(A) RELIGIOUS DATA

The work of Soddbala reveals some data on which an account of the religious and spiritual activities of the time can be built up. We attempt to give here a brief sketch of the same.

Pantheon: The people were god-fearing and righteous. Temples of the Brahmanical gods and goddesses abounded in the land and the drift from the Vedic to the Puranic worship had been completed. One gets the impression of the prevalence of the Puranic faith.

Vedic and Puranic gods: Vedic Gods, Devas or Divukasas (p. 10), viz., Indra, Agni, Varuna, Surya, Yama and Viṣṇu with their various names have been referred to by the poet. They have been described with the later Puranic imprint on them. They are no more the anthropomorphific features of nature and have become personal gods to their respective devotees.

Of the new advents to the older pantheon the following have been named; Brahma, Viṣṇu, Siva, and their
Composite form of Trimūrti, Kubera, Seṣa, Madana and Lokapālas (p. 123).

Goddesses: Of the Vedic goddesses only Śacī, the consort of Indra and Sarasvati (Bhārati - p. 14) are mentioned; but these also have been amply coloured by Puranic ideas. Sarasvati and Bhārati are both identical and denote the Goddess of learning. The Puranic goddesses who preponderate during this age are Laks̄mī and Pārvatī.

Mythical beings mentioned by Sodhala are Gāndharva, Guhyaka, Kinnara, Siddha, Vidyādha, Nāga, Bhūta, Pisāca, Vetaḷa and Gana. It is possible to clarify them under four headings as follows:

(i) Enemies of Gods, very rarely visiting the earth, Asura, Daitya and Dānava.

(ii) Servants of the Gods, frequently connected with mortals, Gāndharva, Kinnara, Guhyaka and Gana.

(iii) Independent super human beings, often mixing with mortals, Nāga, Siddha and Vidyādha.

(iv) Evil beings, hostile to mankind, Rākṣasa, Pisāca, Bhūta and Vetaḷa.

Just as the number of Puranic gods have multiplied so has also grown that of the Daityas or Suradvīpas, for without the creation of important terrifying traits of the latter, the greatness of the former could have hardly been possible to extoll. Rāvāna, Kaṁsa, Kaitabha and Bali have therefore been alluded to. Rahu (p. 75) and Ketu (p. 55) represented by two evil planets have also been classed among the demons after the manner of the Purāṇas. Śiva has the following made up of the Ganas who belong to the class of spirits.

The spirits of the forest, Vanadevatās (pp. 36, 126) have been alluded to. Ancient historical and mythological personages and heroes like, Śvāmin, Parasurāma, Kārtavīrya, Hanumān, Sugrīva, Nāla, Nilā, Āṅgada, Rāma and others are endowed with almost divine powers.

Soddhala has referred to that phase of popular religion in which deification of animals becomes a marked feature. Thus Garuda (the eagle) is the vehicle of Viṣṇu, Śeṣa, the thousand-hooded serpent is the couch of Viṣṇu (p. 65) and the Crocodile is the vehicle of Kandarpa, the love-god (p. 67).

Some of the important gods and goddesses, both vedic and Puranic and other superhuman characters are discussed...
INDRA had been the most powerful God in the pantheon of the Rgveda. 250 hymns have been addressed to him;¹ but later on he was superseded by younger Gods of the Paranic pantheon of whom Viṣṇu and Śiva became the ruling deities. Soddhala refers to Indra usually with regard to narratives regarding the cutting of the wings of the mountains with his weapon Vajra, Kulisa or Dambholi (pp. 76, 82) and also his curse to Urvasī for descending to the human world (p. 52). His rape of Ahalyā has been referred to by Soddhala (p. 36). He presides over the eastern direction and hence the direction is said to be Paurandārī (p. 73). He is endowed with a number of eyes (p. 55). He is referred to as Śatamakha (p. 10), Purandara (p. 20), Akhandala (p. 20), Maghavat (p. 25), Śiṣṇu (p. 26), Śatamanyu (p. 36), Śakra (p. 52), Valabhid (p. 93), Vāsava (p. 94), Surendra (p. 82), Harit (p. 72), Sankrāndana (p. 143), Indra (p. 55), Śatakratu (p. 76), Surapati (p. 129).

VARUNA of the Rgvedic pantheon becomes a water-god (p. 60). He bears a Pāśa, the noose of chastisement (p. 72). He is the presiding deity of the western direction (p. 72).

¹. Macdonell : Vedic mythology, P. 59.
YAṆA also called Danda¹ and Antaka² has been mentioned fifty times in Rgveda³ and three whole hymns are dedicated to him in the 1st and the 10th Maṇḍalas. He gives bliss to the good and woe to the bad in Rgveda. He is the god of death who destroys the world. Yama in his epithet Antaka or Kṛtanta has been referred to by Suddhala as devouring the worlds, Bhūvanabhōjin (p. 75) and also bearing the deadly danda (pp. 76, 82).

BRAHMĀ is one of the principal deities and forms along with Viṣṇu and Siva, the wellknown Hindu triad called trimūrti referred to as Hari-Hara-Brahmanāḥ (p. 70). He is alluded to as Prajāpati, the creator of all the mobile and immobile universe (p. 68). In this manner, Brahman has been given the epithets of Vedhas (p. 124), Viśvaḥ (p. 124) and Pitāmaha (p. 67). He is also said to be Caturmukha (p. 14) and Virāhi (p. 94), Ambhojabha (p. 133), and Pankajabhū (p. 1). He shows favour to those who are cursed (p. 94). Sarasvati is said to be born from the mouth of Brahman, the lotus-born god (p. 1).

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VISHU, a deity of Rigveda is reborn in Puranic Pantheon and has acquired a new glory and boundless power. New epithets are given to him as for example, Hari (p. 94), Trivikrama (pp. 75, 124), Muraripu (p. 11), Murari (pp. 36, 98), Caturbhujas (p. 78), Upendra (p. 95 & 99), Cakrapañi (p. 68), Janardana (p. 73 & 94), Kamsari (p. 111), Murajit (p. 96), Acyuta (p. 119), Sārgin (p. 23), Kaitabhāri (p. 54), Madhuripu (p. 55) and Asuradvis (p. 53).

Visnu in Rigveda is a sun deity, who like the sun takes three strides (vikrama) across the three kinds of space. There his weapon as a precursor of the later Cakra is a revolving wheel represented like the sun. The inferior position of Visnu as a sun deity in Rigveda is changed to one of supreme importance in the Brahmanas, where he already assumes the form of a dwarf and rescues the earth from the Asuras in three strides. In the story of the great deluge in the Satapatha, the fish that towed Manu's vessel into safety was the incarnation of Prajapati Brahman. The later mythology, however, transferred the functions of the fish, boar and tortoise from Prajapati Brahman to Visnu.

Visnu, according to Sodhala who obviously follows the Purānas, is one of the most important gods of the later

Hindu pantheon, and to-day, besides Siva, he is the supreme deity who is worshipped by the Hindus through one or the other of his incarnations.

The Avataaras of Visnu:

An Avatāra or incarnation of a god differs from mere identification of two gods in this, that in the former case the god that is considered an incarnation acts like a human being or even a brute, at the same time he has the miraculous powers of a god. The Avataaras of Visnu are variously given by various authorities.¹

Kūrma (p. 94), Varāha (p. 94), Nṛsiṁha (p. 82), Vāmana (p. 94), Parasurama (Bhārgava) (p. 8), Rāma (p. 110, 111) and Kṛṣṇa (Kaitabhāri p. 55) have all been indentified with Visnu. They were all famous incarnations of Visnu, the most benevolent of the gods. In the Kūrma incarnation, he protected the Vedas. In his Varāha incarnation, he rescued the earth from the Daityas. In the Nṛsiṁha incarnation, Prahlāda was rescued from his father, Hiranyakasipu, whose chest was torn assunder by sharp nails. In the Vāmana incarnation, assuming the form of a Brāhmaṇa-dwarf, he traversed the earth, air and heaven in three strides and gained the earth from

Bali, the lord of the demons. As Parasurama, the son of Jamadagni, he after having killed the Kṣatriyas filled the ponds in Kurukṣetra with their blood and with it gave funeral offering to his dead father. In the incarnation of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, he killed Rāvana and as Vasudeva, he rescued the people from the clutches of cruel Kaṁsa, Kaitābha, Madhu, Mura and others.

**VIṢṆU** reclines on the couch formed by Śeṣa, the thousand-hooded serpent (pp. 36, 65). He is referred to as resting on the lap of Lakṣmī (p. 55, 144) and wearing on his chest a gem named Kaustubh (p. 100) and he is waited upon by the humble Garuḍa (p. 117).

ŚIVA along with Brahmā and Viṣṇu make up the Hindu Triad. He is the most favourite deity of Soddhala whom he invokes in the beginning of his work, "Victorious is the three-eyed god, who is the primal cause and the pillar of the great house called the universe charming with three worlds (also three storeys) and in whose body shines forth the Goddess, the daughter of the king of mountains (Parvati) as a decorative image" (p. 1). Moreover, he concludes the work with a stanza eulogising Śāṅkara, "Victorious in

1. **UK**: P. 158
the three worlds is the favourite deity Śaṅkara, the wielder of Pinaka. Victorious is he, who possesses a great devotion towards the God and greatly victorious is the literary glory, full of eulogy of Śiva, which exists in this Campu story. From this as well as from his frequent references to the deity it seems that the poet was a worshipper of Śiva. He describes his own descent from Kalāditya who is said to be the descendant of Kayastha a gana of Śiva. The names and attributes that are assigned to him bring out well his powerful character. They are:— Trinetra (p. 1), Astamūrti (p. 10), Bhava (p. 10), Umeśa (p. 12), Mahādeva (p. 12), Śiva (p. 53), Ambikānātha (p. 65), Dhurjaṭī (p. 95), Purājit (p. 96), Candraketu (p. 104), Somabhu (p. 107), Ardhenduśekha-ra (p. 115), Mahēśvara (p. 115), Śaṅkara (p. 116), Candraśā (p. 107), Andhakāri (p. 105), Andhakavipāṭaka (p. 92), Hātakēsvara (pp. 102), Somanātha (p. 143), Candraśēkhara (p. 144) and Pinākin (p. 158). Several temples were dedicated to Śiva. Kalidasa refers to a Jyotirlinga called Mahākāla at Ujjayini, and of Viśvesvara or Viśvanātha at Banaras.

Saddhala has also referred to a temple of Śiva (p. 65),

where people offer prayers and bow down to him for the accomplishment of their desired object. Kumārakesari while praying to Śaṅkara gives as vivid picture of the image of the God. He says, "May God Śaṅkara whose dripping elephant-skin, the snake around the neck, ashes besmeared to his body and the third eye on his forehead are looked upon by Parvati as a white Silken garment, a necklace, sandal dust and saffron mark respectively by means of her eyes endowed with deep love which as if works as an unguent of magic collyrium." (p. 65).

We find another reference to a temple of God Candra-ketu (p. 104). He is waited upon by young maidens with the intention that their desires may be fulfilled. Śiva has been spoken of as possessing eight forms (p. 10), viz. the five elements, the sun, the moon and the Soma-sacrificer. He is alluded to have taken a deadly poison named Kālakūṭa at the time of the churning of the ocean. This gave a dark blue colour to his neck and in consequence of it he bears the names Nilakantha and Śītikantha.

The author has frequently alluded to the destruction of Kāmdeva through his third eye (pp. 23, 36, 95) and that

of Tripura, three cities of demons through the fire of his arrow (p. 84) and thus he is Purajit. He is known for his loud laughter. (p. 14) Sōḍḍhala refers to the composite figure called Ardhanārīnāṭesvara represented by Śiva with Pārvatī as forming part of his body (p. 1).

SACĪ or Indrāṇī is the wife of Indra (p. 53, 144). SARASVATĪ or Bhāratī (p. 23) is born from the mouth of Brahmā and is the goddess of speech and learning, the revealer of divine wisdom and the patroness of arts and sciences. She holds a Vīnā in her hand. She is also said to be Vāgīśvarī (p. 14) and Brāhmī (p. 16). Sōḍḍhala while praying to Sarasvatī says, "Let the Goddess, the mistress of speech, born from the mouth of the lotus-born God (Brahmā), purify the world - the Goddess who witnessing simultaneously the whole of the literary world subsists in the mind's eye of the poet like its pupil." (p. 1).

LAKŚMI or Śrī to whom several references are made in the text, is the consort of Viṣṇu (pp. 25, 53) and is represented in sculpture as shampooing the feet of her lord reclining on the Sesa. A complete picture of this pose has been given by Kālidāsa, where she is said to sit on a lotus, her silken robe covering her girāle and Viṣṇu's feet lying on her lap. ¹

¹ Kālidāsa : Raghuvamśa, X, 8.
UMĀ, the consort of Śiva (p. 143, p. 53) has been referred to by the poet under several names like Girindraduhitā (p. 1), Adrisuta (p. 144), Parvati (p. 65), Ambikā (p. 28), Ambikā, Bhavāni and Gaurī (pp. 28, 52). He has also referred to her pancāgni penance (pp. 28, 52).

KĀLĪ, the destructive counterpart of Mahākāla Śiva, wears a necklace of human skull and serpents as her ornaments. She holds the staff of a big sūla as her weapon (p. 61). She cannot be identified with UmA. Her other epithets are Katyāyanī, Cāndi, Cāmūndā, Gandikā, Durgā and Mahākālī (p. 61). Soddhala gives the characteristics of Cāmūndā in her praise by Kumārakesarī. There, the deity is referred to as wearing the bracelets of snakes and holding a big trident in her hand. Her body is covered with a long garment densely woven by means of human heads. Even Indra is said to be bowing down to her feet (p. 61).

NĀGAS have been treated in great extent, as the heroine of the story is a Nāga princess. They are divided into eight Kulas or families, namely Āvanta, Vāsuki, Takaśaka, Karkota, Kulika, Sānkhaṇḍa, Mahāpadma and Padma (p. 108). They reside in the nether world. They assume different forms at their will. Their movement is unobstructed in all the worlds. They are beautiful, divine and strong (p. 93).
An enemy dies as soon as he is touched by them. They are indifferent to the wealth of others and therefore they are appointed as the protectors of wealth by people. It is wonderful that they live like Yogins, only on wind as their food. The aged Śesā bears the wide-spread earth at ease, as if it is a bunch of flowers (p. 94). Vāsuki is said to be the chief of the Pātāla region. Śikhandatilaka, the father of the heroine is referred to as the descendant of the family of Śankhapāla and a favourite attendant of Śāṅkara, the god of the mobile and immobile (p. 95). Śāṅkhapāla seems to be the same as the father of Śāṅkacūḍa, the serpent who was given protection by Jimūtavāhana, the hero of the drama, Nāgānanda. According to Śāṅkacūḍa, the fame of his family was as white as a conch-shell which was a popular standard of comparison for whiteness. Śāṅkhapāla was the name of one of the eight families of Nāgas as shown above.

Śesā-nāga was a mythical figure, the personification of a serpent and the king of Nāgas. His body formed the couch of Viṣṇu, resting on the waters of the milky ocean, while his thousand hoods were the god's canopy. He is also supposed to be supporting the earth on his hoods (pp. 52, 93, 94).

1. Śrīharsa: Nāgānanda, P. 102.
The many-hooded cobra was used as a rope for the churning of the ocean. He now accompanies both Siva and Visnu and is worshipped throughout the country on a particular festival day of his own, the Naga-pancamī.

The Vidyādharas, Kinnaras and Siddhas have been treated by the poet as endowed with divine powers in which the popular belief is reflected. They are supposed to haunt the highest peaks of the Himalayas.

Madana is the handsome god of love. He has a flower-bow having a string of bees and five flowery arrows. He shrewdly awaits the proper opportunity to strike Śiva. Unfortunately the pride of his bow is humbled by Śiva's fortitude, and he is immediately burnt to ashes. Rati is a consort of Madana. The character of Rati is vividly drawn in the famous Rativilāpa of the Kumārasambhava. Soddhala has alluded to Madanā and Rati in his work. His attributes and functions can be understood by the epithets given by the author. They are as under:— Minadhvaja (p. 3), Manobhava (pp. 25, 66, 100), Manmatha (p. 52), Kusumapatrin (p. 48), Kusumasāyaka (p. 50), Cetobhū (p. 53), Jhasaketana (p. 121), Pañceṣu (p. 123), Puspāyudha (p. 66), Puspadhanvan (p. 66) Manobhū (p. 66)

1. Kālidāsa: Kumārasambhava, IV.
Manasija (p. 66), Madana (p. 102), Kandarpa (p. 100), Ananga (p. 96), Saṅkalpanjanman (p. 96), Makardhāra (p. 96), Kusumakaramuka-pañi (p. 74), Smara (p. 96), Makaraketu (p. 99), Karmukapañi (p. 133). The poet also refers to the drinking of wine by cupid and Rati (p. 67). Scattering of the red jewels of the necklace put on by cupid, who has been struck by the foot of Rati in anger (p. 48), movement of Rati along with cupid (p. 53) and her swooning at the burying of cupid (p. 52). Cupid has his banner of an alligator and bears a staff of sugar cane (p. 99).

**CHURNING OF THE OCEAN**

Sodhala has given a number of stray references to Samudramañthana, the churning of the ocean already described in the Purāṇas. The gods and demons assembled together wanted to churn the ocean. The mountain Mandara was made the churning staff. Sesa was used as the rope of the staff. Bali was made the chief of the activities and demons were associated with the gods in the churning. Viṣṇu in his fourth incarnation as a tortoise came out from Patala. He was the resting place of Mandara mountain. Viṣṇu at the request of the Gods and demons supported the churning.

1. Sodhala: UK, pp. 6, 9, 10, 13, 64, 65, 68, 124.
staff. They churned the ocean for hundred years and received the four then jewels, viz., Lakṣmī, Kaustubha, Pārijātaka, Sura, Dhanvantari, the moon, wish-yielding cows, the elephant Airāvata, Śarṅga, the horse Uccaihārasa, the nectar, an umbrella, a bow, Kundalas and the Kalakūta. Vīṣṇu received Lakṣmī, Kaustubha and a Śarṅga bow. Indra received the elephant Airāvata and the horse Uccaihārasa and the Kundalas. Sūrya received Dhanvantari. Varuṇa received the umbrella. Vayu received Pārijātaka. The poison was drunk by Śiva. For the sake of the nectar there issued a battle among the gods and demons. Vīṣṇu assumed the Mohini form and the demons handed over the pot of nectar to him. During the battle, the gods drank the nectar. Rahu, in divine form was also drinking the same amongst the gods. As soon as the nectar reached his neck, the sun and the moon revealed his identity and Vīṣṇu cut off his head from the body. Since that time his enmity with the sun and the moon continues up till now.

**SOMANĀTHA AND HĀTKESVARA**

Sodhahala has referred to Prabhāsa-kṣetra, on the coast of Kathiawar, where the shrine of Śrī Somanātha had been already established. People worshiped Somanātha for the fulfilment of their desired object. At the time of Sodhahala
a great number of people went on a pilgrimage of Somanātha. The author refers to the huge crowd of pilgrims gathered together on a sacred day. He also refers that this shrine fulfilled the desires of the devotees.¹

According to a reference in the Skandapurana the sacred shrine of Somanātha must have been a shrine of Bhai-ravanatha before it came to be known as Somanātha.² Sri Jote R. B. considers that the worship of Somanātha is connected with the worship of the moon and the fire³ and also notes that the worshipers of Śiva according to Somavidyā, the special cult of worshipping Śiva along with the moon, were in great numbers at Prabhāsa. In order to corroborate this argument he quoted the verse⁴ in which it is mentioned that the river Sarasvatī, the ocean, Śiva along with Umā, the moon and Somanātha, these five whose names begin with Sa are difficult to be obtained. Thus he has come to the conclusion that the name Somanātha was given to the sacred shrine of Śiva at Prabhāsa by the Saiva devotees who worship the sacred linga according to the tradition of

2. Skandapurāṇa, Prabhāsa khaṇḍ, Prabhāsa māhātmāya, 4.
Somm-vidya.

Soddhala has also referred to Hatakesvara twice in the text (pp. 102, 140). An aged sage Patalagana by name has been said to be a devotee of Hatakesvara. Having received Brahma lotuses for the worship of the deity in Caitrika Parvan on the full moon day of Caitra, he returned from heaven to the earth (p. 102). In the second reference Soddhala suggests that Hatakesvara, the original deity of the sacred shrine of Hatakesvara was in the Nagaloka; the serpent region. This suggestion can be obtained from the mention of Tarakirita who worships Hatakesvara on one Astami day, in the serpent region (p. 140). There is also a reference to a practice that Hatakesvara was specially worshipped on Astami and Caturthi day. This deity also was considered to be fulfilling the desires of the devotees.

The Puranic references to Somanatha and Hatakesvara are ancient ones.¹ Brahma established the linga of Siva in golden image in order to worship the god, it was the beginning of the worship of that linga. At present, Hatakesvara is a favourite god of the Nagaras of Gujarát. But according to

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¹ GSI, I, P. 227.
references found in the Purānas, Śiva is a beloved god of Nāgas and Nāgendras always worship him.

According to Hānasāṅkarbhāṭī in Nāgrotpatti, Hātakēsvara is an original god of Nāga people but later on he was received by Nāgaras when the god arrived at Vadanaagara from the Pātāla region. In the Linga Purāṇa after worshipping the Hemaliṅga, a verse is recited in which Śiva is referred to as the protector or the god of Nāgas. Umāśāṅkara Joshi refers to Hātakēsvara Kṣetra in Ānarta to the south-east of the Arbuda mountain. Later on it was also mentioned as Camatkārapura Kṣetra. It is near Vadanaagara. Sridhara Śāstri enumerates the following names for Vadanaagara:

- Anandapura, Camatkārapura, Skandapura, Madanaagara, Madanapura, Ānartapura, Vardhamānapura. Its length and breadth

2. GSI, I, P. 228.
3. GSI, I, P.
are said to be of five Kosas. A mythical story regarding the establishment of the linga i.e. Hatakesvara has been given differently, in the Skandapurāṇa (Nāgarakhand, Kumārikākhadda and Prabhasa khanda) and in the Linga Purāṇa.

Prabhāsa and Hatakesvara Kshetra as being connected with approximately the common traditions regarding the worship of Siva and the references to Siva as the God of Nāgas and the same of the Nāgaras, throw light on the hostrical importance of the liga worship in the region of Gujarat and also of Nāga-jati and Nāgaras.

(B) SOCIAL DATA

Soddhala has written an imaginary story where we cannot expect a real picture of the social conditions of the time besides the religious conditions as mentioned before.

Various Quarrels:

However, in the contest of Malayavāhana with the demon Mayābala, Soddhala gets an opportunity to criticise the various quarrels observed in the society of the time, and he ridicules them in scathing words. He points out that the quarrel between widows waxes great on account of lying bare the private secrets of one another. The quarrel of

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1. UK : P. 79.
oo"wives chiefly consists of shouting against each other and
twisting the bones of the fingers. The quarrel between go-
betweens is characterised by loud and obscene abuses against
each other. The quarrel between Brahmanas is characterised
by beating oneself and such other expressions of self torture.
The quarrel between traders is characterised as a profuse
show of raising hands but still it is devoid of striking.
The quarrel amongst the untouchables is characterised by
profuse noise of a crowd of relatives. These quarrels have
particular characteristics according to the castes or the
particular nature of those who quarrel.

There are other quarrels in which there is censure
of mutual actions. Others depict the obligations conferred
on each other. Others only consist of a great noise of
shouting and still others are full of one's own praise. In
such rare cases Soddhala shows his keen observation and a
sense of satirical wit.

Gambling has been referred to by Soddhala in the
story of Kumārakūmās. The condition of a gambler as
described by him follows the description of a gambler
found in the literature beginning from Rgveda onwards.

1. UK : P. 56.
Sūdrak : Mṛcchakaṭṭa Act II.
This description notes that when a person is addicted to gambling, it is very difficult to withdraw from it. He has to suffer insults from his creditors in public places. In this description of gambling Soddhala notes that there were various types of gambling such as Andhika i.e. the blind gambling, etc.

Appointment of a Minister:

Soddhala has also expressed certain thoughts as regards the appointment of a minister. He points out that out of the four castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, only a Kṣatriya individual is fit to be a minister. A Brāhmaṇa, even though he possesses the qualifications for being a minister, would not accept the post, through the fear of being involved in matter which preclude him from spiritual reflections. A Vaiśya is engrossed in the acquisition of wealth through trade and agriculture and consequently, he possesses a miserly heart and thus becomes unfit for the post. Śudras are not even to be considered on account of their faithlessness at the proper time. So according to Soddhala only Kṣatriya deserves to be the chief minister for counselling the king. Therein also the Kṣatriya should be of the same family and

1. UK : P. 8.
have an intimate relation with the king? If a Kṣatriya from another family gets entrance to the administration of a king, he naturally gets an opportunity to usurp the throne of the latter and so such a course is not advisable. Of course, Sodhala makes it quite clear that the minister must possess extraordinary intelligence to cope with the difficult duties of administering a kingdom.

Miscellaneous Features of Society:

Early in the morning, musical instruments were played upon in the temples of gods. The city guards kept a whole night watch. The profession of prostitutes was in full vogue. People were very fond of pet birds like Sarikās and parrots whom they kept in cages. Old women sang songs of praises to Viṣṇu. Young sages began their daily religious routine by praises to God.¹

Hospitality to the guest was highly regarded even by a ploughman.² In the birth festival, keeping awake on the sixth night and the sacrament of naming etc., were celebrated for the welfare of the child.³ The virgins in the royal harem passed those days happily. They engaged themselves in

¹. UK : P. 144.
². UK : P. 33.
³. UK : P. 96.
various activities and amusements such as, drawing portraits, playing on Vānās and flutes, playing ball-games, swinging, conversation with parrots and sārikas, sports with the deer and the swan, testing fresh creepers, plucking fresh flowers and plunging in the pleasure lake. The Danda-rāsa was played on the stage. Narration Purāṇa stories and dissertations of learned persons were prevalent in the society. People used Araghattha machines for watering gardens and the banks of canals were repaired in the beginning of autumn.

A noteworthy social custom prevalent at the time may also be noted here. At the time of Soddhala there was the practice of the tonsure of widows, who after the death of their husbands put on only white garments. Soddhala refers to this practice in the Verse, "When the sun

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1. UK : P. 97
2. UK : P. 130
3. UK : P. 37
4. UK : P. 27
5. UK : P. 74
disappeared from the world the lotus creeper whose hair in the form the swarm of bees were lost, put on like a widow a white garment under the pretext of the moon-light."

From the description of the city Pratisthana, we can guess that big cities were surrounded by strong ramparts and encircled by deep ditches of water. Sacrifices were popular. Houses were strongly built and large in size. They were surrounded by extensive court-yards containing hills and tanks. The cities were rich and the trading community was oppulent. Goldsmiths and jewellers had an extensive scope for their profession on account of the wealth of the citizens.¹

For the acquisition of wealth people perhaps took to shady adventures as magic, mining of rich ores and jewels and facing goblins and spirits in their dark recesses. The Science of curing poisonous snake-bites seems to have an extensive popularity.²

When newly married couples came near their residence, they were received with great honour. For them the path was swept clean and sprinkled with water. It was decorated with figures of swastika and pitchers full of water were placed on both sides.³ In festivals similar preparations were

2. UK : P. 21.
3. UK : P. 146.
made; people decorated themselves in bright clothes and dazzling ornaments. City squares were decorated by scattering flowers and erecting decorative arches and flags, and pitchers full of water\(^1\) were also placed at suitable places.

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1. UK : p. 147.