

part of his duties.²⁷ Nor can we say exactly what executive functions devolved on the king.

In all his acts the king was regularly advised by his *Purohita*; he also had the advantage of the advice of the royal ministers and attendants (see *Ratnin*). The local administration was entrusted to the *Grāmaṇi*, or village chief, who may have been selected or appointed by the king. The outward signs of the king's rank were his palace²⁸ and his brilliant dress.²⁹

The King as Landowner.—The position of the king with regard to the land is somewhat obscure. The Greek notices,³⁰ in which, unhappily, it would be dangerous to put much trust, since they were collected by observers who were probably little used to accurate investigations of such matters, and whose statements were based on inadequate information, vary in their statements. In part they speak of rent being paid, and declare that only the king and no private person could own land, while in part they refer to the taxation of land. Hopkins³¹ is strongly of opinion that the payments made were paid for protection—*i.e.*, in modern terminology as a tax, but that the king was recognized as the owner of all the land, while yet the individual or the joint family also owned the land. As against Baden-Powell,³² who asserted that the idea of the king as a landowner was later, he urges for the Vedic period that the king, as we have seen, is described as devouring the people, and that, according to the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*,³³ the *Vaiśya* can be devoured at will and maltreated (but, unlike the *Śūdra*, not killed); and for the period of the legal *Sūtras* and *Śāstras* he cites *Brhaspati* and *Nārada* as clearly recognizing the king's overlordship, besides a passage of the *Mānava Dharma Śāstra*³⁴ which describes the king as 'lord of all,' a phrase which

²⁷ See Foy, *op. cit.*, chap. iii.

²⁸ Cf. Varuṇa's palace, Rv. ii. 41, 5; vii. 88, 5. The throne, *Asandi*, is used to form the name of Janamejaya's royal city, *Asandivant*. Cf. also *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, v. 4, 4, 1 *et seq.*; *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, viii. 12, 3-5.

²⁹ See, *e.g.*, Rv. i. 85, 8; viii. 5, 38; x. 78, 1, etc. So the king is the great lord of riches (*dhana-patir dhanānām*), Av. iv. 22, 3, and in the *Aitareya*

Brāhmaṇa, vii. 31, he is likened to the *Nyagrodha* tree.

³⁰ See Diodorus, ii. 40; Arrian, *Indica*, 11; Strabo, p. 703, and Hopkins, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 13, 87 *et seq.*

³¹ *India, Old and New*, 221 *et seq.*

³² *Village Communities in India*, 145; *Indian Village Community*, 207 *et seq.*

³³ vii. 29, 3.

³⁴ viii. 39.