vast, solid block of territory in West-Central Asia. In India he was certainly the master of the Punjab, Kashmir, the Indus valley down to the mouth of the river, Malwa, Gujarat, and the peninsula of Kathiawar; and the Indo-Gangetic plain, probably extending as far as the eastern confines of the Mauryan Magadha.

This was an empire, not a whit less glorious or extensive than that of the greatest of the Mauryas. Like Asoka, however, Kanishka too, was touched by the subtle appeal of the Religion of Mercy. At some date in his career, Kanishka was converted to the Law of Piety; and, ever since, fact and fable alike conspired to make him a second Asoka,—a Buddhist Charlemagne. If he did not, like Asoka, actually assume the yellow robe of the Buddhist monk, he was yet too active a patron of Buddhism not to concern himself with a new and Authorised Version of the Law of the Sakya saint. In his reign, a great Ecumenical council was held in Kashmir, at Kundalavana near the capital, under the presidency of the Pontiff Vasumitra, and the guidance of the greatest Buddhist scholar and divine of the age,—Ashwaghosha. 500 theologians, prelates, and scholars participated in the protracted labours, which resulted in the authoritative promulgation of the true apostolic canon, engraved, for further security and permanence, on copper plates deposited in a special cupola, built by order of the Imperial patron for the purpose, where they may even now be lying concealed for all we know. The resemblance to the Catholic Apostolic Church of Christ in the West may be further completed by the story of the conferment of the Kingdom of Kashmir on the Buddhist church. The donation was first made by Asoka, and Kanishka seems only to have confirmed it.

THE GUPTAS

If we may place the reign of Kanishka between 78 A.C., and 120 A.C., a period of another two centuries of decline and dismemberment had to follow before the Imperial idea was reborn in India.

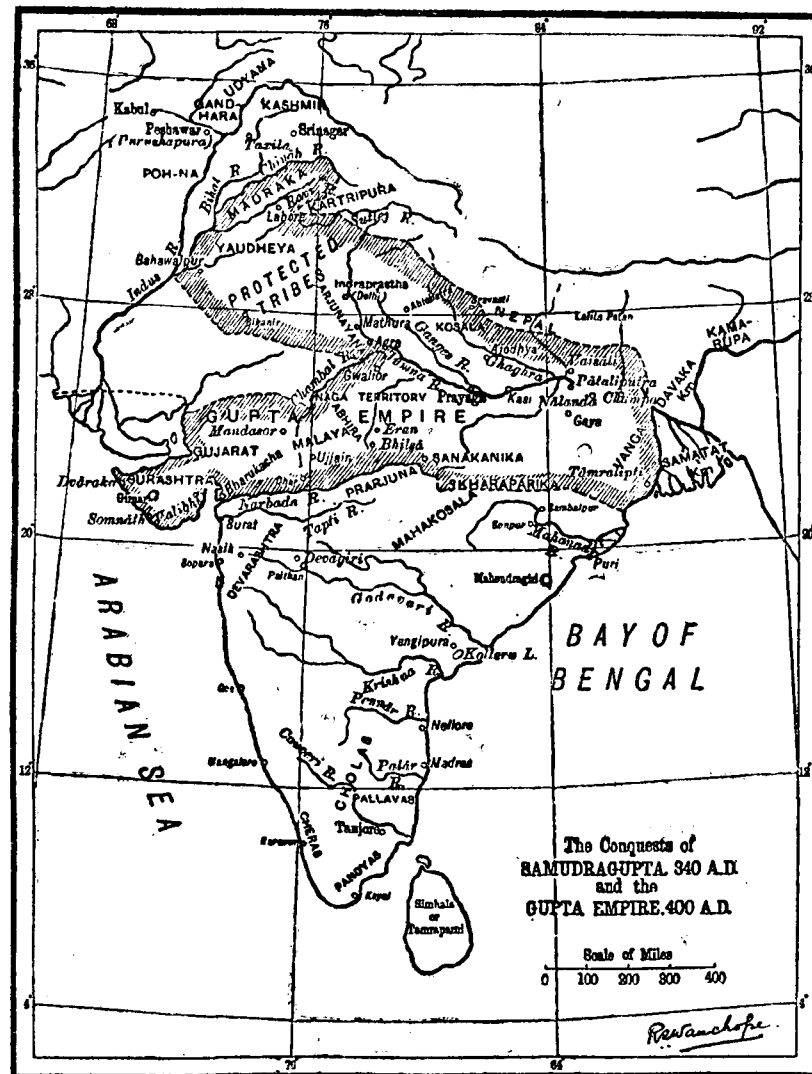
The fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era may well be regarded as the Golden Age in the early history of India. The mighty Gupta Empire, rivalling in extent and splendour the magnificent fabric of Mauryan creation, was formed, extended, consolidated and maintained between 320 A.D. and 455 A.D. Chandra-Gupta, the first of this line of long-lived emperors, was the scion of a petty local prince in Magadha; but on his marriage to Kumara Devi,—a Princess of the Lichchavis, who were a famous clan at the time of the Buddha,—he was immediately raised to the status of a great power in eastern India. He himself had little time to build up a great empire by his conquests; but he was skillful and far-sighted enough to utilize the suzerainty of his Queen's people over the ancient Imperial capital to reduce the whole of the home provinces of the Mauryas to subjection.



His reign is further memorable for the great importance and reverence to his Queen,—the Lichchavi Princess,—after whom his much more famous son Samudra-Gupta is only too proud to be known; and in whose name coins of the realm were struck by her grateful and devoted husband, even as that prince of lovers, the Emperor Jahangir, some 1300 years later, minted his coins in the name of his Empress Nur Jahan.

Samudra-Gupta, son and successor of Chandra-Gupta and Kumara Devi, was a born conqueror. His father seems to have been of Buddhist persuasion, but this "Indian Napoleon,"—as Vincent Smith justly calls him,—was a confirmed but widely tolerant Hindu. The sculptured records of his conquests, embossed in the flowery style of a court panegyrist, had ample basis in sober earnest to justify all the seeming vaingloriousness of style and bewildering magniloquence of expression. His father's sway had hardly penetrated beyond the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges at Allahabad on the west, and on the south up to the Son basin. Not content with this, he carried his victorious arms to the further bank of the Indus on the north-west corner, making the Chinab the permanent frontier of the Empire on that side; subjugated all the semi-independent tribes of the Doab and of Rajputana; annexed the Punjab, and, together with Bundelkhand and the regions of the home provinces, stretching up to the foot of the Himalayas on the north and the mouth of the Ganges on the east, made a consolidated Empire of Hindustan proper, which was not much inferior to that of Akbar. On the south, he had vast ambitions, and actually carried out a tremendous Caesarian march, which, beginning with the regions around Chutia Nagpur, passed along the eastern coast, and went as far south as the modern Conjevaram. Thence he turned backward through the plateau of the Deccan proper along the Western Ghats, conquering and subjugating wherever he went. It was a mighty progress, an unbroken triumph from beginning to end, lasting for perhaps over two years, and testifying during its course to the marvellous organisation of transport and commissariat, of ordnance and general discipline, which kept intact and ever victorious such a huge host, marching over hills, through dense forests, across mighty rivers, along altogether unfamiliar and unfriendly regions. For a thousand years before or after him, there was none to emulate this unparalleled feat. His importance may be illustrated by the instance of a peaceful embassy from King Meghavarna of Ceylon. Whatever justification Samudra-Gupta had to regard the rich presents of gems, etc., which the Ceylonese embassy brought him, as the tributary offerings of a vassal Prince, the fact is indisputable that the worshippers from Ceylon at the Holy of Holies of Buddhism had to seek and obtain the sanction of the Indian Emperor before they could build there an appropriate college of their own.

The unique glory of Samudra-Gupta lies in his bewildering versatility. Conquerors there were before and after him. Soldiering was the sacred, traditional, hereditary occupation of kings in India from time immemorial: so that excellence in this department of king-craft will not by itself call forth our unstinted admiration. Wisdom, foresight, toleration of all the several creeds have been the



distinctive marks of outstanding kings in Indian history from the Mauryas to the Mughals; and in that aspect, also, though Samudra-Gupta was great, he has mighty rivals in Akbar and Asoka. In his patronage of arts and sciences, too, the greatest of the Mughals would easily equal, if not eclipse, him. But where the greatest of the Guptas stands unrivalled is in his own mastery of the Fine Arts. The flute seems to have been as familiar to his hand as the sword and the lance; while the making of verses came to him as naturally as the formation of military manoeuvres in the field. Even his celebration of the famous *Ashvamedha* or Horse Sacrifice may be taken to indicate that love,—that mastery of history,—in which some may have equalled, but none surpassed, him.

Chandra-Gupta II (378-413 A. C.), his son Kumara-Gupta (413-455 A. C.), and grandson Skanda-Gupta (455-467 A. C.) were worthy successors of the great Samudra-Gupta. The first of these even maintained his family tradition of conquest and annexation by over-throwing the western Satrapies of Malwa and Kathiawar, incorporating these rich and wealthy provinces in the Empire, and so extending it from sea to sea throughout the breadth of India. The Gupta Empire recalls in almost every prominent incident the later Mughal Empire. If the glories of the Mughals lasted a hundred and fifty years (1556-1707), those of the Guptas endured for a like period (320-467 A. C.). If the Mughal Empire went on tottering for another century and a half after its zenith had been passed, so did the Gupta for even a longer period. The last of the great Guptas had almost an indential difficulty with the last of the great Mughals. For the Hun invasions may not quite unfitly be compared to the Maratha outbreak of a later age. Skanda-Gupta was at first victorious and stemmed the tide of invasion effectually. But in the last years of his reign he was weary and weakened, and the Hun menace had to be swept away from India by other races in the Empire. The Gupta age, finally, was an age of tremendous revival in the intellectual world. Some of the finest contributions to poetry and philosophy, to architecture and painting, to all the graces and amenities as much as to the arts and sciences of civilised life, were made in this Golden Age of Indian History. The kings were themselves great patrons of poets and artists, refined and cultured enough to appreciate to a nicety the value of the works of art they patronised. The name of Kalidasa,—the immortal laureate of Sanskrit drama and classic poetry,—who is now generally believed to have flourished in this age, would alone suffice to give point to this remark; while those of his other great contemporaries, the famous *Nava Ratna* of the Court of Vikramaditya, will be enough to establish the claim of a Golden Age made for this period. “Probably, India has never been governed better, after the oriental manner, than it was in the reign of Vikramaditya.”¹

SHRI HARSHA (606-647 A. C.)

Another interval of 150 years had to pass before the glories of the Gupta Empire could once more come to bloom. In marked contrast with the mighty Mauryas and

¹ Vincent Smith.

the glorious Guptas, the reign of Harsha of Kanauj stands out alone, like a solitary boss in the midst of an otherwise level plain. A younger son of a local raja of Thaneshwar, the classic Kuru-Kshetra, Harsha was induced to succeed to the throne of his elder brother with some difficulty. When, however, he finally made up his mind to accept the invitation of his nobles and grasp the sceptre, he lost no time in avenging the dastardly murder in Malwa of his beloved elder brother and sovereign, Rajya Vardhana. Malwa was his sister's husband's country; but the king and queen were overthrown; and first Rajya Vardhana, and afterwards Harsha Vardhana, marched against the country to avenge the insult and annex the territory. With Malwa was involved a local king of Bengal, who was overthrown by Harsha, and his dominions annexed to the Empire of Kanauj. The Gujarati kingdom of Valabhi was brought into subsidiary alliance by the marriage of the Valabhi Prince to a daughter of the Emperor. Saurashtra and Kachchh were part of the Empire; while, at the other end of India, Kumara of Kamrup,—the modern Assam,—was a feudatory of the suzerain of Hindustan. Part of the Punjab and the whole of Central India, and the Indo-Gangetic plain up to the Brahmaputra, were under the direct government of Harsha. The Emperor entertained, of course, still vaster ideas of conquest and annexation on the south. But his host was met on the banks of the Narmada by another equally mighty sovereign, the famous Pulakeshin. He successfully withstood the Emperor of the North, and forced him to abandon his ambition of conquering the Deccan.

Harsha, however, had to keep on the alert for 30 years after his coronation. Though, like Asoka, he had adopted the Law of Piety, he was not able to doff the armour till towards the close of his long reign of over 40 years (606-647). At the height of his power and splendour and glory, the famous Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang visited the Empire, (630-644), and was accorded the honour of expounding the Canon in the Imperial Presence. The widowed Queen of Malwa, sister of the Emperor, sat in open Court with her brother; and failed not to express her unstinted praise of the Master when he had done.

The Emperor was a constant traveller, and his Imperial camp was, during his tours, surrounded by as many as 18 camps of vassal kings. In his own camp there were 4 courts, and the Emperor gave public audience in the fourth, “seated on a throne of pearl-like stone, with his feet resting on a foot-stool of sapphire and ruby.” (Mukerji.)

As an example of the wealth and munificence of Shri Harsha, take the following:—

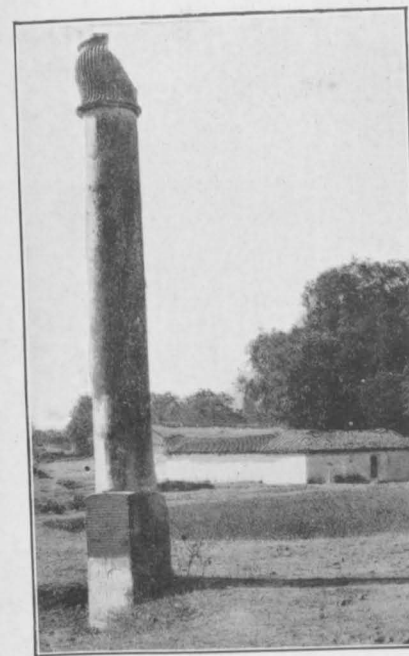
On the occasion of a grand Kumbh Mela at Prayag, 1000 Buddhist priests received each 100 pieces of gold, one pearl, one cotton garment, besides an enormous quantity of food and drink. For 20 days thereafter Brahmans received gifts, and 10 days thereafter other heretics, besides the orphans and the indigent, gifts to whom occupied a whole month. “By this time the accumulation of five years was exhausted. Except the horses, elephants and military accoutrements, nothing remained. The king freely gave away his gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces,

ear-rings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel, and bright head-jewel." Not even his own personal clothing was excepted, so that when on the final day of the assembly he had to offer worship, he had to borrow a second-hand garment from his sister, Rajyashri! Verily, a record of personal charities!

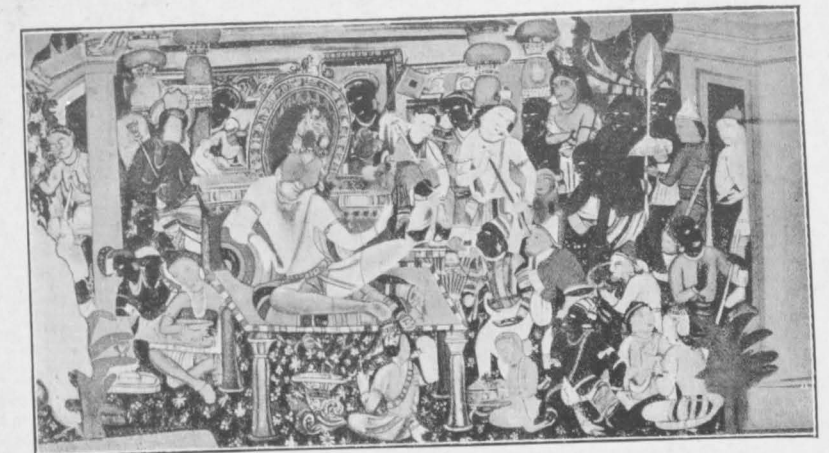
Harsha was also a great, munificent, discerning patron of learning and the Fine Arts. Himself a dramatic poet of no mean order, he was able justly to appreciate the merits of men like Bana Bhatta, or the scholarship of men like Hiuen-Tsang. For more than a thousand years after the death of the Buddha, India remained not only the Holy Land for countless millions of men, but also the focus of the universe for arts and learning. Emperors, like Harsha, or still more the Guptas and Kanishka, who came under the influence of that Messenger of Mercy, were themselves keenly interested in the Scriptures; and able to facilitate the researches of such scholars without a trace of narrow-mindedness, bigotry, or parochialism, that later came to disfigure Indian Royalty.

The history of the next five hundred years is not altogether a blank. The impulse given to the national spirit under the cultured Guptas continued all throughout the period until the advent of the Musalmans. The annals, however, of towering personalities of Imperial or epoch-making proportions seem to be quiet during these five centuries. The Musalman invasions of India did, no doubt, commence in the eighth century under the Arabs. But they are little better than sporadic raids, whose purpose of loot was but faintly tinged with any intention of permanent settlement. Religious fanaticism and proselytising zeal marked the Muslim raiders from the start; and, in this respect, their influence, when it came to be considerable, was in marked contrast with the settled policy of perfect religious freedom and toleration that had distinguished all the early Indian Empires, whether Hindu, Buddhist, or Jain. The Arab Khalifas were, indeed, a highly cultured line. But by the time the Muslim wave of conquest reached India, the Arab influence was definitely on the wane; and the standard of the Crescent was borne by men hailing from the wilds of savage, dreary, inhospitable Turkestan. Until, therefore, they had received the sobering, humanising, civilising touch of more cultured peoples, it would be absurd to expect from them those graces which make the greatness of empire-builders still greater.

Of the Muhammadan conquerors, then, we need hardly touch upon Mahmud of Ghazni at the end of tenth century, and Shahabuddin of Ghor in the twelfth. Mahmud was, in India at least, frankly a raider, whose object was loot, and whose ambition idol-breaking. Patron of Firdausi and master of Alberuni, we scarcely recognise him in India, throughout his twenty-four expeditions, as being even on nodding terms with culture, grace, or beauty in human existence. Shahabuddin of Ghor was, in himself, perhaps, less cultured than his great predecessor. Certainly, his court had none of the splendours which the poetry of Firdausi and the scholarship of Alberuni lent to that of Mahmud. But lacking in these, Shahabuddin



89 INSCRIBED PILLAR OF SAMUDRA
GUPTA OF BHITARI

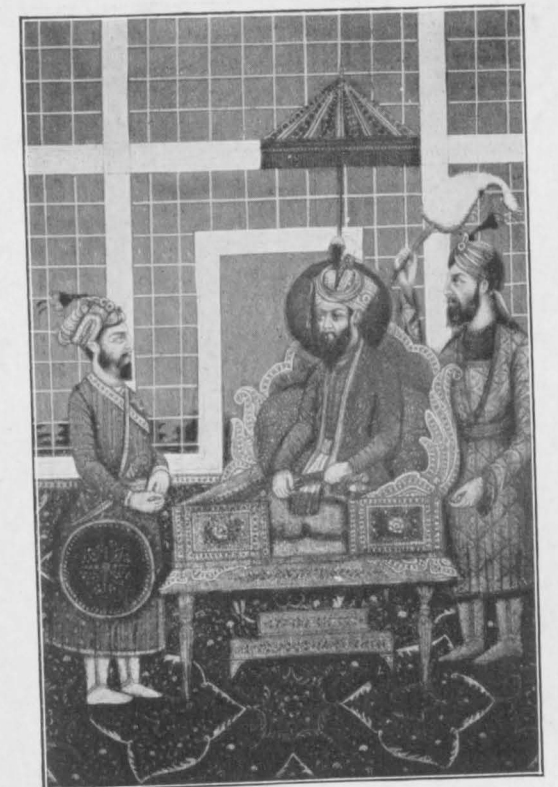


90 PULAKESIN II RECEIVING THE PERSIAN AMBASSADOR
(AJANTA FRESCOES)



91

BABUR



92

HUMAYUN

(91-92: Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)



93

AKBAR



94 AKBAR'S MOTHER
HAMIDA BANO BEGUM



95 NUR JEHAN



96

JEHANGIR

(93 and 95: Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)

appears yet, in India at any rate, to have been gifted with a nobler imagination and actuated by a loftier ambition. He compares unfavourably, in Indian eyes at least, with his Hindu antagonists in point of chivalry, if not in regard to personal courage. But success having once crowned his arms, he speedily recurred to that dream of empire, which had captured the imagination of every Indian hero through the countless generations of our history. He did not, indeed, make India his home of adoption; nor had he time or inclination to assimilate Indian civilisation or Hindu culture. Probably he saw in the latter nothing but abomination. But the elements of greatness, which are accepted as such commonly by mankind, he certainly had; and his Indian career of conquest and annexation exhibits them in a noteworthy measure.

His slave and pupil, his lieutenant and viceroy, Qutb-ud-din was, of course, the first real founder of Muslim dominion in India. Lacking not a whit in personal courage or generalship, as compared to his teacher and sovereign, Qutb-ud-din had his own trait of greatness in the perfect fidelity to the master who had raised and ennobled him, and put him in the way of further greatness. Fanatic he probably was. But as his conquests expanded; as it became more and more evident to him that his home and that of his successors was to be in India; as he made a first-hand acquaintance with the spirit of the people in adventures like that with Maharani Korumdevi of Chitor at Amber, he seems to have realised the futility of the ambition to convert the whole of India to Islam. We have to wait 4 centuries before the perception could arise that since India could not be Islamised, Islam might be Indianised. In his own way, however, and with the unavoidable limitations of his age and conditions, Qutb-ud-din must be recognised to be a great soldier-statesman, surprisingly successful in the task he had taken in hand, with very little violence to his own conscience, and no outrage upon the then current ideals of mankind.

The Slave Dynasty has two other Emperors, at all comparable to Qutb-ud-din. Altamsh maintained the traditions of conquest of his predecessors, and Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban added the ornament of culture and refinement, to which they were strangers. In his day, while the savage Mongols were ravaging the rest of Asia, the Court of Delhi was the most splendid and cultured all through Asia. Fifteen Muslim kings from Central Asia, and the great Persian poet, Shaikh Sadi, were refugees at Delhi, where they were treated with that high-bred courtesy which henceforth becomes a distinguished trait of the Indian Musalman.

A tribute may also be paid in passing to that Prince of Peace, the Emperor Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud, who was the first crowned head to show the more refined and lovable side of the Muslim ruler. A son of Altamsh, yet prisoner himself for a long while, he had been schooled in adversity. Never forgetting the lessons of his youth, he maintained the same rule of rigid simplicity for himself and his household. This is probably unequalled in the annals of Imperial Delhi, unless we think of the mighty Aurangzeb and his own personal, marvellous, simplicity, in the midst of a blazing profusion and almost criminal extravagance. Nasir-ud-Din is said to have lived entirely on the proceeds of the Quran he copied and sold. His wife, the

Empress,—the only partner of his life,—had to cook his food and run his house, as any lady of the middle class, for the Emperor. He refused to employ any servant for his personal comfort out of the public funds, a rare conception of the duties of kingship.

Alauddin Khilji is the next considerable figure on the Imperial stage. A hardy warrior, his laurels in the field were tarnished a great deal by his record of ingratitude and treachery, unsurpassed by any ruler before or since. Kingship is, indeed, a sad craft, which makes men often forget their bonds of natural affection. We have, however, met him in another connection, and must, therefore, pass on to the next imperial race at Delhi.

Of the Tughluqs who succeeded the Khiljis, there is very little to record beyond the madness of Muhammad, a living paradox, if ever there was one; and the peaceful, but prosperous and uneventful, reign of Firozeshah, the founder of yet another Delhi. In the anarchy and disorders of the closing years of the Afghan dominion, no towering personality meets the eye until we come upon the greatest of them all,—Farid, better known to history as Sher Shah Sur. In almost every instance he seems to anticipate the glory and splendour of the greatest of the Mughals. A prudent soldier, his personal bravery was beyond question or cavil, since it could be so well appreciated by Babur, the bravest of the brave. But the soldier in Sher Shah never ran away with the farsighted, deep-thinking, broad-minded statesman. His rise from the position of a petty Jagirdar to the seat of Empire is evidence enough of his daring and sagacity, of his skill and judgment and enterprise. Had Babur lived, it is difficult to say what would have happened to the lion of Bihar and Bengal. Perhaps Sher Khan made the same mistake that the Maharana Sanga of Mewar had made in inviting Babur's aid for the destruction of the Afghan Sultanate of Delhi. They seem to have believed that Babur, like his ancestor Timur, would fight their fight, get his pay or loot for the fighting, and then leave India on some other wild goose chase. If so, they were both undeceived, the Maharana to his own undoing, Sher Shah, more fortunate, to his remarkable accession of power. For, Sher Shah knew his strength,—or the lack of it,—too well to stake his life and hope on the cast of a battle, especially with a warrior and commander like Babur. Like Chandragupta Maurya in the Macedonian camp, he had for a while served in person under Babur; and formed his own opinion of the daring genius and iron will of the first of the Mughals. Escaping from the Mughal camp, he busied himself with more immediate methods of personal aggrandisement, which made him, soon after the death of Babur, a formidable opponent to his son and successor Humayun. The new Emperor had all the courage and the poetry of his father. He certainly excelled Akbar,—his son,—in culture, and even Babur in chivalry. But he lacked, in the earlier years of his rule at least, that tenacity of purpose,—that iron strength of will,—which made the greatness of Babur. Humayun was, therefore, easily able to conquer in a pitched battle. But where the fight depended on something more than personal courage, he had to yield before the superior talents of Sher Shah. When once the Mughals had, as they thought, been expelled, Sher Shah was crowned Emperor of

India; and, during his brief reign of five years, *did everything to mark him out as amongst the greatest of the Indian Emperors.* The achievements of those five brief but crowded years of military triumphs, as well as civil administrative feats, make Sher Shah dispute almost evenly the supreme place with Akbar himself in the annals of Musalman India. He not only gained battles, but built roads and rest-houses; instituted the public post; constructed or renovated irrigation works; re-organised the public services; settled land revenue and fixed the canons of its assessment; reformed the mint and determined the ratio between gold and silver; revised the principles of Imperial taxation; patronised art and literature; and altogether gave every proof of his ability as well as intention to string together and consolidate the vast fabric of his dominions into a single, solid nation. But envious fate denied him the time needed for accomplishing a tenth of his self-imposed task. He was cut off by an accidental shot in the heyday of his career; and the dream of Sher Shah was left for the greatest of the Mughals to convert into a reality.

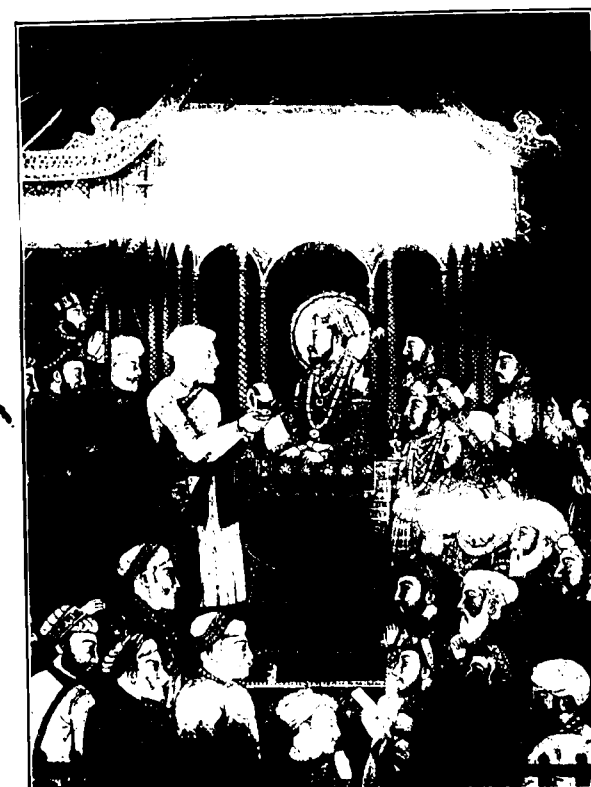
* * * * *

Before, however, we speak of Akbar the Great, let us cast a glance in passing at another Empire-builder working on another part of the stage. Historical research has dealt rather meagrely, so far, with the fortunes of the heroes of the Deccan. The authors of the great Pandya, Chola, Chalukya Empires of the far, far South, are shrouded in impenetrable mists; and we know of a Pulakesin only by his opposition to and defeat of a more fortunate Shri Harsha from the North. But, notwithstanding the paucity of information, we can easily distinguish the outstanding figures of the founders of the great Hindu and Muhammadan kingdoms that, for nearly two centuries, were to dispute the country among them. The raid of the famous renegade general of Alauddin Khilji had terrorised, but not subdued, and much less annihilated, the Malayalis, the Kanarese and the Telugus,—descendants of that mighty race which had peopled India before ever an Aryan invader had set foot in the country. They at last found leaders in two brothers, feudatories of the Hoysala kingdom, who established a settlement at Kishkindha,—the epic capital of Sugriva, the monkey ally of Rama,—on the right bank of the Tungabhadra, in the margin of territory between the modern kingdoms of Mysore and Hyderabad. Bukka, succeeding his elder brother, became the ruler of this straggling settlement of mud huts, destined soon to blossom forth into the famous Empire of Vijayanagar. For to this settlement flocked, as to an asylum, all those who wanted to escape the tyranny and bigotry of the Muslim invaders; and with their help, the united strength of the Hindus was enough, not merely to stem back the tide of invasion and forcible conversion, but to open up a new chapter in the Hindu history of the south, lasting over 200 years, full of achievements of wealth and splendour, second to none in the entire continent.

While the foundation was being laid for the Hindu Empire of the farther South, a new Muhammadan power, independent of Delhi, was also coming into existence on the plateau of the Deccan. According to a common legend, Zafar was a humble

Musalman in the service of a Brahman called Gangu. In tilling his master's fields, he one day came upon a secret hoard, which, instead of appropriating for his own purposes, he took to his master. The latter was struck by this remarkable piece of honesty, and rewarded him by educating the servant with his own sons, and eventually obtaining for him a post in the Tughluq service. Once launched, Zafar's native talents carried him from post to post in a rapid succession of triumphs, that culminated in his being placed in command of an army corps operating in the south. The reigning sovereign, Muhammad Tughluq, had exasperated his people by his innumerable freaks of incredible folly, cruelty, ambition, or insanity; and so, when the fateful hour struck, the man also was at hand. The army proclaimed Zafar their Chief and Emperor; but the prudent adventurer, rather than grasp at the shadow of Imperial name in the North, chose the substantial security of the remote south. Zafar Khan was easily able to suppress opposition of the loyalists, and to secure himself in the Deccan—being proclaimed king as Ala-ud-din Bahman. This Empire, founded by an ex-slave of a Brahman, lasted for 340 years, and comprised, at the height of its prosperity, practically the entire peninsula of the Deccan.

The Mughal Empire was founded in India by Zahiruddin Muhamad Babur, to whose career we have made more than one reference already. A dreamer and yet a warrior of awful prowess; a poet and yet a statesman of consummate ability, foresight and sagacity; he was born of the turbulent race of Timur, cradled amidst the untamed beauties of Samarkand, and rose to manhood amidst the endless vicissitudes of fortune, that made him a seasoned warrior and a finished general at the ripe age of twenty-five. The character of the man shows clearly through every page of his early, varied, romantic career. Three times he took and thrice he lost Samarkand, the metropolis of Central Asia; but not all the blows of fortune succeeded in dimming his ardour for war, or his appreciation of natural beauty. A jolly toper, a gentle poet, a doughty soldier, he was every inch a knight of romance. But the gay insouciance of a poet-philosopher masked the keenness of one of the greatest strategists of his age. The story of his inroads upon India is better left for the historian to edit out of the Emperor's own memoirs, and from the voluminous material compiled by his son and daughter. Suffice it for us to note that he excelled all the previous invaders of India,—of his race and lineage particularly,—in the ease with which he arrived at the decision to make India his home and the heart of his Empire. His own immediate followers were against a permanent settlement in India, where they missed the snowclad mountains of their native wilds. But overlooking this advantage, he was yet able to see the immense possibilities of an Empire in India. By his firmness as much as by his eloquence, he was able to persuade his followers to stay on and share in the vast and rich empire he was hoping to build up. They stayed; and, before Babur died, they were masters of the Punjab and the country between the Ganges and the Jumna. After he had vanquished Sanga in the field, and taught his Afghan allies the weight of



97

SHAH JEHAN



98 MUMTAZ MAHAL



99

AURANGZEB

(97 and 99: Bahadur Singhji Collection, Calcutta)



100

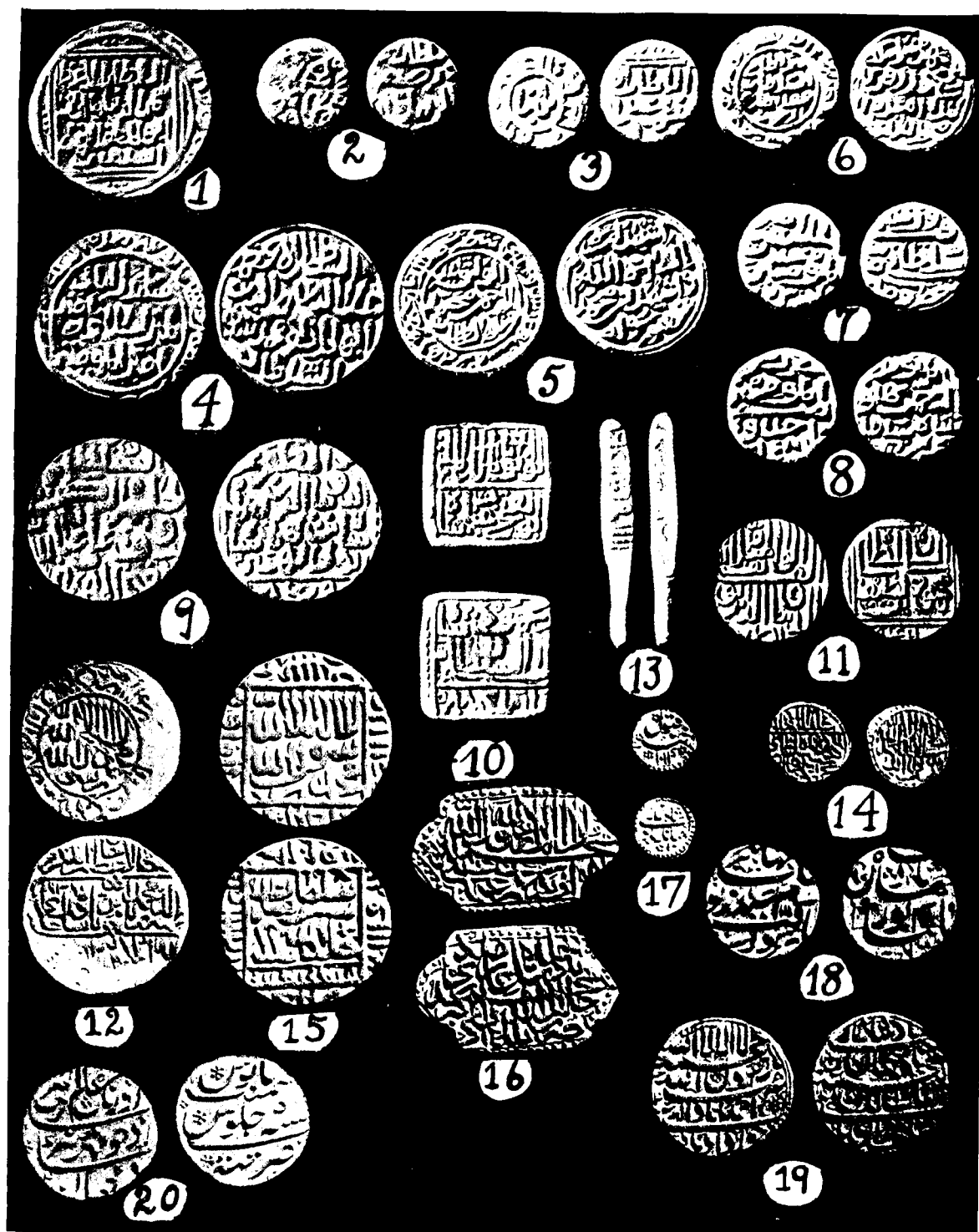
SHIVAJI

(Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay)

his sword, he settled down to plant gardens at Delhi and Agra, to grow his favourite melons of Kabul on the soil of the Doab. His sword was, indeed, held always loose in the scabbard. But the promise of his still growing greatness was nipped in the bud. His death was a fit end to his career of romantic adventure. His favourite son lay stricken before the Emperor's eyes. Rather than live himself and let Humayun die, Babur prayed to God to spare his son, and to take him instead. It was a rare prayer, and was soon answered. Humayun recovered, and Babur fell ill—never to rise again.

The Empire he left was divided by his dutiful son, the chivalrous heir of a knightly father, among his faithless and treacherous brothers, despite their character. His own share Humayun had to dispute with his erstwhile allies or feudatories. But undismayed by the troubles that beset his own throne, Humayun was ever ready to run to the rescue of the distressed. His succour of the widowed Queen and the orphaned King of Udaipur, against his own co-religionists, is amongst the noblest of his achievements. He conquered Gujarat for a while, but was himself driven out of his Empire by the superior genius of the Sur. But even in flight and adversity, the romantic ardour of his father's son knew no restraint. In Sindh he saw, at a feast given by his step-mother, a fourteen-year old girl, the most beautiful daughter of a Persian teacher of religion. To see her was to love her. Humayun asked her hand in marriage; and though Hindal, his brother, opposed, the union of two devoted hearts was soon followed by the union of their hands in holy matrimony. Their love lasted while Humayun lived; for Hamida Banu Begum was courageous as she was beautiful, devoted as she was high-souled. Akbar the Great was born of this union.

The story of Akbar is told too often to need repetition even in a summary form. His birth and infancy; his accession and first victories; his struggles with the companions of his father and the grandees of his court; his conquests and annexations in the full bloom of manhood; his organisation, civil as well as military; his search after Truth; his love of the refined and the beautiful in art as well as nature; his delight in music; his appreciation of painting; his patronage of poets and men of letters; even the minute details of his personal appearance, temperament and habits, are portrayed in Mr. Vincent Smith's masterpiece so vividly, that the reader cannot but recognise in Akbar as it were a personal acquaintance. But without transgressing on the province of his biographer; without repeating tales which no amount of repetition would stale to Indian ears; we may yet mention a few details illustrative of the splendour and magnificence of the court of the greatest Emperor of India since the Imperial Mauryas and the renowned Guptas. His great-grandson ruled, it is true, a larger extent of territories; and had probably a correspondingly larger revenue. But it was Akbar who had laid the foundation of that Empire, and built the greatest portion of it. Succeeding in 1556 to a shadow sovereignty, Akbar was for four years afterwards under the domination of the powers behind his throne. It was, therefore, within a period of less than twenty years (1560-1580) that he accomplished the bulk of his conquests, and settled and



COINS OF INDIA

- 101
1. Altamsh. 2. Raziya. 3. Ghiyas-ud-din Balban. 4. 'Alau-d-din Muhammad, Delhi. 5. Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Delhi. 6. Muhammad bin Tughlaq: Forced Currency, Tughlaqpur. 7. Feroz Shah, Delhi. 8. Bahlol Lodi, Delhi. 9. Bahmani: 'Alau-d-din Ahmad II. 10. Malwa: Ghiyas Shah. 11. Gujarat: Mahmud Shah III. 12. Babur: Lahor. 13. Bijapur: A'dil Shah, Larin. 14. Humayun. 15. Sher Shah, Agra. 16. Akbar, Agra. 17. Jahangir. 18. Jahangir: with Nur Jahan, Surat. 19. Shah Jahan I. 20. Aurangzeb.

consolidated the vast empire stretching from Sindh to Bengal, and Kabul to Gujarat. His later years were not altogether free from warfare; but by 1580 he had given such unmistakable proofs of his transcendent genius, that we may regard the achievement of his imperial ambitions as complete by that time.

How far did he succeed in his task? At the time of his death in 1605, Akbar left, in Agra fort alone, hard cash to the tune of £ 20 million; and if we add up the treasure in all the other provincial capitals, the cash alone aggregates £ 40 million, equal in purchasing power to £ 200 million or more in modern money.¹ And this after fifty years of constant alertness, and splendid, magnificent living beyond the dreams of splendour of any days before or since Akbar!

For an empire founded on conquest, Akbar's stores of military material and weapons seem disproportionately small. But in this, as in many other matters, Akbar's genius set his own standard. He was in marked contrast in this to the earlier emperors. Akbar, unlike the Mauryas or the Guptas, was content with a relatively small standing army, trusting to special levies for any particular expeditions, and depending on the *aides* of his nobles and feudatories for a general strength fully sufficient for the defence of the Empire, its order and security. The military *noblesse* of Akbar was a hierarchy, ordaining the several ranks according to the varied strength of the contingent—horse and foot—which the holder was expected to supply, or entitled to command. It was not a hereditary aristocracy; but, as the biographies in the official list of the *noblesse* show, there was already a seed of such a development in the policy of Akbar and his successors. The salaries payable to the various officers in this military hierarchy compare magnificently with those under the Mauryan Empire, where the heir-apparent was allowed only 48,000 *Panas* per annum,—not much more than Rs. 4000 a month in actual money, and probably not much more in real value either. In the days of Aurangzeb, a hundred years after Akbar, the allowance of the undesignate heir-apparent was

1) The following is an inventory of that treasure:—

Gold coin	Rs. 9,75,80,000
Silver coin	.. 10,00,00,000
Bronze coin	.. 7,66,666
Diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, pearls, etc. (gems)...	.. 6,05,20,521
Wrought gold (including jewels)	.. 1,90,06,745
Golden furniture (Plate and images of animals)	.. 95,07,992
Wrought silver: Goblets &c.	.. 22,25,838
Brazen vessels	.. 51,225
Porcelain	.. 25,07,747
Cloths, silks, cotton goods	.. 1,55,09,979
Woollen cloths	.. 5,03,252
Tents, hangings, umbrellas, rugs	.. 99,25,545
Books	.. 64,63,731
Engines of war and Ordnance Stores	.. 85,75,791
Weapons	.. 75,55,825
Harness	.. 25,25,646
Housings, cloaks and royal arms	.. 50,00,000
Total	Rs. 34,82,26,503

Rs. 2 crores per annum from the Imperial Treasury. The widowed consort of Jahangir—Nur Jahan—was allowed by Shah Jahan Rs. 16 lakhs for the purely personal expenses of a retired widow. In the footnote is a table of salaries¹ under Akbar of the highest officers in the Empire. Even if these were not paid all the year round, they indicate a very high rate of pay, especially when viewed in relation to the purchasing power of the rupee in those days. No wonder that, as one of the English travellers in the seventeenth century remarks, the provincial governors were able to maintain a right royal state. The Subahdar of Gujarat, according to this authority, had a total annual expenditure of Rs. 1 crore! though, very probably, by far the larger proportion of this was derived from the private estates of the Viceroy. Akbar had discovered the principle of making up a splendid court and a brilliant aristocracy without any danger to the sovereign, in affording the nobles opportunities of honourable and dignified employment away from their homes, somewhat on the same lines as were followed in France under Louis XIV.

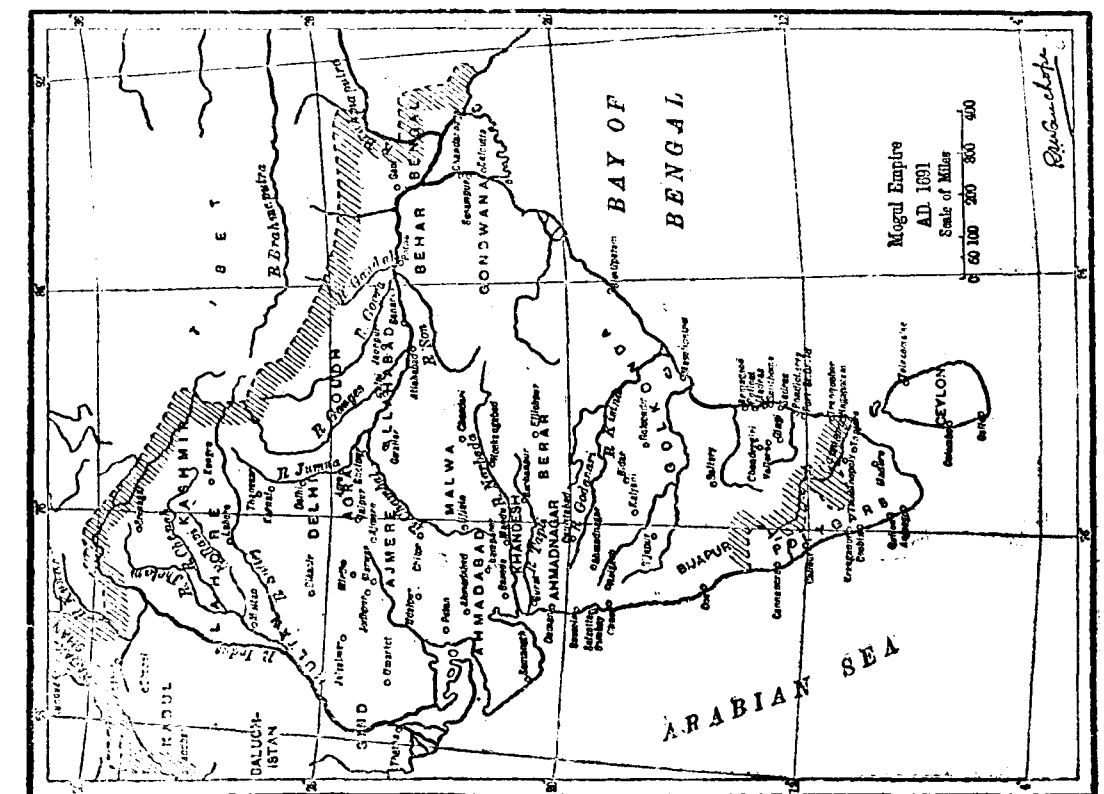
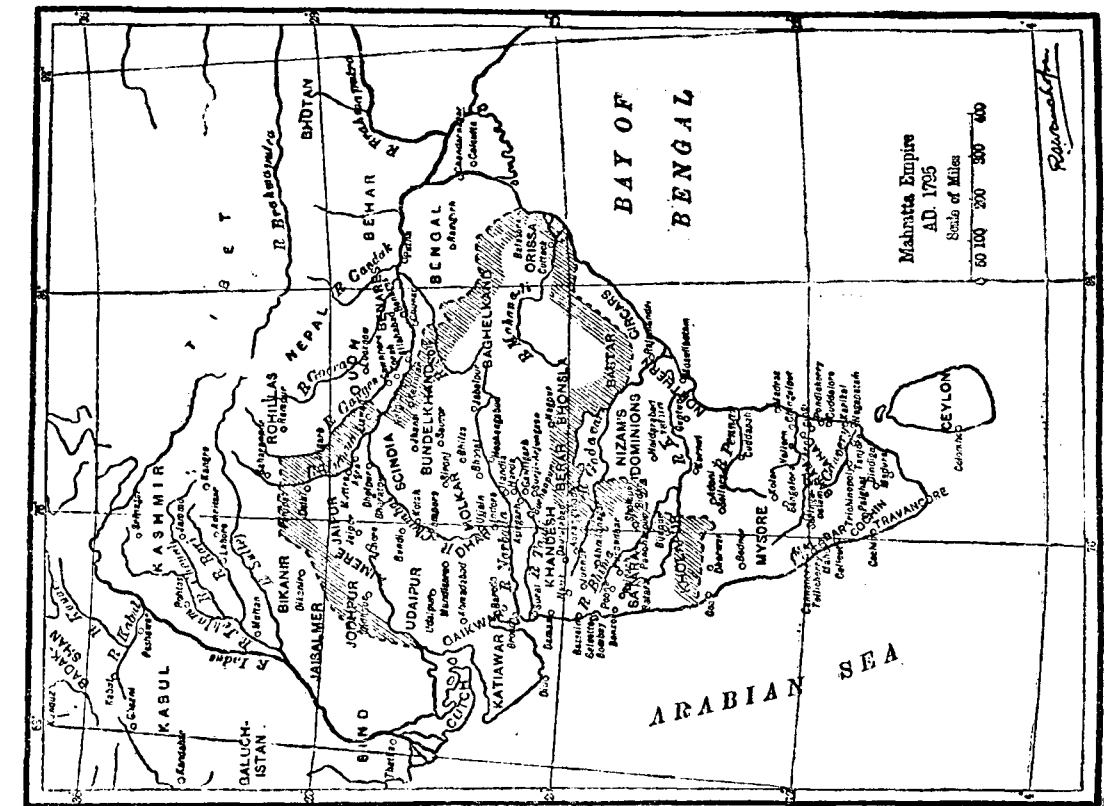
Akbar's passion for organisation,—a veritable mark of genius,—shows itself again and again in the minute regulation of every detail of life in his Court and his harem, his army and his administration. The continuance of his Empire for a century and a half in its pristine glory was in no small measure due to this perfect regulation and careful organisation. The harem,—that most sensitive, delicate and even dangerous point in an oriental monarchy,—was a marvel of ordered ease and luxury. Five thousand women dwelt within it, and each had her own separate state and quarters. The Camp of the Emperor on march was another such wonder, which never failed to excite the most unstinted admiration of the European travellers. It is impossible to give even a specimen of the myriads of regulations made by Akbar. The student who wants fuller details must be referred to the fountain-head of all information about Akbar's institutions,—the *Ain-i-Akbari*, the Mirror of Akbar. Let us conclude this sketch by a quotation from V. A. Smith, summing up the character and achievements of his hero.

“The practical ability displayed by Akbar as soldier, general, administrator, diplomatist and supreme ruler, has been shown abundantly by his whole history, and does not need further exposition. The personal force of his character, discernible even now with sufficient clearness, was overpowering to his contemporaries. He was truly, as the Jesuit author calls him, “the terror of the East.” In the later years of his reign, when all his old friends had disappeared, and he had been spoiled to a certain extent by more than four decades of autoeracy, it is probable that he was feared rather than loved. The dread of him, even at an earlier time, was so potent that he felt himself free to flout and insult the most sacred feelings of his Muhammadan subjects, and to continue in the course of conduct for more than twenty years. As early as 1582 Monserrate noted with surprise that Akbar had not been killed by the Musalmans. It is true that his innovations provoked rebellions, but we never hear of their resulting in direct attempts

1) Commander of	Horses	Elephants	Beasts of Burden	SALARIES		
				Rupees per month		
				1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class
5,000	340	100	260	30,000	29,000	28,000
1,000	94	31	67	8,200	8,100	8,000
500	30	12	27	2,500	2,300	2,100
100	10	3	7	700	600	500
10	4	—	—	100	82½	75

on his life. His grand personal qualities seem to have shielded him from the violence of the assassin. We read of only one attempt to murder him, and that occurred when he was twenty-one years of age, and was still a zealous Muslim, but had given deep offence by invading the honour of families.

In the tale of the Great Mughal Emperors, there is at least one grand, noble, heroic figure of a woman that cannot be passed over in silence. Nur Jahan was not a heroine of the harem. She was the guardian angel, the inspiring genius of Jahangir, as she was the adored wife of his bosom, the beloved consort of his reign. The son of Akbar lacked many a trait of his father's towering personality; but his deficiencies were eclipsed by the dazzling qualities of his Empress. Their love is a fit tale for an inspired bard. The luckless child of a Persian immigrant, Nur Jahan was abandoned at birth in a desert by her parents; but fate had destined her for higher things. She was saved and returned to her parents. Her father obtained honourable employment under Akbar. The daughter, dowered by peerless beauty and still more matchless graces of the mind, was a frequent and welcome visitor to the Imperial *zenana*. Prince Salim once saw her in the palace garden for one brief fleeting moment,—and for ever lost his heart to the lovely Persian. His father, however, would have no such *mesalliance*; and so she was married and exiled to a distant province of the Empire. It was only when Salim had ascended the throne, that he could gratify the dream of his youth and manhood. Her husband was bidden to the court of the Imperial viceroy in his province; but Sher Khan, too, was worthy of her who had loved him so well and truly. Refusing to be a complaisant coward, he died the death of a warrior in the field; and his widow was brought to the court of the Emperor. But the Master of India dared not take liberties with the idol of his heart. Lord of life and death to countless millions, he was yet a humble suppliant at the feet of the matchless Persian. For four long, cruel, desolate years he waited her self-imposed widowhood. At last, when she had consented to accept his homage, he raised her to his throne. Alone among the women in Indian history, or with the possible exception of the first Gupta Empress, Nur Jahan was a consort regnant. Even coins were minted in her name jointly with her husband's. If the *Khutba* was not recited in her name, also, she was amply compensated by the perfect sovereignty she exercised over her husband and his Empire. Jahangir was a changed man under the dear, delicious influence of his adored Empress. For fifteen years she ruled the realm, commanded the armies, made and unmade the fortunes of many a grandee. Her power was more legitimate, her influence more beneficial, her policy more impersonal, than that of any woman that can at all be compared to her. When at last misfortune overtook her; when a rebellious general and an undutiful son beset her lord, she acted the heroine to perfection in a stricken field. Foiled in battle, she shared the gilded captivity of the Emperor to the day of his release wrought by her woman's wit. Her day was done when Jahangir died, and the closing years of this wonderful



woman mark her to be even more high-souled in her retirement than ever she was at the height of her glory.

* * * * *

The descendants of Babur and Akbar maintained the Mughal Empire for a hundred years after the death of the latter, in all its strength and splendour, extent and integrity. The last of the Great Mughals, Aurangzeb Alamgir, even made considerable additions, carrying the imperial sway of the House of Timur from sea to sea to the farthest extremity of India. It would be difficult to find in any other country a succession of kings of the same House, for close upon two hundred years, of such high level of ability. But, with the exception of Babur and Akbar, the sovereigns of this line can scarcely be ranked as the makers of an empire or the builders of a nation. *Grand Seigneurs* in every sense of the term, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, even Humayun and Aurangzeb, cannot compare in constructive greatness to Akbar, or in the conqueror's renown to Babur.

After Akbar, again, first class Empire-builders fall into decline. Shivaji, the Maratha chieftain, was certainly a man above the biggest of his time; and, if he must be denied the title of an Empire-builder, the fault is not his own, but rather that of his immediate successors. His very insistence on Hinduism was, though not a pose, the inevitable result of the circumstances of his time. Aurangzeb, the third in descent after Akbar, had reversed the policy of real national solidarity of the greatest of the Great Mughals. The Hindus of the north were powerless, purposeless, or leaderless to make a stand against the suicidal fanaticism of the Emperor. Shivaji hence raised the standard which seemed to be threatened with annihilation. The son of a Bijapur *jagirdar*, he early imbibed a passion for liberating his suffering co-religionists from the tyranny of the Musalman. Illiterate in the same sense as Akbar, he was nevertheless well schooled in the peculiar requirements of his vocation. Step by step he rose by his own daring exploits to be the champion of defiant and assertive Hinduism, acknowledged as such by Aurangzeb himself. The latter tried both force of arms and duplicity to vanquish or ensnare him. But his daring overcame the armies of the Mughals, and his genius rescued him from their prison. His escape from Delhi was much more ambitious, extensive and dazzling. Crowned in regal splendour at his capital, he was recognised by all the powers around him,—native as well as foreign,—as an independent sovereign, the idol of the Hindus, the pride of the Marathas, the dread of the Mughals. Like Akbar, he, too, was no mere military adventurer. His greater glory shows in the splendid semblance of organised, constitutional rule that he strove to establish in his dominions. Read it how you like, it is a marvel how an illiterate peasant of the Ghats could evolve—could even think of—such a wonderful structure as his Cabinet, so much in advance of his age, so much at variance with his tradition!

The immediate successor of Shivaji was more unfortunate than incompetent. Shambhaji lacked not the daring that had distinguished his great father. But he was

dissolute, slovenly, thoughtless. He shows at his best and noblest as a prisoner in the hands of an enemy that knew, and showed, no mercy. Shahu, his son, though brought up in the enervating atmosphere of the Mughal *zenana*, lost none of the passionate devotion to the faith of his fathers; and though he lacked the genius of his grandfather, he missed no opportunity, when it came to him, to raise once again the standard of Shivaji. But the custody of the Maratha fortunes was destined to pass to a line of great Brahman Ministers, who came within an ace of resuscitating the Hindu Empire throughout the continent of India in the eighteenth century. The Peshwas of Poona were nominally only the chief ministers of the descendants of Shivaji,—almost in the same way that the Mayors of the Palace in France served the descendants of Charlemagne. Bajji Rao I, and his luckless but no less brilliant, daring, and gifted son and namesake, pushed the Maratha dominion to the extremities of India, north, south, east and west; and though they were beaten in the Battle of Panipat by the Afghans in 1761, the conqueror did not care, or dare, to remain permanently in India. The Maratha sovereignty was thus really unaffected by this terrible, but temporary, set-back. What really defeated, and undid the work of Shivaji and the Bajji Raos, was the old, old curse of India—internal disunion. The great Satraps of the Peshwa,—the Scindhias, Holkars, Gaekwars, and Bhonsles,—failed to respond to the call of national solidarity in their suicidal search for personal aggrandisement. A Maratha Confederacy was created by the genius of the great, brilliant, pathetic Nana Fadnavis in the closing years of the eighteenth century; but was undermined by the perfidy, or ambition, of its most prominent members; broken by their incessant rivalries; destroyed by the weakness and vices of the last of the line—perhaps the last of the Hindus—as well.

* * * *

There is no need to be tragic. The race of the Hindus is not ended, nor their spirit gone. A new breath of life is already seen to revivify the body of an ancient nation, which is all the more promising because it makes for a rational—not sentimental—solidarity among the myriads of India. The pangs of a new birth may not permit the picture to be uniformly pleasing to the eye of the contemporary; but contemporaries never see all the shades and nuances of the drama of their day. And hope is eternal in the human breast.

CHAPTER V

POETRY AND DRAMA

The literary treasures of India are the oldest in the world. Their beginnings reach far back into those dim recesses of the past, where history is yet only a fairytale, and biography a myth. The Vedic hymns—particularly of the Rig-Veda—are, indeed, not in the same tongue that holds the amazing treasures of the classic Sanskrit. But the difference is of absorbing interest and material importance only to philologists and archaeologists. To the average reader of the classic Sanskrit, the Vedic hymns have a quaint, archaic flavour, all the more pleasing because of their wonderful capacity to embody sense in sound. The classic Sanskrit language is really the same high-born Vedic lady, dressed in more gorgeous clothing, adorned with more polished ornaments, embellished by more perfect art in the parure and allure of a veritable *grande dame*.

It may be open to question if the Sanskrit language, as regulated and fixed by Panini in the 4th or 5th Century B. C., was always the language of the people as a whole. It may be questioned whether the source and origin of the great mass of literature in epic or classic poetry, drama or story, or even the grand treatises on every branch of moral and mental philosophy, metaphysics and logic, law and social organisation, on dramaturgy, poetics, and mathematics—were always and from the beginning in the Sanskrit language as we find it now. But whether or not the various popular dialects co-existed with the parent stock of the speech we call Sanskrit; whether or not the seed of all the immense, varied, wonderful mass of literature we find in that language even to-day in spite of the countless ravages of time and of savage barbarians, came into it from the less refined, less scholastic, but more popular dialects,—it is nevertheless undeniable that the combined mass of the still surviving literature in the Sanskrit tongue makes even to-day one of the most precious treasures of mankind, amazing in its richness, bewildering in its variety, unequalled in its polished perfection.

It is, indeed, highly probable that the mass of the people, even in the days of the Vedic Aryans, spoke a language which was less refined and less systematized than the speech of the cultured Seers of the day. The language of the peoples not of Aryan stock, who remained in possession of a considerable portion of the peninsula, must also have had its influence upon the speech of the new-comers, as spoken whether by the cultured or the common. Whatever its origin, the Sanskrit literature is older, and grander, and more stirring, than that in any other language now surviving. Of the authors we know next to nothing. They were legendary figures, and their life and achievements are impossible even to glance at in the absence of any reliable records. We shall therefore confine our appreciation only to their works.

"The Vedic language as we find it in the Rig-Veda and the latter *Samhitas* is already a poetic and hieratic language, which was doubtless different even from the speech of the priests in ordinary life, and still further removed from that of the ruling and subject classes, not to mention the slaves or aborigines. The language of the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* is equally a hieratic speech; it represents the language used primarily by priests at sacrifice, then in speculations based on the sacrifice, and extending ultimately beyond its immediate limits, not the language of everyday conversation either among the priests themselves or in intercourse with others. It is undoubtedly a general continuation of the language of the *Samhitas* in so far as it is descended from the prose of the Samhita period; indeed, while we have no prose as old as the Rig-Veda, there is no reason to doubt that the prose of the *Samhitas* of the Black *Yajur Veda* is contemporaneous with the later verses, of the texts. In the grammar of Panini (composed about the 4th century B.C.) we find the norm laid down for the spoken language—*Bhasha* of his time in the higher circles of society, a fact which explains the failure of the norm of Panini to conform to any texts which are preserved to us, though it has obvious affinities with the language of such *Brahmanas* as the *Aiteraya*."

The pride of place, in point of antiquity at least, belongs, of course, to the Vedic hymns.

Among the four Vedas, the Rig-Veda (Veda of Verses) is the most ancient. The greatness and importance of this is inestimable, whether we look upon it as a storehouse of data for ancient history, a mine of information for early theology, or a treasure house of facts of Aryan society, its structure and regulation. But its richness as a piece of artistic creation, of the poet's eye "in a fine frenzy rolling," is still more incalculable. The music that vibrates in every line of these thousand odd hymns is impossible to render in any other tongue, even including the purest, most refined, most beautiful daughter of the Vedic Sanskrit herself. Regarded in India as the most sacred of its treasures by the Indian people, the Vedas have been preserved in sound and sense with the most marvellous fidelity to the original. The great peculiarity of the Vedic accent has been maintained intact, thanks to the absolute necessity of reciting the sacred texts at the several sacrifices with absolute, perfect, meticulous correctness. This accent is musical in its nature, depending upon the pitch of the voice in pronouncing every syllable of each verse; and so differentiates that speech decisively from all the later languages, including the classic Sanskrit.

Of the literary beauty of the oldest of the Vedas, a by-no-means over enthusiastic English scholar says:—

"Regarded from this aspect alone, its value is considerable. As is to be expected from its great antiquity, its diction is simpler and more natural than that of post-Vedic Sanskrit. Its hymns as a whole are composed with a surprising degree of metrical skill and command of language. Their poetry is often impaired by conceits and mysticism, particularly where the two specifically ritual deities—Agni and Soma—are concerned. Yet the hymns contain much genuine poetry, often expressed in beautiful and even noble imagery."¹

1) cp. A. A. Macdonell. *India's Past*. p. 39. (Oxford, 1927.)

It is impossible to select examples which could appeal to ears unused to the majestic sway and wave of the Vedic verse. But those familiar with the masterpieces of great musical genius easily recall how the creations of true genius in music can make sound blend in perfect harmony with the sense. There are war songs in these Vedic hymns, which, in the form of weird incantations of the royal bard, suggest the fierce blast of the trumpet, the rushing of the chariots, the shouts of rage and triumph of the warriors, in the changing rhythm of the verses, in the most marvellous choice of words suiting exactly the sense to be conveyed.

"Let the might and the power of the prayer be now increased, as also the warrior's sway of whom I am the family priest. I lengthen his warrior rule by the incense-smoke rising to heaven. I shatter his foeman's arms. Let those who rage against the mighty king sink low. * * * Heroes advance and conquer; let your arms be fierce. Strike, strike home your pointed arrows; on the weak bowmen, strike with fierce weapons the powerless foe."¹

In the very last verse rousing the host to advance and conquer, the bard is himself carried off his feet by the fierce passion in his own verses, and repeats over and over again the harsh sounds that thrill through the last two resounding lines, calling on the Aryans to annihilate the enemy.

Prētā Jāyatā nara ugrā vāh santu bāhāvah.
Tīksnēsavo abalāadhanvano hata ugrā-āyudhā abalān ugrābāhāvah.

The poets of the Vedas are equally felicitous in expressing the longing of the human soul to pierce through the unknown, and to grasp the infinite. The intense pathos of the following line is inexpressible in the most faithful, the most exact translation.

Pārā hi me vimanyavah pātanti vāsyā-īṣṭaye
Vāyo nā vasatir-ūpa.² (R. V. I. 25, 4.)

"And still my wearied mind turns to thoughts of wealth, even as a bird flies to its nest."

But the true end of the struggle is found in the one verse handed down from Vedic times and murmured by all orthodox Hindus to-day, as they wake every day to find the reality of the world rise up around them, and ever know that beyond this reality is that which they still yearn to know.

Om! Tāt Savituh vāreṇyam bhārgo
devāsya dhīmahi
Dhiyō yō nah prachōdyāt.³

Once heard in the land of its birth, once heard from the lips of those who have caught its elusive music,

1) *Atharva Veda* III., 19, 7.

2) R. V. I., 25, 4.

3) "Let us meditate on the to-be-longed for Light of the Inspirer; may it incite all our efforts." R. V. III. 62, 10.

"It rings for ever after as India's noblest tribute to the divine, as an acknowledgment of submissive resignation to the decrees which bid man keep his soul in patience, until the day dawns when all things shall be revealed."¹

To the remaining three Vedas it is unnecessary to devote much space. The *Sama* and the *Yajur* are nothing but the redactions of the great Rig-Veda, the former almost wholly, and the latter nearly a third, derived from the main stock. They deal with the ritual attendant on the several sacrifices. The hymn was the prayer without which sacrifice would be of no avail. The prayer must be recited and intoned with absolute exactness in voice and sequence of the sounds by the Priest. A single syllable mispronounced, a single letter misplaced, and the entire magic of the rite would go. Hence, the practice of learning the Vedas by heart, guaranteeing perfect accuracy in intonation and accentuation.

The *Atharva Veda*,—the fourth and last,—is more original and interesting. It is obviously the product of a society far more sophisticated than that of the Rig-Veda. For, besides an amount of pantheistic and theosophic matter, it deals in magic spells to remove disease, to vanquish foes, to bring good luck in love and in gambling. Here is a specimen from a hymn intended to secure a woman's affections by the aid of the God of Love:—

"With longing feathered, tipped with love,
Its shaft is formed of mixed desire.
With this his arrow levelled well
Shall Kama pierce thee to the heart."²

A considerable portion of the *Atharva* and *Yajur Veda* is written in prose, and its bulk is a little more than half the Rig-Veda.

Let us here note, in passing, the origin of the art of writing in India. The Vedic hymns were distinctly *spoken*, not *written* compositions. They were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition, and so could dispense with a written form. Exactly when the art of writing first arose, or came into India, cannot be said with any degree of precision; but scholars are agreed that the eighth century B. C. must be taken to have witnessed the birth or introduction of the science in India. Basing their arguments on the fact that no written records are available, whether in actual manuscript or inscriptions like those of Asoka in the 3rd Century B. C., the modern Western scholars have argued that the earliest written records of India must have been for the use of traders' books only, migrating thence to legal documents, and coming to be used, last of all, for the transcription of sacred and profane literature. Allowing that no written records earlier than Asoka's inscriptions have still been discovered; and admitting that the completion and perfection of the literary language by definite rules of grammar was not accomplished until about the 4th or 5th Century B. C.,—the date assigned

1) *A Literary History of India* p. 61. by R. W. Fraser.

2) *India's Past*. p. 42. A. A. Macdonell.

to Panini,—it does not by any means follow that the art of writing was not known in India till about the eighth century B. C. The Vedic was a spoken, in contradistinction to a written, tongue; and the classic Sanskrit, with all its elaborate rules of grammar and letter combinations in words, may not have been formed much before Panini. But the fact that there are distinct marks, of the nature of inscriptions, on the seals discovered recently in the Indus Valley, must be enough to conclude that writing of some sort must have been known and used, if not amongst the Aryan invaders, then among the Dravidian natives, long before the 8th or even the 18th century B. C. The script used here is of course lost; and its deciphering must take time. But the art as known and practised amongst the native Dravidians must have provided material for the self-confident Aryans. Their own script,—or the variety of it which we now know to be the most ancient,—was derived from the Phœnicians. As used by the Aryans in India,—and particularly after the grammarians had settled the sound values, and the order of the letters according to the organ used in pronouncing them,—the script became materially different from the old Semitic alphabet.

The script, it may be added, is of two varieties,—Brahmi and Kharoshti,—both derived ultimately from the same Semitic source. The former is traced back to the Moabite inscription of circa 850 B. C., and is considered to be the parent of all modern Indian alphabets. Kharoshti, on the other hand, was, when it entered India, of Persian origin, written from right to left. Asokan inscriptions are in that script; and, though during the interval the alphabet is enriched to suit the more numerous sounds in the Indian tongue, its affinity with its sister scripts of Semitic origin is unmistakable.

* * * *

The literature of the Buddhists, as we now possess it, does not go beyond the 3rd century B. C. The *Katha Vattu* of Tissa, son of Mogali, is the earliest extant written record, and dates from 250 B. C. The Third Œcumenical Council of Buddhism was held in or about 241 B. C., when the *Pitakas*,—or the Baskets,—of the Canon were completed. The three Baskets contain, respectively, Metaphysics (*Abhidhammapitaka*) as recited by Kashyapa, the most learned of the Buddha's disciples; the Canon or Rule of Ecclesiastic Life (*Vinayapitaka*) as recited by Upali; and the *Suttapitaka*, or aphorisms and parables given to his most favourite disciple,—Ananda,—by the Buddha himself. This *Suttapitaka* has 5 divisions called the *Nikayas*, containing the speeches and dialogues of the Blessed One. Says Mr. Rhys Davids:—

"In the depth of philosophic insight, in the method of Socratic questioning often adopted, in the earnest and elevated tone of the whole, in the evidence they afford of the most cultured thought of the day, these discourses constantly remind one of the dialogues of Plato."

To this may be added the *Questions of King Milinda*, a compilation of some learned Buddhist dating from about 125 B. C., and pronounced by the greatest of

the modern Buddhist scholar to be a "Masterpiece of Indian prose, and indeed the best book of its class from a literary point of view, that had been produced in any country." It ranks in authority next after the *Pitakas*. The author, a thorough-going rationalist, works out remorselessly, and with inexorable logic, a perfect system of negative dogmatism, denying soul, God, and a future for the liberated.

Later works of a Buddhist origin include the *Vissuddhimagga* of Buddhagosa (c. 400 A. D.) setting forth the *Hinayana* ideal of the Arhat; while the same writer's *Athashalini* is a most valuable commentary on the *Dhammasangani*. The Chronicles, called the *Dipavamsa* and *Mahavamsa*, are of historical rather than philosophical importance; but they indicate the shifting of the centre of interest in Buddhist philosophy from the country of its origin to other lands and alien peoples.

Poetical writings of great Buddhist scholars like Ashwaghosha, the Court Pandit to the Emperor Kanishka, once head of the Buddhist University in Magadha, break the tradition of the Master, inasmuch as they begin to be composed in Sanskrit in preference to the language of the people. If we include writers like these among the glories of Buddhism, we shall have to carry the literary history of the Buddhists beyond the reign of the Emperor Harsha, who was himself no mean scholar, poet, and dramatist. We must, therefore, leave this brief survey at this point with the remark only, that while it was in the heyday of its popularity, Buddhism added to the literature of India,—and particularly in the vernacular,—an immense treasure of philosophic and poetical writings, the full value of which is even now not realised.

The Prakrit or the people's tongue in Aryan India seems to have been almost as old as the Vedic Sanskrit. We can, therefore, scarcely consider the Prakrit literature to be a whit less important than the Vedic and the classic Sanskrit.

In almost every one of these there is excellent literature developed in course of time, the oldest form of that literature being bardic poetry, dealing with the life and achievements of heroes. The epic tales in their poetic form must be of the utmost antiquity; though they must originally have been composed, in all probability, in the popular vernacular garb, convenient to the strolling minstrel. The great Brahmanic venture in this field,—the finished, classic, Sanskrit epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*,—were, no doubt, originally in the popular dialect: "I believe," says Barth, (*Ind. Ant.* (1895) p. 71.) "that the Hindu epic is ancient, as ancient in its origin as the earliest traditions of the nation."

Their present form and clothing is dated by scholars to somewhere between 300 B. C. and 100 A. D.—a large margin, unavoidable when we think of the immense interpolations in these works. We need not, in this chapter, go over the story of the classic Sanskrit Epics. We need not even concern ourselves, here, with the glimpses of philosophic thought inspiring the poems, nor with the picture of social structure unfolded therein. Judged only as works of art, as masterpieces of the classic poetic genius, these creations of Valmiki, the father of Indian poetry, and of Vyasa, are instinct with dramatic feeling that never flags throughout the

interminable narrative; and are tense with emotion that defies the art of the subtlest analyst. Scenes like the Denudation of Draupadi in the full Court of the Kauravas, with her mighty husbands defeated in gambling looking on helplessly, the elders perplexed, the wise and the thoughtful shuddering, the Kaurava princes mad with the joy of this public humiliation of their rivals; and Draupadi herself, the heroine and the centre of the scene, in wild disorder of her hair and clothes, now appealing in infinite pathos, now struggling with her ravisher with all the force of outraged womanhood, now arguing like the subtlest casuist, now praying the prayer of her life to the Almighty and the Omnipresent to save her from shame, and at last confounding her insulters by the miraculous way in which her prayers are heard and answered by the Lord Krishna—scenes like these, recurring in endless succession, make an inexhaustible feast for the eye and the ear when recited by the bards, who themselves live again every incident they describe. The beauty of the language, the variety of the incident, and withal the unity of the story, the simplicity of the theme,—at least in one of them, and yet the touching appeal,—are all merits of the great Indian Epics, which stand unchallenged in their own sphere. As a means of rich and varied expression of the finest shades of meaning, Sanskrit was decidedly superior to the vernacular; and must, therefore, have been used for purposes of secular literature as well, quite as early as the Prakrit. The practice, moreover, of the Sanskrit drama, dating from the first century A. C., if not earlier, makes it clear that the two forms of speech,—the refined, rigid, well-regulated Sanskrit, and the later, easier, more popular Prakrit,—existed, and were used as vehicles of literary expression, side by side from time immemorial. Hence we cannot fairly use the available evidence to argue that as a literary tongue of a secular nature either Sanskrit or Prakrit had precedence over the other.

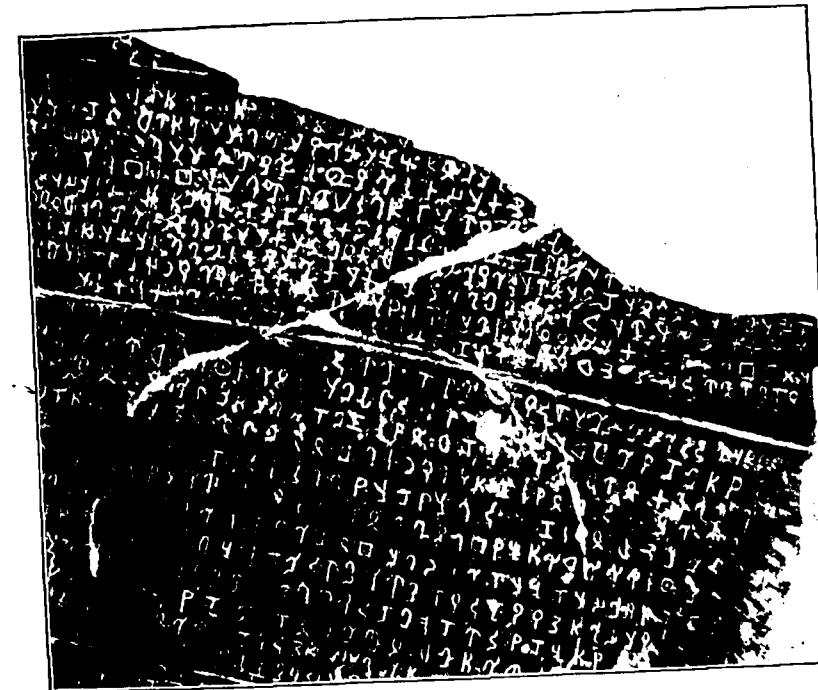
The folk-tale in its epic form must be held to be the direct, immediate ancestor of the *Kavya* (Poetry), which the Sanskrit critics are agreed in regarding as the highest form of literature. Panini does not mention the epic; but that is not conclusive to say that epic or poetry was unknown in his day. As well might it be said that because the epics ignore several of Panini's rules in their subtler nuances, therefore the great grammarian himself did not exist. Still it is probably in accordance with historical development to say that the classic Sanskrit language, as we now have it, was born of the epic. She is a lady of a noble house, whom it would not do to take liberties with. Patanjali, Panini's follower two hundred years later, is perfectly familiar with almost all the forms and peculiarities of the classic Sanskrit literature, as well as with the rules of prosody and kinds of metre patronised in the later *Kavya*. With the Prakrit tongues of old becoming stereotyped and frozen, to be used, under set rules, for dramatic purposes only, Sanskrit came to be more and more the ordinary medium of polite intercourse.

Next to the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, though less known to fame, the best epic work in classic Sanskrit is that of Ashwaghosha, the Abbot-president of the great Buddhist University in Magadha and Scholar Laureate of Kanishka. His

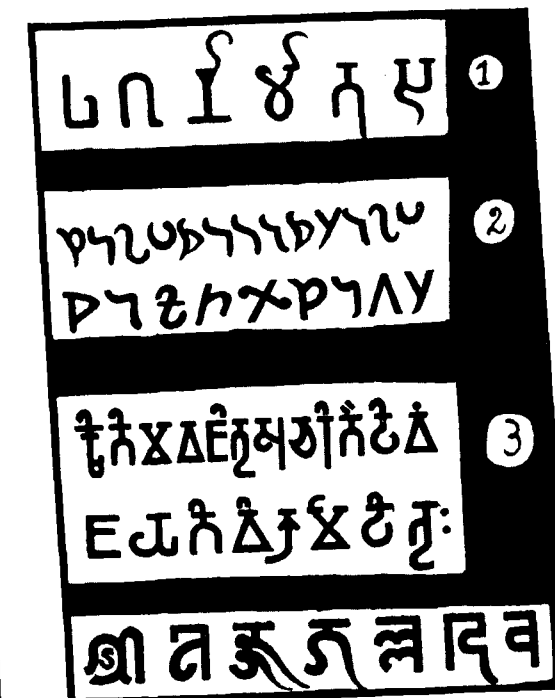
Buddha-charita is a poetic account of the life and mission of the Sakya Sage, originally in 28 cantoes, of which now only 13 are available. The poem is a product of consummate art, if only because of its rhythmic regularity in precise poetic form. Ashwaghosha seems to have been the model for that Prince of Poets and Poet of Princes,—Kalidasa,—in more than one place of this great Epic, the *Raghuvamsha*. *Sundarananda*, another creation of the Buddhist Bard, is still more definitely poetic, in its wonderful tribute to the power of human life, (VIII) and the eloquent homage to the charms of woman (X). The author is a master of metre and the *Alamkara* (figures of speech), and can write the most delicious, the most fanciful lyrics, like the *Gandistotra Gatha*, which remind one of the *Bells of Castille*, by the most musical of English poetesses. Ashwaghosha in this poem describes the religious message conveyed by the sounds arising when a long piece of wood is beaten by a club.

The greatest, however, of the Epics in classic Sanskrit, as the chastest and the most beautiful poetry in the whole range of Sanskrit literature, belongs to Kalidasa. This master-poet,—*Kavi-kul-Guru* as he has been styled by one of the most famous of his successors,—has others besides epic poems to his credit. We shall speak of these in another connection. Let us here mention his two Epics: the *Birth of the War-God (Kumara-Sambhava)* and the *House of Raghu (Raghuvamsha)*. It is impossible to say which of their many charms is the most arresting, which of their thousand beauties the most fascinating. Being, however, largely descriptive, the palm must be assigned to those numerous passages giving the most exquisite delineation of scenes of nature's glories and man's emotions, in which his favourite figure of speech,—Simile,—had the fullest play. The stanzas giving the sorrows of Aja are unequalled for their pathos in the entire Sanskrit literature. Simple and unaffected, and yet refined to daintiness, Kalidasa is, nevertheless, a master of words, who can combine sounds so skilfully that their mere utterance conjures up the scene, as by a touch of the magician's wand, before the mind's eye of the reader. The subject matter of these his poems may not have been new even in his day (4th Century A. D.); but the treatment is decidedly original and the master's own. No translation, however erudite and exact, can render the subtle spell of the original in sound, in style, in meaning.

Other metrical compositions of an epic character after Kalidasa only serve to emphasise the greatness of the Master and of his inimitable style. Vatsabhatti's *Prasasti* or panegyric in praise of the Temple of the Sun at Mandasor, written in about 472-3 A. C. can scarcely be called an epic at all, and, with difficulty, even a poem, though it is rich in illustrations of the rule of poetics, and a certain attempt at conforming sound to sense. The *Kiratarjuniya* of Bharavi, describing the struggle of Arjun with the God Shiva in the form of a huntsman; and the *Bhattikavya* of Bhartrihari appear to be tricks in comparison; the one illustrating the author's genius in verbal sleights; and the other illustrating the forms of the Sanskrit grammar. Bharavi's work, however, is not without a degree of poetic fancy, particularly in its descriptive portions. Magha has a greater reputation, popular



102 INSCRIPTION OF ASHOKA ON THE GRINAR ROCK



103 COINS OF INDIA—ANCIENT INDIAN SCRIPTS
(1. Brahmi 2. Kharoshthi 3. Gupta 4. Nagari)



104 DANDAK OF DRAUPADI
(Painting by S. L. Haldankar)

tradition making him an honoured rival of the Laureate of all ages. But his *Sishupaula-Vadha* is a museum of metrical *tour de force*, in which at least two stanzas (XIX 33 and 34) are so arranged that the succeeding, read backwards, spells exactly the same as the preceding read in the ordinary way. The *Janakiharana* of Kumaradasa is mentioned by a tenth century poet critic, Rajasekhara, to be of a level with Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsha*, and modern critics do not quite deny him this high praise. He seems to have been a Ceylonese king (517-26 A. D.) whose mastery of Sanskrit seems to be wonderful. This trickiness is carried to its highest in the *Raghavapandaviya* (800 B. C.) of Kaviraja, who narrates the story of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in one work by the use of ambiguous words and phrases. Finally, we may mention the *Nalodaya*,—a versified episode of the *Mahabharata*,—whose author aims pre-eminently at exhibiting his skill in manipulating artificial metres and elaborate tricks of style. This poem is also remarkable in the history of Sanskrit literature, inasmuch as it is in this that the *Rhyme* in verse first makes its appearance. Rhyme, however, does not seem to have become very popular in Sanskrit poetry; though the greatest lyric poet after Kalidasa, Jayadeva, in his *Gita Govind*; and the most philosophic,—Shankaracharya, in his *Moha-Mudgara* (8th century A. C.),—use rhyme with the most delightful mastery.

The place of the rhyme seems, however, to be more fittingly in the Lyrics. The classical Sanskrit is, like her daughters,—the leading vernaculars of modern India,—rich in this most appealing form of poetry. They occur, most commonly, as isolated stanzas in the classic drama, which may, therefore, be regarded as really lyrical, the more so because the characteristic feature of what we would nowadays call drama,—action and movement,—is lacking in the Sanskrit drama generally. Lyrics by themselves are, also, not unknown. Kalidasa is here, as in other departments of poetic art, the sublime master. His *Cloud Messenger*,—*Meghaduta*,—is the most exquisite piece of the kind, so full of a simple, touching appeal, that Göethe declared: if one had to send a messenger to one's heart's beloved, who would not send the *Cloud Messenger*? The story is quite simple. A Yaksha,—a kind of a demigod,—was remiss in his duties, which offended his Lord, the God Kubera. The latter sentenced him to an exile on a peak in the Vindhya Hills, from whence, one evening in the rainy season, he saw a cloud floating on to his northern home in Mount Kailasa, where his beloved is forced to reside without him. The Yaksha sends his message of love and longing, with a thousand wonderful endearments, to the darling of his heart, by this most original of all messengers,—the Cloud in the monsoon current. The description of the journey northwards, and of the towns and hills and rivers on the way, displays not only the poet's wonderful knowledge of geography, but his marvellous love of nature. A man of cultured ease and travelled tastes, he has something choice and yet characteristic of each place to say, in his own inimitable grace of manner and charm of words. And when the journey is done, when the Messenger has reached the destination, the message, with its touch of pathos, its depth of love and reverence for the beloved, leaves a haunting spell on

every reader that has ever read its magic strains. "Tell my beloved," says the Yaksha through the *Cloud Messenger*:—

"Goddess, beloved! how vainly I explore
The world, to trace the semblance I adore:
Thy graceful form the flexible tendril shows,
And like thy locks the peacock's plumage glows;
Mild as thy cheeks the moon's new beams appear,
And those soft eyes adorn the timid deer;
In rippling brooks thy curling brows I see,
But only view combined those charms in thee."¹

Could the most ardent lover say,—could the most exacting mistress ask,—more?

The other lyric of the Laureate of Sanskrit literature *Ritusamhara*, or the description of the six seasons of the Sanskrit year, is not quite so great a favourite with the critics. Perhaps it is a product of his yet immature genius. The work is, however, on a different plane from the English poet Thompson's *Seasons*; for the erotic is a dominant sentiment in this lyric of the Sanskrit Virgil. Taken individually, the seasons may each be said to be better described, objectively, in other works than in the *Ritusamhara* of the Master. His own description of Spring is much better in *Kumara-Sambhava*, while Bharavi's *Kiratarjuniya* gives a much more delightful description of Autumn (IV), as Shudraka's *Mrichha-Katika* has a more excellent picture of the rainy season,—the most beautiful of all.

Another praiseworthy piece of this class is the *Shringara Shataka*—the *Centaine Erotique*—of the Poet-prince Bhartrihari. Exactly when he lived and died is a mystery, like the lives of almost all the Sanskrit poets. Even of the master, Kalidasa, little is known, and that by uncorroborated tradition, except that he was a rather wild young man, whom suddenly the Goddess Kali favoured so much that he was raised to be the brightest star in that galaxy of scholars and savants that surrounded the legendary King Vikramaditya. Sober history believes him to have been a Poet-Laureate at the court of Chandra-Gupta II, somewhere about the close of the fourth century of the Christian era. We get this rough approximation by placing the Mandasor inscription, with its reproduction of the *Ritusamhara* verses, at the upper limit, and the filtration of the knowledge of Greek astronomy into India, as evidenced by Kalidasa's work, as the lower limit (300 A. C.). Popular tradition makes Bhartrihari an elder brother of the far-famed Vikramaditya; and therefore a contemporary,—even though slightly senior,—of Kalidasa. Bhartrihari was jilted by the woman he had loved more than everything else in life; and so, in disgust, he left his Court and Queen to become a Sannyasi, writing, in his retirement, those famous 3 centaines: known as the *Shringara Shataka*, or the *Centaine*

1) श्यामास्वङ्गं चकितहरिणीप्रेक्षणे दृष्टिपातान्
वक्त्रच्छायां शशिनि शिखिनां बर्हभारेषु केशान् ।
उत्पश्यामि प्रतनुषु नदीवीचिषु भ्रूविलासान्
हनैकस्मिन् क्वचिदपि न ते चण्डि सादृश्यमस्ति ॥

Erotique, the *Niti Shataka*, or the Ethical Centaine; and the *Vairagya Shataka*, or the Centaine of Renunciation. These are great favourites among the Indian people with any pretention to education. Their chaste simplicity and elegant appropriateness make them oft repeated platitudes to point a moral or adorn a tale.

Other examples of Sanskrit lyrics might be found in the *Chaura-panchashika* and the *Gata-karpana*, which are, however, not quite so well known as those already mentioned. On a totally different footing of popularity stands, the *Centaine* of Amaru, dealing with the endless and eternal theme of Love. He is a master of the class of Kalidasa in the universal art of painting lovers in all their varying moods of joy and grief. To the puritan, the descriptions sound a trifle too sensual; and to the wicked and the depraved everything will appear debased. The magnificent love-song of Radha and Krishna, sung by the immortal Jayadeva of Bengal in the twelfth century, may also incur the censure, on this score, of hyperpuritanical critics. Those, however, who can enjoy the untranslatable charm of the original in its mellifluous stream of easy alliteration and unlaboured rhyme; the unparalleled imagery, and unequalled wealth of emotion, cannot but overlook—if ever they give a thought to it—the sensual side of the love scenes.

Even more important than poetry in all its forms, the most prolific form of classic Sanskrit literature, and the one most prized, is the Drama. We have barely a dozen good specimens of the best Sanskrit effort in this branch now surviving. The paucity of the extant Sanskrit drama has led some critics, more ingenious than honest, to suggest that the entire Indian drama is exotic,—of Grecian origin. Their only real argument is that the curtain is called *Yavanika*—amongst several other names; and that by Yavana the ancient Indians meant the Greeks ever since the days of the Alexandrine invasion. They forget, in their zeal to deny India any contribution to the world's treasures of creative art, that even the oldest known works in any language now known in the world,—the hymns of the Rig-Veda;—are instinct with dramatic feeling; that many of the sacrifices of the Vedic times must have involved considerable scenic and recitative effort; that even where the hymns are unconnected with ritual, they embody dialogues in the course of the narrative; that from the earliest times the rhapsodes,—the progenitors of the Indian epic, which is the source of most dramatical works in India,—have been an integral feature of Indian society; and that, given all these elements, the creation of the drama from an utterly unaided indigenous impulse was inevitable.

"The most likely explanation is that the Indian drama derives its origin from scenes of a historical and a popular character, which are initiated in the Vedic ritual; as when a Brahmin buys Soma from a Shudra, who is then driven out with sticks. Such scenes of horseplay would be accompanied by dance, song and music, which are designated as the most important elements of the dramatic art (*Natya*). It is also noteworthy that the ordinary words for "actor", "play", and "dramatic art" are derived from the vernacular root *nat* to "dance". The mimic dance becomes the drama as soon as the words are added."¹

1) A. A. Macdonnell. *India's Past*. p. 99.

This and the remarkable peculiarities of the Indian drama, such as the introductory dialogue, the use of different dialects of different classes of personages, the mixture of prose and verse, and of dance and music, must all go to prove the entirely indigenous character of the Indian drama.

As to when the drama first emerged from the rude village show to be the finished product of an elaborate art, we have no means of knowing. The science of dramaturgy of Bharat was complete and effective, long before the Christian era; but the extant specimens of the Art come from a much later date.

The earliest Sanskrit drama, as now known, is that of Ashwaghosha of epic fame. By many the play *Mrichha-Katika* (The *Little Clay-Cart*) of King Shudraka is dated much earlier—from about the 2nd century B. C. If the wealth of social information, combined with high poetic excellence and considerable movement or action,—a quality in which the best Indian drama is comparatively deficient,—could entitle a play to take high rank, the *Little Clay-Cart* certainly deserves to be called the first of the Indian dramas. The one play, so far known, of Ashwaghosha,—*Sariputra-prakarna*—and found in Turfan, deals with the conversion of the two chief disciples of the Enlightened One. Bhasha,—whom Kalidasa mentions in the Introduction to his own *Malavika-Agnimitra* with obvious praise,—is the next great dramatist, in point of time. He has no less than 13 plays credited to him; but the question of their authenticity,—and, therefore, of the real work of this poet,—is still undecided.

The two greatest of the classic Sanskrit dramatists are Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, the Shakespeare and Milton of India. Kalidasa is, by universal consent, the greatest of the Indian Sanskrit playwrights, as he is the acknowledged master of all forms of the poetic art. A wild unruly youth, like Shakespeare, his works reveal the most perfect mastery of all the highest learning of his time. Take the famous test scene in *Malavika-Agnimitra*, where the King and the Recluse are judging the relative excellence in dancing. None but a past-master in the technique of dancing could have hit off—as Kalidasa does—all the marks of perfect dancing shown by Malavika. None but a connoisseur of beauty could have summed up the fleeting charm of the dancer's pose in a single stanza. Or take, again, Canto VIII of the *Kumara-Sambhava*. None but a perfect adept in the science of erotics,—Kamasutra,—could give in such detail the love passages between the Divine Couple. In the IX Canto of the *Raghu-vamsha* the poet exhibits a mastery of the poetic composition, rarely equalled and never excelled, by using as many as 14 different metres (thirteen of them in less than 20 stanzas); and by employing *Yamakas*—or paronomasias—in which the same syllable repeated in changing form and meaning makes for the most admirable effect when sense comes to correspond to sound. In *Vikramorvasiham* Act IV, he displays his familiarity with the music of his day with an ease and eloquence that bespeaks the master in excelsis. Altogether, he is no untutored genius or a freak of Nature, but, like Tennyson, a poet *par excellence* of the cultured and comfortable classes.

Kalidasa's plays are far too famous all the world over to need a repetition, even in outline, of any one of them. The moment it was published in the West, Goethe remarked of *Shakuntala*:—

“Would thou the young year's blossoms and the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed?
Would thou the earth and heaven itself in one sole name combine,
I name thee, O Shakuntala, and all at once is said.”

This and all his other plays would perhaps in modern eyes be defective in point of action, and so unsuitable for the stage purposes of to-day. Their glory, however, is the glory of the true classic; the eternal character of their theme; the unspeakable charm of their language. The Vaidarbhi style, in which the Master wrote, lays emphasis on “simplicity, clearness, richness in sentiment; variety, attractiveness and elevation through the use of poetic terminology”. Kalidasa is throughout free from affectation. He is a master of simile and metaphor, which, despite the difference in poetical conventions between the East and the West, has claimed unstinting admiration from all his critics. Simple, chaste, and yet exquisitely adorned, Kalidasa's works,—particularly the dramas,—are most easily readable even by beginners in Sanskrit literature; while the homeliness of his sentiment makes him for ever the poet of the people, even though in his own day the mightiest monarch strove to do him the utmost honour in his court.

The *Abhignāna-Shākuntalam*, to give the master-piece its full title, is the true *Nātaka*, according to Sanskrit dramaturgy. It does not deal with every day life but gives an idealised picture of God-like and heroic characters. So, too, does his other classic, *Vikramorvasiham*. The only one of his plays dealing at all with life as it really must have been about his time is the *Mālavikā-Agnimitram*, woven round the historical name of King Agnimitra, whose father as well as son were great warriors and ambitious conquerors, but who himself seems to have been a master of dalliance. Certainly, Kalidasa portrays him as such, not by direct description, but indirectly, by inevitable contrast with the other characters mentioned in the play. Orthodox critics do not give the same place to this comedy, as they give to the two others mentioned already. Yet those who have an eye to realism, those who wish to obtain from the Master's works a mirror of his days, will find the copious descriptions of men and events most interesting.

Bhavabhuti, frankly, does not write for the masses. Tradition makes him a contemporary and a disciple of the Master; but there is nothing in the extant work of this author to suggest any similarity in style or sentiment. Reliable history is, as usual, unavailable about the date of this master-singer; but what data we so far have point to his having lived somewhere about the beginning of the 8th century of the Christian era. He does not, indeed, banish the erotic entirely from his works; but, in the presence of the awful grandeur of his theme generally, the mere by-play of lovers stands awed and rebuked into a subdued second place, even though the lovers are Rama and

Sita—in separation. “How little do they know,” he has himself written in the Introduction to *Mālātī-Mādhava*, “who speak of us with censure. The entertainment is not for them. Possibly some one exists or will exist, of similar tastes with myself; for time is boundless, and the world is wide”. To this may be added, as pendant, this judgment of Grierson: “I do not believe that there ever was even a Pandit in India who could have understood, say, the more difficult passages of Bhavabhūti at first hearing, without previous study.”¹

Of his 3 plays, the *Uttara-Rama-Charita* is remarkable in the whole range of Sanskrit literature for its intense pathos. The classic Indian drama knows no tragedy; and, therefore, this play is made to end happily. But if there is anywhere a real approach to the tragic in the Sanskrit drama, it is surely in this eloquent expression of the grandeur of love in separation. As in the heroic plays of Kalidasa, the personages are here also semi-divine, and the incidents of a marvellous kind, bordering on the miraculous. Only in the *Mālātī-Mādhava* is there any hint of a realistic sketch. This play would, in modern times, be the very acme of perfection for the film-maker. Malati, a daughter of a minister in Ujjain, has been brought up by a Buddhist nun, as any high class demoiselle in mediaeval Europe. She is in love with Madhava, son of the Berari Prime Minister, who had been sent to Ujjain to finish his education. The prince of Ujjain demands Malati of her father for one of his own favourites, and therewith commences the real interest of the drama. The high-priest of the Goddess Chamunda has sworn to sacrifice to her a chaste virgin; and his choice falls on our heroine, who is led to the dread temple by sorcery. The play is most valuable, thus, by its full, though gruesome, picture of the unholy rites connected with Tantric worship. The temple is situated near a burning-ground, where the arch-priestess, Kapala-kundala, intones the awful sacrificial hymn to Shakti—Divine Energy. Madhava, too, who has resolved to seek the aid of magic spells to win his lady-love, enters upon the scene. He is, however, unaware that his beloved lies bound a captive in the temple which he enters with the dread offering in his hands; slays the high-priestess who is dancing the Tantric dance while invoking the Goddess, and rescues Malati. The whole scene is grand and awful,—more even than the witches' scene in *Macbeth*. The Indian dramatist shows a more thorough appreciation of the mysteries of black magic, which is, in the end, foiled by the greater glory of the Buddhist nun, who has mastered all the charms and counter-charms enough to frustrate the practices of the Shakti-worshippers.

Two plays ascribed to the Imperial Bard,—Shri Harsha of Kanauj—*Ratnāvalī* and *Priyadarshika*, are of the drawing-room type, giving a fairly faithful picture of the life and manners in an Imperial Court. These are just the plays most accurately to illustrate the rules of the *Nāṭyashāstra*, or the Science of Dramaturgy. In their plot and general get-up they resemble Kalidasa's *Mālavikā-Agnimitra*, with passages of real poetic charm, not at all inferior to the verses of the Master. A third play ascribed, apocryphally, to Shri Harsha, deals with another theme,—the

¹) *A Literary History of India*, p. 288, by Frazer.

life of a Bodhisatva. The subject matter of the *Nāgānanda* could not be unfamiliar to the Buddhist Emperor; but the style is remarkably different from that of his authentic works already mentioned.

The political drama *Mudra-Rakshasa* is a most singular piece by the poet Vishakhadatta. It is the only great poetic work in the Sanskrit language utterly free from even a mention of Love. It is an account, in the most highly dramatic form, worthy of a Sardou or an Augier, of the Revolution in Bihar in the fourth century B. C., by which the throne of Magadha passed from the proud Nandas to the low-born—but well advised—Chandragupta. The main revolution is really over when the play opens; but its interest is most cleverly sustained by the efforts of the Nanda Minister Rākshasa for a counter-revolution, and the counter moves of that arch-politician Chānakya, who had aided Chandragupta in his success. It is a subtle and wonderful tribute to the loyalty of the great Minister; as well as a marvellous picture of the great Brahman sage, who is prone to take affront, as the nobles of the court of Francis I, but who is equally indifferent to worldly wealth and grandeur. For a realistic painting of historical personages, there is probably no other piece in the Sanskrit literature to surpass this.

The works of Bhatta-Narayana, (C. 800 A.C.) and of Rajasekhara (C. 900 A.D.), can only be barely mentioned here. The *Veni-Samhar*, *The Binding of the Braid*, of the former deals with a well-known episode in the *Mahabharata*; while the *Bāl-Rāmāyana* and the *Bāl-Bhārata* of the latter are amongst the richest of the juvenile poetry in India. His *Karpura-Manjari* is a master-piece of the Prakrit tongue, in which he was as good a master as in Sanskrit. Indeed, all his works, though perhaps not first-class poetry, make excellent reading because of the correctness of his diction, and the wealth of idiomatic phrases strewn all over the plays. The *Prabodha-Chandrodaya* of Krishnamishra (Circa 1100 A. C.) is another work, remarkable for its allegorical characters, comparable to the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

On the whole, however, the modern criticism is not utterly unfounded that the Sanskrit drama suffers from a degree of monotony. The inventiveness of the Indian artists is by no means amazing in plot and purpose, in theme and motive, in characterisation and sentiment. Perhaps the rigid rules of the Indian *Nāṭyashāstra*, followed by the Masters a shade too slavishly, explain this flaw. But in so far as the accusation touches the literary artistry of India as a whole, it can be easily rebutted by a reference to the prose works in Sanskrit. The story as a story must have been the favourite recreation of our fathers five thousand years ago as it is to-day; and it would have been naturally much more easy to recite or recount in the freer, easier speech of the people than in the rigorously regulated language of the learned. But even in the Sanskrit tongue there is surviving a sufficient number of specimens to mark the appreciation of the learned for this form of literary creation. The distinction between the fable and the parable,—between the tale and the novel or romance,—is, necessarily, not rigidly observed. The *Pancha Tantra*, a veritable store-house of the beast-and-bird fable, is one of the most ancient

creations of the Indian genius, whose origin is lost in the mists of extreme antiquity. Imitations of it are found in every tongue from the Chinese and the Arabic to the Greek and the French. Originating most probably in Prakrit in prose form, the Sanskrit version has taken a poetic garb, without affecting the smoothness and simplicity of its origin.

If this marvellous collection of fables may not be classed as a prose work proper, the *Great Collection of Stories* presented by various authors under various titles, is undisputed prose,—a faithful, reliable, genuine portraiture of the life and manners of the peoples of ancient India. The prose works, however, which embody beauties of style as well as of narrative, are relatively of recent creation. Dandin and Subandhu, Bana and Kshemendra, are classic examples of first-class sanskrit prose of the latter day ornateness. The two first-named are of uncertain date. But neither the *Story of the Ten Princes* (*Dasha-Kumara-Charita*), nor the *Tale of Vāsavadattā* suffer on account of the uncertainties attaching to the history of their authors. The former displays many a flaw in style, which its author has himself inveigled against in his standard treatise on *Poetics* (*Kāvya-darsha*.) But what of that? The story is complex, involved, often depending on the marvellous and the miraculous to work out its mechanism. But what of that, either? Dandin's art is still unquestionable, and reminds one of the prose creations of a Victor Hugo or a Eugene Sue. Indeed, all the classic Sanskrit prose works now extant display a minuteness and elaboration of description, which would be the envy of the modern psycho-analysts. Dandin is admittedly a master of style,—cultured, correct and dignified. Subandhu, the author of *Vāsavadattā*, is, on the other hand, a kind of cyclopoedist of his day. In his long compounds, in his tremendous piling of adjectives, and immense love of resonant phrases, he reminds a modern reader of the interminable prefaces of Bernard Shaw. His love of pun brings him nearest to his more famous confrère Bana, the biographer of Harsha (606-648). Bana's much more famous Romance,—*Kadambari*,—is at once the admiration and despair of the modern Sanskrit student. The author's infinite love of far-fetched allusions, puns and *double-entendres*; and his interminable sentences, which would eclipse Mark Twain's parody of the German language, place him in a class by himself. Even his son, who continued and completed the unfinished Romance, does not come near him in this regard. Dhanapala in his *Tilakmanjari* shows a certain imitation of this curious style, as also the Jain writer Somadeva in his *Yasastilaka*.

The tale as a tale is further illustrated by such works as the *Vaitalapanchavinshika*, the *Shuka-Saptati*, or the *Simhāsana-Dvātrimshikā*, wherein all the elements of the modern story-writing,—problems, riddles, detective tales, sex-novels, psycho-analytical and historical romance—are discernible in the making. The original *Brihat-Kathā* of Gunādhyā was in a vernacular,—the Paishachi dialect; and the Sanskrit versions of Kshemendra and of Somadeva are adaptations in the cultured language of the learned,—the original being lost.

PLATE XXXVIII

APSARA DANCING
(From N. C. Mehta's book "Studies in Indian Painting")

The literary treasures of India, however, are not contained solely in the rigid, sonorous, highly cultivated Sanskrit language, or in the dead and gone Prakrits. The South Indian,—Dravidian,—languages, the speech of the great Andhra Desha, of the Chola and the Pandya Kingdoms, have preserved their own wonderful creations from long before the Aryans came into this country. Perhaps the entire land was once Dravidian, and the Dravid languages were the languages of the people of India. Even after the Aryan conquest, the mountain and the forest made for the South an impenetrable barrier, shutting up the people there as in a walled fort with a goodly garrison. The South, has, indeed, been Brahmanised; and Sanskrit, as a learned and sacred language, has come to be adopted there as much as in any other part of India. Without mentioning, at this stage, the glories of such scholars and philosophers as Sayanacharya and Madhavacharya; Shankaracharya (a prodigy, if there ever was one) and Ramanujacharya; we may mention that not an inconsiderable portion of the classic Sanskrit literature, and some of its best, is of southern creation. The choicest and the most elegant style was Vaidarbhi, or Berari. The dialect most favoured for songs in the classic drama was the Maharashtri,—may we call it the Deccani, now?—whose sweetness and elegance easily made it popular throughout the land. Apart from this tribute to the conquering race, the South has maintained its own monuments of literary genius, in Telegu, Tamil, Kanarese and Malayalam, and in innumerable dialects. For one not personally familiar with any of these languages it would naturally be difficult to give a just appreciation of their literature. But the relative paucity of our remarks on the Dravidian treasures of prose and verse must not be held to imply any poverty of that literature.

Says Caldwell in his *Grammar of Dravidian Languages*:

“There is no proof of Dravidian literature, such as we now have it, having originated much before Kumarila’s time (700 A. D.); and its earliest cultivators appear to be Jainas.”

“It was through the fostering care of the Jainas,” says Mr. Frazer in his *Literary History of India*, “that the South first seems to have been inspired with new ideals, and its literature enriched with new forms of expression.”

Brahmanical influences may have penetrated to the southern countries in pre-historic antiquity, when Agastya first broke through the mountain barrier. But the Jain and the Buddhist missionaries seem to have followed close on the heels of the Brahmans. The last two have now fallen very much in the background; but the literary historian of the land must admit their contribution to the southern vernacular literature,—particularly of the Jains,—to be the most substantial. In the true spirit of protestantism, these Jains and Buddhists always preferred the speech of the people to the language of the learned to convey their message; and hence their influence on language-building and literature for the masses. One of the greatest of these Jain masterpieces in the South is the *Natadiar* in Tamil, traditionally reputed to be composed in a miraculous manner by the 8000 Jain monks. They had fled the ravages of a 12 years’ drought in the Empire of

Natadiar

Chandragupta Maurya to the court of the Pandya king in the Deccan. When the famine was over, the monks wanted to return; but the king would not let them. So they departed secretly, leaving each a stanza as a souvenir of their stay, and of His Majesty's courtesy. The King was angry when he discovered their departure, and ordered their mementoes to be thrown in the river. To the surprise of all beholders, four hundred of these quatrains floated, and make up the most wonderful reminder of the Jain genius in the vernacular. The judgment of the English scholar and translator, Dr. Pope, is summed up in the sentence.

"There seems to be a strange sense of moral obligation, an earnest aspiration after righteousness, a fervent and unselfish charity, and generally a loftiness of aim that are very impressive."

The poem deals with virtue, wealth and pleasure, in a strain of acute worldly wisdom, a quaint fancy and a homely imagery, pointed wit and elegant satire, that seem most surprising when one remembers that the authors were so many, and all of them ascetics. Take this picture as a sample.

"She, of enticing beauty, adorned with choice jewels, said forsooth, 'I will leap with you down the precipice'. Because I had no money, she, weeping, and pointing to her aching feet, withdrew and left me alone."

Could even the Camel-driver of Baghdad have bettered this in sentiment? It is not cynicism, but merely knowledge of the world.

The same theme of wealth and virtue inspired the pariah-poet, — Tiruvalluvar, — a thousand years after the authors of the *Nataliyar* had left the southern shores. The wonderful mastery of the poet over his language, as seen in his successful handling of the *Vempa*, the most difficult metre in his language with "some of the most perfect combinations of sound set to the most delicate play of fancy," establishes his indisputable claim to have been a veritable genius wondrously inspired. His verses on love are perfect, pregnant with meaning, proverbial in setting. Dr. Pope's metrical translation of the poet's *Kurral* embodies a faint aroma of the warm fragrance of the original.

"The pangs that evening brings I never knew,
Till he, my wedded spouse, from me withdrew (1226).

"My grief at morn a bud, all day an opening flower,
Full-blown expands in evening hour (1227).

"Or bid thy love, or bid thy shame depart,
For me, I cannot bear them both, my worthy heart (1247).

"In lover quarrels, 'tis the one that first gives way,
That in reunion's joy is seen to win the day (1327).

Another great Tamil poet was Manika Vachagar, a fierce opponent of the dominant Jainism of his day, an ardent devotee of the dread God Shiva. Dr. Pope,

his learned and sympathetic translator, assigns him to the 11th century Christian era, and considers him to be a mixture of St. Paul and St. Francis of Assisi. But perhaps the poet dates from much earlier, — the 4th century A. C. Born at Madura of a Brahman courtier of that place, he is said by tradition to have acquired all the learning of his day by the time he was 16, when the king appointed him Prime Minister. The laurels of even a Richelieu or a Pitt must pale before this prodigy, who wanted to re-establish an old Church. The poet is, of course, still most popular in the country he converted, his verses being even now sung with rapture by the high caste and the low caste, by the aged and the youthful, who all delight in committing them to memory. Two centuries later was born Tirunana Sambandha, another Tamil poet-saint and Shaivite of lyric fame.

These were the immediate predecessors of Shankaracharya. He was their true descendant in spirit, as their compatriot in space. The greatest revivalist, the greatest commentator the *Upanishads* have ever known, he reminds one of the fiery zeal of a Loyola, combined with the vast learning and profound thoughtfulness of an Aquinas. An ascetic and a scholar, a poet and a Yogi, he compressed the most varied and bewildering activities in the short space of barely 32 years. In the intellectual sphere, he was the sovereign master in his day (788 A. C. to 820 A. C.) from Dwarka to Puri, from Badrinath to Shringeri. The fading glories of Aryan cult and culture find in him a most brilliant luminary. His life, or rather an account of his *Digvijaya*, — or the Great Conquest, — has been preserved for posterity by another great Vedic commentator of the South, Madhavacharya of Vijayanagar. But little or nothing is known about his personal life. Born in Malabar about 788 A. C., he died at Kedarnath in the Himalayas about 820 A. C., after having enriched the Indian sacred literature by the most terse and profound commentaries on all the later Scriptures. His teaching, summed up, emphasises the delusive nature of the outer world and its phenomenon, and the unreality of sense perceptions. The most popular and yet the most poetic of his creations is a song in Sanskrit of some 31 verses, which embodies, as it were in a nutshell, the philosophy of the most learned and yet the most musical of philosophers. The versification of the *Moha-Mudgara* is exquisite; its rhyme unequalled; its alliteration unsurpassed.

With the establishment of the Muhammadan Empire in India, a subtle transformation comes over the native genius. The real creative impulse seems to be killed, at least for a while. The country was staggered by the rude hammering of Mahmud's sacrilegious axe on the idol of the great, far-famed temple of Somnath on the shores of the Arabian Ocean. And while it gathered itself together again, the heavy cavalry of the Pathan and the Mughal had thundered through the land from Peshawar to Kanyakumari, defiling where they could not destroy. The ranks of the invaders were replenished by fresh hordes of savage fanatics. Natives of India, however, gradually accepted Islam, if not in fear of the sword, then out of consideration of worldly good. With the growing force of Muslim dominion, and the rising tide of conversion, the old cultivation of the Sanskrit tongue declined. In

Kashmir and in Bengal there were, indeed, stray writers in Sanskrit, even after the advent of Muhammadanism. The lyric genius of Jayadeva of the *Gita-Govinda* fame is second to none in all the annals of Indian literature. That wonderful poem, picturing the love of Krishna and Radha, deals with an old and yet ageless theme. The combination, however, of the most exquisitely musical phrases, in some of the strangest and boldest metres ever handled by a Sanskrit bard, with a wealth of alliteration and imagery bewildering in its riotous luxuriance, stamps the author as the peer and equal of the brightest stars in our literary firmament. Apart, however, from such sporadic outbursts of a stray genius, the Sanskrit language languished in the Muhammadan era, until the cultured Muslims came, of their own accord, to appreciate the charms of this noble tongue. We may take the Sanskrit scholarship of Akbar's Mughal courtiers; and the Sanskrit education of Dara, Shah Jahan's eldest and the most favourite son, and translator of the *Upanishads*, as indexes of the changed viewpoint. In spite, however, of this revival; and the undying lustre of the old language of scholars, singers and seers of India, Sanskrit became, in the Muhammadan era, a dead language; and so, from about the 12th century A. C., the laurels of literary creation go to the vernacular languages of the people.

The present day vernaculars are not, however, the creation exclusively of Muslim dominion. They are all rich beyond words in literary creations that sway the heart of the simple souls making up the mass in any country. It is impossible to select for special mention the literature of any of these, or even the outstanding names in them all. All that we can or might do in this place is to mention some of the towering personalities, who, without regard to provincial or linguistic boundaries, make the collective literary consciousness of India.

It is, curiously enough, in Bengal that we find the first re-appearance of the light after it has been extinguished by the crash of steel in the war of faiths. Jayadeva is a Bengali from the Birbhum district, preaching, through the haunting strains of his unforgettable verses, the doctrine of *Bhakti*,—faith absolute and unquestioning,—which had first been taught by Krishna himself to his chosen devotee Arjuna. Born, perhaps, for popular consumption, from the system of Yoga which aimed at the absorption of the Soul into the Essence of the Deity, the doctrine of *Bhakti* has been transmuted by such great alchemists as Shankaracharya and Ramanujam, Jayadeva and the Sikh Gurus, the Tamil Tiruvalluvar and the Gujarati Narasimha Mehta or Mira Bai, the poet-queen of Mewar; so that for myriads of Indians to-day, it is the only road to salvation. Bengal, as already remarked, leads the way, with Jayadeva the Poet, and Chaitanya the philosopher,—a second Buddha. The labours of the great jurists, beginning with Medhatithi and Jimutavahana of *Dāyabhāga* fame, might be thought to consort ill with the lyrics of the poet, or the longings of the philosopher. And yet the soil was the same. Ramanand sang his songs of devotion round about Agra, where his followers still form a goodly number. But his fame has been increased a hundred-fold by his more famous disciple, Kabir, a simple weaver of Benares, even as in modern times, the fame of

Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa has been increased by his more celebrated follower Swami Vivekananda. Kabir, his followers believe, was born of an immaculate conception. His trite little sayings, with homely imagery and every day application, are the first manifestation of the Hindu reaction on contact with Islam, breaking through the suffocating hold of Hindu ritual to a glimpse of natural theology so easy of acceptance in the days of warring creeds. The Vedantic conception of a single supreme Deity is insisted upon in place of these; and the warring legions of Allah (or Ali)-worshippers and Rama-worshippers are sought to be reconciled in that common adoration of the one Omnipotent. The way to know Him might be shown by a Guru, a spiritual preceptor,—a principle, which Kabir's contemporary, Nanak, used with the utmost felicity. The *Shahbdavli*,—A Thousand Gems from Kabir,—and the *Sukha-Nidhan*, combine the Vedantic doctrine of unreality, with the Jain universal conception, the Buddhist notion of *Nirvana*, and the Islamic idea of a personal God, into a common cult. "Behold but one in all things," cries the poet. "It is the second that leads you astray. Every man and woman that has ever been born is of the same nature as yourself."

Bidyapati Thakur,—an archaic namesake, if not a previous Avatar, of Tagore—in northern Bihar, and Chandidas in Bengal, carried on the torch kindled by Kabir; while the royal Mira of Mewar reproduced the ecstasies of St. Teresa a century in advance of that Spanish Saint.

The change from this mystic devotion to realistic sensuousness followed soon after, when the curb of spiritualism was relaxed by the growing breeze of agnosticism. Vallabhacharya built his epicurean mansion on this new form of the sentiment of devotion, though Chaitanya, his contemporary, had taken the spiritual line. Born at Nadiya in Bengal (1485-1527 A. C.), Chaitanya's wonderful eloquence and magnetic personality was endowed with an almost mesmeric force. Devotion, utter and absolute, to Krishna is the key-note of this passionate preacher of Muhammadan India.

The line of Hindu poets is next continued by the simple, pathetic figure of Surdas, and the towering genius of Tulsidas. The blind Bard of Agra, Surdas, sang, in his *Sur-Sagar* of sixty thousand verses, innumerable songs for the worship of Krishna, even as Milton composed his masterpieces. Of Tulsidas (died 1624 A.C.) an English critic writes:

"Pandits may talk of the Vedas and the Upanishads, and a few may even study them; others may say they pin their faith on the Puranas; but to the vast majority of people of Hindustan, learned and unlearned alike, the norm of conduct is the so-called *Tulsikrit-Ramayana*."

The basis of this far-famed work of the greatest poet during the Muhammadan age is Valmiki's *Ramayana*; but the genius of Tulsidas has made it all his own, even as the cantoes in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsha* are all his own. The work of Tulsidas spread far and wide the doctrines of Ramananda and the faith in Vishnu, in the chaste, refined garb of Rama and Sita that would not offend the most exacting moralist. In mystic words of ever abiding charm and unfading fragrance, Tulsi

exhorts the reader to ponder on the name of Rama, the symbol of the good, the perfect, the eternal, and all-pervading.

"Perish property, house, fortune, friends, parents and kinsmen, and all that does not help to bring one to Rama . . . Even a dog-keeper, the savage hillsmen, the stupid foreigners, the outcaste, become purified and renowned by repeating the name of Rama."

While these great seers and singers flourished in the North and the West; while Chaitanya preached his new faith, and the Rajputs and Marathas fought and bled for their old,—poets and preachers in the South and the West were by no means idle. Narasimha Mehta in Gujarat was propagating the same cult of devotion to Vishnu that Mira Bai had sung before him in Hindustan. In the South, in the country of the Marathas, Tukaram, a Shudra Saint and poet of Poona, was singing his 5000 hymns on the same theme. Schooled in adversity and persecution, his piety, devotion, simplicity, and unblemished life won him the worship of the greatest soldier and statesman of his age, Shivaji Maharaj. When however Shivaji begged him to pay a visit to the court, the Shudra poet wrote back:

"What pleasure is there in paying a visit? The days of life are fleeting past. Having known one or two duties which are the real Essence, I shall now live in my own delusion. The meaning of the whole which will do thee good is this—God is the all-pervading soul in every created object. Live with thy mind unforgetful of the all-pervading soul, and witness thyself in Ramdasa." (Frazer p. 301.)

Against the names of these heroes of the song and the sermon amongst the Hindus, the Muslims in India have but few names to offer from amongst native-born Indian Musalmans. Amir Khusru in the Tughluq days is claimed to be Indian. But the bulk of the Muhammadan creations was by foreigners and in non-Indian languages, until the days of the Mughals. Perhaps we do not yet know all the contributions of the pre-Mughal Musalmans to the Splendour of India in the world of art and literature. Perhaps the memories of untutored fanatics and irresponsible autocrats have obscured unduly the longings of the soul among the devout and the thoughtful of the Muslims, like a Nizamuddin, or a Shaikh Salim Chisti, or even a Faizi.

In any event, with the advent of the Mughals, the scene changes at once. They are polished, cultured, aristocrats,—in the best sense of the word. Babur was himself a writer of no mean ability, and his son and daughter were as refined specimens of their age and culture as the best. Akbar was unlettered, and yet the most educated of the Emperors, who appreciated scholars and thinkers so much that he sought them in every way, in every place. His Court was a replica of the glorious days of the great Guptas and Mauryas centuries before him. His son was a literateur, and his grandson the most magnificent patron of the gorgeous art India has ever known. The children of Shah Jahan were all the most finished ladies and gentlemen of their day,—with Dara Shukoh, the eldest, the most erudite, the most refined, and the most tragic, leading in the way which promised his reign would become that of



106

KABIR

(From Coomaraswamy's "Rajput Painting")



107

GURU NANAK



108

BAJ BAHADUR AND RUPMATI

a second Akbar,—a promise of the Golden Age which, if it bloomed at all, faded all too soon!

With the fanatical and puritanical Aurangzeb, these splendours began to pale. But the impulse the Imperial patronage had given was too great to flicker out at once. The century of darkness following upon the fall of the Mughal Empire was, perhaps, the dreariest and gloomiest period India has ever experienced; but the new impulse born the moment a settled government was formed and even now pulsating through the land, is evidence enough of the yet surviving genius of the people. We are, however, yet much too near a Tagore or a Toru Dutt, an Iqbal or a Sarojini Naidu to be able to form a just appreciation of their contributions to the Splendour That Was 'Ind.



109 SHIVA
(Ceylon)



110 BUDDHA SEATED FROM TAXILA
(From M. J. Marshall, "The Art of India")



111 RUINS OF ANCIENT UNIVERSITY OF TAXILA



112 PARASWANATH, XIIth JAIN SAINT
OR TIRATHAKAR (MATHURA)

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

We have been looking so far at the splendours of Indian literary genius, mainly as creations of the poet's art. But a yet more voluminous literature is to be found in the Scriptures of the various religions that took their root on this soil, and in the marvellous flights of philosophy that accompany the more dogmatic parts of the sacred writings. Scholarship as such, and passionate pursuit of science, also distinguish the early Indian genius. No picture of the *Splendour That Was 'Ind*, could claim to be complete, which does not cast a glance at these, our still most popular treasures; and so, this chapter is devoted to a brief survey of the wonders of Indian Science and Philosophy.

The philosophy of the Vedas is a little difficult to describe. The words are simple, but their meaning not always clear, precise, certain. The striking sensuous nature-worship of the earliest of the hymns to the World God (Varuna), the Fire-God, the Wind-Gods, the Sun-God, is tinged with a feeling of oneness of the natural phenomena, which later on came to be recognised as the unity of the Divine immanence in the forces of nature and the myriad forms of life. Says the Rig-Veda: (R. V. I. 164, 46):—

“They recall him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and He is the heavenly winged Garutman.”

The question is ever asked in one form or another:

“What pathway leadeth to the Gods? Who knoweth this of a truth, and who will now declare it? (R. V. III, 54-5.)

And the answer rises strident from the stanza of the early Hymns.

“One All is Lord of what is fixed, and moving, that walk, that flies, this multiform creation.” (Wallis, *Cosmology of the Vedas*, p. 51.)

The soul of the Seer is, indeed, not always satisfied by this simple answer; and the *cri de coeur* rises again, “*Kasmai Devaya-Havisha Vidhema*” (To what God shall we sacrifice?). But this cry of despair goes hand in hand with growing sophistication,—widening as well as deepening human knowledge; and so the question meets with varied answers in the systems of philosophy built largely on the Vedas themselves, discovering in them meaning which it may fairly be doubted if the Vedic Seers themselves were aware of. The *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas*,—a later development of the *Brahmanas*,—are a kind of prose commentaries on the Vedas, which also constitute in themselves philosophic treatises. It is from the Age of these *Brahmanas* that the four-classed organisation of the Indian society may be said definitely to date, though in the *Purusha-Sukta* of the Rig-Veda there is a reference to the same. The sacrificial ritual, elaborate as it was complex

was made the rigid monopoly of that class, and so ensured its unchallenged supremacy.

The “Forest Treatises” (*Aranyakas*), compiled as a kind of theosophic pendant to the *Brahmanas*, make an easy transition to the *Upanishads*, which are considered to be the basis and storehouse of the systematic philosophy of the Hindus. Composed in the Vedic tongue, they must necessarily have preceded the date assigned by scholars to the origin and perfection of the classic Sanskrit tongue—circa 500 B. C. About a dozen of these esoteric treatises stand out as pre-eminently clear, thoughtful, suggestive, works, marking the zenith of the literary production of the Vedic period. They carry on the speculative side of the *Brahmanas*, putting forth,—under the guise of exposition, elucidation, and comment,—their own distinct philosophy, independent of the ritualistic religion of the *Brahmanas*. The *Upanishads*

“do not aim at securing earthly and afterwards heavenly bliss in the abode of Yama by sacrificing correctly to the gods, but at obtaining deliverance from mundane existence by absorption of the individual soul in the world-soul through correct knowledge. The Upanishad conception of the world-soul (Ātman) is the final development of the personal creator Prajāpati, who has become the impersonal source of all being, Brahman.”¹

The illusiveness (Māyā) of the outside material world is first formulated in *Shvetashwata Upanishad*; but the idea is implicit in the oldest. The identity of the individual with the world-soul is enunciated by the *Chhandogya Upanishad* which, with the *Brihadāranyaka Upanishad*, is regarded as the finest outcome of Vedic philosophy. The development of philosophic calm is furthered by the rise of the theory of Transmigration, which appears first in the *Shatapatha* (Hundred Paths) *Brahmana*; and the working mechanism is supplied by the doctrine of *Karma*.

The Brahman canonical literature,—apart from the *Vedas*, the *Brahmanas*, and the *Upanishads*,—is of course, in classic Sanskrit. It is in the form of concise treatises or aphorisms, called *Sutras*, and is divided into three main groups. The *Shrauta Sutras* deal with the sacrificial ritual. The *Grihya Sutras* deal with the domestic life of the Hindu from birth to death, and furnish data of unparalleled importance for the history and ethnology of the people. Finally, the *Dharma Sutras* are legal treatises concerned with the relations of man to his neighbours in society.

The *Sutras* of the Jains, and the Buddhist canonical works, when finally settled, were, on the other hand, in the every day language of the ordinary people. Before, however, we have a hurried survey of these Scriptures, let us cast a brief glance at the life and teachings of these great masters on the Indian soil. Scholars are now generally agreed that Jainism is an older religion than Buddhism,—though the surface similarity of the two had led the first European scholars to consider the former to

¹ cp. Macdonell *India's Past*, p. 46.

be only an offshoot of the latter. Siddhartha Gautama,—the Buddha,—and Vardhamana Mahavira, are now considered to have been contemporaries, though Jain tradition, and stray remarks in the Buddhist Scripture, suggest the founder of modern Jainism to have preceded the author of Buddhism by about 50 years. Even if we hold, with modern European scholars, Vardhamana Mahavira to have died a few years after the Buddha, there is no doubt now that the religion and dogma Mahavira preached constituted only a new edition of the doctrine of Parshwa, his predecessor in the Jain pantheon, had preached. It seems not unlikely that Parshwa lived a couple of centuries before Mahavira; and preached a doctrine, a philosophy of life, which was even then not utterly unfamiliar. Mahavira was, according to Jain tradition, born about 600 B. C., at Vaisali in the country of the Lichhavis, who were a warrior tribe governing themselves like the ancient Athenians or the medieval Venitians. Siddhartha was a prince or noble of this clan, allied through his wife with the chief of his race; and, through him, with the powerful monarch of Magadha. Vardhamana Mahavira was his second son, and lived in his father's dominion till he was 30. He was married and had a daughter; but in the fullness of time he renounced his princely heritage, and retired to practise severe austerities. For 12 years he strove in unheard of penance to cut through the bonds that held him to life and its vanities. At last he reached the final and complete stage of knowledge. The French say: "*Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*;" the Jains suggest rather that "to know and understand all is to transcend all". For 30 years after reaching the stage of all-knowledge, Mahavira preached the doctrine of *Ahimsa*, love and fellow-feeling with all living beings. The Hindu practice of animal sacrifice became an abomination to the Jains and the Buddhists alike; but the Jains went beyond the Buddhists in holding life to be in existence in wind and water, in earth and fire, as much as in the smallest worm and the strongest, highest, best of men. Modern Science seems to confirm,—very strangely, indeed,—the belief of the Jains. But it also seems to show how utterly impracticable the Jain dogma would be in daily life, if practised in its absolute rigour. Historians, however, agree that if the Jains unlike the Buddhists, though relatively few in number, still survive the field, it is because they have had the minority's intense instinct of self-preservation shown in conservative tactics. The Jain doctrine is cognate to the Buddhist in its rejection of a personal, creative, omnipotent Divinity; but it is not on that account, without its own code of ethics, both individual and social. The abhorrence of untruth and unchastity among men and women ranks almost on a par with the canon of *Ahimsa* for the lay as well the clerical Orders. The Jain *Samgha* or Society is made up of the monks and nuns,—or those who have renounced utterly all worldly riches and relationships; and of the *Shravaks* and *Shravikas*, the laity male and female, who, without renouncing the householders' responsibilities, are required to conform their life and conduct and dealings to the main canon of their religion. The Jain canon seems to have been codified in the time of the Emperor Chandragupta Maurya about 300 B. C., by the pontiff Bhadrabahu; though schism seems to have made its appearance in the life-time of Mahavira himself. The

PLATE XLII



113

A JAIN NUN

(Painting by Rao Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar)

distinction between the Swetambaris and Digambaris dates from the days of Mahavira; but the internal differences of to-day seem to have gone on somewhat minute points, the most considerable relating to the worship of idols. It is to the idolatrous, however, the student of art and architecture in India must feel thankful for those superb creations, such as the Temples of Mount Abu or the statue at Shravan Belgola, which relieve in part the otherwise ascetic puritanism of the Jains.

The bulk of the Jain Scripture now extant is certainly not all as the founder himself uttered it. Such as it is, it is contained in 32 Sutras, made up of the eleven *Angas*, the 12 *Upangas*, the 4 *Mul Sutras*, 4 *Chheda Granthas*, and 1 *Avshak Sutra*. Its rigour is obviously inconsistent with the demands of organised Society and its government; though in Western India the Empire of Gujarat had at one time Kings and Ministers of State professing the Jain faith. From the innocuous character of their practices, however, and from the unambitious nature of their faith, they seem, generally speaking, to have disarmed any active hostility from the days of the Maurya to those of the Mughal.

The Buddha was a contemporary of Mahavira. Born of a Sakya Prince at Shravathi, or Kapilavastu, in the foot-hills of the Himalayas, the founder of Buddhism was also a Kshatriya by birth. King Suddhodana was a King probably in the same sense as many a modern princelet in Kathiawar is styled "His Highness". The story of his wife Mayadevi having wonderful dreams at the time of the conception of her great son may be taken to be some of those postmortem embroideries, which hang like aureoles round the birth story of every great man. Siddhartha was born in a garden,—the far-famed Lumbini Grove,—where the Queen his mother had halted on her way to her father's home. Prince Siddhartha was a strange child,—even in his childhood, exceedingly sensitive to any spectacle of sorrow and suffering in the entire living world; and so, by the orders of the King, his father, he was spared every such scene, lest the great pity of his heart might make him do some unusual act. His mother, Queen Mayadevi, was spared the sight of his great Renunciation by death soon after the wondrous child was born. The young Prince, however, continued to grow as any other young man of his rank and day, going through all the exercises and enjoyments his position entailed. He was, by nature, disinclined to marry; but was lured into it by the wiles of his father's Court, as much as by the bewitching eyes of the noble Yashodhara. Soon after the birth of his first child, the Call came to him; and Buddha left, at dead of night, his sleeping wife and babe, his father's Court and all its treasures, to solve the riddle of the universe, and find an unfailing antidote to suffering and sadness.

For years he journeyed to and fro; for years he meditated and practised the most rigorous austerities. The saints and sages he met were all unsatisfying in their answers to the queries of the Sakyan inquirer. The Gods of the Vedas were only the magnified images of the type of man, held in awe and reverence amongst his fellows. To the searching queries of the Sakyan's heart they made no reply, even in the more rarefied atmosphere of the *Upanishads*. The endless cycle of

birth and death seemed, perhaps, the perfection of hopelessness, which dismayed, if it did not revolt, the inquirer.

After years of patient suffering in incredible austerities and meditation, Light at last came to the Sakyan sage under the sacred Bo-tree at Buddha Gaya. He rose, and proclaimed aloud his message.

Many a House of Life
Hath held me – seeking ever Him who wrought
These Prisons of the Senses, sorrow-fraught.
Sore was my ceaseless strife.

But now he was free, and his message of hope was carried by Him in His own life-time throughout the length and breadth of the land from Bengal to the Punjab. From the day he first preached in the Deer-park at Benares to the five ascetics who had for a while accompanied him in his researches, he insisted on the one truth, the Middle Path, that gave freedom from the bondage of *Karma*. His message consisted of the Eightfold Precept, *i.e.* Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought and Right Self-Concentration.

Buddhism, in spite of its seeming emphasis on the utter emptiness of things mundane, was not a mere freak in the evolution of Indian thought. The Buddhist Scriptures, like the Jain, are in the Magadhi or Pali language,—very likely the language spoken by the Venerable One Himself; though that does not mean that he was unfamiliar with the vast philosophical lore of the Hindu *Upanishads*. In fact, the body of doctrine that was later on systematised as the Buddhist philosophy may well be taken to be considerably influenced by the systems preceding. When however, the wisdom of the Venerable One came out of His mouth, it seemed to be a direct outcome of the conditions under which men's minds were then agitating.

“A congeries of conflicting theories and guesses,” says Prof. Radhakrishnan, “accepted by some and denied by others, changing with men, reflecting the individual characters, emotions and wishes of their authors, filled the air. There were no admitted facts or principles which all recognised, but only dissolving views and intuitions. In actual life, ritualism reigned supreme, with its cruel accompaniments of meaningless sacrifices and purposeless incantations, in which people had ceased to believe.”

It was against this the Buddha raised his voice in passionate protest, and proclaimed the superiority of the natural law over such meaningless supernaturalism. His doctrine permitted each man to work out his own salvation for himself, irrespective of caste or birth, independent of the ministration of priests or the interposition of the gods. “It is a foolish idea to suppose that another can cause us happiness or misery; He declared. If ethics is made to rest on the shifting sands of metaphysics or theology, it has an uncertain tenure. Buddha wished to build it on the rock of facts”. (Radhakrishnan.) So he went about, discarding priest and dogma, eschewing sacrament and sacrifice, insisting only on the perfection of character and the inner self as the only way to salvation.

We need not go into the particulars of the Buddhist philosophy beyond just mentioning the four cardinal points,—the central truths,—which comprise it, *viz.*, “that there is suffering, that it has a cause, that it can be suppressed, and that there is a way to accomplish it”. Suffering, like the world, is endless, and without beginning; but the Buddhist is inclined, perhaps, to over-emphasize it. The cause of suffering is the craving for the gratification of the senses. All that is transient is painful; and if only the permanent deserve to be called Atman or the soul, then the Buddhist would have nothing to do with the Soul. The Second Sermon of the Buddha himself was delivered to his first five disciples on the non-existence of the soul. When the wandering mendicant Vachhaghatta asked the Master, “Is there the Ego?” He remained silent; and when the persistent inquirer asked again: “Is there not the Ego”? He remained silent. He is clear, indeed, about what the soul is not,—neither body, nor sense-perception, nor the constituents of the individual. But as to what it is,—He has nothing to say; for He felt it would be transcending experience to assert the existence of the soul by going behind phenomena. *Karma* He believes in, and regards as an explanation of suffering; and when one is freed from it, one reaches *Nirvana*,—the actionless state of do-nothingness,—in this life, and *parinirvāna*, when the body—purged of all *Karma*—falls into decay. The way to reach this consummation is by the Eight-fold Path already mentioned. “Still persisting, still achieving” in the Eightfold Path, the Buddhist becomes free from all bodily passion and worldly desires of life and its longings; and when *Nirvana* is attained, he becomes finally, absolutely, completely free from any longing whether of earth or of heaven, of pride and passion and ill-feeling, self-righteousness and ignorance.

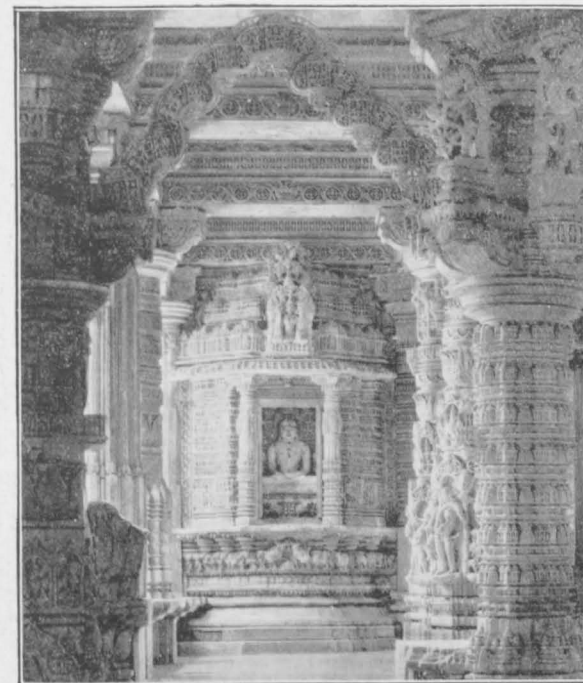
The doctrine of Personal Responsibility, implicit in the theory of *Karma*, was the greatest recommendation of Buddhism to the non-Indian Princes who came to establish an Empire in India. To the Hindu the idea of a non-caste or Shudra sovereign would be anathema; but to the Buddhist the slave-girl's son Chandragupta was as acceptable as Kanishka the non-Indian. The pride of birth and caste being dispensed with and denied, manhood was left to assert itself free of all restrictions. India, however, seemed not to be ready yet to assimilate this message of the Master; and so when the bewitching influence of his wonderful eloquence was removed, the purity, simplicity, and withal the daring, of his doctrines was gradually lost sight of. Soon after his death in 478 B. C., 500 of His most chosen disciples met together in the Satapanni Cave near Rajagriha,—the ancient capital of Magadha,—to collect together, in an authorised version, the Master's sayings. In the three Baskets or *Pitakas*, the Pali books contain, according to the strict orthodox belief, all the doctrines of the Master Himself, given out in his 44 years of Enlightened preaching. But the purity and simplicity of these was modified in the Second Œcumenical Council held at Vaisali in 377 B. C., where the first great schism commenced over the attempt of the northern followers to introduce Indulgences, *e.g.*, the permission to the Buddhist monk to receive any amount of gold and silver. The two great divisions of the Higher Vehicle,—*Mahāyāna*—and the

Lower Vehicle, — *Hinayāna*, — commencing here were eventually split up into sects. Buddhism flourished in India, though divided into sects, and in a gradually more and more Hinduised form, for over a thousand years after the founder's death. Meanwhile, the more ancient Vedic philosophy and religion had never died out. More than one effort was made for its revival during this period; but universal success was unattainable till the great Shankaracharya came on the scene.

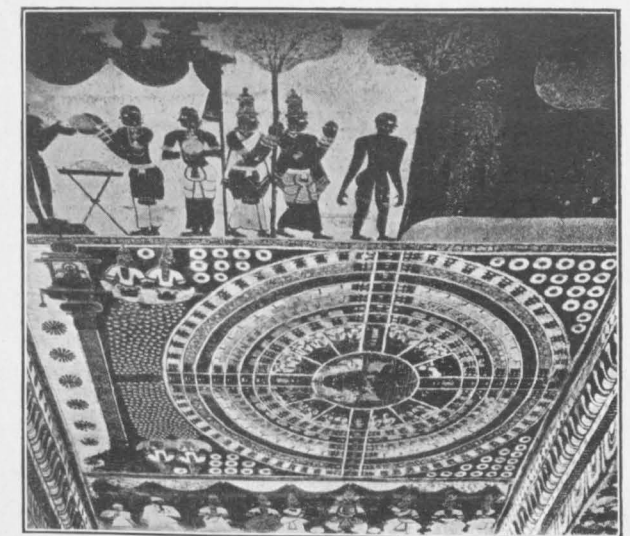
The philosophy of Vedantism, with which Shankaracharya's name is associated, is, perhaps, a shade too refined for the ordinary mortal. By his insistence on the idealistic non-duality, and yet of non-reality of the sense-perceptions, Shankara supplied a charm to hold the faith of the religious mystic, and of the rarefied idealist who is repelled by crude materialism. Ramanuja, also a Vedic commentator, and born about the beginning of the eleventh century A. C., was a preacher of qualified Adwaitism — or non-duality, — in which the Supreme Spirit, the Universal Soul, becomes at once the cause of the outside world and the material of all creation. In the God Vishnu he finds this Supreme Soul particularly and pre-eminently embodied; and hence his insistence on the adoration of Vishnu as the only means of gaining freedom from rebirth. Madhavacharya (14th century) also took the same view. While, however, philosophers debated on Adwaitism, the countless masses of the Indian villagers were content with the worship of the village godlings, with here and there an awful variety provided by some foul Tantric rite, for which the temples of the great Hindu Gods were resorted to only by stealth, and in a perverted form.

Philosophy in India has, however, never been able to divorce itself completely from Theology and religious ritual, thanks to its origin in the study of the Vedas. The classic Six Systems, — the *Shad-Dharshana*, — though each an independent development, have all this common origin, as reflected in the Six Systems being really only three pairs. Even if we do not reckon Jainism and Buddhism as philosophically parts of these Six Systems; and even if we include all the minor divisions as independent systems, — following the *Sarva-Darshana-Samgraha* of the famous Madhavacharya, — there would be in all sixteen different schools of thought hailing from the most ancient times. The Muslim contribution of Suffism is really a variant of Vedantism, though it did not take its origin in this country; while the practical rejoinder to the iconoclastic zeal of the early Muslims in India, as made by Kabir and Nanak, and as now embodied in the doctrines of the Sikhs, can hardly be described as independent systems. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves in this review to the principal Six Schools — the famous, classic *Shad-Darshana*.

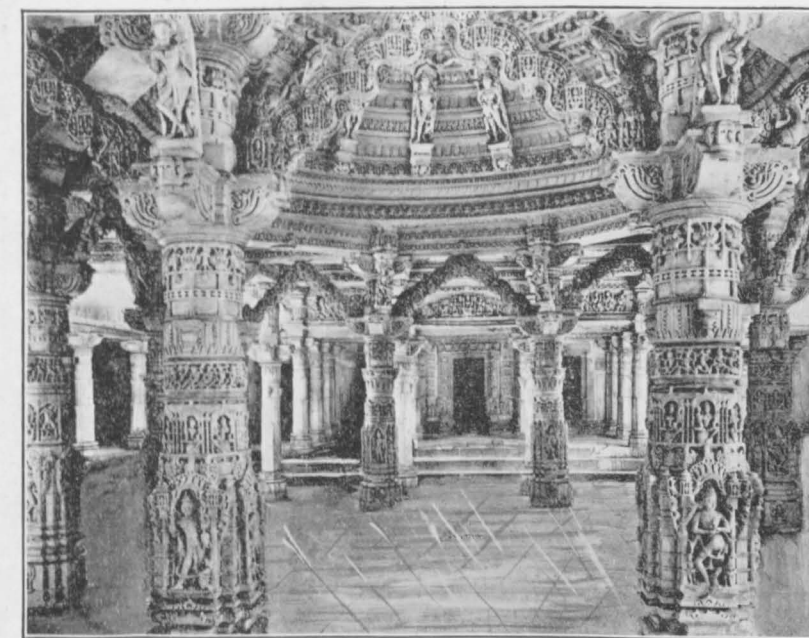
In the Six Systems are comprised; the *Purva* and *Uttara Mimāṃsā*, the *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga*; the *Nyāya* and *Vaisheshika*. Each system has a body of aphorisms (Sutras) as its basis, and a varying host of commentaries, both critical and explanatory. A brief review of the most salient feature of each would reveal the relationship *inter se*, and its place in the story of philosophic thought in this country.



114 ABU: SIDE CHAPEL IN THE NEMNATH TEMPLE



115 CEILING PAINTINGS IN JAIN TEMPLE (CONJEEVRAM)



116 DILWARA TEMPLE: ADINATH TEMPLE HALL



117 BUDDHA STATUE (SANCHI)



118 TEMPTATION OF BUDDHA
(Photo: Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad)



119 SIDDHARTHA
(Photo: Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad)



120 BUDDHA'S PARINIRVANA
(Photo: Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad)



121 DIVISION OF BUDDHA'S BONES
(Photo: Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad)

1 and 2. THE MIMAMSAS.

These are the immediate offsprings of the Vedas; the *Uttara Mimamsa* being more commonly and compendiously known as the Vedanta System. The first, or *Purva Mimamsa* deals with the practical or ritualistic aspect of the Vedas, while the *Uttara Mimamsa*,—the theoretical or philosophical side,—is concerned with the World-Soul. Jaimini, author of the *Purva Mimamsa Sutra*, emphasizes the importance of the sacrifices and ceremonies prescribed by the Vedas as the only way to Salvation. A great commentator Shabara-Swamin is made greater by his more famous annotator Kumarila Bhatta, who wrote about 700 A. C., in Southern India. Madhavacharya followed in his footsteps in the fourteenth century. The basic Sutra of the *Uttara Mimamsa* is the *Vedanta Sutra* of Badarayana, composed, very likely, contemporaneously with Jaimini's great work in the sister school. The most famous and now the oldest extant commentary on his work is that of Shri Shankaracharya of immortal memory. The chief exponent of Adwaitism or Monism, he developed the doctrine of Maya, which regards the outside world of sense perceptions and phenomena to be an appearance. His extensive, learned, scientific treatises,—on the fundamental *Vedanta-Sutra*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Bhagavad-Gita*,—make a complete system, religio-philosophic in its nature, which even now claims the largest proportion of the keenest intellect of modern India. Ramanuja of Conjevaram, another South Indian (1175 to 1250 A. C.), modified Shankara's note of Adwaitism by a greater emphasis on Devotion or *Bhakti*, and by disputing the latter's views on the relation between *Karma* and *Jnana*, on the nature of true knowledge, and on the relation between Brahman and the world. On the whole, however, it would be true to say that the disputations of philosophers for two thousand years and more have succeeded in abolishing the difference, or at least in minimising it, as between the Path of Action (*Karma-Marga*) and the Path of Knowledge (*Jnana-Marga*); while the difference between these and the Path of Devotion (*Bhakti-Marga*) remains still undiminished.

3. THE SANKHYA SYSTEM.

This is a Dualistic school of thought, which is so-called Enumerative, because the classification and numbering of principles is an important feature. As opposed to the idealistic schools of the Vedas and Upanishads, this is a philosophy of Realism. It was founded by Kapila, of whom only the name survives. The ultimate authority here is not the *Vedas*, but the experience of each one by himself. The founder and his followers reject the doctrine of the World-Soul; consider matter and the phenomenal world to be real; and admit as per experience a multiplicity of individual souls. The First Cause of the world is *Prakriti*,—Nature,—or primeval matter. The origin of suffering is the non-distinction between soul and matter; and its end, the true knowledge. Though independent of, and even in opposition to, the Vedas, the Sankhya doctrine soon made its way in the Brahmanic literature, and came to permeate the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*. Certainly, at the time of

the Buddha, and even of Mahavira or Parshwa, it must have been an important body of thought; for these great founders of non-Vedic religions in India taught doctrines which were essentially Sankhyic. The oldest extant Sankhya treatise is the *Sankhya-Karika* of Ishwara-Krishna, dating from about 300 A. C. Barth, the great French scholar, considered it to be the pearl of the whole scholastic literature of India; and the Arabian Alberuni in the 11th century bases his description of the Sankhya-System on this concise exposition of the Doctrine.

4. THE YOGA.

This is another non-Vedic school of thought in India, dating even from the days before the Vedic ideas took shape in philosophical systems.

"The primary meaning is the 'Yoking' of the mind with a view to concentrate thought on a single point; for these exercises aim at the regulation of breathing, sitting, and restraining the senses, for the purposes of exclusive concentration on a single supernatural object, in order to obtain as a result supernatural knowledge as supernatural powers."

These exercises play a great part in the Brahmanic, Buddhist and Jain religions, owing, partly at least, to the value of the doctrine in teaching a rigorous restraint of the senses from the point of morality. In pure philosophy, Yoga is akin to the Sankhya, except that it accepts theism, and emphasizes asceticism as the way to salvation from life and its suffering. This has elicited the high praise given to it by Shri Krishna in the *Gita*, which is otherwise a poem of praise for the One God. The Yogic God, however, is not the same as the personal, creative, Lord and Judge of men, as imagined by the theistic systems generally. The basic Sutra of this system is ascribed to a Patanjali, (not the celebrated grammarian,) dealing, in four sections, with the nature, means, results, and end of concentration. There are a number of commentaries, as usual; but the handbooks now commonly used seem to be so utterly divorced from the essence of the old system, that they only invite, more often than not, the ridicule of the sceptic and the critical. This ridicule, — or at least scepticism, — cannot but be intensified by the histrionics of the modern pushing salesmen from the European shopkeepers.

5. THE NYAYA SYSTEM AND 6. VAISHESHIKA.

This is, essentially, Indian Logic, the two schools, once separate, having at last coalesced. They are wholly independent of religious belief, and may thus be rightly styled the systems of Scientific Logic and Theory of Knowledge. The *Nyaya Sutra* of Gautama is in five books, the first two dealing with Logic and Theory of Knowledge, the third with Psychology, the next with Transmigration and final salvation, and the last a final supplement to the whole. In its latest form it is supposed to date from 300 A. C., but must have originated centuries earlier. The Buddhists and the Jains, at the height of their prestige, encouraged and cultivated this science of dialectics, which even now forms an integral part of any scheme of liberal education in India.

Mention may also be made of the system of Charvaka, the Indian Materialist, who frankly preached the doctrine of making the most of this world as we find it. The oldest Buddhist canonical work — *Vinaya Pitaka* — mentioning it, the doctrine must be taken to be very old indeed, though all that we now have of it is the distorted version of its successful opponents. It regarded soul as nothing but an attribute of the body, and pleasure and pain as being caused by earthly causes to the mortal coil. Frankly opposed to anything supernatural, it was the perfect *rationalism* of antiquity, and as such opposed to the vested interests of the Sacerdotal order.

OTHER SCIENCES

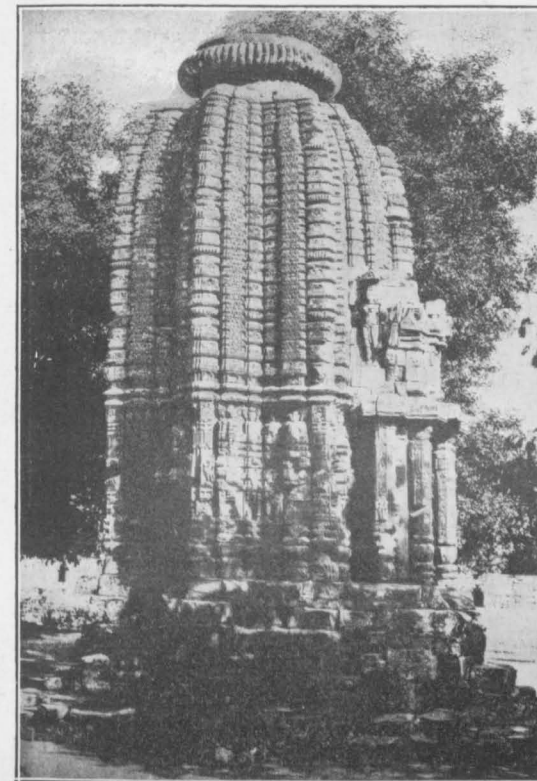
The literary achievements of ancient and medieval India do not, however, exhaust themselves in the magnificent monuments of philosophical and canonical writings, nor even in the very remarkable treasures of poetic or dramatic creations. Secular sciences were also cultivated both in their abstract and practical forms. Of the sciences which have translated themselves in the yet enduring creations of Indian art and craftsmanship, we shall speak incidentally in the chapters dealing with the Arts and Crafts of India. Here let us speak only of those other sciences which are unconnected with religious and philosophic literature on the one hand, and with their practical application in the form of concrete arts on the other, e.g. the *Kama Shastra* (Erotics), or the *Artha Shastra* (Political Economy).

The earliest to be cultivated of these sciences was in all probability the Science of Language, or Grammar. Indians have considered this from the earliest antiquity to be the most important science, indispensable in any system of education calling itself liberal. Beginning with the linguistic investigation of the Vedic hymns, the Science was well termed by its early professors *Vyakarana* or analysis; and the works on phonetics must be considered to be among the earliest of our grammatical treatises. Yaska's Vedic *Nirukta* shows a very considerable grammatical advance, even in the age of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* and the later *Samhitas*. Panini's celebrated classic, *Shabdamanushasana* or the Doctrine of Words, has been the standard classic on Sanskrit grammar since at least the 5th century B. C.; and he mentions ten of his predecessors in the science by name. A native of the Indus Valley near the town of Attock, Panini is an ideal writer, laying down his rules with algebraic terseness. Katyayana, a century or so after Panini, and Patanjali, another like period after Katyayana, make the most brilliant links in the long series of master-grammarians of ancient India. Those who followed them added nothing of their own to the work of these masters, though a later day Katyayana did try to make Pali an independent language by itself, not a derivative from Sanskrit. Thus the *Kashika Vritti* (Commentary of Benares) by Vaman and Jayaditya in the 7th century A. C., or the *Sidhant-Kaumudi* of Bhattoji Dikshita in the 17th century (1625 A. C.), are mere handbooks on the standard treatises. The grammarian Bhartrihari wrote about 631 A. C., however, from a slightly different point of view. He considers the science of language, and not merely of words, their roots and

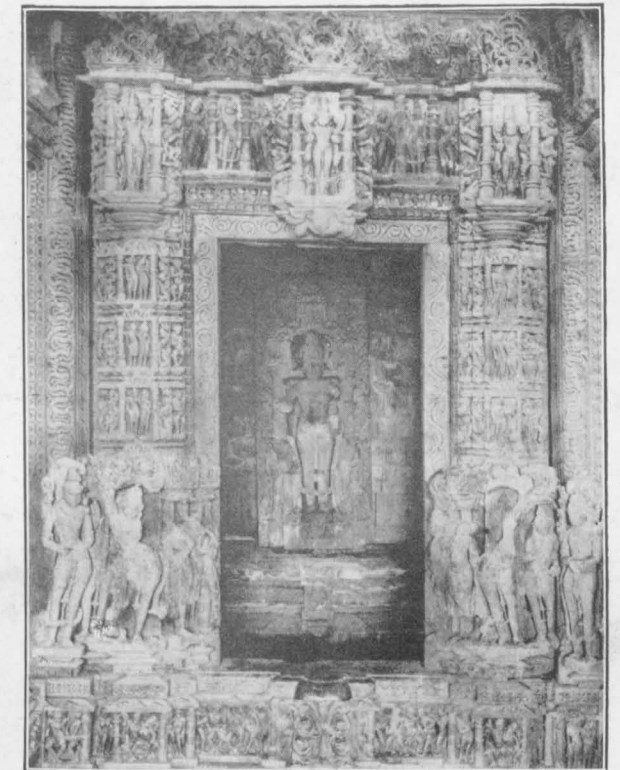
forms, their combination in sentences. The *Katantra*, again, of Sharvavarman, dating from 300 A. C., is another attempt at emancipation from the domination of the old masters. The Jain saint and scholar, Hemachandra of Gujarat, (12th century A. C.) writing mainly for the Jains, has little interest, except as a philologist, in the Vedic roots and accent of the classic Sanskrit words. He also wrote a comprehensive Prakrit grammar. Vararuchi, on the other hand, broke away completely from the older tradition by composing a grammar of the four Prakrit languages prevailing in his time; the *Maharashtri*, the *Paishachi*, the *Magadhi*, and the *Shaurseni*.

Closely allied with the work of the grammarians, are the labours of the Lexicographers. The Vedic *Nighantus* are the beginning of the Indian Lexicography; but the lexicons now most famous date rather from classic than from Vedic times. The *Dhatu-Pathas* (List of Roots) and the *Gana Pathas* (List of word-groups) from the Vedas make an easy transition from the *Nighantu* to the classic *Kosha* or Dictionary. Like the Treatises on Poetics, these are indispensable for the dramatist and the poet. The standard lexicon of the Sanskrit language now known is *Amar-Kosha*, ascribed to a learned scholar Amar Simha, a contemporary of Kalidasa at the court of Vikramaditya. The dictionaries of Halayudha (950 A. C.), and of Yadavprakashya, are the creations of South-Indian scholarship; while the works of Dhananjaya (1123-1140 A. C.) and of Hemachandraacharya, — a veritable mine of learning, — are Jain contributions from the South and the West to the same branch of learning.

Next in importance in cultivation, perhaps, but second to none in their significance to the daily life of the people, are the innumerable Legal Treatises dating from the earliest antiquities. The *Dharmashastras*, — (The Science of Duties or Obligations), — take their origin in the Vedas, and are, in their early form, more religious treatises than works on law and jurisprudence. Their remarks, however, on religious or sacrificial ritual and penances, the duties of priests and kings, make an excellent foundation for their later development into complete treatises on social, personal and public law and morality amongst the Aryans. The *Apastambiya Dharma-Sutra* is regarded by some modern scholars to be the best and oldest of these, dating from about 400 B. C. This is a product of the Black Yajur Veda school in South-India, like the still later work of Baudhayana. But older, most probably, than these is the *Dharma-Shastra* of Gautama, which follows the *Sama-Veda*. The work now regarded as the standard, authoritative treatise in this branch is the celebrated *Manava-Dharma Shastra*, or the "Code of Manu," which even now rules the life at every important stage of the largest section of the Hindus. The widest difference of opinion prevails as to the date of the author, Manu. Dates as varied as the 13th century B. C. and the 2nd century A. C. have been suggested by modern scholars. Even the *Mahabharata* quotes this *Manu-Smriti* with approval. Yagnavalkya, another legist, has been rendered famous by his commentator Vijñaneshwara, whose *Mitakshara* dates from the later half of the 11th century. It was adopted as a standard soon after its publication both in Benares and in Maharashtra, becoming, through the latter, a part of the modern law in British



122 BUDDHA-GAYA, NAVAGRAHA
TEMPLE, ORISSA

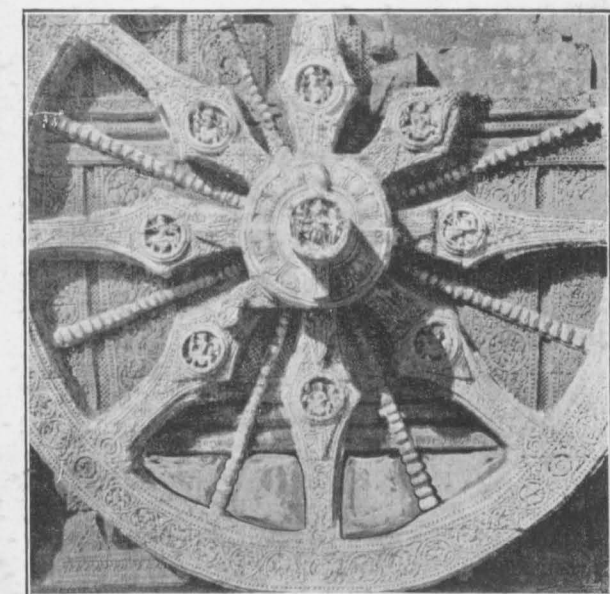


123 KHAJURAO—SHRINE OF THE
SURYA TEMPLE



124 AIHOLE TEMPLE, BIJAPUR, EARLY CHALUKYAN STYLE
BIJAPUR DISTRICT

(Photo: Archaeological Survey of India)



125 KONARAK—WHEEL OF THE
SUN CHARIOT