

religious system were on a par in the matter of status and dignity. The Shudra could never aspire to be a Brahmin in the Vedic regime but he could become a Bhikshu and occupy the same status and dignity as did the Brahmin. For, while the Vedic order of Brahmins was closed to the Shudra, the Buddhist order of Bhikshus was open to him and many Shudras who could not become Brahmins under the Vedic Regime had become their peers by becoming Bhikshus under Buddhism. Similar change is noticeable in the case of women. Under the Buddhist regime she became a free person. Marriage did not make her a slave. For marriage under the Buddhist rule was a contract. Under the Buddhist Regime she could acquire property, she could acquire learning and what was unique, she could become a member of the Buddhist order of Nuns and reach the same status and dignity as a Brahmin. The elevation of the status of the Shudras and women was so much the result of the gospel of Buddhism that Buddhism was called by its enemies as the Shudra religion (i.e. the religion of the low classes).

All this of course must have been very galling to the Brahmins. How very galling it must have been to them is shown by the vandalic fury with which Brahmanism after its triumph over Buddhism proceeded to bring about a complete demolition of the high status to which the Shudras and women had been elevated by the revolutionary changes effected by the vivifying gospel of Buddhism.

Starting with this background one shudders at the inhumanity and cruelty of the laws made by Manu against the Shudras. I quote a few of them assembling them under certain general heads.

Manu asks the householders of the Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya Class :

IV. 61. Let him not dwell in a country where the rulers are Shudra.....

This cannot mean that Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya should leave the country where Shudra is a ruler. It can only mean that if a Shudra becomes a king he should be killed. Not only a Shudra is not to be recognized as fit to be a king, he is not to be deemed as a respectable person. For Manu enacts that :—

XI. 24. A Brahmin shall never beg from a Shudra property for (performing) a sacrifice i.e. for religious purposes.

All marriage ties with the Shudra were proscribed. A marriage with a woman belonging to any of the three higher classes was forbidden. A Shudra was not to have any connection with a woman of the higher classes and an act of adultery committed by a Shudra with her was declared by Manu to be an offence involving capital punishment.

VIII. 374. A Shudra who has an intercourse with a woman of the higher caste guarded¹ or unguarded, shall be punished in the following manner; if she was unguarded, he loses the offending part. If she was guarded then he should be put to death and his property confiscated.

Manu insists that a Shudra shall be servile, unfit for office, without education, without property and as a contemptible person, his person and property shall always be liable to be conscripted.

As to office Manu prescribes.

VIII 20. A Bramhana who is only a Brahmana by descent i.e. one has neither studied nor performed any other act required by the Vedas may, at the king's pleasure, interpret the law to him i.e. act as the Judge, but never a Shudra (however learned he may be).

VIII. 21. The Kingdom of that monarch who looks on while a Shudra settles the law will sink low like a cow in a morass.

VIII. 272. If a Shudra arrogantly presumes to preach religion to Bramhins the King shall have poured burning oil in his mouth and ears.

In olden times the study of the Vedas stood for education. Manu declare that the study of the Vedas was not a matter of right but that it was a matter of privilege. Manu deprived the Shudra of the right to study Veda. He made it a privilege of the three higher classes. Not only did he debar the Shudra from the study of the Vedas but he enacted penalties against those who might help the Shudra to acquire knowledge of the Veda. To a person who is privileged to study the Vedas, Manu ordains that :

IV. 99. He must never read the Vedas.. in the presence of the Shudras.

and prescribes that :—

III. 156. He who instructs Shudra pupils and he whose teacher is a Shudra shall become disqualified for being invited to Shradha.

Manu's successor went much beyond him in the cruelty of their punishment of the Shudra for studying the Veda. For instance Katyayana lays down that if a Shudra overheard the Veda or ventured to utter a word of the Veda, the King shall cut his tongue in twain and put hot molten lead in his ears.

As to property Manu is both ruthless and shameless. According to the Code of Manu :

X. 129. No superfluous collection of wealth must be made by a Shudra, even though he has power to make it since a servile man, who has amassed riches, becomes proud, and, by his insolence or neglect, gives pain to Bramhans.

¹Guarded means under the protection of relation, Unguarded means living alone.

The reason for the rule is more revolting than the rule itself. Manu was of course not sure that the prohibitory injunction will be enough to prevent the Shudra from acquiring wealth. To leave no room for the Shudra to give offence to the Bramhins by his accumulation of wealth Manu added another section to his code whereby he declared that :

VIII. 417. A Bramhana may seize without hesitation if he be in distress for his subsistence, the goods of his Shudra.

Not only is the property of a Shudra liable to conscription but the labour of the Shudra, Manu declares, is liable to conscription. Compare the following provision in Manu :

VIII. 413. A Bramhana may compel a Shudra, whether bought or unbought to do servile work; for he is created by the creator to be the slave of a Bramhana.

A Shudra was required by Manu to be servile in his speech. How very servile he must be can be seen from the following provisions in Manu :—

VIII. 270. A Shudra who insults a twiceborn man with gross invective, shall have his tongue cut out; for he is of low origin.

VIII. 271. If he mentions the names and castes of the (twiceborn) with contumely, an iron nail, ten fingers long, shall be thrust red hot into his mouth.

Manu's object was to make the Shudra not merely a servile person but an altogether contemptible person. Manu will not allow a Shudra the comfort of having a high sounding name. Had Manu not been there to furnish incontrovertible proof it would be difficult to believe that Bramanism could have been so relentless and pitiless in its persecution of the Shudra. Observe Manu's law as to the names that the different classes can give to their children.

II. 31. Let the first part of a Brahman's name denote something auspicious, a Kshatriya's be connected with power, and a Vaishya's with wealth, but a Shudra's express something contemptible.

II. 32. The second part of a Bramhan's name shall be a word implying happiness, of a Kshatriya's a word implying protection, of a Vaisya's a term expressive of thriving and of a Shudra's an expression denoting service.

The basis of all these inhuman laws is the theory enunciated by Manu regarding the Shudra. At the outset of his Code, Manu takes care to assert it emphatically and without blushing. He says :

I. 91. One occupation only, the Lord prescribed to the Shudra, to serve meekly these other three castes (namely Bramhin, Kshatriya and Vaishya).

Holding that the Shudra was born to be servile, Manu made his laws accordingly so as to compel him to remain servile. In the Buddhist regime a Shudra could aspire to be a judge, a priest and even a King, the highest status that he could ever aspire to. Compare with this the ideal that Manu places before the Shudra and one can get an idea of what fate was to be under Brahmanism :

X. 121. If a Shudra, (unable to subsist by serving Brahmanas), seeks a livelihood, he may serve Kshartiyas, or he may also seek to maintain himself by attending on a wealthy Vaishya.

X. 122. But let a (Shudra) serve Brahmanas, either for the sake of heaven, or with a view to both (this life and the next); for he who is called the servant of a Brahmana thereby gains all his ends.

X. 123. The service of Brahmanas alone is declared (to be) an excellent occupation for a Shudra; for whatever else besides this he may perform will bear him no fruit.

X. 124. They must allot to him out of their own family (property) a suitable maintenance, after considering his ability, his industry, and the number of those whom he is bound to support.

X. 125. The remnants of their food must be given to him, as well as their old household furniture.

Manu can hardly be said to be more tender to women than he was to the Shudra. He starts with a low opinion of women. Manu proclaims :

II. 213. It is the nature of women to seduce men in this (world); for that reason the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females.

II. 214. For women are able to lead astray in (this) world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger.

II. 215. One should not sit in a lonely place with one's mother sister or daughter; for the senses are powerful, and master even a learned man.

IX. 14. Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; (thinking), '(It is enough that) he is a man ', they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly.

IX. 15. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this (world).

IX. 16. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, (every) man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them.

IX. 17. (When creating them) Manu allotted to women (a love of their) bed, (of their) seat and (of) ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct.

The laws of Manu against women are of a piece with this view. Women are not to be free under any circumstances. In the opinion of Manu :—

IX. 2. Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males (of) their (families), and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.

IX. 3. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.

IX. 5. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.

IX. 6. Considering that the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands (must) strive to guard their wives.

V. 147. By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.

V. 148. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.

V. 149. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both (her own and her husband's) families contemptible. Woman is not to have a right to divorce.

IX. 45. The husband is declared to be one with the wife, which means that there could be no separation once a woman is married. Many Hindus stop here as though this is the whole story regarding Manu's law of divorce and keep on idolizing it by comforting their conscience by holding out the view that Manu regarded marriage as sacrament and therefore did not allow divorce. This of course is far from the truth. His law against divorce had a very different motive. It was not to tie up a man to a woman but it was to tie up the woman to a man and to leave the man free. For Manu does not prevent a man for giving up his wife. Indeed he not only allows him to abandon his wife but he also permits him to sell her. But what he does is to prevent the wife from becoming free. See what Manu Says :

IX. 46. Neither by sale nor by repudiation is a wife released from her husband.

The meaning is that a wife, sold or repudiated by her husband, can never become the legitimate wife of another who may have bought or received her after she was repudiated. If this is not monstrous nothing can be. But Manu was not worried by considerations of justice or injustice of his laws. He wanted to deprive women of the freedom she had under the Buddhistic regime. He knew, by her misuse of her liberty, by her willingness to marry the Shudra that the system of the gradation of the Varna had been destroyed. Manu was outraged by her license and in putting a stop to it he deprived her of her liberty.

A wife was reduced by Manu to the level of a slave in the matter of property.

IX. 146. A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is (acquired) for him to whom they belong.

When she becomes a widow Manu allows her maintenance if her husband was joint and a widow's estate in the property of her husband if he was separate from his family. But Manu never allows her to have any dominion over property.

A woman under the laws of Manu is subject to corporal punishment and Manu allows the husband the right to beat his wife.

VIII. 299. A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil, and a younger brother of the full blood, who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo.

In other matters woman was reduced by Manu to the same position as the Shudra.

The study of the Veda was forbidden to her by Manu as it was to the Shudra.

II. 66. Even for a woman the performance of the *Sanskaras* are necessary and they should be performed. But they should be performed without uttering the Veda Mantras.

IX. 18. Women have no right to study the Vedas. That is why their Sanskars are performed without Veda Mantras. Women have no knowledge of religion because they have no right to know the Vedas. The uttering of the Veda Mantras is useful for removing sin. As women cannot utter the Veda Mantras they are as unclean as untruth is.

Offering sacrifices according to Bramhanism formed the very soul of religion. Yet Manu will not allow women to perform them. Manu ordains that :—

XI. 36. A woman shall not perform the daily sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas.

XI. 37. If she does it she will go to hell.

To disable her from performing such sacrifices Manu prevents her from getting the aid and services of a Bramhin priest.

IV. 205. A Bramhan must never eat food given at a sacrifice performed by a woman.

IV. 206. Sacrifices performed by women are inauspicious and not acceptable to God. They should therefore be avoided.

Woman was not to have any intellectual pursuits and nor free will nor freedom of thought. She was not to join any heretical sect such as Buddhism. If she continues to adhere to it, till death she is not to be given the libation of water as is done in the case of all dead.

Finally a word regarding the ideal of life, Manu has sought to place before a woman. It had better be stated in his own words :

V. 151. Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.

V. 154. Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.

V. 155. No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women, apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.

Then comes the choicest texts which forms the pith and the marrow of this ideal which Manu prescribes for the women :

V. 153. The husband who wedded her with sacred Mantras, is always a source of happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, in this world and in the next.

V. 150. She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.

This the Hindus regard as a very lofty ideal for a woman!!!

The severity of these laws against Shudras and women show that the phenomenal rise of these classes during the Buddhist regime had not only offended the Brahmins but had become intolerable to them. It was a complete reversal of their sacred social order from top to bottom. The first had become last and the last had become first. The laws of Manu also explain, the determined way in which the Brahmins proceeded to use their political power to degrade the Shudras and the women to their old status. The triumphant Bramhanism began its onslaught on both the Shudras and the women in pursuit of the old ideal namely servility and Bramhanism did succeed in making the Shudras and women the servile classes, Shudras the serfs to the three higher classes and women the serfs to their husbands. Of the black

deeds committed by Brahmanism after its triumph over Buddhism this one is the blackest. There is no parallel in history for so foul deeds of degradation committed by a class of usurpers in the interest of class domination. The colossal character of this deed of degradation perpetrated by Barahmanism is unfortunately not fully realized. It is concealed by those small monosyllabic words, Stri and Shudra. Let those who wish to get an idea of the enormity of their deed think, of the numbers that lie behind these two terms. What part of the population do they apply to ? The woman represents one half of the population. Of the balance the Shudra represents not less than two third. The two together make up about 75% of the total population. It is this huge mass of people that has been doomed by Brahmanism to eternal servility and eternal degradation. It is because of the colossal scale of degradation whereby 75% of her people were deprived of their right to life, liberty and persuit of happiness that India became a decaying if not a dead nation.

The principle of graded inequality runs through the whole of the Manu Smriti. There is no department of life in which he has not introduced his principle ,of graded inequality. For a complete and thorough exposition of it, it would be necessary to reproduce the whole of Manu Smriti. I will take only a few departments to illustrate how in the hands of Manu the principle of graded inequality became imbedded in the social life.

Take the field of marriage. Observe the rule of Manu :—

III. 13. It is declared that a Shudra woman alone (can be) the wife of a Shudra, she and one of his own caste (the wives) of a Vaishya, those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kshatriya, those three and one of his own caste (the wives of a Bramhan).

Take the rules of Manu regarding the treatment of guests :—

III. 110. But a Kshatriya (who comes) to the house of a Brahmana is not called a guest (atithi), nor a Vaisya, nor a Shudra, nor a personal friend, nor a relative, nor the teacher.

III. 111. But if Kshatriya comes to the house of a Brahmana in the manner of a guest, (the house-holder) may feed him according to his desire, after, the above mentioned Brahmanas have eaten.

III. 112. Even a Vaisya and a Shudra who have approached his house in the manner of guests, he may allow to eat with his servants, showing (thereby) his compassionate disposition.

In the house of a Brahmana, nobody except a Brahmin is to have the honour of being a guest.¹ If the Kshatriya comes in the manner

¹ The word guest is used by Manu in a technical sense and means a Bramhana who stays one night only see III. 102.

of a guest to the house of a Brahmin he is to be fed after all the Brahmins are fed and if the Vaishyas and Shudras come in the manner of guests they are to be fed after everybody is fed and only in the company of servants.

Take the rules of Manu regarding Sanskaras:

X. 126. A Shudra has no right to receive the sacraments.

X. 68. The law prescribes that neither of the two (that is those who belong to mixed castes) shall receive the sacraments the first being excluded on account of lowness of his origin of his parents was against the order of the castes.

II. 66. The whole series¹ of sacraments must be performed for females also in order to sanctify the body at the proper time and in the proper order, but without the recitaion of sacred Vedic Mantras.

Manu further lays down that:

VI. 1. A twice born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly (observing the rules given below).

VI. 33. But having thus passed the third part of (a man's natural term of) life in the forest, he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachment to worldly objects.

Even in law Manu introduces the principle of graded inequality. To take only two illustrations, the law of defamation, abuse and the law of assault:

VIII. 267. A Kshatriya having defamed a Brahmana, shall be fined one hundred (panas); A Vaisya one hundred and fifty or two hundred; a Shudra shall suffer corporal punishment.

VIII. 268. A Brahmana shall be fined fifty (panas) for defaming a Kshatriya; in (the case of) a Vaisya the fine shall be twenty five (panas); in (the case of) a Shudra twelve.

VIII. 269. For offences of twice born men against those of equal caste (varna, the fine shall be) also twelve (panas) for speeches which ought not to be uttered, that (and every fine shall be) double.

VIII. 276. (For mutual abuse) by a Brahmana and a Kshatriya a fine must be imposed by a discerning (king), on the Brahmana the lowest agreement, but on the Kshatriya the middlemost.

VIII. 277. A Vaisya and a Shudra must be punished exactly in the same manner according to their respective castes, but the tongue (of the Shudra) shall not be cut out; that is the decision.

¹Except Upanayan which is forbidden for women.

VIII. 279. With whatever limb a man of a low caste does hurt to (a man of the three) highest (castes), even that limb shall be cut off; that is the teaching of Manu.

VIII. 280. He who raises his hand or a stick, shall have his hand cut off; he who in anger kicks with his foot, shall have his foot cut off.

Everywhere is the principle of graded inequality. So ingrained it had become in the social system that the successors of Manu were careful to introduce it where he had failed to give effect to it. For instance Manu had had recognized the system of slavery. But had failed to prescribe whether the system of slavery was or was not subject to the principle of graded order of insubordination.

Lest it should be understood that the law of graded inequality did not apply to slavery and that a Brahmin may be a slave of the Shudra, Yajnavalkya at once proceeds to clear the doubt. He expressly laid down that:—

“Slavery is in the descending order of the Varnas and not in the ascending order” (XIV. 183).

Vijnaneshwar in his commentary on Yajnavalkya makes it concrete by his illustrations when he says :

“Of the Varnas such as the Brahmana and the rest, a state of slavery shall exist *Anulomyena*, in the descending order. Thus, of a Brahmana, a Kshatriya and the rest may become a slave; of a Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra; and of a Vaishya, Shudra, thus the state of slavery shall operate in the descending order.”

Stated in the language of equality and inequality, this means that the Brahmin is the highest because he can be the slave of nobody but is entitled to keep a person of any class as his slave. The Shudra is the lowest because everybody can keep him as his slave but he can keep no one as his slave except a Shudra. The place assigned to the Kshatriya and the Vaishya introduces the system of graded inequality. A Kshatriya while he is inferior to the Brahmin he can be the slave of the Brahmin. While he is yet superior to the Vaishyas and the Shudras because he can keep them as his slaves; the Vaishyas and the Shudras have no right to keep a Kshatriya as his slave. Similarly a Vaishya while he is inferior to the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, because they can keep him as their slave and he cannot keep any one of them as his slave, he is proud that he is at least superior to the Shudra because he can keep the Shudra as his slave while Shudra cannot keep the Vaishya as his slave.

Such is the principle of graded inequality which Brahmanism injected into the bone and the marrow of the people. Nothing worse to paralyze society to overthrow inequity could have been done.

Although its effects have not been clearly noticed there can be no doubt that because of it the Hindus have been stricken with palsy. f Students of social organization have been content with noting the difference between equality and inequality. None have realized that in addition to equality and inequality there is such a thing as graded inequality. Yet inequality is not half so dangerous as graded inequality. Inequality carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Inequality does not last long. Under pure and simple inequality two things happen. It creates general discontent which forms the seed of revolution. Secondly it makes the sufferers combine against a common foe and on a common grievance. But the nature and circumstances of the system of graded inequality leave no room for either of these two things to happen. The system of graded inequality prevents the rise of general discontent against inequity, ft cannot therefore become the storm centre of revolution. Secondly the sufferers under inequality becoming unequal both in terms of the benefit and the burden there is no possibility of a general combination of all classes to overthrow the inequity. To make the thing concrete the Brahmanic law of marriage is full of inequity. The right of Brahmana to take a woman from the classes below him but not to give a woman to them is in inequity. But the Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra will not combine to destroy it. The Kshatriya resents this right of the Brahmana. But he will not combine with Vaishya or the Shudra and that for two reasons. Firstly because he is satisfied that if the Brahman has the right to take the right of three communities, the Kshatriya has the right to appropriate the women of two communities. He does not suffer so much as the other two. Secondly if he joins in a general revolution against this marriage—inequity in one way he will rise to the level of the Bramhins but in another way all will be equal which to him means that the Vaishyas and the Shudras will rise to his level i.e. they will claim Kshatriya women—which means he will fall to their level. Take any other inequity and think of a revolt against it. The same social psychology will show that a general rebellion against it is impossible.

One of the reasons why there has been no revolution against Brahmanism and its inequities is due entirely to the principle of graded inequality. If is a system of permitting a share in the spoils with a view to enlist them to support the spoils system. It is a system full of low cunning which man could have invented to perpetuate inequity and to profit by it. For it is nothing else but inviting people to share in inequity in order that they may all be supporters of inequity.

There now remains to lift the curtain from the last act of this drama of Bramhanism.

Bramhanism inherited from the Vedic past that system of Chaturvarna. The system of Chaturvarna which the Hindus regard as the unique creation of their Aryan ancestors is in no sense unique. There is nothing original about it. The whole ancient world had stumbled into it. The Egyptians had it and the ancient Persians had it. Plato was so convinced about its excellence that he presented it as ideal form of social organization. The ideal of the Chaturvarna is faulty. The lumping together of individuals into a few sharply marked off classes is a very superficial view of man and his powers. The Ancient Aryans as well as Plato had no conception of the uniqueness of every individual, of his incommensurability with others and of each individual forming a class of his own. They had no recognition of the infinite diversity of active tendencies and combination of tendencies of which an individual is capable. To them there were types of faculties or powers in the individual constitution and all that is necessary for social organization is to classify them. All this is demonstrably wrong. Modern science has shown that lumping together of individuals into a few sharply marked off classes each confined to one particular sphere does injustice both to the individual and to Society. The stratification of Society by classes and occupations is incompatible with the fullest, utilization of the qualities which is so necessary for social advancement and is also incompatible with the safety and security of the individual as well as of Society in general.¹

There is another mistake which the Ancient Hindus including Plato, made. There is probably some truth in saying that there is among human beings a dimorphism or polyformism in human beings as there is among insects, though in the former it is only psychological while in the latter it is both physical as well as psychololgical. But assuming that there is a thing psychological dimorphism or polyformism among human beings, it is wrong to separate them into those who are born to do one thing and others to do another, some born to command i.e. to be masters and some born to obey i.e. to be slaves. It is wrong to suppose that in a given person some qualities are present and others are absent. On the contrary the truth is that all qualities are present in every person and this truth is not diminished in any way by that, some tendency predominates to the extent of being the only one that is apparent. So well established is this truth that a tendency which may be dominant in a man at one time may be quite different from and even the direct opposite of the tendency that may be dominant at another time. As Prof. Bergson² in speaking of the Nietzsche's false antithesis of 'men' and 'slaves' observes :

¹. For further consideration of this subject see my tract on "Annihilation of Caste."

². "Two sources of Morality". (Holt), p. 267.

“We have a clear vision of this (falsity) in times of revolution, Unassuming citizens, upto that moment humble and obedient, wake up one fine day with pretentions to be leaders of men”.

The cases of Mussolini and Hitler are a complete disproof of the theory of the Aryans and of Plato.

This Vedic system of Chaturvarna, far from being an ideal system was made positively worse by the changes which Bramhanism made and which have already been described. Every one of them was mischievous in character is beyond question. The Buddhist order of Bhikshus and the Vedic order of Brahmins were designed to serve the same purpose. They formed the elite of their society whose function was to lead and guide society along the right road. Although designed to discharge the same function the Buddhist Bhikshu was better placed to discharge it than was the Bramhin. That is because Buddha recognized one thing which nobody either before him or after him has done. Buddha realized that for a person to give a true lead to Society and be its trustworthy guide he must be intellectually free and further, which is more important, to be intellectually free he must not have private property. An elite charged with the care of his private property must fail to discharge his duty of leading and guiding Society along the right road. Buddha therefore took care to include in the Code of discipline for the Bhikshus a rule prohibiting a Bhikshu from holding private property. In the Vedic order of Bramhins there was no such prohibition. A Bramhin was free to hold property. This difference produced a profound difference on the character and outlook of the Buddhist Bhikshu and the Vedic Bramhin. The Bhikshus formed an intellectual class. The Bramhins formed on the other hand merely an educated class. There is a great difference between an intellectual class and an educated class. An intellectual class has no limitations arising out of any affiliations to any class or to any interest. An educated Class on the other hand is not an intellectual class although it has cultivated its intellect. The reason is that its range of vision and its sympathy to a new ideology is circumscribed by its being identified with the interest of the class with which it is affiliated.

The Bramhins from the very beginning therefore were inclined to be a purely educated class, enlightened but selfish. This evil in the Vedic order of Bramhins was extreme by the changes made in the old Vedic System. The right of the Brahmins to rule and the grant of special privileges and immunities made them more selfish, and induced in them the desire to use their education not for the advancement of learning but for the use of their community and against the advancement of society.

All their energy and their education has been spent in maintaining their own privileges against the good of the public. It has been the boast of many Hindu authors that the civilization of India is the most ancient civilization in the world. They will insist that there was no branch of knowledge in which their ancestors were not the pioneers. Open a book like "The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology" by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, or a book like "The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus" by Dr. Brajendranath Seal one is overwhelmed with data touching upon the knowledge their ancestors had about various scientific subjects. From these books it would appear that the ancient Indians knew astronomy, astrology, biology, chemistry, mathematics, Medicine, minerology. Physics and in the view of the mass of people even aviation. All this may be very true. The important question is now how the ancient Indians discovered these positive sciences. The important question is why did the ancient Indians cease to make any progress in the sciences in which they were the pioneers? This sudden arrest in the progress of science in ancient India is as astounding as it is deplorable. In the scientific world India occupies a position which even if it be first among the primitive is certainly last among the civilized nation. How did it happen that a people who began the work of scientific progress stopped, halted on the way, left in its incoherent and incomplete condition ? This is a question that needs to be considered and answered, not what the ancient Indians knew.

There is only one answer to the question and it is a very simple answer. In ancient India the Brahmins were the only educated class. They were also the Class which was claiming to be above all others. Buddha disputed their claim for supremacy and declared a war on the Brahmins. The Brahmins acted as an Educated Class—as distinguished from an intellectual class—would act under the circumstances. It abandoned all pursuits and engaged itself in defending the claim of supremacy and the social, economic and political interests of its class. Instead of writing books on Science, the Brahmins undertook to write Smritis. Here is an explanation why the progress of science in India became arrested. Brahmins found it more important and more imperative to write Smritis to repel the Buddhist doctrine of social equality.

How many Smritis did the Brahmins write ?

Mr. Kane a great authority on the Smriti literature has computed their number to be 128. And what for ? The Smritis are called lawbooks which of course hide their nature. They are really treatises expounding the supremacy of the Brahmins and their rights to special privileges. The defence of Brahmanism was more important than the

progress of science. Bramhanism not only defended its privileges but set about extending them in a manner that would cover every descent man with shame. The Brahmins started particularly to expand the meaning of certain privileges granted to them by Manu.

Manu had given the Bramhins the right to *dana*, gift. The *dana* was always intended to be money or chattel. But in course of time the concept of *dana* was expanded so as to include the gift of a woman which a Brahmin could keep as his mistress or who could be released by the Bramhin on commutation¹ of money payment.

Manu designated the Bramhins as Bhu-devas, lords of the Earth. The Bramhins enlarged the scope of this statement and began to claim the right to sexual intercourse with women of other classes. Even queens were not exempt from this claim. Ludovico Di Varthema who came to India as a traveller in about 1502 A.D. records the following about the Brahmins of Calicut:

“It is a proper, and the same time pleasant thing to know who these Brahmins are. You must know that they are the chief persons of the faith, as priests are among us. And when the King takes a wife, he selects the most worthy and the most honoured of these Brahmins and makes him sleep the first night with his wife, in order that he may deflower her.”²

Similarly Hamilton³ another writer says:

“When the Samorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie (Nambudari Brahmin), or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and if he pleases, he may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships.”

In the Bombay Presidency the priests of the Vaishnava sect claimed the right to deflower the women of their sect. This gave rise to the famous Maharaja Libel case brought by the chief priest of the Sect against one Karosondas Mulji in the High Court of Bombay in the year 1869 which shows that the right to claim the benefit of the first night was certainly effective till then.

When such a right to sexual cohabitation for the first night could be extended against the generality of the lower classes the Brahmins did not hesitate to extend it. This they did particularly in Malabar. There, Manu designated the Brahmins as Bhu-devas, lords of the earth. The Brahmins enlarged the scope of this statement and began to claim the

¹I remember reading the report of case in which a Brahmin who had taken a married wife as Dana refused to release her even though communication was offered by her husband.

²“The Travels of Ludovico Di Varthema” (Pub. Hakyt Society) Page 141. Varthema adds Do not imagine that the Brahmin goes willingly to perform this operation. The King is even obliged to pay him four hundred or five hundred ducats.

³New Account of the East Indies (1744) Vol. I. page 310.

right of promiscuous sexual intercourse with the women folk of the other Classes. This happened particularly in Malabar. There¹

“The Brahman castes follow the Makatyam System that is the system by which the child belongs to its father’s family. They contract, within their own caste regular marriages, with all the ordinary legal and religious sanctions and incidents. But the Brahmin men are also in the habit of entering into Sambandhan-Unions with women of the lower castes.”

This is not all. Observe further what the writer has to say:

“Neither party to a Sambadhan Unions becomes thereby a member of the other family; and the offspring of the Union belong to their mothers *tharwad* (family) and have no sort of claim, so far as the law goes, to a share of their father’s property or to maintenance therefrom.”

Speaking of the origin of this practice the author of the Gazetteer observes that the origin of this institution:

“Is found in the claim of the Bhu-devas ” or “Earth Gods” (that the Brahmanas) and on a lower plain of the Kshatriyas or the ruling classes, to the first fruits of lower Caste Womanhood, a right akin to the medieval *droit de Seigneurie*.”

It is an understatement to say that it is only a right to first fruits as the ‘right to the first night’ was called in the middle ages in Europe. It is more than that. It is a general right of the Brahmin against the lower caste to claim any woman of that class for mere prostitution, for the mere satisfaction of sexual appetite, without burdening the Brahmin to any of the obligations of marriage.

Such were the rights which the Brahmins the spiritual precepts claimed against the laity!! The Borgese Popes have been run down in history as the most debauched race of spiritual preceptors who ascended the throne of Peter. One wonders whether they were really worse than the Brahmins of India.

A purely intellectual Class, free to consider general good and having no interest of a class to consider, such as the one contemplated by Buddha is not to be had anywhere. For the limitations resulting from property on the freedom of intellect of the elite have not been generally recognized until very recently. But this want of an intellectual class has been made good in other countries by the fact that in those countries each Strata of Society has its educated class. There is safety, if no definite guidance, in the multiplicity of views expressed by different educated classes drawn from different strata of society. In such a multiplicity of views there is no danger of Society being misguided or

¹ Gazetteer of Malabar and Anjengo District by Mr. C. A. Innes Vol. I. p. 95

misdirected by the views of one single educated class drawn from one single class of society and which is naturally bound to place the interest of its class before the interests of the country. By the change made by Brahmanism India ceased to have safe and sure guidance of an intellectual class. But what is worse is that the Hindus lost the safety and security which other peoples have and which arises from the multiplicity of views expressed by various educated classes drawn from different strata of Society.

By the denial of education to the Shudras, by diverting the Kshatryyas to military pursuits, and the Vaishyas to trade and by reserving education to themselves the Brahmins alone could become the educated class—free to misdirect and misguide the whole society. By converting Varna into Caste they declared that mere birth was a real and final measure of the worth of a man. Caste and Graded inequality made disunity and discord a matter of course.

All this disfigurement of the original Varna system would have been tolerable if it had remained a mere matter of social practice. But Brahmanism was not content to leave the matter there. It wanted to give the Chaturvarna in its changed and perverted form the force of law. This new Chaturvarna the making of Brahmanism occupies in the Manu Smriti as the Law of Persons and the Law of Family. Nobody can make a mistake about it. Manu made it an offence for a person of a lower Caste to arrogate to himself the status of a higher Caste or to pass off as a member of the higher Caste.

X. 96. A man of low caste who through covetousness lives by the occupations of a higher one, the king shall deprive of his property and banish.

XI. 56. Falsely attributing to oneself high birth, giving information to the king (regarding a crime), and falsely accusing one's teacher, (are offences) equal to slaying a Brahmana.

Here there are two offences, General Impersonation (X. 96) and impersonation by the Shudra (XI 56). Note also the punishments how severe they are. For the first the punishment is confiscation of property and banishment. For the second the punishment is the same as the punishment for causing the death of a Brahmin.

The offence of personation is not unknown in modern jurisprudence and the Indian Penal Code recognizes it in section 419. But what is the punishment the Indian Penal Code prescribes for cheating by personation? Fine, and if imprisonment, then 3 years or both. Manu must be turning in his grave to find the British Government make so light of his law of Caste.

Manu next proceeds to direct the king that he should execute this law. In the first place he appeals to the King in the name of his pious duty:

VIII. 172. By preventing the confusion of Castes.....the power of the King grows, and he prospers in this world and after death.

Manu perhaps knows that the law relating to the confusion of Varna may not be quite agreeable to the conscience of the king and he avoids enforcement. Consequently Manu tells the King how in the matter of the execution of the laws the King should act:

VIII. 177. Therefore let the King not heeding his own likes and dislikes behave exactly like Yama.

i.e. he should be as impartial as Yama the Judge of the Dead.

Manu however does not wish to leave the matter to the King as a mere matter of pious duty. Manu makes it a matter of obligation upon the King. Accordingly Manu lays down as a matter of obligation that:

VIII. 410. The King should order a Vaishya to trade to lend money, to cultivate the land, or to lend cattle, and the Shudra to serve the twice born Caste. Again Manu reverts to the subject and say:

VIII 418. The King should carefully compel Vaishyas and Sudras to perform the work (prescribed) for them; for if these two castes swerved from their duties they would throw this whole world into confusion.

What if the Kings do not act up to this obligation. This law of Chaturvarna is so supreme in the eyes of Manu that Manu will not allow himself to be thwarted by a King who will not keep his obligation to maintain this law. Boldly Manu forges a new law that such a king shall be disposed. One can imagine how dear Chaturvarna was to Manu and to Brahmanism.

As I have said the Chaturvarna of the Vedic system was better than caste system was not very favourable to the creation of a Society which could be regarded as one single whole possessing the Unity of the ideal society. By its very theory the Chaturvarna has given birth to four classes. These four classes were far from friendly. Often they were quarreling and their quarrels were so bitter that they cannot but be designated as Class wars. All the same this old Chaturvarna had two saving features which Brahminism most selfishly removed. Firstly there was no isolation among the Varnas. Inter-marriage and inter-dining the two strongest bonds for unity had full play. There was no room for the different Varnas to develop that anti-social feeling which destroys the very basis of Society. While the Kshatriyas fought against the Brahmins and the Brahmins fought against the Kshatriyas there were

not wanting Kshatriyas who fought against the Kshatriyas¹ for the sake of Brahmins and there were not wanting Brahmins² who joined hands with Kshatriyas to put down the Brahmins.

Secondly this old Chaturvarna was conventional. It was the ideal of the Society but it was not the law of the State. Brahmanism isolated the Varnas and sowed the seed of antagonism. Brahmanism made legal what was only conventional. By giving it a legal basis it perpetrated the mischief. The Vedic Chaturvarna if it was an evil would have died out by force of time and circumstances. By giving it the force of Law Brahmanism has made it eternal. This is probably the greatest mischief that Brahmanism has done to Hindu Society.

In considering this question one cannot fail to notice that the obligation imposed upon the King for the maintenance of the law of Chaturvarna which is another name for the system of graded inequality does not require the King to enforce it against the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. The obligation is limited to the enforcement of the law against the Vaishyas and the Shudras. Having regard to the fact that Brahmanism was so intent on giving the system the force of law the result has been very awkward to say the least about it. Notwithstanding this attempt at legalization the system remained half legal and half conventional, legal as to the Vaishyas and the Shudras and merely conventional as to Brahmins and Kshatriyas,

This difference needs to be accounted for. Was Brahmanism honest in its attempt to give the system the force of law? Did it wish that each of the four Varnas be bound by it? The fact that Brahmanism would not bind the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas by the law it made, shows that in this business Brahmanism was far from honest. If it believed in the system as ideal it could not have failed to make it an universal binding force.

But there is more than dishonesty in this foul game. One can quite understand why the Brahmins were left free and untrammelled by the shackles of the law. Manu called them Gods on earth and Gods must be above the law. But why were the Kshatriyas left free in the same way as the Brahmins. He knows that the Kshatriyas will not humble themselves before the Brahmins. He then proceeds to warn them, how the Brahmins can punish them if the Kshatriyas show arrogance and plan rebellion.

IX. 320 When the Kshatriyas become in any way overbearing towards the Brahmanas, the Brahmanas themselves shall duly restrain them; for the Kshatriyas sprang from the Brahmanas.

¹ This is how Interpret the story of Parashuram's war against the Kshatriyas.

² Buddhism was a revolt against Brahmins and Brhminism. Yet many or the early followers of Buddha & Buddhism were Brahmins.

IX. 321. Fire sprang from water, Kshatriya from Brahmanas, iron from stone; the all-penetrating force of those (three) has no effect on that whence they were produced.

One might think that the reason why Manu does not impose an obligation upon the King to enforce the law against the Kshatriya was because the Brahmins felt themselves quite capable of dealing with Kshatriyas by their own prowess and without the aid of the King and that they meant to put their sanctions against the Kshatriyas when the time came and without fear of consequences. All this could not have been meant by Manu. For after uttering this vows of vengeance, and threats and imprecations Manu suddenly come down and begins to plead with the Kshatriyas for cooperation and common front with the Brahmins. In a verse next after the verse in which he utters the threats and imprecations against the Kshatriyas Manu pleads:

IX. 323. But (a king who feels his end drawing nigh) shall bestow all his wealth, accumulated from fines on Brahmanas, make over his kingdom to his son and then seek death in battle.

From imprecations to supplication is a very queer cry. What is the explanation of this anti-climax in the attitude of this strange behaviour of Manu towards the Kshatriyas? What is the object of this cooperation between Brahmins and Kshatriyas ? Against whom is this common front to be? Manu does not explain. A whole history of a thousand years must be told before this puzzle is solved and the questions satisfactorily answered.

The history which furnishes the clue to the solution of this puzzle is the history of the class wars between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas.

Most of the orthodox Hindus are repelled by the doctrine of Class war which was propounded by Karl Marx and would be certainly shocked if they were told that the history of their own ancestors probably furnishes the most cogent evidence that Marx was searching for support of his theory. Indeed there have been numerous class wars between Brahmins and the Kshatriyas and only the most important of them have been recorded¹ in the ancient Hindu literature. We have record of the conflict between the Brahmins and the Kings who were all Kshatriyas. The first of these conflicts was a conflict with King Vena, the second with Pururavas, the third with Nahusha, fourth with Nimi and fifth with Sumukha. There is a record of a conflict between Vashishtha a Brahmin and Vishvamisra an ordinary Kshatriya and not a king. Then we have the record of the wholesale massacre of the Brahmins of Bhrigu clan by the Kshatriya descendants of Kratavirya

¹ All this record has been collected by Prof. Muir in his Original Sanskrit Texts. Vo. I.

and then we have the record of the whole class of Kshatriyas exterminated by Parashuram acting on behalf of the Brahmanas. The issues that brought them in conflict extended over a wide range and show how bitter and strained must have been the feelings between Brahmins and Kshatriyas. There were conflicts over the question whether the Kshatriya had a right to become a Brahmana. There were conflicts over the question, whether the Brahmins were subject to the authority or not. There were conflicts on the question who should salute first and who should give way to whom. The wars were wars¹ of authority, status and dignity.

The results of these wars could not but be obvious to the Brahmins. Notwithstanding their boastful utterances they must have realized that it was not possible for them to crush the Kshatriyas and that notwithstanding the wars of extermination the Kshatriyas survived in sufficient numbers to plague the Brahmins. One need not pay any attention to the filthy story told by the Brahmins and alluded to by Manu that the Kshatriyas of the Manu's day were not the original Kshatriyas but a race of new Kshatriyas begotten by the Brahmins upon the widows of the old Kshatriyas who were massacred by Parashuram. Blackmailing is one of the means which Brahmanism is never ashamed of using to advance its own purposes. The fight of Brahmanism against the Kshatriyas was from the very beginning a fight between a fool and a bully. Brahmanas were fighting against the Kshatriyas for the maintenance of the Chaturvarna. Now it is this very Chaturvarna which allowed bayonets to the Kshatriyas and denied them to the Brahmins. How under this theory could the Brahmin fight with the Kshatriya with any hope of success? It could not have taken long for the Brahmins to realise the truth—which Tallyrand told Napoleon—that it is easy to give bayonets but it is very difficult to sit on them and that as Kshatriyas had bayonets and Brahmins none, war with the Kshatriya was the way to ruin. These were the direct consequences of these wars between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. But there were others which could not have escaped the attention of the Brahmins. While the Brahmins and Kshatriyas were fighting among themselves nobody was left to check and keep the Vaishyas and the Shudras under control. They were on the road of social equality almost nearing to the status of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas. To Brahmanism the possibility of suppressing the Kshatriya was very remote and the danger of being overtaken by Vaishyas and Shudras were real and very real. Should the Brahmana continue to fight the Kshatriya and ignore the danger of the Vaishyas and the Shudras? Or Should the Brahmana give up the hopeless struggle against the

¹ See Hopkins History of the Ruling Races.

Kshatriya and befriend him and make with him a common cause and suppress the growing menace of the Vaishyas and Shudras? Brahmanism after it was exhausted in the wars with the Kshathiyas chose the second alternative. It sought to befriend their worthwhile enemies the Kshatriyas to work for a new ideal namely to enslave and exploit the two classes below them namely the Vaishyas and the Shudras. This new ideal must have taken shape some time when the Satpatha Brahmana came to be composed. It is in the Satpatha Brahmana we find the new ideal expressed it was well established. The language in which it is expressed, and the subject to which it is applied are so telling that I feel it should be quoted in its original terms. Says the author of the Satpatha¹:

“They then make the beast return (to the Ahavaniya²) the he-goat goes first of them, then the ass, then the horse. Now in going away from this (Ahavaniya) the horse goes first, then the ass, then the he-goat—for the horse corresponds to the Kshatra (nobility), the ass to the Vaishya and Shudra, the he-goat to the Brahman and in-as-much as, in going from here, the horse goes first, therefore the Kshatriya, going first, is followed by the three others castes; and in-as-much as, in returning from here, the he-goat goes first, therefore the Brahman, going first, is followed by the three other castes. And in-as-much as the ass does not go first, either in going back from here, or in coming back from there, therefore the Brahmana and Kshatriya never go behind the Vaishya and Sudra; hence they walk thus in order to avoid a confusion between good and bad. And, moreover, he thus encloses those two castes (the Vaishyas and Sudra) on both sides by the priesthood and the nobility and makes them submissive.”

Here is the explanation of the puzzling attitude of Manu towards the Kshatriyas, attitude of willing to wound but afraid to strike, of wishing to dictate but preferring to befriend.

It is these wars and the compromise that had taught Manu that it was no use trying to coerce the Kshatriyas to submit to the domination of the Brahmin. It may be an ideal to be kept up. But as practical politics it was an impossible ideal. Like Bismark, Manu knew that politics was the game of the possible. What was possible was to make a common cause and to build up a common front between the Brhamins and the Kshatriyas against the Vaishyas and the Shudras and this is what Manu did. The pity of it is that it was done in the name of religion. This need not shock anybody who has studied the soul and spirit of Brahmanism. With Brahmanism religion is a cloak to cover and hide its acquisitive politics.

¹Eggeling Sathapatha Brahmana. Part III. pp. 226-27.

²Avavaniya.