

the people and the nobles,<sup>16</sup> in which no doubt the inferior numbers of the latter were compensated by their superior arms and prowess. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa<sup>17</sup> the Vaiśya is described as tributary to another (*anyasya bali-kṛt*), to be devoured by another (*anyasyādya*), and to be oppressed at will (*yathākāma-jyeya*). Probably these epithets apply most strictly to the relation of the king and his people, but the passage shows that the people were greatly at the mercy of the nobles. No doubt the king granted to them the right, which may have been hereditary, to be supported by the common people, whose feudal superiors they thus became. In return for these privileges the Kṣatriyas had probably duties of protection to perform, as well as some judicial functions, to judge from an obscure passage of the Kāthaka Saṃhitā.<sup>18</sup>

The main duty of the Kṣatriya in the small states<sup>19</sup> of the Vedic period was readiness for war. The bow is thus his special attribute,<sup>20</sup> just as the goad is that of the agriculturist; for the bow is the main weapon of the Veda. Whether the Kṣatriyas paid much attention to mental occupations is uncertain. In the latest stratum of the Brāhmaṇa literature there are references to learned princes like Janaka of Videha, who is said to have become a Brahmin (*brahmā*), apparently in the sense that he had the full knowledge which a Brahmin possessed.<sup>21</sup> Other learned Kṣatriyas of this period were

<sup>16</sup> Cf. note 13; Taittirīya Saṃhitā, v. 4, 6, 7; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iv. 6, 7.

<sup>17</sup> vii. 29. Cf. *Rājan*.

<sup>18</sup> xxvii. 4 (*tasṃd rājanyenādhyakṣeṇa vaiśyaṃ ghnanti*, 'so with a Rājanya as a supervisor [?] they smite a Vaiśya'). It is not clear whether *han* here means 'kill' or 'beat.'

<sup>19</sup> See Hopkins, *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 15, 30, n. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Av. xviii. 2, 60; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, xviii. 9; xxxvii. 1; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, v. 3, 5, 30; Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, vi. 1, 3. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 19, the list is longer — chariot, breastplate (*Kavaca*), bow and arrow (*iṣu-dhanvan*)—and in the prayer for the

prosperity of the Kṣatriya (called, as usual in the older texts, Rājanya), at the Aśvamedha, the Rājanya is to be an archer and a good chariot-fighter; Taittirīya Saṃhitā, vii. 5, 18, 1; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iii. 12, 6; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, Aśvamedha, v. 14; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, xxii. 2. So Indra is the god of the Kṣatriyas, Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, ii. 3, 1; iv. 5, 8, etc.

<sup>21</sup> Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xi. 6, 2, 1. Cf. Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad, iv. 1. See Max Müller, *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 421 et seq.; Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, 12, 426 et seq. Similarly at the Dikṣā a Kṣatriya becomes temporarily a Brahmin, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 23. Cf. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, iii. 4, 1, 3.