CHAPTER XI.

ECONOMIC LAW.
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"ECONOMIC LIFE".

Man's attempt to meet the primary necessities of life or his attempts to feed and clothe himself and his family have led to the development of his Economic life. Wants tend to increase rapidly with the advance of civilisation and this has led to the development of the complex science of Economics in the present day world.

Based also on the social and economic pressure of meeting all the needs of man simultaneously, was the primary division of labour by the Aryans resulting in four Castes and ultimately leading to growth and development of the complex structure of Caste System. Farming and fighting were the two occupations left open to all castes and creeds. In India, which is primarily an agricultural country, farming was a highly developed industry by the medieval period.

AGRICULTURE.

The Abhidhānaratnamālā mentions a large variety of cereals—Varieties of Rice—Sāli and Kedrava; mustard—śarshapa, pepper or saffron—Priyangu, Sesamum—Jartila, wild rice—Māvāra, as well as pulses of different kinds—Masūra, Kalāya, Rallē and Ādhaka etc. The Sartis mention seventeen articles as corn or Dhānya and Nādhāti mentions Sugarcane (Ikshudanda) and Sugar (Śarkāra).

For scientific utilisation of the fertility of the soil, land was divided into five varieties—(2) Fertile—Uṛvāra, (2) Barren—Irīna, (3) Fallow—Mhila, (4) Desert—Māru, and (5) Excellent Soil—Mṛtā or Mṛtsanā.

Sadvala was land abounding with grass and that abounding in reeds was Sadvala.

Gardening and fruit cultivation or maintaining large orchards was also practised on large scale and fruits like mangoes, coconuts, mustard-apple, Pomegranate etc. were grown. Flowers such as Kanal (Lotus), Hiloḍpala (Blue Lotus), Fārijīta (White fragrant flower), Āsoka and Kadamba were very popular among the rich and poor alike. Ladies decorated their hair and persons with such flowers.

Though scenes directly showing farmers ploughing land are not found yet the mention of cereals, fruits and flowers as well as the scientific division of land based on fertility of the soil bear witness to the prosperous growth of Agricultural industry.

Here may be mentioned a rustic couple with their hands on each other's shoulders¹ who perhaps belonged to the farmer class.

TEXTILES

Sculptured images of men and women are shown wearing transparent thin clothes, printed or embroidered in beautiful designs. Spinning (Kartaṇa), weaving² and lace making (Jālikarana) were occupations specially meant for widowed women who were forced to earn their own living. Proficiency of the weavers art is vouchsafed by the fact that Indian cotton was an article of lucrative trade with not only Asian countries, but was also coveted in European countries in the middle age.

¹. Badagaon Mehsoongaon, Rewa.
². Weaver was known as Tantuvara.
TAILORS
Clothes woven artistically were cut and sown into fashionable kañchuka or Slouses worn by ladies or Kûrпасaka worn by agents. Deft tailors also made beautiful head gears out of these for kings, queens and rich men and women of society.

METAL WORKERS.
Metals like Copper, tin, brass, lead, iron, gold and silver were used for making articles of every days use, Saurashtra was famous for its brass industry, Vanga for industries of Tin while Debal in Sindh was famous for making Swords of iron.

Metal workers can be divided into three categories on the basis of metals used- (1) Blacksmiths (Lohakâra) making swords, arrow heads, shields, buckles, stirrups, sickles and spade from iron. (2) Copper smiths (Tamrakâra) were there for making articles from brass or lead such as utensils like kalasa (Plate 10 Figs. 1 to 6), ladle, cooking utensils, metal plates or Thālī, Bells, gongs and Darpana, the highest achievement of the coppersmith (i.e. the Metallic mirror) (3) Goldsmiths (hiranyakâra) proficiency of whose art is testified to by the beautifully and artistically designed various pieces of jewellery worn by men and women alike. Ornaments inlaid with gems, gold or silver ornaments variously designed and shaped like flowers, buds, leaves or bells are innumerable in any single temple site of the early or late medieval period.

The Hara, Kundala, Katisutra, Mūlura all bespeak of the proficiency of the Ėranyakāras.

Beadsman

Closely connected with jewellers is the beadsman. It is the beadsman who strings together artistically gold pendant with red, gold, green and blue threads which may be matching the inlaid work of the gold pieces, to make a necklace. He puts together the beads, pearls, coral and other stones to make a Hara.

Some other important but considered to be low, were the occupations of

Potters — who were making pitchers of various shapes and sizes. Even today the Potter at wheel is one of the most interesting persons to watch. How his dexterous hand turns the wheel and shape the clay into beautiful vases, pitchers, Surākā (long necked pot) etc is a matter of wonder for many outsiders.

Rope and Basket Makers(Suruda) — were making baskets for carrying fruits and vegetables and ropes for tying the wild animals or huge carved pieces of stone in a Bahangī pole and many other uses.

Leather Workers(Charamakāra) — used to make shoes(Plate I Fig.15) sandals, slippers, saddles for horses and leather bags of quite modern designs with a strap to hang them on the shoulder and a lid with a button (Plate I Fig. 8).

Hunters(Fhedra), Fishermen(Kaivarta), Washermen(Rajaka).

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1. Hunting scenes have been described in the Chapter Hobbies and Recreations, P.409, 344-345.
Chapālas and Vadhaka were some other professionals considered to be untouchables or Antyaja (Weavers also come under this category).

**CARPENTERS (Takshaka)**:

During the early medieval centuries a variety of furniture was used by rich and poor people of India. Cots (Plate X, Fig. 13), tables (Plate X, Fig. 10), cushioned seats (Plate X, Fig. 9d1), wooden slippers (Plate X, Fig. 7) the print board (Plate X, Fig. 22) and such other things. These were all made by the Carpenters. The beautifully decorated Sella de Carts and the best of all—the Indian Chariots, decorated with carved pieces of wood all over are evidences of the dexterity of a carpenter in his profession. They must have also helped in putting wooden doors and beams in the buildings of the time.

**SCULPTORS (Silākara)**:

What better proof of the proficiency of an Indian Sculptor of the medieval period, could there be than the massive, magnificent, solid but at the same time delicately carved, hundreds of stone temples that lie scattered all over the North and the South of India. The bold, patient and devoted sculptor did not hesitate to choose granite—the hardest stone, as his material for a temple (Chausath Jogini temple and Khajuraho is entirely of this material). Huge uncouth boulders were brought from far and distance and the sculptor set at work with only a hammer and a chisel breathing life into stone.

The work of the architect had been divided into four categories: (1) the architect or the Śāhāpi (2) The Designer or the Draughtsman—Śāstragrāhī whose only instrument was a measuring scale.
and a long piece of thread (Sātra), (3) the measurer of Vardhaka who was well versed in the laws of proportions and (4) the Mason or the Takshaka who engraved the designs with the hammer and the chisel. Geometrical designs, leafy patterns, blooming buds, full blown lotuses, flaming dragons and dancing Apsaras all seem to be perfect to the finish. Anger, love, bewitching smiles, flaming eyes and soft affectionate face of the mother, all are perfect to a degree which evince wonder even from a most perfect architect of today. The huge Varāha, large Sāndi, tall Horse, massive Elephant as well as the small birds, the Sūka and the Sārika, all are meticulously carved giving fine out the minutest details from top to toe. Some of the images are so realistic that but for their surroundings, they could be easily mistaken for real ones.

A mason at work with the hammer in right and chisel in the left hand temptation of depicting which, perhaps, the sculptor could not resist, is the most enlightening portrayal of an artist immersed in work oblivious to his surroundings. What does it matter to him if a crowd passes by— he had his hammer and the chisel and to a long way before he can stop(Fig.212).

LABOURERS AND SERVANT CLASS.

Huge stones boulders hewn were carried from one place to the other by labourers. Equally heavy weight was tied to both the ends of a pole with ropes and then carried by one, two or more men according to its weight.

1. Lit out Vishnu T Kiradu; Sa T near Vishnu T Kiradu.
2. Lit out Vishnu T Kiradu; Somnath Museum.
Similarly rich people often went from one place to the other on a palanquin carried by two or more men on their shoulders (Fig. 213). Other attendants of these rich men followed on foot.

Fruit or vegetable sellers also carried their articles on a bahangi pole in two baskets tied to it at both ends (Fig. 214).

To the servant classes belong the Chawrie or Fly whisk bearers, garland bearers and Chattras (Plate Fig. 14) bearers who accompanied their rich masters.

ARMED ATTENDANTS.

Here it would not be out of place to mention the armed attendants of kings, queens or other rich men.

Attendants are shown with Sakti and the other hand on Kati; Bow and arrow and sword and shield or with a small knife (Fig. 215).

1. Rail back cut Naulaka T Ghumla; Sm frieze outside the T facing Sm T Nochera; Lt cut Sun T Konark; Sm T near Vishnu T Kiradu.
2. Lt cut Sun T Konark; Lt cut Muktesvara T Muvanesvara.
4. Pillar top Shama Shah T Mt Abu; Ambika T Jagat; Mandap inner Chausukha Vastupal T Girnar.
5. Lt cut Sm T facing Sun T Konark; Amr Museum.
7. Teli Tz Gwalior Fort.
8. Lt cut Rajavara T Saghara; Sm T near Mahabir T Osian (arrows only); Shri Saha Museum Chamba.
9. Rail cut Paras vanth T Mt Abu; (The attendant has only sword and is saluting his master) Rudraon Nehsanagao.
Some horsemen are also shown in attendance to their lord. One carries Sword⁠¹ and the other a Spear².

BARBERS.

Amongst the poor class may be placed the barbers who cut the hair of men in various styles according to their tastes and the fashions of the day. The various styles of hair, beard whiskers and moustaches show that barbers must have earned a decent living in those days.

CHARIOTERS.

Chariots were the means of communication which few beside kings could afford. But well trained charioteers must not have been lacking and this profession is often referred to in literature.

GRASS CUTTERS.

To provide fodder to large number of tame animals, the grass cutter must have been very busy with his sickle or small spade.

FALCONER.

Taming birds was popular among lajdes and professional falconers must have sold wild birds to them to satisfy their desire for a pet.

ENGINEERS.

Massive stone structures and the well planned towns and capitals of medieval India bespeak of the trained and efficient Engineers that they must have been. Even the Sthapati mentioned above (under the

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¹ Chaturbhuj T Gwalior Fort
² Bheem out Fuli T
heading sculptor) was none but the chief architect standing at par
with the Chief Engineer of modern days.

**PHYSICIANS.**

Ayurveda is an old Indian Science of medicines. The land
of famous surgeons and physicians like Charaka and Dhanvantari had not
allowed their race to become extinct.

Scenes of women taking out thorn or undergoing an
operation in the feet, bear testimony to the existence of this class of
professionals in society.

**GOVERNMENT SERVANTS.**

The large number of King’s courtiers, his clerk, bodyguards,
army men and civil officials can come under the head of Government
servants. They are paid from the royal treasury and belonged to the
rich class of society. These were highly qualified and well trained
persons in their respective max callings and were consequently paid
according to their grades and services.

**ANIMALS AND MEANS OF TRANSPORT.**

While some animals and birds were tamed to make pets
(e.g. Kapi, Mayura, Suka and Srikē), others were kept to provide eggs.
Under these we may count the hen, the swans and ducks. But animals
like Balloocks, Horse, Camel and Elephant provided means of transport
and were beasts of burden too(Fig.216).

*See Chapter IX.*

1. Sn T near Vishnu T Kiradu; 3rd T near Vishnu T Kiradu;
   (Cart is beautiful and shows a lady sitting under a Chhatra held
   by a servant) Samaichesvara T Chittor.
Bullock Carts\(^1\) were the popular means of transport (Figs. 217) while Chariots\(^2\) were used by the rich. But in the deserts of Rajasthan Camel Carts\(^3\) (Closed from all the sides as a protection against dust storms of the desert) were used. On the sea coasts and in towns on river banks, boats were the chief means of transport \(^4\) (Fig. 218).

**CELESTIAL VEHICLES.**

Gods also used vehicles for going from one place to the other and their modes of conveyance were flying horses, Garuḍa and the Vidyādhara. Kubera had a Vimāna (aeroplane) and Śiva had his Bull Nandi.

**FOOD AND DRINK.**

Agriculture being the chief occupation of people in India men here primarily depended on cereals like wheat, corn, gram, rice and pulses. Vegetables and fruits were used in plenty. But though a large part of the population was vegetarian all men were not. Hunting and fishing were not merely pastimes, they also provided food for many. Ṛgveda\(^5\) allows cow, goat and deer flesh to be eaten while that of peacock, hoirse, ass, sparrow, cock and pig was considered lawful food. When savoury vegetarian preparations like sweet-meats and laddoo...

\(^1\) Sa T near Vishnu T Kiradu; 3rd T near Vishnu T Kiradu; (Cart is beautiful and shows a lady sitting under a Ghatra held by shows a lady Samidheśvara T Chittor.

\(^2\) Room 3 Ahuvanesvara Museum.

\(^3\) (Cart is drawn by three camels) Jodhpur Museum.

\(^4\) Calcutta Museum.
'Ganepsa is shown eating them) were made, rich non-vegetarian dishes too must have been popular. The royal kitchen had a Cook-Phachaka (who was also employed in rich men's houses) and the culinary art had greatly progressed.

Milk was a popular beverage. Honey and grape juice—Nadhuka, was also liked. But wine was most popular. The Fānagoshthi or drinking parties are referred to and even Brahmans used to drink some kinds of wine (Somapāna). Wine was also prepared from rice flour.

BUILDINGS.

The poor in villages lived in small mud huts, but brick houses even for the poor could be found in towns and cities. The rich people lived in spacious houses having attached gardens and orchards (Fig. 219 third row from bottom). The kings, of course, lived in places with roomy balconies and airy halls (Fig. 220) (palace gates and garden are shown). The Mānasināg palace at Gwalior (inside the fort) shows how special rooms for summer with light arrangements and skylights were built for the delicate queens of the rulers. Temples themselves prove that beautifully carved palaces must have been build for kings.

Some of the scenes sculptured in the temples suggest palace walls and balconies.

The Fṛathihārī is opening the palace gates. Horses are being

* Refer to drinking scenes described in Chapter IX.
1. & 2. Bhāma Shah T roof Mt Abu.
looked after in the stables; the elephant is coming out from the gate and herd of cattle is being driven to the pasture (Fig. 221 fourth row).

A place is shown enveloped in the flames of fire. The flames throw light on its walls and windows. Some persons are shown dropping down its windows (Fig. 222). Ganesa—the god himself is shown driving a chariot towards the place and in the chariot is seated god Vishnu.

The right persons living in such places often gave large amount of money in charity.

A man seated is being offered a purse apparently full of coins by another man.

CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

The sculptures make no direct reference to the villages, towns and cities of the period. But the royal scenes depicting kings and queens moving with their cortege prove the presence of big towns and cities.

There were nice neat villages in the countryside. The scene (Fig. 223) depicts a typical scene of an Indian village with women working under the shades of tree. A small baby is swinging in the hammock hung on the branches. The cow-herd is tending cows. two

1. Lt out Vishnu T Kiradu.
2. Sm T ahead of Sati Stones Osian.
3. Roof Bhama Shah T Mt Abu.
women are churning butter; a mother sits with two children on both her
knees, nearby is the cradle for the small baby. A woman with the
mudak small pitcher seems to be going to fetch water.

Towns having a population of a few thousand men, harbours with
navigators and sailor on the sea-coasts and prosperous cities, where
kings and courtiers lived were also there. These have been mentioned in
the literature of the period but not shown in sculptures.

TRADE AND MONEY.

Not only land trade within the country but also sea trade
with far off lands was carried on. Indian goods were sold in Europe,
China, Persia and East Indies. Trade was a source of great wealth to
the country which was rich and prosperous, so that she was coveted
by her neighbours— the Sakas, Yushis and the Muslims.

The common mode of exchange or transaction in the country—
side was barter but in towns and cities things were purchased with money.
The gold, silver and copper coins found, show that coinage was well
developed and standard coins were made in the country.