

is recognized,<sup>125</sup> as we have seen above of Niyoga, in the appointment of a brother to beget children with the wife of a dead man, or perhaps of a man who is childless. 'Sonlessness' (*aviratā*) is placed on the same level as lack of property (*amati*), and Agni is besought to protect from it.<sup>126</sup> The birth of a daughter was certainly not specially welcome: the Atharvaveda<sup>127</sup> in one hymn distinctly invokes the birth of a son, and deprecates that of a daughter, while the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa<sup>128</sup> contains an old verse which says that a daughter is a misery (*hṛpanam*), while a son is a light in the highest heaven (*īyotir ha putrah paramē vyoman*). But there is no proof that the Vedic Indians practised the exposure of female children. This conclusion, deduced from certain passages in the later Saṃhitās<sup>129</sup> by Zimmer<sup>130</sup> and Delbrück,<sup>131</sup> has been disproved by Böhlingk.

*Child Life.*—No doubt the care of a child was left to the mother, but we learn little from the earlier literature<sup>132</sup> of the life of the young. The length of the period of pregnancy is frequently placed at ten (doubtless lunar) months.<sup>133</sup> On birth the child was first fed with milk or ghee, and then given the breast.<sup>134</sup> On the eighth day after birth

<sup>125</sup> x. 18, 8; 40, 2.

<sup>126</sup> Rv. iii. 16, 5.

<sup>127</sup> vi. 11, 3. Cf. viii. 6, 25.

<sup>128</sup> vii. 15. Cf. Max Müller, *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 409.

<sup>129</sup> Taittiriya Saṃhitā, vi. 5, 10, 3; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iv. 6, 4; 7, 9; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, xxvii. 9; Nirukta, iii. 4; Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xv. 17, 12.

<sup>130</sup> *Altindisches Leben*, 319. Cf. Weber, *Naxatra*, 2, 314, n., who cites Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, xi. 8, 8, as evidence of the exposure of two boys, but the sense is doubtful.

<sup>131</sup> *Die indogermanischen Verwandtschaftsnamen*, 575. See also Weber, *Indische Studien*, 5, 54, 210; Ludwig, *Translation of the Rigveda*, 6, 142; Kaegi, *Der Rigveda*, n. 49; Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, 389, 390. Böhlingk's view is given in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*,

44, 494-496, and cf. Fischel, *Vedische Studien*, 2, 48, who compares iv. 18, 5.

<sup>132</sup> The later literature is full of details of the ceremonies before and after birth (see Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 573 *et seq.*). Weber, *Naxatra*, 2, 314, n., gives the Vedic embryology; twins were disliked, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 9, etc.

<sup>133</sup> Rv. v. 78, 9; x. 184, 3; Av. i. 11, 6; iii. 23, 2; Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 13, 9; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, iv. 5, 2, 4; Chāndogya Upaniṣad, v. 9, 1; Weber, *Naxatra*, 2, 314, n. There are in the Av. many spells concerned with birth (i. 11, etc.), and miscarriages are mentioned (*avatokā, avasū, Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, xxx. 15; Av. viii. 6, 9, etc.).

<sup>134</sup> Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, i. 3, 4 (*Mādhyamdina* = i. 5, 2 *Kāṇva*). Cf. also vi. 4, 24 *et seq.*; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii. 5, 1, 6. After being weaned the child is *ati-stana* (Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, xiii. 2).