

Germans known to Tacitus¹⁶³ were divided into *nobiles* and *ingenui*, and the Anglo-Saxons into eorls and ceorls, noble and non-noble freemen.¹⁶⁴ The origin of nobility need not be sought in the Vedic period proper, for it may already have existed. It may have been due to the fact that the king, whom we must regard as originally elected by the people, was as king often in close relation with, or regarded as an incarnation of, the deity;¹⁶⁵ and that hereditary kingship would tend to increase the tradition of especially sacred blood: thus the royal family and its offshoots would be anxious to maintain the purity of their blood. In India, beside the sanctity of the king, there was the sanctity of the priest. Here we have in the family exclusiveness of king and nobles, and the similar exclusiveness of a priesthood which was not celibate, influences that make for caste, especially when accompanying the deep opposition between the general folk and the servile aborigines.

Caste, once created, naturally developed in different directions. Nesfield¹⁶⁶ was inclined to see in occupation the one ground of caste. It is hardly necessary seriously to criticize this view considered as an ultimate explanation of caste, but it is perfectly certain that guilds of workers tend to become castes. The carpenters (**Takṣan**), the chariot-makers (**Rathakāra**), the fishermen (**Dhaivara**) and others are clearly of the type of caste, and the number extends itself as time goes on. But this is not to say that caste is founded on occupation pure and simple in its first origin, or that mere difference of occupation would have produced the system of caste without the interposition of the fundamental difference between Āryan and Dāsa or Śūdra blood and colour. This difference rendered increasingly important what the history of the Āryan peoples shows us to be declining, the distinction between the noble and the non-noble

¹⁶³ *Germania*, 7. 13, etc.

¹⁶⁴ Medley, *English Constitutional History*,² 21 *et seq.*, and authorities there cited. In the formation of a kingdom minor chiefs, once petty kings, would become nobles.

¹⁶⁵ E.g., Frazer, *Early History of the Kingship and The Golden Bough* (ed. 3), Part I., *The Magic Art and the Evolution*

of Kings. The traces of this conception in Āryan peoples are clear—e.g., the *rex sacrificulus* in Rome, the sacred functions of the Archon Basileus in Athens; cf. Ridgway, *Origin of Tragedy*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁶ *Brief View of the Caste System of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, Allahabad, 1885