

Strabo. Geography: Book XV: On India (first century)

11. India is bounded on the north. from Ariana to the eastern sea, by the extremities of the Taurus, which by the natives are severally called 'Paropamisus' and 'Emodus' and 'Imaus' and other names, but by the Macedonians 'Caucasus'; on the west by the Indus River; but the southern and eastern sides, which are much greater than the other two, extend out into the Atlantic sea, and thus the shape of the country becomes rhomboidal, each of the greater sides exceeding the opposite side by as much as three thousand stadia, which is the same number of stadia by which the cape common to the eastern and southern coast extends equally farther out in either direction than the rest of the shore. Now the length of the western side from the Caucasian Mountains to the southern sea is generally called thirteen thousand stadia, I mean along the Indus River to its outlets, so that the opposite side, the eastern, if one adds the thousand of the cape, will be sixteen thousand stadia. These, then, are the minimum and maximum breadths of the country. The lengths are reckoned from the west to the east; and, of these, that to Palibothra can be told with more confidence, for it has been measured with measuring lines, and there is a royal road of ten thousand stadia. The extent of the parts beyond Palibothra is a matter of guess, depending upon the voyages made from the sea on the Ganges to Palibothra; and this would be something like six thousand stadia. The entire length of the country, at its minimum, will be sixteen thousand stadia, as taken from the Register of Days' Journeys that is most commonly accepted, according to Eratosthenes; and, in agreement with him, Megasthenes states the same thing, though Patrocles says a thousand stadia less. If to this distance, however, one adds the distance that the cape extends out into the sea still farther towards the east, the extra three thousand stadia will form the maximum length and this constitutes the distance from the outlets of the Indus River along the shore that comes next in order thereafter, to the aforesaid cape, that is, to the eastern limits of India. Here live the Coniaci, as they are called.

12. From this one can see how much the accounts of the other writers differ. Ctesias says that India is not smaller than the rest of Asia; Onesicritus that it is a third part of the inhabited world: Nearchus, that the march merely through the plain itself takes four months; but Megasthenes and Deimachus are more moderate in their estimates, for they put the distance from the southern sea to the Caucasus at above twenty thousand stadia, although Deimachus says that 'at some places the distance is above thirty thousand stadia' but I have replied to these writers in my first discussion of India. At present it is sufficient to say that this statement of mine agrees with that of those writers who ask our pardon if, in anything they say about India, they do not speak with assurances.

13. The whole of India is traversed by rivers. Some of these flow together into the two largest rivers, the Indus and the Ganges, whereas others empty into the sea by their own mouths. They have their sources, one and all, in the Caucasus; and they all flow first towards the south, and then, though some of them continue to flow in the same direction, in particular those which flow into the Indus, others bend towards the east, as, for example, the Ganges. Now the Ganges, which is the largest of the rivers in India, flows down from the mountainous country, and when it reaches the plains bends towards the east and flows past Palibothra, a very large city, and then flows on towards the sea in that

region and empties by a single outlet. But the Indus empties by two mouths into the southern sea, encompassing the country called Patalene, which is similar to the Delta of Egypt. It is due to the vapours arising from all these rivers and to the Etesian winds, as Eratosthenes says, that India is watered by the summer rains and that the plains become marshes. Now in the rainy seasons flax is sown, and also millet, and, in addition to these, sesame and rice and bosmorum, and in the winter seasons wheat and barley and pulse and other edibles with which we are unacquainted. I might almost say that the same animals are to be found in India as in Aethiopia and Egypt, and that the Indian rivers have all the other river animals except the hippopotamus, although Onesicritus says that the hippopotamus is also to be found in India. As for the people of India, those in the south are like the Aethiopians in colour, although they are like the rest in respect to countenance and hair (for on account of the humidity of the air their hair does not curl), whereas those in the north are like the Egyptians.

14 As for Taprobane, it is said to be an island situated in the high sea within a seven days sail towards the south from the most southerly parts of India, the land of the Coniaci; that it extends in length about eight thousand stadia in the direction of Aethiopia, and that it also has elephants. Such are the statements of Eratosthenes; but my own description will be specially characterised by the addition of the statements of the other writers, wherever they add any accurate information.

15. Onesicritus, for example, says of Taprobane that it is 'five thousand stadia in size,' without distinguishing its length or breadth; and that it is a twenty days' voyage distant from the mainland, but that it is a difficult voyage for ships furnished with sails and are constructed without belly-ribs on both sides; and that there are also other islands between Taprobane and India, though Taprobane is farthest south; and that amphibious monsters are to be found round it, some of which are like kine, others like horses, and others like other land-animals.

16. Nearchus, speaking of the alluvia deposited by the rivers, gives the following examples: that the Plain of the Hermus River, and that of the Cayster, as also those of the Maeander and the Caicus, are so named because they are increased, or rather created, by the silt that is carried down from the mountains over the plains—that is all the silt that is fertile and soft; and that it is carried down by the rivers, so that the plains are, in fact, the offspring, as it were, of these rivers; and that it is well said that they belong to these. This is the same as the statement made by Herodotus in regard to the Nile and the land that borders thereon, that the land is the gift of the Nile; and for this reason Nearchus rightly says that the Nile was also called by the same name as the land Egyptus.

17. Aristobulus says that only the mountains and their foothills have both rain and snow, but that the plains are free alike from rain and snow, and are inundated only when the rivers rise; that the mountains have snow in the winter-time, and at the beginning of spring-time the rains also set in and ever increase more and more, and at the time of the Etesian winds the rains pour unceasingly and violently from the clouds, both day and night, until the rising of Arcturus; and that, therefore, the rivers, thus filled from both the snows and the rains, water the plains. He says that both he himself and the others noted this when they had set out for India from Paropamisadae, after the setting of the Pleiades, and when they spent the winter near the mountainous country in the land of the Hypasians and of Assacanus, and that at the beginning of spring they went down into the plains and to Taxila, a large city, and thence to the Hydaspes River and the country of

Porus; that in winter. However, no water was to be seen, but only snow: and that it first rained at Taxila; and that when, after they had gone down to the Hydaspes River and had conquered Porus, their journey led to the Hypanis River towards the east and thence back again to the Hydaspes, it rained continually, and especially at the time of the Etesian winds; but that when Arcturus rose, the rain ceased: and that after tarrying while their ships were being built on the Hydaspes River, and after beginning their voyage thence only a few days before the setting of the Pleiades, and, after occupying themselves all autumn and winter and the coming spring and summer with their voyage down to the seacoast, they arrived at Patalene at about the time of the rising of the Dog Star; that the voyage down to the seacoast therefore took ten months, and that they saw rains nowhere, not even when the Etesian winds were at their height, and that the plains were flooded when the rivers were filled, and the sea was not navigable when the winds were blowing in the opposite direction, and that no land breezes succeeded them.

18. Now this is precisely what Nearchus says too, but he does not agree with Aristobulus about the summer rains, saying that the plains have rains in summer but are without rains in winter. Both writers, however, speak also of the risings of the rivers. Nearchus says that when they were camping near the Acesines River they were forced at the time of the rising to change to a favourable place higher up, and that this took place at the time of the summer solstice; whereas Aristobulus gives also the measure of the height to which the river rises, forty cubits, of which cubits twenty are filled by the stream above its previous depth to the margin and the other twenty are the measure of the overflow in the plains. They agree also that the cities situated on the top of mounds become islands, as is the case also in Egypt and Aethiopia, and that the overflows cease after the rising of Arcturus, when the waters recede; and they add that although the soil is sown when only half-dried, after being furrowed by any sort of digging-instrument, yet the plant comes to maturity and yields excellent fruit. The rice, according to Aristobulus, stands in later enclosures and is sown in beds and the plant is four cubits in height, not only having many ears but also yielding much grain; and the harvest is about the time of the setting of the Pleiades, and the grain is winnowed like barley; and rice grows also in Bactriana, and Babylonia and Susis, as also in Lower Syria. Megillus says that rice is sown before the rains, but requires irrigation and transplantings being watered from tanks. Bosmorum, according to Onesicritus, is a smaller grain than wheat; and it grows in lands situated between rivers. It is roasted when it is threshed out, since the people take an oath beforehand that they will not carry it away unroasted from the threshing floor, to prevent the exportation of seed.

19. Aristobulus, comparing the characteristics of this country that are similar to those of both Egypt and Aethiopia. and again those that are opposite thereto, I mean the fact that the Nile is flooded from the southern rains, whereas the Indian rivers are flooded from the northern, inquires why the intermediate regions have no rainfall for neither the Thebais as far as Syene and the region of Meroe nor the region of India from Patalene as far as the Hydaspes has any rain. But the country above these parts, in which both rain and snow fall, are cultivated, he says, in the same way as in the rest of the country that is outside India; for, he adds, it is watered by the rains and snows. And it is reasonable to suppose from his statements that the land is also quite subject to earthquakes, since it is made porous by reason of its great humidity and is subject to such fissures that even the beds of rivers are changed. At any rate, he says that when he was sent upon a certain mission he

saw a country of more than a thousand cities, together with villages, that had been deserted because the Indus had abandoned its proper bed, and had turned aside into the other bed on the left that was much deeper, and flowed with precipitous descent like a cataract, so that the Indus no longer watered by its overflows the abandoned country on the right, since that country was now above the level, not only of the new stream, but also of its overflows.

20. The flooding of the rivers and the absence of land breezes is confirmed also by the statement of Onesicritus; for he says that the seashore is covered with shoal-water, and particularly at the mouths of the rivers, on account of the silt, the flood-tides, and the prevalence of the winds from the high seas. Megasthenes indicates the fertility of India by saying that it produces fruit and grain twice a year. And so says Eratosthenes, who speaks of the winter sowing and the summer sowing, and likewise of rain; for he says that he finds that no year is without rain in both seasons; so that from this fact, the country has good seasons, never failing to produce crops; and that the trees there produce fruits in abundance, and the roots of plants, in particular those of large reeds, which are sweet both by nature and by heating, since the water from the sky as well as that of the rivers is warmed by the rays of the sun. In a sense, therefore, Eratosthenes means to say that what among other peoples is called 'the ripening,' whether of fruits or of juices, is called among those people a 'heating.' and that ripening is as effective in producing a good flavour as heating by fire. For this reason also, he adds, the branches of the trees from which the wheels of carriages are made are flexible; and for the same reason even wool blossoms on some. From this wool, Nearchus says, finely threaded cloths are woven, and the Macedonians use them for pillows and as padding for their saddles. The Serica also are of this kind, Byssus being dried out of certain barks. He states also concerning the reeds, that they produce honey, although there are no bees, and in fact that there is a fruit-bearing tree from the fruit of which honey is compounded, but that those who eat the fruit raw become intoxicated. In truth, India produces numerous strange trees, among which is the one whose branches bend downwards and whose leaves are no smaller than a shield. Onesicritus, who even in rather superfluous detail describes the country of Musicanus, which, he says, is the most southerly part of India, relates that it has some trees whose branches have first grown to the height of twelve cubits and then after such growth, have grown downwards, as though bent down, till they have touched the earth; and that they then, thus distributed, have taken root underground like layers, and then, growing forth, have formed trunks and that the branches of these trunks again, likewise bent down in their growth have formed another layer, and then another, and so on successively, so that from only one tree there is formed a vast sunshade, like a tent with many supporting columns. He says also of the size of the trees that their trunks could hardly be embraced by five men. Aristobulus also, where he mentions the Acesines and its confluence with the Hyarotis, speaks of the trees that have their branches bent downwards and of such size that fifty horsemen according to Onesicritus, four hundred can pass the noon in shade under one tree. Aristobulus mentions also another tree, not large, with pods, like the bean, ten fingers in length, full of honey, and says that those who eat it cannot easily be saved from death. But the accounts of all writers of the size of the trees have been surpassed by those who say that there has been seen beyond the Hyarotis a tree which nothing casts a shade at noon of five stadia. And as for the wool-bearing trees, Aristobulus says that the flower contains a seed, and that when this is removed the rest is

combed like wool.

21. Aristobulus speaks also of a self-grown grain, similar to wheat, in the country of Musicanus, and of a vine from which wine is produced, although the other writers say that India has no vine; and therefore, according to Anacharsis, it also has no flutes, or any other musical instruments except cymbals and drums and castanets, which are possessed by the jugglers. Both he and other writers speak of this country as abounding in herbs and roots both curative and poisonous, and likewise in plants of many colours. And Aristobulus adds that they have a law whereby any person who discovers anything deadly is put to death unless he also discovers a cure for it, but if that person discovers a cure he receives a reward from the king. And he says that the southern land of India, like Arabia and Aethiopia, bears cinnamon, nard, and other aromatic products, being similar to those countries in the effect of the rays of sun, although it surpasses them in the copiousness of its waters; and that therefore its air is humid and proportionately more nourishing and more productive; and that this applies both to the land and to the water, and therefore, of course, both land and water animals in India are found to be larger than those in other countries; but that the Nile is more productive than other rivers, and produces huge creatures, among others the amphibious kind: and that the Egyptian women sometimes actually bear four children. Aristotle reports that one woman actually bore seven; and he, too, calls the Nile highly productive and nourishing because of the moderate heat of the sun's rays, which, he says, leave the nourishing element and evaporate merely the superfluous.

22. It is probably from the same cause, as Aristotle says, that this too takes place—I mean that the water of the Nile boils with one-half the heat required by any other. But in proportion, he says, as the water of the Nile traverses in a straight course a long and narrow tract of country and passes across many climata and through many atmospheres, whereas the streams of India spread into greater and wider plains, lingering for a long time in the same climata, in the same proportion those of India are more nourishing than those of the Nile; and on this account their river animals are also larger and more numerous; and further, he says, the water is already heated when it pours from the clouds.

23. To this statement Aristobulus and his followers, who assert that the plains are not watered by rain, would not agree. But Onesicritus believes that rain-water is the cause of the distinctive differences in the animals; and he adduces as evidence that the colour of foreign cattle which drink it is changed to that of the native animals. Now in this he is correct; but no longer so when he lays the black complexion and woolly hair of the Aethiopians on merely the waters and censures Theodectes, who refers the cause to the sun itself, saving as follows: 'Nearing the borders of these people the Sun, driving his chariot, discoloured the bodies of men with a murky dark bloom, and curled their hair, fusing it by unincreasable forms of fire. But Onesicritus might have some argument on his side; for he says that, in the first place, the sun is no nearer to the Aethiopians than to any other people, but is more nearly in a perpendicular line with reference to them and on this account scorches more, and therefore it is incorrect to say 'nearing the borders the sun' since the sun is equidistant from all peoples; and that, secondly, the heat is not the cause of such a discoloration, for it does not apply to infants in the womb either, since the rays of the sun do not touch them, But better is the opinion of those who lay the cause to the sun and its scorching, which causes a very great deficiency of moisture on the surface of the skin. And I assert that it is in accordance with this fact that the Indians do not have

woolly hair, and also that their skin is not so unmercifully scorched, I mean the fact that they share in any atmosphere that is humid. And already in the womb children, by seminal impartation, become like their parents in colour; for congenital affections and other similarities are also thus explained. Further, the statement that the sun is equidistant from all peoples is made in accordance with observation, not reason; and, in accordance with observations that are not casual, but in accordance with the observation, as I put it, that the earth is no larger than a point as compared with the sun's globe since in accordance with the kind of observation whereby we feel differences in heat—more heat when the heat is near us and less when it is far away—the sun is not equidistant from all: and it is in this sense that the sun is spoken of as 'nearing the borders' of the Aethiopians, not in the sense Onesicritus thinks.

25. The following too is one of the things agreed upon by all who maintain the resemblance of India to Egypt and Aethiopia: that all plains which are not inundated are unproductive for want of water. Nearchus says that the question formerly raised in reference to the Nile as to the source of its floodings is answered by the Indian rivers because it is the result of the summer rains; but that when Alexander saw crocodiles in the Hydaspes and Egyptian beans in the Acesines, he thought he had found the sources of the Nile and thought of preparing a fleet for an expedition to Egypt, thinking that he would sail as far as there by this river, but he learned a little later that he could not accomplish what he had hoped; for between are great rivers and dreadful streams, Oceanus first, into which all the Indian rivers empty; and then intervene Ariana, and the Persian and the Arabian Gulfs and Arabia itself and the Trogodyte country. Such, then, are the accounts we have of the winds and the rains, and of the flooding of the rivers, and of the inundation of the plains.

26. But I must tell also the several details concerning the rivers, so far as they are useful for the purposes of geography and so far as I have learned their history. For the rivers in particular, being a kind of natural boundary for both the size and the shape of countries, are very convenient for the purposes of the whole of our present subject; but the Nile and the Indian rivers offer a certain advantage as compared with the rest because of the fact that apart from them the countries are uninhabitable, being at the same time navigable and tillable, and that they can neither be travelled over otherwise nor inhabited at all. Now as for the rivers worthy of mention that flow down into the Indus, I shall tell their history, as also that of the countries traversed by them; but as for the rest there is more ignorance than knowledge. For Alexander, who more than any other uncovered these regions, at the outset, when those who had treacherously slain Dareius set out to cause the revolt of Bactriana, resolved that it would be most desirable to pursue and overthrow them. He therefore approached India through Ariana, and, leaving India on the right, crossed over Mt. Paropamisus to the northerly parts and Bactriana; and, having subdued everything there that was subject to the Persians and still more, he then forthwith reached out for India too, since many men had been describing it to him, though not clearly. Accordingly he returned, passing over the same mountains by other and shorter roads, keeping India on the left, and then turned immediately towards India and its western boundaries and the Cophes River and the Choaspes, which latter empties into the Cophes River near a city Plemyrion, after flowing past Gorys, another city, and flowing forth through both Bandobene and Gandaritis. He learned by inquiry that the mountainous and northerly part was the most habitable and fruitful, but that the southerly part was partly

without water and partly washed by rivers and utterly hot, more suitable for wild beasts than for human beings. Accordingly, he set out to acquire first the part that was commended to him, at the same time considering that the rivers which it was necessary to cross, since they flow transversely and cut through the country which he meant to traverse, could more easily be crossed near their sources. At the same time he also heard that several rivers flowed together into one stream, and that this was always still more the case the farther forward they advanced, so that the country was more difficult to cross, especially in the event of lack of boats. Afraid of this, therefore, he crossed the Cophes and began to subdue all the mountainous country that faced towards the east.

27. After the Cophes he went to the Indus, then to the Hydaspes, then to the Acesines and the Hyarotis and last to the Hypanis; for he was prevented from advancing farther, partly through observance of certain oracles and partly because he was forced by his army, which had already been worn out by its labours, though they suffered most of all from the waters, being continually drenched with rain. Of the eastern parts of India, then, there have become known to us all those parts which lie this side the Hypanis, and also any parts beyond the Hypanis of which an account has been added by those who, after Alexander, advanced beyond the Hypanis, as far as the Ganges and Pallibothra. Now after the Cophes follows the Indus; and the region between these rivers is occupied by Assacani, Massiani, Nysaei, and Hypasii; and then one comes to the country of Assacanus, where is a city Mesoga, the royal seat of the country; and now near the Indus again, one comes to another city, Peucolaitis, near which a bridge that had already been built afforded a passage for the army.

28. Between the Indus and the Hydaspes lies Taxila, a city which is large and has most excellent laws; and the country that lies round it is spacious and very fertile, immediately bordering also on the plains. Both the inhabitants and their king, Taxiles, received Alexander in a kindly way; and they obtained from Alexander more gifts than they themselves presented, so that the Macedonians were envious and said that Alexander did not have anyone, as it seemed, on whom to bestow his benefactions until he crossed the Indus. Some say that this country is larger than Egypt. Above this country in the mountains lies the country of Abisarus, who, according to the ambassadors that came from him, kept two serpents, one eighty cubits in length and the another one hundred and forty, according to Onesicritus, who cannot so properly be called arch-pilot of Alexander as of things that are incredible; for though all the followers of Alexander preferred to accept the marvellous rather than the true. Onesicritus seems to surpass all those followers of his in the telling of prodigies. However, he tells some things that are both plausible and worthy of mention and therefore they are not passed by in silence even by one who disbelieves them. At any rate, others too speak of the serpents, saying that they are caught in the Emodi mountains and kept in caves.

29. Between the Hydaspes and the Acesines is, first, the country of Porus, extensive and fertile, containing about three hundred cities: and, secondly, the forest near the Emodi mountains, from which Alexander cut, and brought down on the Hydaspes, a large quantity of fir, pine, cedar, and other of all kinds fit for shipbuilding, from which he built a fleet on the Hydaspes near the cities founded by him on either side of the river where he crossed and conquered Porus. Of these cities, he named one Bucephalia, after Bucephalas, the horse which fell during the battle with Porus (the horse was called Bucephalas from the width of his forehead; he was an excellent war-horse and was

always used by Alexander in his fights); and he called the other Nicaea, after his victory. In the forest above-mentioned both the number and the size of the long-tailed apes are alike described as so extraordinary that once the Macedonians, seeing many of these standing as in front-line array on some bare hills (for this animal is very human-like in mentality, no less so than the elephant), got the impression that they were an army of men; and they actually set out to attack them as human enemies, but on learning the truth from Taxiles, who was then with the king, desisted. The capture of the animal is effected in two ways. It is an imitative animal and takes to flight up in the trees. Now the hunters, when they see an ape seated on a tree, place in sight a bowl containing water and rub their own eyes with it: and then they put down a bowl of bird-lime instead of the water, go away, and lie in wait at a distance; and when the animal leaps down and besmears itself with the bird-lime, and when, upon winking, its eyelids are shut together, the hunters approach and take it alive. Now this is one way, but there is another. They put on baggy breeches like trousers and then go away, leaving behind them others that so are shaggy and smeared inside with bird-lime; and when the animals put these on, they are easily captured.

30. Some put both Cathaea and the country of Sopeithes, one of the provincial chiefs, between these two rivers, but others on the far side of the Acesines and the Hyarotis, as bordering on the country of the second Porus, who was a cousin of the Porus captured by Alexander, The country that was subject to him is called Gandaris. As for Cathaea, a most novel regard for beauty there is reported; I mean that it is prized in an exceptional manner, as, for example, for the beauty of its horses and dogs; and, in fact, Onesicritus says that they choose the handsomest person as king, and that a child is judged in public after it is two months old as to whether it has the beauty of form required by law and is worthy to live or not; and that when it is judged by the appointed magistrate it is allowed to live or is put to death; and that the men dye their beards with many most florid colours for the sole reason that they wish to beautify themselves; and that this practice is carefully followed by numerous other Indian peoples also (for the country produces marvellous colours, he says), who dye both their hair and their garments; and that the people, though shabby in every other way, are fond of adornment. The following too is reported as a custom peculiar to the Cathaeans: the groom and bride choose one another themselves, and wives are burned up with their deceased husbands for a reason of this kind that they sometimes fell in love with young men and deserted their husbands or poisoned them; and therefore the Cathaeans established this as a law, thinking that they would put a stop to the poisoning. However, the law is not stated in a plausible manner, nor the cause of it either. It is said that in the country of Sopeithes there is a mountain of mineral salt sufficient for the whole of India. And gold and silver mines are reported in other mountains not far away, excellent mines, as has been plainly shown by Gorgus the mining expert. But since the Indians are inexperienced in mining and smelting, they also do not know what their resources are, and handle the business in a rather simple manner.

31. Writers narrate also the excellent qualities of the dogs in the country of Sopeithes. They say, at any rate, that Alexander received one hundred and fifty dogs from Sopeithes; and that, to prove them, two were let loose to attack a lion, and, when they were being overpowered, two others were let loose upon him, and that then, the match having now become equal, Sopeithes bade someone to take one of the dogs by the leg and pull him away, and if the dog did not yield to cut off his leg; and that Alexander would not consent

to cutting off the dog's leg at first, wishing to spare the dog, but consented when Sopeithes said that he would give him four instead; and that the dog suffered the cutting off of his leg by slow amputation before he let go his grip.

33. Now the country between the Hypanis and the Hydaspes is said to contain nine tribes, and also cities to the number of five thousand-cities no smaller than Cos Meropis, though the number stated seems to be excessive. And as for the country between the Indus and the Hydaspes, I have stated approximately the peoples worthy of mention by which it is inhabited; and below them, next in order, are the people called Sibae, whom I have mentioned before, and the Malli and the Sydracae, large tribes. It was in the country of the Malli that Alexander was in peril of death, being wounded in the capture of some small city; and as for the Sydracae, I have already spoken of them as mythically akin to Dionysus. Near Patalene, they say, one comes at once to the country of Musicanus, and to that of Sabus, where is Sindomana, and also to the country of Porticanus and others, who, one and all, were conquered by Alexander these peoples dwelling along the river-lands of the Indus; but last of all to Patalene, a country formed by the Indus, which branches into two mouths. Now Aristobulus says that these mouths are one thousand stadia distant from one another, but Nearchus adds eight hundred; and Onesicritus reckons each of the two sides of the included island, which is triangular in shape, at two thousand, and the width of the river, where it branches into the mouths, at about two hundred; and he calls the island Delta, and says that it is equal in size to the Egyptian Delta, a statement which is not true. For it is said that the Egyptian Delta has a base of one thousand three hundred stadia, though each of the two sides is shorter than the base. In Patalene there is a noteworthy city, Patala, after which the island is named.

34. Onesicritus says that most of the seaboard in this part of the world abounds in shoals, particularly at the mouths of the rivers, on account of the silt and the overflows and also of the fact that no breezes blow from the land, and that this region is subject for the most part to winds that blow from the high sea. He describes also the country of Musicanus, lauding it rather at length for things of which some are reported as common also to other Indians, as, for example, their length of life, thirty years beyond one hundred (and indeed some say that the Seres live still longer than this), and their healthfulness, and simple diet, even though their country has an abundance of everything. Peculiar to them is the fact that they have a kind of Laconian common mess where they eat in public and use as food the meat of animals taken in the chase; and that they do not use gold or silver, although they have mines; and that instead of slaves they use young men in the vigour of life, as the Cretans use the Aphamiotae and the Laconians the Helots: and that they make no accurate study of the sciences except that of medicine, for they regard too much training in some of them as wickedness for example, military science and the like; and that they have no process at law except for murder and outrage, for it is not in one's power to avoid suffering these, whereas the content of contracts is in the power of each man himself, so that he is required to endure it if anyone breaks faith with him, and also to consider carefully who should be trusted and not to fill the city with lawsuits. This is the account of those who made the expedition with Alexander.

35. But there has also been published a letter of Craterus to his mother Aristopatra, which alleges many other strange things and agrees with no one else, particularly in saying that Alexander advanced as far as the Ganges. And he says that he himself saw the river and

monsters on its banks, and a magnitude both of width and of depth which is remote from credibility rather than near it. Indeed, it is sufficiently agreed that the Ganges is the largest of known rivers on the three continents, and after it the Indus, and third and fourth the Ister and the Nile; but the several details concerning it are stated differently by different writers, some putting its minimum breadth at thirty stadia and others even at three, whereas Megasthenes says that when its breadth is medium it widens even to one hundred stadia and that its least depth is twenty fathoms. It is said that Palibothra lies at the confluence of the Ganges and the other river, a city eighty stadia in length and fifteen in breadth, in the shape of a parallelogram, and surrounded by a wooden wall that is perforated so that arrows can be shot through the holes; and that in front of the wall lies a trench used both for defence and as a receptacle of the sewage that flows from the city: and that the tribe of people amongst whom this city is situated is called the Prasii and is far superior to all the rest; and that the reigning king must be surnamed after the city, being called Palibothrus in addition to his own family name, as, for example, King Sandrocottus to whom Megasthenes was sent on an embassy. Such is also the custom among the Parthians for all are called Arsaces, although personally one king is called Orodes, another Phraates, and another something else.

37. Writers are agreed that the country as a whole on the far side of the Hypanis best; but they do not describe it accurately, and because of their ignorance and of its remoteness magnify all things or make them more marvellous. For example, the stories of the ants that mine gold and of other creatures, both beasts and human beings, which are of peculiar form and in respect to certain natural powers have undergone complete changes, as, for example, the Seres, who, they say, are long-lived, and prolong their lives even beyond two hundred years. They tell also of a kind of aristocratic order of government that was composed outright of five thousand counsellors, each of whom furnishes the new commonwealth with an elephant. Megasthenes says that the largest tigers are found among the Prasii. even nearly twice as large as lions, and so powerful that a tame one, though being led by four men, seized a mule by the hind leg and by force drew the mule to itself; and that the long-tailed apes are larger than the largest dogs, are white except their faces, which are black (the contrary is the case elsewhere), that their tails are more than two cubits long, and that they are very tame and not malicious as regards attacks and thefts; and that stones are dug up of the colour of frankincense and sweeter than figs or honey and that in other places there are reptiles two cubits long with membranous wings like bats, and that they too fly by night, discharging drops of urine, or also of sweat, which putrefy the skin of anyone who is not on his guard; and that there are winged scorpions of surpassing size; and that ebony is also produced; and that there are also brave dogs, which do not let go the object bitten till water is poured down into their nostrils; but larger than a fox and that some bite so vehemently that their eyes become distorted and sometimes actually fall out; and that even a lion was held fast by a dog, and also a bull, and that the bull was actually killed, being overpowered through the dog's hold on his nose before he could be released.

39. He says, then, that the population of India is divided into seven castes: the one first in honour, but the fewest in number, consists of the philosophers: and these philosophers are used, each individually, by people making sacrifice to the gods or making offerings to the dead, but jointly by the kings at the Great Synod, as it is called, at which, at the beginning

of the new year, the philosophers, one and all, come together at the gates of the king; and whatever each man has drawn up in writing or observed as useful with reference to the prosperity of either fruits or living beings or concerning the government, he brings forward in public; and he who is thrice found false is required by law to keep silence for life, whereas he who has proved correct is adjudged exempt from tribute and taxes.

40. The second caste, he says, is that of the farmers, who are not only the most numerous, but also the most highly respected, because of their exemption from military service and right of freedom in their farming; and they do not approach a city, either because of a public disturbance or on any other business; at any rate, he says, it often happens that at the same time and place some are in battle array and are in peril of their lives against the enemy, while the farmers are ploughing or digging without peril, the latter having the former as defenders. The whole of the country is of royal ownership; and the farmers cultivate it for a rental in addition to paying a fourth part of the produce.

41. The third caste is that of the shepherds and hunters, who alone are permitted to hunt, to breed cattle, and to sell or hire out beasts of burden; and in return for freeing the land from wild beasts and seed-picking birds, they receive proportionate allowances of grain from the king, leading, as they do, a wandering and tent-dwelling life. No private person is permitted to keep a horse or elephant. The possession of either is a royal privilege, and there are men to take care of them.

46. After the hunters and the shepherds, he says, follows the fourth caste—the artisans, the tradesmen, and the day-labourers; and of these, some pay tribute to the state and render services prescribe by the state, whereas the armour-makers and shipbuilders receive wastes and provisions at a published scale, from the king for these work for him alone; and arms are furnished the soldiers by the commander-in-chief, whereas the ships are let out for hire to sailors and merchants by the admiral.

47. The fifth caste is that of the warriors, who, when they are not in service, spend their lives in idleness and at drinking-bouts, being maintained at the expense of the royal treasury; so that they make their expeditions quickly when need arises. since they bring nothing else of their own but their bodies.

48. The sixth is that of the inspectors to whom it is given to inspect what is being done and report secretly to the king, using the courtesans as colleagues, the city inspectors using the city courtesans and the camp inspectors the camp courtesans; but the best and most trustworthy men are appointed to this office.

49. The seventh is that of the advisers and councillors of the king, who hold the chief offices of state, the judgements, and the administration of everything. It is not legal for a man either to marry a wife from another caste or to change one's pursuit or work from one to another; nor yet for the same man to engage in several, except in case he should be one of the philosophers, for, Megasthenes says, the philosopher is permitted to do so on account of his superiority.

50. Of the officials, some are market commissioners, others are city commissioners and others are in charge of the soldiers. Among these, the first keep the rivers improved and the land remeasured, as in Egypt, and inspect the closed canals from which the water is distributed into the conduits, in order that all may have an equal use of it. The same men also have charge of the hunters and are authorized to reward or punish those who deserve either. They also collect the taxes and superintend the crafts connected with the land—those of wood-cutters, carpenters, workers in brass, and miners. And they make roads,

and at every ten stadia place pillars showing the by-roads and the distances.

51. The city commissioners are divided into six groups of five each. One group looks after the arts of the handicraftsman. Another group entertains strangers, for they assign them lodgings, follow closely their behaviour, giving them attendants and either escort them forth or forward the property of those who die; and they take care of them when they are sick and bury them when they die. The third group is that of those who scrutinize births and deaths, when and how they take place, both for the sake of taxes and in order that births and deaths, whether better or worse, may not be unknown. The fourth group is that which has to do with sales and barter; and these look after measures and the fruits of the season, that the latter may be sold by stamp. But the same mail cannot barter more than one thing without paying double taxes. The fifth group is that of those who have charge of the works made by artisans and sell these by stamp, the new apart from the old; and the man who mixes them is fined. The sixth and last group is that of those who collect a tenth part of the price of the things sold; and death is the penalty for the man who steals. These are the special duties performed by each group, but they all take care jointly of matters both private and public, and of the repairs of public works, of prices, market harbours, and temples.

52. After the city commissioners there is a third joint administration, in charge of military affairs, which is also divided into six groups of five each. Of these groups one is stationed with the admiral; another with the man in charge of the ox-teams, by which are transported instruments of war and food for both man and beast and all other requisites of the army. These also furnish the menials, I mean drum-beaters, gong-carriers, as also grooms and machinists and their assistants; and they send forth the foragers to the sound of bells, and effect speed and safety by means of reward and punishment. The third group consists of those in charge of the infantry; the fourth, of those in charge of the horses; the fifth, of those in charge of the chariots; and the sixth, of those in charge of the elephants. The stalls for both horses and beasts are royal, and the armoury is also royal; for the soldier returns the equipment to the armoury, the horse to the royal horse-stable, and likewise the beast; and they use them without bridles. The chariots are drawn on the march by oxen; but the horses are led by halter, in order that their legs may not be chafed by harness, and also that the spirit they have when drawing chariots may not be dulled. There are two combatants in each chariot in addition to the charioteer; but the elephant carries four persons, the driver and three bowmen, and these three shoot arrows from the elephant's back.

53. All Indians live a simple life, and especially when they are on expeditions; and neither do they enjoy useless disturbances; and on this account they behave in an orderly manner. But their greatest self-restraint pertains to theft; at any rate, Megasthenes says that when he was in the camp of Sandrocottus, although the number in camp was forty thousand, he on no day saw reports of stolen articles that were worth more than two hundred drachmae; and that too among a people who use unwritten laws only. For, he continues, they have no knowledge of written letters, and regulate every single thing from memory, but still they fare happily, because of their simplicity and their frugality; and indeed they do not drink wine, except at sacrifices, but drink a beverage which they make from rice instead of barley; and also that their food consists for the most part of rice porridge; and their simplicity is also proven in their laws and contracts, which arises from the fact that they are not litigious; for they do not have lawsuits over either pledges or

deposits, or have need of witnesses or seals, but trust persons with whom they stake their interests; and further, they generally leave unguarded what they have at their homes. Now these things tend to sobriety; but no man could approve those other habits of theirs of always eating alone and of not having one common hour for all for dinner and breakfast instead of eating as each one likes; for eating in the other way is more conducive to a social and civic life.

54. For exercise they approve most of all of rubbing; and, among other ways, they smooth out their bodies through means of smooth sticks of ebony. Their funerals are simple and their mounds small. But, contrary to their simplicity in general, they like to adorn themselves; for they wear apparel embroidered with gold, and use ornaments set with precious stones, and wear gay-coloured linen garments, and are accompanied with sun-shades; for, since they esteem beauty, they practise everything that can beautify their appearance. Further, they respect alike virtue and truth; and therefore they give no precedence even to the age of old men, unless these are also superior in wisdom. They marry many wives, whom they purchase from their parents, and they get them in exchange for a yoke of oxen, marrying some of them for the sake of prompt obedience and the others for the sake of pleasure and numerous offspring; but if the husband does not force them to be chaste, they are permitted to prostitute themselves. No one wears a garland when he makes sacrifice or burns incense or pours out a libation; neither do they cut the throat of the victim, but strangle it, in order that it may be given to the god in its entirety and not mutilated. Anyone caught guilty of false-witness has his hands and feet cut off, and anyone who maims a person not only suffers in return the same thing, but also has his hands cut off; and if he causes the loss of a hand or an eye of a craftsman, he is put to death. But although Megasthenes says that no Indian uses slaves, Onesicritus declares that slavery is peculiar to the Indians in the country of Musicanus, and tells what a success it is there, just as he mentions many other successes of this country, speaking of it as a country excellently governed.

55. Now the care of the king's person is committed to women, who also are purchased from their fathers; and the bodyguards and the rest of the military force are stationed outside the gates. And a woman who kills a king when he is drunk receives as her reward the privilege of consorting with his successor; and their children succeed to the throne. Again, the king does not sleep in daytime; and even at night he is forced to change his bed from time to time because of the plots against him. Among the non-military departures he makes from his palace, one is that to the courts, where he spends the whole day hearing cases to the end, none the less even if the hour comes for the care of his person. This care of his person consists of his being rubbed with sticks of wood, for while he is hearing the cases through, he is also rubbed by four men who stand around him and rub him. A second departure is that to the sacrifices. A third is that to a kind of Bacchic chase wherein he is surrounded by women, and, outside them, by the spear-bearers. The road is lined with ropes; and death is the penalty for anyone who passes inside the ropes to the women; and they are preceded by drum-beaters and gong-carriers. The king hunts in the fenced enclosures, shooting arrows from a platform in his chariot (two or three armed women stand beside him), and also in the unfenced hunting grounds, from an elephant; and the women ride partly in chariots, partly on horses, and partly on elephants, and they are equipped with all kinds of weapons, as they are when they go on military expeditions with the men.

58. Speaking of the philosophers, Megasthenes says that those who inhabit the mountains hymn the praises of Dionysus and point out as evidences the wild grape-vine, which grows in their country alone, and the ivy, laurel, myrtle, box-tree, and other evergreens no one of which is found on the far side of the Euphrates except a few in parks, which can be kept alive only with great care; and that the custom of wearing linen garments, mitres, and gay-coloured garments, and for the king to be attended by gong-carriers and drum-beaters on his departures from the palace, are also Dionysiac; but the philosophers in the plains worship Heracles. Now these statements of Megasthenes are mythical and refuted by many writers, and particularly those about the vine and wine; for much of Armenia, and the whole of Mesopotamia, and the part of Media next thereafter, extending as far as Persis and Carmania, are on the far side of the Euphrates; and a large part of the country of each of these tribes is said to have good vines and good wine.

59. Megasthenes, makes another division in his discussion of the philosophers, asserting that there are two kinds of them, one kind called Brachmanes, and the other Garmanes; that the Brachmanes, however, enjoy fairer repute, for they are more in agreement in their dogmas; and that from conception, while in the womb, the children are under the care of learned men, who are reputed to go to the mother and the unborn child, and, ostensibly, to enchant them to a happy birth, but in truth to give prudent suggestions and advice; and that the women who hear them with the greatest pleasure are believed to be the most fortunate in their offspring; and that after the birth of children different persons, one after another, succeed to the care of them, the children always getting more accomplished teachers as they advance in years; and that the philosophers tarry in a grove in front of the city in an enclosure merely commensurate with their needs, leading a frugal life, lying on straw mattresses and skins, abstaining from animal food and the delights of love, and hearkening only to earnest words, and communicating also with anyone who wishes to hear them; and that the hearer is forbidden either to talk or to cough or even to spit; and if he does, he is banished from association with them for that day as a man who has no control over himself; and that, after having lived in this way for thirty-seven years, they retire, each man to his own possessions, where they live more freely and under less restraint, wearing linen garments, ornaments of gold in moderation in their ears and on their hands, and partake of meats of animals that are of no help to man in his work, but abstain from pungent and seasoned food; and that they marry as many wives as possible, in order to have numerous children, for from many wives the number of earnest children would be greater; and, since they have no servants, it is necessary for them to provide for more service from children -- the service that is nearest at hand; but that the Brachmanes do not share their philosophy with their wedded wives, for fear, in the first place, that they might tell some forbidden secret to the profane if they became corrupt, and, secondly, that they might desert them if they became earnest, for no person who has contempt for pleasure and toil, and likewise for life and death, is willing to be subject to another; and that the earnest man and the earnest woman are such persons; and that they converse more about death than anything else, for they believe that the life here is, as it were, that of a babe still in the womb, and that death, to those who have devoted themselves to philosophy, is birth into the true life, that is, the happy life; and that they therefore discipline themselves most of all to be ready for death; and that they believe that nothing that happens to mankind is good or bad, for otherwise some would not be grieved and others delighted by the same things, both having dream-like notions, and that

the same persons cannot at one time be grieved and then in turn change and be delighted by the same things. As for the opinions of the Brachmanes about the natural world, Megasthenes says that some of their opinions indicate mental simplicity, for the Brachmanes are better in deeds than in words, since they confirm most of their beliefs through the use of myths; and that they are of the same opinion as the Greeks about many things; for example, their opinion that the universe was created and is destructible, as also the Greeks assert, and that it is spherical in shape, and that the god who made it and regulates it pervades the whole of it; and that the primal elements of all things else are different, but that water was the primal element of all creation; and that, in addition to the four elements, there is a fifth natural element of which the heavens and the heavenly bodies are composed; and that the earth is situated in the centre of the universe. And writers mention similar opinions of the Brachmanes about the seed and the soul, as also several other opinions of theirs. And they also weave in myths, like Plato, about the immortality of the soul and the judgments in Hades and other things of this kind. So much for his account of the Brachmanes.

60. As for the Garmanes, he says that the most honourable of them are named Hylobii and that they live in forests subsisting on leaves and wild fruits, clothed with the bark of trees, and abstaining from wine and the delights of love; and that they communicate with the kings, who through messengers inquire about the causes of things and through the Hylobii worship and supplicate the Divinity; and that, after the Hylobii, the physicians are second in honour, and that they are as it were, humanitarian philosophers, men who are of frugal habits but do not live out of doors, and subsist upon rice and barley-groats, which are given to them by everyone of whom they beg or who offers them hospitality; and that through sorcery they can cause people to have numerous offspring, and to have either male or female children; and that they cure diseases mostly through means of cereals and not through means of medicaments; and that, among their medicaments, their ointments and their poultices are most esteemed, but that the rest of their remedies have much in them that is bad and that both this class and the other practise such endurance, both in toils and in perseverance, that they stay in one posture all day long without moving and that there are also diviners and enchanters who are skilled both in the rites and in the customs pertaining to the deceased, and go about begging alms from village to village and from city to city; and that there are others more accomplished and refined than these. but that even these themselves do not abstain from the common talk about Hades, insofar as it is thought to be conducive to piety and holiness; and that women, as well as men study philosophy with some of them, and that the women likewise abstain from the delights of love.

61. Aristobulus says that he saw two of the sophists at Taxila, both Brachmanes; and that the elder had had his head shaved but that the younger had long hair, and that both were followed by disciples; and that when not otherwise engaged they spent their time in the market-place, being honoured as counsellors and being authorized to take as a gift any merchandise they wished; and that anyone whom they accosted poured over them sesame oil, in such profusion that it flowed down over their eyes; and that since quantities of honey and sesame were put out for sale, they made cakes of it and subsisted free of charge; and that they came up to the table of Alexander, ate dinner standing, and taught him a lesson in endurance by retiring to a place near by, where the elder fell to the ground on his back and endured the sun's rays and the rains (for it was now raining, since the

spring of the year had begun); and that the younger stood on one leg holding aloft in both hands a log about three cubits in length, and when one leg tired he chanced the support to the other and kept this up all day long: and that the younger showed a far greater self-mastery than the elder; for although the younger followed the king a short distance, he soon turned back again towards home, and when the king went after him, the man bade him to come himself if he wanted anything of him; but that the elder accompanied the king to the end, and when he was with him chanced his dress and mode of life; and that he said, when reproached by some, that he had completed the forty years of discipline which he had promised to observe; and that Alexander gave his children a present.

63. Onesicritus says that he himself was sent to converse with these sophists; for Alexander had heard that the people always went naked and devoted themselves to endurance and that they were held in very great honour, and that they did not visit other people when invited, but bade them to visit them if they wished to participate in anything they did or said; and that therefore, such being the case, since to Alexander it did not seem fitting either to visit them or to force them against their will to do anything contrary to their ancestral customs, he himself was sent; and that he found fifteen men at a distance of twenty stadia from the city, who were in different postures, standing or sitting or lying naked and motionless till evening, and that they then returned to the city; and that it was very hard to endure the sun, which was so hot that at midday no one else could easily endure walking on the ground with bare feet.

64. Onesicritus says that he conversed with one of these sophists, Calanus, who accompanied the king as far as Persis and died in accordance with the ancestral custom, being placed upon a pyre and burned up. He says that Calanus happened to be lying on stones when he first saw him; that he therefore approached him and greeted him; and told him that he had been sent by the king to learn the wisdom of the sophists and report it to him, and that if there was no objection he was ready to hear his teachings; and that when Calanus, saw the mantle and broad-brimmed hat and boots he wore, he laughed at him and said: 'In olden times the world was full of barley-meal and wheaten-meal, as now of dust; and fountains then flowed, some with water, others with milk and likewise with honey, and others with wine, and some with olive oil; but, by reason of his gluttony and luxury, man fell into arrogance beyond bounds. But Zeus, hating this state of things, destroyed everything and appointed for man a life of toil. And when self-control and the other virtues in general reappeared, there came again an abundance of blessings. But the condition of man is already close to satiety and arrogance, and there is danger of destruction of everything in existence. And Onesicritus adds that Calanus, after saying this, bade him, if he wished to learn, to take off his clothes, to lie down naked on the same stones, and thus to hear his teachings; and that while he was hesitating what to do, Mandanis, who was the oldest and wisest of the sophists, rebuked Calanus as a man of arrogance, and that too after censuring arrogance himself; and that Mandanis called him and said that he commended the king because, although busied with the government of so great an empire, he was desirous of wisdom; for the king was the only philosopher in arms that he ever saw, and that it was the most useful thing in the world if those men were wise who have the power of persuading the willing, and forcing the unwilling, to learn self-control; but that he might be pardoned if, conversing through three interpreters, who, with the exception of language, knew no more than the masses, he should be unable to set forth anything in his philosophy that would be useful for that, he added, would be

like expecting water to flow pure through mud!

65. At all events, all he said, according to Onesicritus, tended to this, that the best teaching is that which removes pleasure and pain from the soul; and that pain and toil differ, for the former is inimical to man and the latter friendly, since man trains the body for toil in order that his opinions may be strengthened. whereby he may put a stop to dissensions and be ready to give good advice to all, both in public and in private; and that, furthermore, he had now advised Taxiles to receive Alexander, for if he received a man better than himself he would be well treated, but if inferior, he would improve him. Onesicritus says that, after saying this, Mandanis inquired whether such doctrines were taught among the Greeks; and that when he answered that Pythagoras taught such doctrines, and also bade people to abstain from meat, as did also Socrates and Diogenes, and that he himself had been a pupil of Diogenes, Mandanis replied that he regarded the Greeks as sound-minded in general, but that they were wrong in one respect, in that they preferred custom to nature; for otherwise, Mandanis said, they would not be ashamed to go naked, like himself, and live on frugal fare; for, he added, the best house is that which requires the least repairs. And Onesicritus, goes on to say that they enquire into numerous natural phenomena, including prognostics, rains, droughts, and diseases; and that when they depart for the city they scatter to the different market-places; and whenever they chance upon anyone carrying figs or bunches of grapes, they get fruit from that person as a free offering; but that if it is oil, it is poured down over them and they are anointed with it; and that the whole of a wealthy home is open to them, even to the women's apartments, and that they enter and share in meals and conversation; and that they regard disease of the body as a most disgraceful thing; and that he who suspects disease in his own body commits suicide through means of fire, piling a funeral pyre; and that he anoints himself, sits down on the pyre, orders it to be ignited, and burns without a motion.

66. Nearchus speaks of the sophists as follows: That the Brachmanes engage in affairs of state and attend the kings as counsellors; but that the other sophists investigate natural phenomena; and that Calanus is one of these; and that their wives join them in the study of philosophy; and that the modes of life of all are severe. As for the customs of the rest of the Indians, he declares as follows: That their laws, some public and some private, are unwritten, and that they contain customs that are strange as compared with those of the other tribes; for example, among some tribes the virgins are set before all as a prize for the man who wins the victory in a fist-fight, so that they marry the victor without dowry; and among other tribes different groups cultivate the crops in common on the basis of kinship, and, when they collect the produce, they each carry off a load sufficient for sustenance during the year, but burn the remainder in order to have work to do thereafter and not be idle. Their weapons, he says, consist of bow and arrows, the latter three cubits long, or a javelin, and a small shield and a broad sword three cubits long; and instead of bridles they use nose-bands, which differ but slightly from a muzzle; and the lips of their horses have holes pierced through them by spikes.

67. Nearchus, in explaining the skill of the Indians in handiwork, says that when they saw sponges in use among the Macedonians they made imitations by sewing tufts of wool through and through with hairs and light cords and threads, and that after compressing them into felt they drew out the inserts and dyed the sponge-like felt with colours; and that makers of strigils and of oil-flasks quickly arose in great numbers; and that they write missives on linen cloth that is very closely woven, though the other writers say that

they make no use of written characters; and that they use brass that is cast, and not the kind that is forged; and he does not state the reason, although he mentions the strange result that follows the use of the vessels made of cast brass, that when they fall to the ground they break into pieces like pottery. Among the statements made concerning India is also the following, that it is the custom, instead of making obeisance, to offer prayers to the kings and to all who are in authority, and of superior rank.

69. The following statements are also made by the historians: that the Indians worship Zeus and the Ganges River and the local deities. And when the king washes his hair, they celebrate a great festival and bring big presents, each man making rivalry in display of his own wealth. And they say that some of the ants that mine gold have wings; and that gold-dust is brought down by the rivers, as by the rivers in Iberia. And in the processions at the time of festivals many elephants are paraded, all adorned with gold and silver, as also many four-horse chariots and ox-teams; and then follows the army, all in military uniform; and then golden vessels consisting of large basins and bowls a fathom in breadth; and tables, high chairs, drinking-cups, and bath-tubs, all of which are made of Indian copper and most of them are set with precious stones -- emeralds, beryls, and Indian anthracites; and also variegated garments spangled with gold, and tame bisons, leopards, and lions, and numbers of variegated and sweet-voiced birds. And Cleitarchus speaks of fourwheeled carriages on which large-leaved trees are carried, and of different kinds of tamed birds that cling to these trees, and states that of these birds the orion has the sweetest voice, but that the catreus, as it is called, has the most splendid appearance and the most variegated plumage; for its appearance approaches nearest that of the peacock. But one must get the rest of the description from Cleitarchus.

70. In classifying the philosophers, writers oppose to the Brachmanes the Pramnae, a contentious and disputatious sect; and they say that the Brachmanes study natural philosophy and astronomy, but that they are derided by the Pramnae as quacks and fools, and that, of these, some are called 'Mountain' Pramnae, others 'Naked' Pramnae, and others 'City' Pramnae or 'Neighbouring' Pramnae; and that the 'Mountain' Pramnae wear deer-skins, and carry wallets full of roots and drugs, pretending to cure people with these, along with witchery and enchantments and amulets; and that the 'Naked' Pramnae, as their name implies, live naked, for the most part in the open air practising endurance, as I have said before, for thirty-seven years;...