

SELECTION XXVIII.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MĀNAVA-DHARMA-ĀSTRĀ.

§ 53. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL. The Manu literature is now very extensive. Only several of the most important and recent works need be mentioned here.

Arthur C. Burnell and Edward W. Hopkins. The ordinances of Manu. Translated from the Sanskrit. With an introduction. London, Trübner & Co. 1884. 8°. Price 12 shillings.

George Bühler. The laws of Manu. Translated with extracts from seven commentaries. [=SBE. vol. xxv.] Oxford, at the Clarendon Press. 1886. 8°. Price 21 shillings. The volume contains an elaborate and valuable introduction.

Julius Jolly. Mānava Dharma-āstra, the code of Manu. Original Sanskrit text, with critical notes. London, Trübner & Co. May, 1887. 8°. Price 10 shillings 6 pence.

Burnell's introduction contains an argument on the date of our Manu text. Professor Hopkins has summed up and criticised this argument (JAOS. xiii. p. xxviii = PAOS. May, 1885), and concludes that it brings us not one step nearer a solution of the problem.

Bühler's introduction (p. civ-cxviii) gives a learned discussion of the date. Of this, Hopkins makes a résumé (JAOS. xiii. p. cxviii = PAOS. May, 1887). He finds Bühler's conclusions probable, but does not think them absolutely proved by the proofs adduced.

The text-edition of Loiseleur Deslongchamps (Paris, 1830) is hardly obtainable now. It is safe

to say that Jolly's robs all preceding ones of their value, inasmuch as it is the result of far-reaching critical studies. The principal places in which Jolly's text varies from that of the Reader are i.97; ii.11,76, 125; xii.23,37,42,45,90,95,96.

The general theory of the origin of the Laws of Manu was summed up and criticised by Whitney (JAOS. xiii. p. xxx = PAOS. May, 1885). Meantime, however, Bühler's Introduction has put the question in a new light.

The relations of our text to the Mahā-bhārata are ably discussed by Hopkins, JAOS. xi.239-275 (cf. PAOS. Oct., 1883). Here may be found, conveniently assembled, quotations from Manu in the Sūtras and inscriptions, the legendary material about him in the Epic, and a careful discussion of the passages in the Epic which profess to be the declarations of a personal Manu.

By way of calling attention to the interesting subject of the knowledge of the Greeks concerning India, occasional citations are given. The references to Strabo's Γεωγραφικά (of which book xv., chap. 1, §§ 1-73 describe India) follow Casaubon's paging.

The following introduction is in the main a brief abstract of some of the more important points of Bühler's introduction.

§ 54. The native tradition respecting the origin of the Mānava-dharma-āstra takes the book to be the work of an individual law-giver. In accordance with this tradition, until quite recently, it has been usual for English writers to call the treatise 'The Laws of Manu.' And this designation may still be used, provided only it be used with an intelligent mental reservation, which takes due account of the results of modern criticism. For in the light of critical study, the figure of Manu, as a historical person, fades away; but, on the other hand, we find that Manu as a name is one of the greatest and most reverend of the Hindu antiquity. Questions thus arise: Whence the greatness of this name? What was the real origin of this law-book, and how came it to be called Mānavan?

§ 55. The word mānu originally means simply 'man' (see vocabulary). As we speak of human beings as the 'children of men,' so the Rig-veda speaks of them as the 'offspring of man' (mānu); and in this way arose the conception of a personal Mānu, the father of mankind. He is, in fact, the heros eponymos of the human race.

In the Veda¹ he appears as 'Father Manu, child of the Sun,' as a holy seer, the originator of prayer, praise, and sacrifice, and as the object of the special favor of the gods. In the Brāhmaṇas, Manu is the progenitor of the new race after the flood. That he was regarded as a type of wisdom, is evidenced by the ancient saw, 'Whatever Manu said, that is medicine' (TS.ii.2.10²). And again, that he was an eminent type of goodness appears from the fact that his actions came to be looked upon as

¹ For the Vedic legend of his birth, see 85¹⁵N. The ancillary books make Manu the author of RV. viii. 27-31. For ancient legends about Manu, see Bühler's *Manu*, p. lvii f; Muir, *l*. 161f, and esp. 181f.