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ART. III.—*Legends chiefly from the Śatapatha Brāhmana.*
By J. MUIR, Esq., D.C L., LL.D.

THE Brāhmanas may be generally described as occupying an intermediate position, both as regards chronology, character, language, and mythology, between the Vedic hymns, and the Indian epic poems and Purānas. They are liturgical works, connected with the different Sanhitās, or collections of hymns, and having it for their object to explain the application of those hymns to the different parts of the Brahmanical ritual, as practised at the period when they were compiled.¹ In these works we encounter a great many legends of greater or less extent, which are introduced with the view of showing the occasion on which some particular hymn was first uttered, or of accounting for the origin, and enforcing the efficacy, of some particular ceremony, or for some other such purpose. Many of these stories have their germ in some brief notice or allusion in the hymns of the Rig Veda, while they occur in a greatly developed form in the epic poems and Purānas. The shape in which these legends occur in the Brāhmanas is thus an intermediate one between that in which they appear in the hymns, and that which they subsequently assume in mythological works of a later date. Of this description is the story of Śunahśepa in the Aitareya Brāhmana, which appeared about the same time in the 1st and 2nd vols. of Weber's "Indische Studien," in the German translation of Professor R. Roth, and in the Journal of this Society, vol. xiii., pp. 96 ff., translated into English by the late Professor Wilson, and which has subsequently been given by Professor Max Müller, in his "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," pp. 408 ff. In this story the author of the Brāhmana quotes various hymns from the first Mandala of the Rig Veda, which he considers to have been uttered by Śunahśepa, at the time when he was in danger of being immolated. The legend was, at a later period, introduced into the Rāmāyana, Book i., sections 61, 62.

¹ For a detailed account of these works, Professor Max Müller's well known "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature" may be consulted.

Two interesting legends, from the Śatapatha Brāhmana, have been translated by Professor Weber, in the first volume of his "Indische Studien," as illustrative of the immigration of the Aryas into India from the north, and of their subsequent diffusion to the eastward.¹ The first of these two passages contains the legend of the Deluge (at the close of which the ship carrying Manu, the progenitor of the Indian Aryas, was stranded on one of the peaks of the Himālaya), in the oldest form in which it occurs in any Indian work. A later version of the legend occurs in the Mahābhārata,² and a third of a still more modern complexion, is to be found in the Bhāgavata Purāna.

I shall now proceed to adduce, from the Śatapatha Brāhmana, and other similar works, some other stories relating to Vishnu, and some of the other deities.

It has been noticed by Professor Wilson, in the Introduction to his translation of the Rig Veda, vol. i., p. xxxiv, that Vishnu, as represented to us in the hymns of that Veda, is a deity of quite a different character from the god of the same name whom we meet in the later Hindu mythology. As Professor Wilson's remarks are readily accessible, I shall not introduce here any description of the Vedic Vishnu. When we descend from the hymns to the Brāhmanas, although we discover perpetual allusions to the earliest conception of Vishnu, as traversing the sky in three strides, yet he no longer appears exclusively under that character, but becomes invested with some new attributes, and forms the subject of various new legends, which are quite foreign to the hymns;—at the same time that he is still very different from the deity of the same name, who is described in the Purānas.

The following are the principal legends regarding Vishnu which I have noticed in the Śatapatha Brāhmana.

The first, from chapter i, 2, 5, 1 ff, in which the god is represented as a dwarf, and as having, under the form of sacrifice, conquered the whole earth, appears, when combined with the conception contained in the hymns, of his having traversed the world in three strides, to have formed the germ of the story of the dwarf incarnation. The style, it will be remarked, is characterized by a naïve simplicity.

¹ One of these stories has been subsequently quoted by Professor Max Müller in his "Anc. Ind. Lit." p. 425 (along with some others from the other Brāhmanas), and both have appeared in the 2nd vol. of my Sanskrit Texts, pp. 325 ff., and 420 ff.

² Vana-parva, vv. 12746—12804.

"The gods and Asuras, who were both sprung from Prajāpati, strove together. Then the gods were, as it were, worsted, and the Asuras thought, 'this world is now certainly ours.' 2. Then they spake, 'Come let us divide this earth, and having divided it, let us subsist thereon.' They accordingly went on dividing it with ox-hides from west to east. 3. The gods heard of it, [and] said, 'The Asuras are dividing this earth; come, we shall go to the spot where they are dividing it. Who shall we become (*i.e.*, what shall become of us), if we do not share in it?' Placing at their head Vishṇu, the sacrifice, they proceeded [thither], 4. and said, 'put us in possession of this earth; let us also have a share in it.' The Asuras, grudging as it were, answered, "We give you as much as this Vishṇu can lie upon."¹ 5. Now, Vishṇu was a dwarf. The gods did not reject that offer; [but said among themselves], 'They have given us much [these Asuras], who have given us what is co-extensive with sacrifice.' Then having placed Vishṇu to the east, they surrounded him with metres; [saying], on the south side, 'I surround thee with the Gāyatrī metre;' on the west, 'I surround thee with the Trishṭubh metre;' on the north, 'I surround thee with the Jagatī metre.' 7. Having thus surrounded him with metres, they placed Agni (fire) on the east, and thus they went on worshipping and toiling. By this they acquired the whole of this earth; and since by this they acquired (*samavindanta*) it all, therefore [the place of sacrifice] is called *vedi* (from the root *vid*, 'to acquire'). Hence men say, 'as great as is the altar, so great is the earth;' for by it (the altar) they acquired the whole of this [earth]. Thus he who so understands this, conquers all this [earth] from rivals, expels from it rivals. 8. Then this Vishṇu, being wearied, surrounded by metres, with Agni to the east, did not advance; but hid himself among the roots of plants. 9. The gods then exclaimed, 'What has become of Vishṇu? what has become of the sacrifice?' They said, 'Surrounded by metres, with Agni to the east, he does not advance; search for him here.' So digging, as it were, they searched for, and found him at a depth of three fingers; therefore let the altar [have a trench] three fingers deep.

¹ Compare with this legend the similar one quoted by Sāyana in his note on R. V. vi., 69, 8, from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, 6, 15:—"Indra and Vishṇu fought with the Asuras. Having conquered them, they said, 'let us divide [the world].' The Asuras said, 'be it so.' Indra said, 'As much as this Vishṇu strides over in three strides, so much is ours; the rest is yours.' He strode over these worlds, then the Vedas, then speech."

Therefore, also, *Pāñchi*¹ made an altar of this description for the soma sacrifice. 10. But let no one do so," etc.

The next legend from the same work relates how Vishṇu became pre-eminent among the gods, and how he lost his head. Here also he is identified with sacrifice.

Śatapatha Br. xiv. i. 1, 1, ff.: "The gods, Agni, Indra, Soma, Vishṇu the Sacrifice, and all the [other] deities, excepting the Aśvins, were present at a sacrifice. 2. Kuruxetra was the place of their divine worship. Hence, men say that Kuruxetra is the country where the gods sacrifice. Consequently, to whatever part of Kuruxetra a man goes, he looks upon it as a place for divine worship, since it was the spot where the gods worshipped. 3. They were [there. They said], 'May we attain prosperity, become famous, and eat food.' And in the very same way these [men] attend a sacrifice [saying], 'May we attain prosperity, become famous, and eat food.' 4. Then [the gods] said, 'Whosoever among us, through exertion, austerity, faith, sacrifice, and oblations, first comprehends the issue of the sacrifice, let him be the most eminent of us: this [renown shall be] common to us all.' [To this they consented, saying], 'Be it so.' 5. Vishṇu first attained that [proposed object]. He became the most eminent of the gods: wherefore men say, 'Vishṇu is the most eminent of the gods.' 6. He who is this Vishṇu is sacrifice; he who [is] this sacrifice is the Aditya.² Vishṇu could not support this fame. And the same is the case now, that every one cannot support fame. 7. Taking his bow and three arrows, he departed. He stood, resting his head on the end of his [bended] bow. Being unable to overcome him, the gods sat down all round him. 8. Then the ants said to them (now the ants were the same as *upadikas*), 'What will you give to him who gnaws the bowstring?' [The gods replied], 'We will give him the enjoyment of food, and he shall find waters even in the desert; so shall we give him every enjoyment of food.' 9. [The ants, then], approaching, gnawed his bowstring. When that was divided, the ends of the bow, starting asunder, cut off the head of Vishṇu. 10. It fell, making a sound

¹ On this the commentator remarks:—"Pāñchi thought that the altar for the soma sacrifice also should have a trench three fingers deep." Pāñchi is again mentioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 2, 1, 4, 27 (p. 143), along with Āsuri and Mādhuḥi, where the commentator speaks of them as three munis (Asurībrāhṛitayas trayo munayah). See Weber's Ind. Stud. i. 192. 434.

² It seems as if there were a play of words here, the word *yaśaḥ*, "fame," having reference to the words *sa yaḥ sa Vishṇuḥ*, etc., *sa yaḥ sa yajñāḥ*, etc. "He who [is] this Vishṇu," etc. "He who [is] this sacrifice," etc.

(*ghrin*). That having fallen, became that Aditya. Then the rest of him became extended towards the east. Since the head fell with the sound of *ghrin*, hence *gharma*, [the 'sacrificial kettle,' received its name]; and since he became extended, (*prāvriṣyata*) the *pravargya* [received its appellation]. 11. The gods then said, 'A great hero (*mahān vīrah*) of ours has fallen.' Hence arose the name of *mahāvīra* (a sacrificial vessel).¹ They wiped (*sammamriḥ*) with their hands the fluid (blood) which flowed from him. Hence arose the name of *samrāt*. 12. The gods touched (?) him (Vishṇu), as men wishing to know property (?) do. Indra first reached him. He came into contact with him limb by limb. He embraced him. Having embraced him, he became this fame, which Indra is. He who so knows this becomes fame. 13. That Vishṇu was indeed sacrifice (*makha*). Hence Indra became the possessor of sacrifice (*makhavān*). He is *Makhavān*; they call him *Maghavān* transcendently: for the gods love what is transcendental (*lit.* beyond the reach of the senses). 14. They (the gods) gave food to those ants. All food is water; for with water men, as it were, moisten the food which they eat: as the common saying is. 15. Then they divided into three portions this Vishṇu, the sacrifice. With that headless sacrifice (see above), the gods went on worshipping and toiling."

I am indebted to Professor Weber for the next two passages, the first from the Taittirīya Aranyaka, and the second from the Panchavimśa Brāhmaṇa, which both relate the same legend which has just been given from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

Taittirīya Aranyaka, v. i. 1 ff.—"The gods, desirous of fame, were attending a sacrifice complete in every respect. They said 'whatever fame first comes to us, that shall be common to us all.' Kuruxetra was their altar. Khaṇḍava was its southern, Tūrghna its northern, and Parīnah its hinder section. The Marus were the earth dug from it. 2. Fame came to the Sacrifice derived from Vishṇu [*Makha Vaiṣṇava*] among their number. This fame he eagerly desired; with it he departed. The gods followed him, seeking to obtain [this] fame. From the left [hand] of him while thus followed, a bow was produced, and from his right hand arrows. Hence a bow and arrows have a holy origin, for they are sprung from sacrifice. 3. Though many, they could not overcome him, though he was only one. Therefore many men without bows and

¹ A long account is given of the *gharma*, *pravargya*, and *mahāvīra* in Kātyāyana's Śrauta Sūtras, xxvi.

arrows cannot overcome one hero who has a bow and arrows. He smiled, 'Though they are many, they have not overcome me who am only one.' Virile strength issued from him as he continued to smile. This the gods put upon the plants. They became *śyāmāka* grain. For they are smilers (*smayākāh*). 4. Hence this grain derives its name. Wherefore a person who has been consecrated should smile with reserve, that he may retain his virility. He stood leaning on his bow. The ants said [to the gods], 'let us choose a boon; and after that we shall subdue [or kill him]. Wherever we dig, let us open up water.' Hence wherever ants dig, they open up water. 5. For this was the boon which they chose. They gnawed his (Vishnu's) bowstring. His bow, starting asunder, hurled his head upwards. It travelled through heaven and earth. From its so travelling (*prāvarttata*), the *pravargya* derives its name. From its falling with the sound of *ghrām*, *gharma* obtained its name. Virile energy (or seed, *vīryam*) fell from the mighty one (*mahatah*): hence the *mahāvīra* got its name. 6. From their taking a portion (*samabharan*) of it (the bow-string?) the *samrāt* obtains its appellation. The gods divided him, when prostrate, into three parts; Agni [took] the morning oblation; Indra the midday oblation; and the Viśvedevas the third oblation. Sacrificing with this headless sacrifice, they (the gods) neither obtained blessings, nor conquered heaven. 7. The gods said to the Aśvins, 'Ye two are physicians, replace this head of the sacrifice.' They said 'Let us ask a boon, let our *graha* (libation of Soma) be received here also. [The gods accordingly] received this [libation] to the Aśvins on their behalf. [The Aśvins] replaced this head of the sacrifice, which is the *pravargya*. Sacrificing with this sacrifice with a head, they obtained blessings, they conquered heaven. When one spreads out the *pravargya*, then he replaces the head of the sacrifice. Sacrificing with this sacrifice with a head, a man obtains blessings, and conquers heaven. Hence this *pravargya* is principally concerned with oblations to the Aśvins."

Panchavimśa Brāhmaṇa, vii., 5, 6.—"Desirous of fame, the gods Agni, Indra, Vāyu, and Makha (Sacrifice) were attending a sacrifice. They said, 'whatever fame comes to us, that shall be common to us.' Fame came to Makha among their number. Taking it, he departed. The others wished to take their share in it. They strove with him. He stood leaning on his bow. The end of his bow, springing upwards, cut off his head. He became the *pravargya*. Makha is sacrifice. When men spread out the *pravargya*, they replace the head of Makha."

It is not my object to cite here the later legends about Vishṇu, the principal of which are well known, and easily accessible. I shall merely indicate two of the most important passages which give an account of the Dwarf incarnation. These are in the Rāmāyana, i., 31, 2 ff., Schlegel's ed.; i., 32, 2 ff., Gorresio's ed.; and the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Book viii., sections 15—21.

I shall now adduce some legends from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa about the creation, the primeval waters, the mundane egg, &c., which will readily be recognized as the originals from which the representations of the same subjects given in Menu's Institutes and in the Purāṇas have been derived:

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vi. 1, 1, 1 (pp. 499 of Weber's edition): "In the beginning this [universe] was indeed non-existent. But men say, 'what was that non-existent?' The rishis say, that in the beginning there was non-existence. Who are these rishis? The rishis are breaths. Inasmuch as before all this [universe], they desiring this [universe], strove (? *arishan*), with toil and austerity, therefore they are called *rishis*. 2. This breath which is in the midst is Indra. He by his might kindled these breaths in the midst: inasmuch as he kindled them, he is the kindler (*Indha*). They call Indha Indra transcendently; for the gods love that which is transcendental. They being kindled, created seven separate men (*purusha*). 3. They said, 'being thus, we shall not be able to generate these seven men; let us make one man.' So speaking, they made these seven men one man (*purusha*). Into the part above the navel, they compressed two of them, and two others into the part below the navel; [one] man [formed one] side; [another] man [another] side; and one formed the base. 5. This [one] man became Prajāpati. The man who became Prajāpati is the same as this Agni who is kindled on the altar. 6. He verily is composed of seven men (*purusha*): for this man is composed of seven men, since four [make] the soul, and three the sides and extremity (*lit.*, tail). For the soul of this man [makes] four, and the sides and extremity three. Now, inasmuch as he makes the soul [which is equal to four] superior by one man, the soul, in consequence of this [excess of] force, controls the sides and extremity [which are only equal to three]. 8. This man (*purusha*) Prajāpati desired, 'may I become more, may I be reproduced.' He toiled, he performed austerity. Having toiled and performed austerity, he first created the Veda (*brahma*), the triple science. It became to him a foundation; hence men say, 'the Veda (*brahma*) is the foundation of all this.' Wherefore having

studied [the Veda] a man has a foundation (?), for this is his foundation, namely the Veda. Resting on this foundation, he performed austerity. 9. He created the waters from the world [in the form of] speech.¹ Speech belonged to him. It was created. It obtained (pervaded) all this. Because it *obtained* (*āpnōt*) all this which exists, it (speech) was called waters (*āpah*); and because it *covered* (*avrinōt*), it was called *vāh* (another name of water). 10. He desired, 'May I be reproduced from these waters.' So saying, with this triple science he entered the waters. Thence an egg arose. He pondered on it (?). He said, 'let there be,' 'let there be,' again, 'let there be.' From it the Veda was first created, the triple science. Hence men say, 'the Veda is the first-born of this whole [creation]. Further, [as] the Veda was first created from that Man, therefore it was created his mouth. Hence they say of a learned man that he is like Agni; for the Veda is Agni's mouth."

The same idea about Prajāpati being composed of seven men, occurs again in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, x., 2, 2, 1 (p. 767).—"These seven men whom they made one man (*puruṣha*) became Prajāpati. He created offspring. Having created offspring, he mounted upwards; he went to this world where he shines upon this. There was then no other object of worship: the gods began to worship him with sacrifices. Hence it has been said by the rishi (Rig Veda, x., 90, 16), 'the gods worshipped the sacrifice with sacrifice.'"

II. In the preceding legend, the gods are represented as the creators of Prajāpati, who in his turn is stated to have generated the waters, and the mundane egg. In the following story, the order of production is different. The waters generate the egg, and the egg brings forth Prajāpati, who creates the worlds and the gods.

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xi., 1, 6, 1 ff. (pp. 831 ff.)—"In the beginning this universe was waters, nothing but water.² The

¹ This is illustrated by another passage in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vii., 5, 2, 21 (617), which says: *vāg vā ajo vācho vai prajā Viśvakarmā jajāna* | "Speech is the mover [or, the unborn]. It was from speech that Viśvakarman produced creatures." And in the Brihad Aranyaka (p. 290 of Bibl. Ind.) it is said | *trayo lokā ete eva* | *vāg evāyaṁ loko mano 'ntarīkṣa-lokaḥ prāṇo 'sau lokah* | "It is they which are the three worlds. Speech is this world, mind is the aerial world, and breath is that world (the sky)."

² Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vi., 7, 1, 17.—*Tasyāpa eva pratishṭhā* | *apsu hi ime lokāḥ pratishṭhātāḥ* | "Waters are its support: for these worlds are based upon

waters desired, 'how can we be reproduced?' So saying, they toiled, they performed austerity. While they were performing austerity, a golden egg came into existence. Being produced, it then became a year. Wherefore this golden egg floated about for the period of a year. 2. From it in a year a man (*puruṣa*) came into existence, who was Prajāpati. Hence it is that a woman, or a cow, or a mare, brings forth in the space of a year, for in a year Prajāpati was born. He divided this golden egg. There was then no resting-place for him. He therefore floated about for the space of a year, occupying this golden egg.¹ 3. In a year he desired to speak. He uttered *bhūh*, which became this earth;² *bhuvah*, which became this firmament; and *svah*, which became that sky. Hence a child desires to speak in a year, because Prajāpati spoke in a year. 6. He was born with a life of a thousand years. He perceived the further end of his life, as [one] may perceive the opposite bank of a river. 7. Desiring offspring, he went on worshipping and toiling. He conceived progeny in himself; with his mouth he created the gods. These gods were created by attaining heaven. This is the godhead of the gods (*devāh*) that they were creating by attaining heaven (*divam*). To him while he was continuing to create, heaven, as it were, arose(?). This is the godhead of the gods, that to him as he was continuing to create, heaven, as it were, arose. . . . 14. These [following] gods were created from Prajāpati, viz., Agni, Indra, Soma, and Parameshthīn, son of Prajāpati. . . . 18. Prajāpati said to his son Indra," etc.

In the next passage, Prajāpati is said to have taken the form of a tortoise :

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vii., 4, 3, 5 (p. 609).—"Having assumed the form of a tortoise, Prajāpati created offspring. That which he created, he made (*akarot*); hence the word *kūrma*. Kāśyapa means tortoise; hence men say, 'all creatures are descendants of Kāśyapa.' This tortoise is the same as Aditya."

the waters." Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xiv., 8, 6, 1 (= Bṛihad Aranyaka Upanishad, p. 974). — *Āpa credam agre āsuh | tā āpah satyam asṛijanta satyam Brahma Brahma Prajāpatim Prajāpatir devān |* "In the beginning waters alone formed this universe. These waters created Truth, Truth created Brahma, Brahma created Prajāpati, and Prajāpati the gods."

¹ *Tasya Prajāpater āspadam kimapi na babhūva sa cha nirādāhāratvāt sthātum āśaknuvann idam eva bhinnam hiranmayānṇam punah samvatsara-paryantam bibhṛad dhārayan tāsv evāpsu paryasravat |* "There was no resting place for Prajāpati; and he, being unable to stand, from the want of any support, occupying this divided golden egg for a year, floated about on these waters." Comm.

² Compare Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, p. 141.

In the later mythology, as is well known, it is Vishṇu who assumes the form of a tortoise.

Thus in the chapter of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa descriptive of Vishṇu's incarnations it is said (i., 3, 16):—"In his eleventh incarnation, the Lord in the form of a tortoise supported on his back the churning-mountain, when the gods and Asuras were churning the ocean."

In its application of the Vājasaneyi Sanhitā, 37, 5, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 14, 1, 2, 11 (p. 1025) makes the following allusion to the elevation of the earth by a boar:—" 'She (the earth) was formerly so large,' &c. ; for formerly this earth was only so large, of the size of a span. Emūsha, a boar,¹ raised her up."

I quote some further texts relative to Prajāpati.

In the following he is said to have in the beginning constituted the universe, and to have created Agni (see above, pp. 37, 39).

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii., 2, 4, 1 (p. 151).—"Prajāpati alone was all this [universe] in the beginning. He considered, 'how can I be reproduced?' He toiled, and performed austerity. He generated Agni from his mouth."

In the next passage, ii., 4, 4, 1 (p. 173), he is identified with Daxa:²—"Prajāpati formerly sacrificed with this sacrifice, being desirous of progeny, [and saying] 'may I abound in offspring and cattle, attain prosperity, become famous, and obtain food.' He was Daxa."

In Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vi., 8, 1, 14 (p. 565) Prajāpati is said to be the supporter of the universe (a function afterwards assigned to Vishṇu:—"Prajāpati is Bharata (the supporter), for he supports all this universe."³)

Compare the first verse of the Mūṇḍaka Upanishad, where Brahmā is called the preserver of the world (*bhuvanasya goptā*).

In the next passage, xiii., 2, 4, 1 (p. 977), Prajāpati is represented as desirous, not to create, but to conquer, the worlds:—"Prajāpati desired, 'may I conquer both worlds,' that of the gods, and that of men," &c.

In chapter xiii., 6, 6, 1 (p. 997) Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa is introduced:—"Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa desired, 'may I surpass all created things; may I alone become all this?' He beheld this form of sacrifice

¹ See R.V. viii., 66, 10.

² See R.V. x., 72, 4, 5.

³ In R.V. i., 96, 3, the epithet *Bharata* is applied to Agni. The commentator there quotes another text, no doubt from a Brāhmaṇa, *esha prāṇo bhūtvā prajā vibharti tasmād esha bhārataḥ* | "He becoming breath, sustains all creatures; hence he is the sustainer."

called *purusha medha* (human sacrifice) lasting five nights. He took it; he sacrificed with it. Having sacrificed with it, he surpassed all created things, and became all this. That man surpasses all created things, and becomes all this, who thus knowing, sacrifices with the *purusha medha*,—he who so knows this. The *Purusha-sūkta* is shortly afterwards quoted.

In chapter xi., 2, 3, 1 (p. 838) Brahma (in the neuter) is introduced as being the original source of all things :—"In the beginning Brahma was all this. He created the gods. Having created the gods, he placed them in these worlds, in this world Agni, Vāyu in the atmosphere, and Sūrya in the sky."

In chapter xiii., 7, 1, 1 (p. 1000), Brahma is described as sacrificing himself :—"The self-existent Brahma performed austerity. He considered, 'in austerity there is not infinity. Come let me sacrifice myself in created things, and created things in myself.' Then having sacrificed himself in all created things, and all created things in himself, he acquired superiority, self-effulgence, and supreme dominion (compare Manu, xii., 91). Therefore a man offering all oblations, all creatures, in the *śarvamedha* (universal sacrifice), obtains superiority, self-effulgence, and supreme dominion."

With the preceding passages relating to the creation of the world from primeval waters, through the medium of a mundane egg, may be compared the texts of later writers, where the same subject is treated (in some cases with an intermixture of later philosophical doctrines), such as Manu, i., 5, ff.; Rāmāyaṇa ii., 110, 2 ff.¹ Harivansa, verses 35 ff.; and 12425 ff.; Vishnu Purāṇa, i., 2, 45 ff.; Linga Purāṇa, i., 3, 28 ff.; Bhāgavata Purāṇa, iii., 20, 12, ff., &c.

I quote here some other interesting legends which I have observed in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa regarding Prajāpati, the creation of the gods, and the manner in which they acquired immortality, and became superior to the Asuras, or to other deities. The first two tell how Prajāpati himself became immortal.

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, x, 1, 3, 1, ff (p. 761).—"Prajāpati produced creatures. From his *upper breaths* he created the gods, and from his *lower breaths* mortal creatures. After the creatures, he created Death, the devourer. 2. Of this Prajāpati, half was mortal and half immortal. With that part of him which was mortal, he was afraid of Death. Fearing, he entered this (earth), having

¹ See Vol. xix. of this Journal, p. 307, note.

become two things, earth and water. 3. Death said to the gods, 'what has become of him who created us?' [They answered], 'fearing you, he has entered this earth.' Death said, 'let us search for, and collect him. I will not kill him.' The gods then collected him on this [earth]. The part of him which was in the waters, they collected those waters, and the part which was in this [earth], they [collected] that earth. Having collected both of these, the earth and the waters, they made a brick. Hence these two things make a brick, viz., earth and water. 4. Then these five parts of him were mortal, hair, skin, flesh, bone, and marrow; and these immortal, mind, voice, breath, eye, ear 6. The gods said, 'let us make him immortal.' So [saying], having surrounded this mortal part with these immortal parts, they made it immortal thence Prajāpati became immortal"

x, 1, 4, 1.—"Prajāpati was formerly both of these two things, mortal and immortal. His breaths were immortal, and his body mortal. By this rite, by this ceremonial, he made himself uniformly undecaying and immortal."

The next extracts tell how the gods acquired immortality.

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, x, 4, 3, 1 ff. (p 787).—"It is this year which is death; for it wears away the life of mortals by days and nights, and then they die; wherefore it is it which is death. Whoso knows this death [which is] the year,—it does not wear away his life by days and nights before [the time of] his decay: he lives through his whole life. 2. This [the year] is the ender; for it by days and nights brings on the end of the life of mortals, and then they die; hence it is the ender. Whosoever knows this ender, death, the year, it does not by days and nights bring on the end of his life, before his decay: he lives through his whole life. 3. The gods were afraid of this ender, death, the year [which is] Prajāpati, 'lest he should by days and nights bring on the end of our life.' 4. They performed these rites of sacrifice, viz., the *agnihotra*, the *darśa*, and *pūrṇamāsa*, the *chāturmāsya*s (oblations offered at intervals of four months), the *paśubandha*, and the *saumya adhvara*; but sacrificing with these rites they did not attain immortality. 5. They moreover kindled sacrificial fires; they celebrated *parīśrits*, *yajushmatīs*, *lokamprīnas*, without definite measure, as some now¹ celebrate them. So did the gods, but they did not attain immortality. They went on worshipping and toiling, seeking to acquire immortality. Prajāpati said to them, 'Ye do not celebrate

¹ This seems to be a polemical hit aimed by the author of the Brāhmaṇa at some contemporaries who followed a different ritual from himself.

all my forms ; ye carry them to excess [?] and ye do not duly carry them out ; hence ye do not become immortal.' 7. They said, 'Tell us how we may celebrate all thy forms.' 8. He said, 'perform 63 hundred *parisrits*, 63 hundred and 36 *yajushmatīs*, and 10 thousand 8 hundred *lokamprīṇas* : ye shall then celebrate all my forms, and shall become immortal.' The gods celebrated accordingly, and then they became immortal. 9. Death said to the gods, 'In the same way all men will become immortal, and then what portion shall remain to me?' They said, 'no other person shall henceforward become immortal with his body, when thou shalt seize this portion [the body] : then every one who is to become immortal through knowledge or work, shall become immortal after parting with his body.' This which they said, 'through knowledge or work,' this is that knowledge which is Agni, that work which is Agni. 10. Those who so know this, or those who perform this work, are born again after death ; and being born, they are born for immortality. And those who do not so know, or those who do not perform this work, and are born again after death, become again and again his (death's) food."

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xi, i, 2, 12 (p. 828).—"The gods were originally mortal.¹ When they obtained the year, they became immortal. The year is all : all is undecaying ; by it a man obtains undecaying welfare, an undecaying world."

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xi, 2, 3, 6 (p. 839).—"The gods were originally mortal. When they were pervaded by Brahma, they became immortal."

From the next passage, as from two others already quoted, it appears that Prajāpati himself was not entirely exempt from the power of death. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, x, 4, 4, 1 (p. 790).—"Sin, death, smote Prajāpati when he was creating living beings. He performed austerity for a thousand years to get free from sin."

The following legend describes how the gods became distinguished from, and superior to, the Asuras. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ix, 5, 1, 12 ff. :

"The gods and Asuras, both descendants of Prajāpati, obtained their father Prajāpati's inheritance, speech, true and false, both truth and falsehood. They both spoke truth, and both [spoke] falsehood. Speaking alike, they were alike. 13. Then the gods, abandoning falsehood, adopted truth ; while the Asuras abandoning

¹ See Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii., 2, 2, 8 (p. 146), quoted in Part II. of my Sanskrit Texts, p. 388, note 36, for another legend on this same subject, in which the gods are said to have become immortal by another means.

truth, adopted falsehood. 14. The truth which had been in the Asuras, perceived this, 'the gods, abandoning falsehood have adopted truth; let me go thither.' So [saying, truth] came to the gods. 15. Then the falsehood which had been in the gods, perceived, 'the Asuras, abandoning truth have adopted falsehood; let me go thither.' So [saying, falsehood] came to the Asuras. 16. The gods [then] spoke entirely truth, and the Asuras entirely falsehood. Speaking truth alone (or devotedly) the gods became, as it were, weaker, and, as it were, poorer. Hence it happens that the man who speaks only truth, becomes as it were, weaker and poorer; but in the end he becomes [superior?]; for the gods became so in the end. 17. Then the Asuras, speaking only falsehood, increased like saline earth, and became, as it were, rich. Hence it happens that he who speaks only falsehood, increases like saline earth, and becomes, as it were, rich; but is overcome in the end, for the Asuras were overcome. That which is truth is the triple science (the three Vedas). Then the gods said, 'let us, performing sacrifice, spread this truth.'" The gods then performed a variety of sacrifices, which were always interrupted by the arrival of the Asuras. At length, 27. "When these had gone, they instituted the third *savana*, and accomplished it. That which they accomplished, they obtained entirely true. Then the Asuras went away, and these gods became [superior and] the Asuras were worsted. The man who knows this becomes in his own person superior, and his hater, his enemy, is defeated."

The next legend explains how inequality was introduced among the gods. Śatapatha Brahmana, 4, 5, 4, 1 (p. 397 f.) :—"Originally the gods were all alike, all pure. Of them, being all alike, all pure, three desired: 'May we become superior,' viz., Agni, Indra, and Sūrya (the sun). 2. They went on worshipping and toiling. They saw these *atigrāhyas*;¹ they took them over and above. Because they did so, these draughts (or cups) were called *atigrāhyas*. They became superior. As they [obtained?] thus, as it were, superiority, so superiority is, as it were, acquired by the man, of whom, when he knows this, they receive these *grahas* (draughts, or cups). 3. Originally there was not in Agni the same flame, as this flame

¹ By this name are called "three particular *grahas*, or sacrificial vessels, with which libations were made in the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice to Agni, Indra, and Sūrya." Prof. Goldstücker's Diet. The word is explained by Boehtlingk and Roth, as meaning "*haustus insuper hauriendus*," a draught to be drunk over and above; the designation of three fillings of the cup, which are drawn at the Soma offering.

which is [now] in him. He desired: 'May this flame be in me.' He saw this *graha*, he took it; and hence there became this flame in him. 4. Originally there was not in Indra the same vigour, etc., etc. [as in para. 3.] 5. Originally there was not in Sūrya the same lustre, etc., etc. [the same as in para. 3.] That man has in himself these forces, these energies, of whom, when he knows this, they receive these *grahas*."

It is already known from the remarks made by the late Professor Wilson, in the introduction to his translation of the Rig Veda (vol. i., pp. xxxvii. ff., and vol. ii., p. ix. ff.) that the god Rudra, as represented in the hymns, is very different from the deity (Mahādeva) to whom the same name is applied in the later mythology. I shall not inquire here what the Vedic conception of Rudra was (a subject which has also been discussed by Professor Weber in his "Indische Studien," ii., 19 ff; see also pp. 30, i. ff.); but shall merely quote the two following legends; the first from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, (vi., 1, 3, 7 ff.,) in which Rudra is represented as a form of Agni, and which appears to be the original from which the legends of the birth of Rudra in the Vishnu Purāṇa (Wilson, p. 58), and in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, sect. 52, are derived:—

"This foundation existed. It became the earth (*bhūmī*). He extended it. It became the broad one (*prithivī*). On this foundation beings, and the lord of beings, consecrated themselves for the year (*samvatsara*). The lord of beings was a householder, and Ushas (the dawn) was his wife. Now these beings were the seasons. That lord of beings was the year. That wife Ushas was Aushasī (the daughter of the dawn).¹ Then those beings and that lord of beings, the year, impregnated Ushas, and a boy (*Kumāra*) was born in a year. The boy wept. Prajāpati said to him, 'Boy, why doest thou weep? since thou hast been born after toil and austerity.' The boy said, 'My sin, indeed, has not been taken away, and a name has not been given to me. Give me a name.' Wherefore when a son has been born (to any man) let a name be given to him; that takes away his sin; and (let) also a second and a third (name be given) in succession; that takes away his sin. Prajāpati said to him, 'thou art Rudra.' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Agni became his form, for Agni is Rudra. He was

¹ I am unable to explain how Ushas, the dawn, is here identified with her own offspring, Aushasī.

Rudra because he 'wept' (*arodīt*, from *rud*, 'to weep.') The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati replied, 'Thou art Sarva.'¹ Inasmuch as he gave him that name, the waters became his form, for the waters are Sarva (All), because all this is produced from the waters (see above, p. 38). The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati replied, 'Thou art Paśupati.' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, the plants became his form, for the plants are Paśupati. Hence, when the beasts obtain plants, they became lords (or strong?). The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati said to him, 'Thou art Ugra.' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Vāyu (the wind) became his form. Vāyu is Ugra (or, the 'fierce'); wherefore when it blows strongly, men say, 'Ugra blows.' The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati said to him, 'Thou art Aśani.' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Vidyut (Lightning) became his form. Lightning is Aśani. Hence they say that Aśani has struck a man whom lightning strikes. The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati said to him, 'Thou art Bhava.' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Parjanya (the god of rain) became his form. For Parjanya is Bhava (Being); because all this (universe) arises from Parjanya. The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati replied, 'Thou art the Great god (*Mahān devah*).' Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Chandramas (the Moon) became his form. Prajāpati is the Moon: Prajāpati is the 'Great god.' The boy said, 'I am greater than one who does not exist: give me a name.' Prajāpati replied, 'Thou art Īśāna (the ruler)'. Inasmuch as he gave him that name, Aditya (the Sun) became his form. For the Sun is Īśāna; because he rules over this universe. The boy said, 'I am so much: do not give me any further name.' These are the eight forms of Agni. Kumāra (the Boy) is the ninth. This is the threefoldness (*trivṛttā*) of Agni. Since there are, as it were, eight forms of Agni, the gāyatrī metre has eight syllables. Hence men say, 'Agni pertains to the Gāyatrī.' This boy (*kumāra*) entered into the forms. Men do not see Agni as a boy: it is these forms of his that they see; for he entered into these forms."

¹ The origin of this name may perhaps be found in Rig Veda x, 61, 19, where these words occur, "This is my centre, here is my abode, these are my gods, this is I Sarva (or All), &c."

The same legend is given in a somewhat different form in the Śāṅkhāyana or Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa, and an abstract of the passage has been furnished by Professor Weber in his *Indische Studien*, ii., 300 ff. The following translation has been made from a copy taken from the MS. in the Bodleian Library, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. Aufrecht:—

Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa, vi, 1.—“Prajāpati being desirous of progeny, performed austerity. From him, when he had performed austerity, five (children) were produced, Agni (fire), Vāyu (wind), Aditya (sun), Chandramas (moon), and Ushas (dawn) the fifth. He said to them, ‘Do ye also perform austerity.’ They consecrated themselves. Before them, when they had consecrated themselves, and had performed austerity, Ushas (dawn), the daughter of Prajāpati, assuming the form of a celestial nymph (*Apsaras*), arose. Their attention was riveted upon her.” As a result of this appearance of Ushas, “a being arose with a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, and a thousand arrows.¹ He came to his father, Prajāpati, who asked him, ‘Why dost thou come to me?’ He answered, ‘Give me a name: I shall not eat this food, so long as no name has been given to me.’ ‘Thou art Bhava,’ said Prajāpati, for Bhava is the waters. Therefore, Bhava does not slay this man, nor his offspring, nor his cattle, nor any (creature of his) who speaks. And further, whosoever hates him, is most wicked. Such is not the case with him who possesses this knowledge. His rule is, Let a man wear a garment.

“He (this newly formed being) came a second time to Prajāpati, who asked him, ‘Why dost thou come to me.’ ‘Give me,’ he replied, ‘a second name: I shall not eat this food with only one name.’ ‘Thou art Śarva,’ Prajāpati answered, for Śarva is Agni. Therefore Śarva does not slay him, nor his cattle, nor any (creature of his) who speaks. And further, whosoever hates him is most wicked. Such is not the case with him who possesses this knowledge. His rule is, Let not a man eat every sort of food.

“He came the third time to Prajāpati, who said to him, &c. ‘Thou art Paśupati,’ Prajāpati answered, for Paśupati is Vāyu (wind). Therefore Paśupati does not slay, &c. His rule is, let no one slander a Brahman.

¹ *Pratīhītābhīh*. This word (as I learn from the *Indische Studien*) is explained by the commentator, Vināyaka Bhaṭṭa, as equivalent to *pravṛtībhih* “energies.” Weber renders it by “arms.” Dr. Aufrecht informs me that the word has in the Rig Veda the sense of “arrows.”

“He came the fourth time to Prajāpati, who said to him, &c. ‘Thou art Ugra deva (the fierce god),’ Prajāpati answered, for Ugra deva is plants and trees. Therefore Ugra deva does not slay, &c. His rule is, Let not a man look upon the shame of a woman.

“He came the fifth time to Prajāpati, who said to him, &c. ‘Thou art Mahān deva (the great god),’ Prajāpati answered, for Mahān deva is Aditya (the sun). Therefore Mahān deva does not slay, &c. His rule is, Let no man look upon him (the sun) rising or setting.

“He came the sixth time to Prajāpati, who said to him, &c. ‘Thou art Rudra,’ Prajāpati answered, for Rudra is Chandramas (the moon). Therefore Rudra does not slay, &c. His rule is, Let no man eat anything decomposed (?) or any marrow.

“He came the seventh time to Prajāpati, who said to him, &c. ‘Thou art Isāna,’ Prajāpati replied, for Isāna is food. Therefore Isāna does not slay, &c. His rule is, Let no one reject him who desires food.

“He came the eighth time to Prajāpati, who said, &c. ‘Thou art Aśani,’ Prajāpati replied, for Aśani is Indra. Therefore Aśani does not slay, &c. His rule is, Let a man speak truth, and possess gold.

“This is the Mahān deva (great god) who has eight names and eight forms. The progeny to the eighth generation of the man who possesses this knowledge, eats food, and ever wealthier men will be born among his descendants.”
